



**DRAFT TWO YEAR MODIFICATION
FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**
DELAWARE PYS 2020-2023
CONTENTS

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I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

a. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

This is a combined plan

COMBINED PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM(S)

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

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.)

b. PLAN INTRODUCTION OR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Delaware is pleased to submit the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) two-year modification for the Combined State Plan. Under Governor John Carney's leadership and vision, Delaware has been advancing Delaware's workforce to obtain education and/or training while focusing on preparing Delawareans for the high-demand jobs of today and the future.

Since the submission of the State Plan in 2020 great challenges, great changes, and great successes have affected the workforce system in Delaware. Historically low unemployment rates were erased overnight as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. Delaware's economy and labor market have experienced a turbulent two years. Delaware's focus pivoted to deal with the effects of the worldwide pandemic, however, our dedication to ensuring Delawareans were equipped with the necessary training and education to endure the lasting effects was unmistakable. Since writing the combined WIOA State Plan, Delaware's publicly funded workforce system has made enormous strides in delivering services during these unprecedented times.

The 16 Partner programs shift to virtual meetings to maintain an organization infrastructure including county-level WIOA teams and meetings; state-level WIOA teams and meetings; and a statewide annual convening, which facilitates communication, fosters forward thinking, and develops bottom-up input for strategic planning.

In implementing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, four co-partners formed Delaware's strategic partnership: the Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training (DOL-DET); the Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR); Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Visually Impaired (DVI); and the Delaware Department of Education Office of Continuing Technical Education (CTE). It is important to note, that in one form or another all these entities are DWDB members or designees. Under WIOA, every state is required to submit a plan to qualify for the federal grant. Delaware has chosen to develop a combined plan, including the Department of Education Career and Technical Education; Migrant Seasonal Farmworker program, and the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JSVG).

Goal Review and Development. This iteration of the Delaware's State Plan resulted from a thorough review of goal accomplishment from the first plan; an analysis of issues that "bubbled up" from the staff level; and specific guidance from the DWDB. All this information was reviewed and synthesized at the DWDB's all-day strategic planning retreat held October 8, 2019.

Priorities. The DWDB, at its annual strategic planning retreat on October 8, 2019, established these priorities for the next four years:

a. **Resource Alignment.** This is initially the DWDB main effort. The Financial Oversight Committee and the DWDB executive director will lead this effort. This goal ensures the DWDB funds

projects, training, and innovative programs with funds from multiple sources. To clarify, the DWDB is looking for workforce partners from multiple agencies, to combine funds to achieve goals. Whenever possible, the DWDB will look beyond WIOA Dislocated Worker, WIOA Adult, WIOA Youth, and Delaware Blue Collar funds to finance activities in the public workforce system.

b. **Pathways with an Expansion to Adult Pathways.** This is a continuation and expansion of the goal from the previous four-year plan. The DWDB intends to continue weighting this initiative by assigning bonus points and aligning the demand occupation list with this goal. The DWDB is expanding this goal to include adult pathways (often called Career Lattices). While there are sure to be more initiatives; the DWDB embraces – funds permitting – a policy that provides an additional ITA for clients who have completed an ITA training program and demonstrated success in the industry in which they were trained.

c. **Wilmington Youth Initiative.** The Wilmington Youth Initiative Committee is a Delaware Workforce Development Board initiative established to develop policies and initiatives to mitigate youth gun violence through workforce development initiatives and wrap around services for Wilmington youth in the city’s most dangerous areas.

d. **Process Redesign.** This is a continuation of the process redesign goal from the previous four-year plan. This goal includes executing the action plan developed by the DEMEP mapping process. The initial effort in this goal is the development of a robust referral system characterized by Delaware’s VOCAL initiative and research into developing an Artificial Intelligence (AI) referral system. Process redesign is a long-range project including a mapping of business services.

e. **Re-Entry.** The DWDB recognizes that justice involved citizens are a workforce pool, which may need expanded services to achieve employment which offers unsubsidized employment which ensures a living wage and ultimately mitigates recidivism.

Command and Control. Delaware partners will continue to use current approaches to align its publicly funded workforce system. Those approaches include:

1. Memorandum of Understand (MOU) – This individually negotiated and executed agreement will outline the responsibilities and opportunities for each partner. In addition, it established and documents the One-Stop system goals. (See Appendix AA for MOU Copies)
2. Monthly Statewide Partner Governance Meetings - These meetings will provide a forum to identify issues and opportunities to evolve and expand the delivery system. Embedded in this process is an oversight group for small projects, such as the alignment of the various partners’ Business Service groups.
3. Local meetings – These meetings will be convened quarterly locally to identify issue and opportunities. The purpose will be very similar to the statewide meetings, but they will focus more on operational issues.
4. Quarterly Board meetings. Partners brief the status goal attainment to the DWDB at these meetings. Mid-course corrections – if needed – are made.

Labor Market Information Considerations.

Delaware’s publicly funded workforce system was jolted in late February and early March of 2020 when the Corona Virus ripped through the First State causing mass worker dislocations, shuttering of small business, a tsunami of unemployment filings, and closures of state offices. The disruption knocked workforce partners, staff, and leaders back scrambling to embrace new approaches.

Delaware’s has shown a steady decline in unemployment since the height in April 2020. Delaware’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in December 2021 was 5.0%. The last time Delaware’s unemployment rate was at or below 5% was March 2020 when the unemployment rate was 4.8%.

Delaware finishes the year with 11,900 more jobs than December 2020. In December 2021, Leisure & Hospitality was up 5,800 jobs over-the-year, while Wholesale & Retail Trade as well as the Construction industry increased 2,300 jobs over-the-year. Professional & Business Services and Manufacturing were down 1,300 and 500 jobs over-the-year, respectively.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

a. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

1. Economic and Workforce Analysis

A. Economic Analysis

i. Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Overview of Employment by Industry - 2020

Delaware's average employment for all industries decreased by 25,311 from 2019 to 2020, according to data from the QCEW program. In percentage terms, that is a decrease of 5.6 percent. The drop in Delaware's average monthly employment in 2020 was mainly due to the effects of the Coronavirus on the state's economy. Delaware's fastest growing as well as its smallest industry sector was Mining, with a 14.8 percent change in employment over-the-year for 2020. While Mining was the fastest growing industry in percentage terms it averaged only 70 jobs in 2020. Transportation and Warehousing was the second fastest growing sector of the economy with an increase of 6.7% growth in average monthly employment. Transportation and Warehousing also had the largest increase in average monthly employment with an increase of 983 jobs over-the-year. The next fastest growing industry was Management of Companies and Enterprises at 5.2 percent over-the-year. Federal Government and Utilities were the fourth and fifth fastest growing industries with a percent change in employment of 5.1 percent and -0.7 percent, respectively.

Industry Description	NAICS	2019 Average Monthly Employ.	2020 Average Monthly Employ.	Change in Average Monthly Employ.	% Change in Average Monthly Employ.	Rank by % Change (Largest to Smallest)
Mining	21	61	70	9	14.8%	1
Transportation and warehousing	48-49	14,615	15,598	983	6.7%	2
Management of companies and enterprises	55	8,017	8,431	414	5.2%	3
Federal Government	Fed	5,727	6,018	291	5.1%	4
Utilities	22	2,074	2,060	-14	-0.7%	5
Finance and insurance	52	42,435	41,869	-566	-1.3%	6
Wholesale trade	42	10,998	10,840	-158	-1.4%	7
Real estate and rental and leasing	53	5,594	5,510	-84	-1.5%	8
Total Government	Total	63,604	62,474	-1,130	-1.8%	9
Construction	23	22,917	22,415	-502	-2.2%	10
Local Government	Local	27,683	27,064	-619	-2.2%	11
Health care and social assistance	62	72,052	70,137	-1,915	-2.7%	12
State Government	State	30,195	29,392	-803	-2.7%	13
Professional and technical services	54	26,325	25,365	-960	-3.6%	14

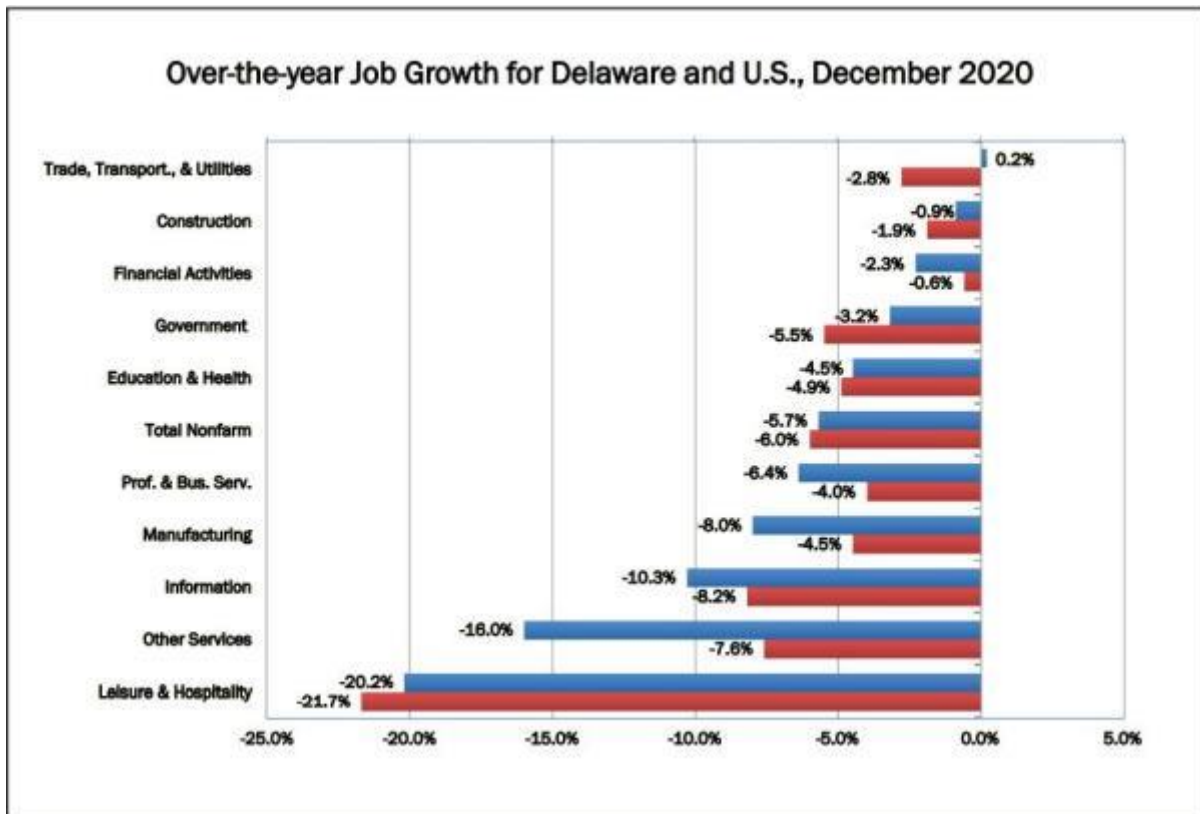
Industry Description	NAICS	2019 Average Monthly Employ.	2020 Average Monthly Employ.	Change in Average Monthly Employ.	% Change in Average Monthly Employ.	Rank by % Change (Largest to Smallest)
Administrative and waste services	56	29,542	28,057	-1,485	-5.0%	15
Total Industries	Total	452,838	427,527	-25,311	-5.6%	
Manufacturing	31-33	27,305	25,536	-1,769	-6.5%	16
Information	51	3,905	3,637	-268	-6.9%	17
Retail trade	44-45	51,893	47,874	-4,019	-7.7%	18
Educational services	61	4,853	4,375	-478	-9.8%	19
Agric., forestry, fishing and hunting	11	1,411	1,250	-161	-11.4%	20
Other services, except public admin.	81	12,134	10,736	-1,398	-11.5%	21
Accommodation and food services	72	43,233	33,789	-9,444	-21.8%	22
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	71	9,872	7,507	-2,365	-24.0%	23

Delaware's over-the-year percent change in Total Nonfarm job growth was -5.7 percent for the 12 months ending December 2020. By comparison, U.S. job growth during the same period was -6.0 percent. Delaware's only industry with job gains was in the Trade, Transportation, & Utilities, growing by 0.2 percent over-the-year, and outperforming the U.S. decline of -2.8 percent. The U.S. didn't have any major industry with positive job growth.

Of the remaining declining Delaware industries, the Construction industry had the smallest decline in job growth for 2020, down 0.9 percent. For the U.S., Construction jobs declined 1.9 percent. Job growth in the Financial Activities industry was down 2.3 percent in Delaware, compared to the U.S. which was only down 0.6 percent in 2020. Government declined for Delaware by 3.2 percent, which was the fourth strongest job performance in jobs 2020, while U.S. over-the-year job growth in Government was down 5.5 percent. Education & Health rounds out the industries with above average performance in jobs over-the-year job in Delaware for 2020 declining 4.5 percent and performing slightly better than the national decline of 4.9 percent.

The remaining five major industries performed worse than average in Delaware. Leisure & Hospitality had the worst job declines in all Delaware industries, declining 20.2 percent over-the-year, but slightly better than the national decline of 21.7 percent. The Other Service industry had the second greatest percentage losses in Delaware down 16.0 percent, nationally jobs were down 7.6 percent in the Other Services industry. The Other Services industry includes repair and maintenance, personal and laundry services, and membership organizations. Delaware jobs in Information were down 10.3 percent, the third largest percent decline. Nationally, Information jobs fell 8.2 percent. Manufacturing jobs declined 8.0 percent over-the-year, while declining 4.5 percent nationally. Professional & Business Services had over-the-year job losses, declining by 6.4 percent, while nationally jobs fell by 4.0 percent.

ii. Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

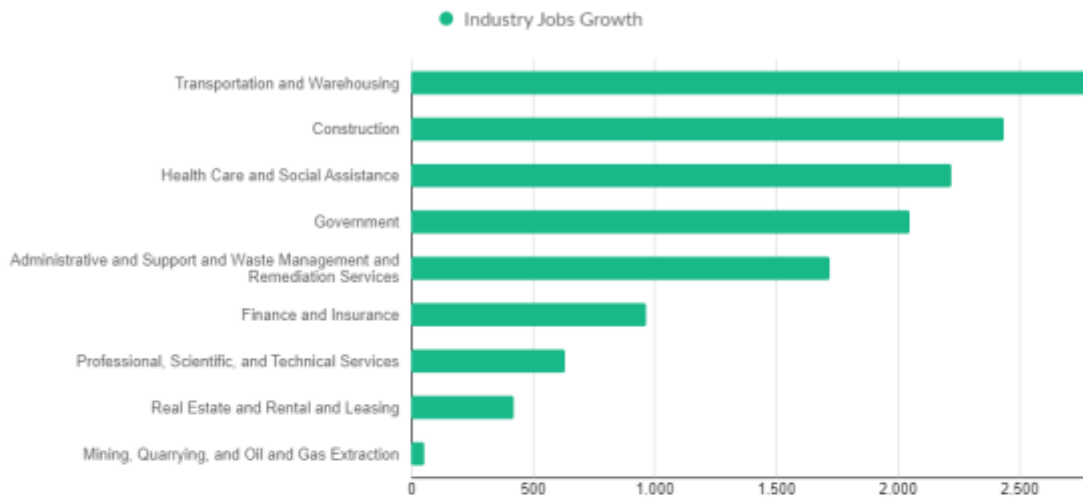


Delaware Nonfarm Employment, Seasonally Adjusted (in 000s)

INDUSTRY GROUP	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021	Over the Month Change	Over the Year Change†
TOTAL NONAG. EMP.	453.5	452.2	1.3	11.9
CONSTRUCTION	24.8	24.7	0.1	2.3
MANUFACTURING	24.6	24.6	0.0	-0.5
Durable Goods	8.9	8.8	0.1	-0.1
Nondurable Goods	15.7	15.8	-0.1	-0.4
TRADE, TRANSP., & UTIL.	84.3	83.7	0.6	3.1
Wholesale Trade	11.2	11.0	0.2	-0.1
Retail Trade	51.5	51.2	0.3	2.4
Transp. & Utilities	21.6	21.5	0.1	0.8
INFORMATION	3.6	3.6	0.0	0.1
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	46.6	47.1	-0.5	0.0
PROF. & BUS. SERVICES	59.5	59.6	-0.1	-1.3
EDUCATION & HEALTH	78.3	78.2	0.1	0.6
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	49.1	48.5	0.6	5.8
OTHER SERVICES	16.8	16.6	0.2	0.9
GOVERNMENT	65.9	65.6	0.3	0.9
Federal Government	5.9	5.8	0.1	0.0

INDUSTRY GROUP	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021	Over the Month Change	Over the Year Change†
State Government	31.3	31.2	0.1	-0.6
Local Government	28.7	28.6	0.1	1.5

Top Growing Industries



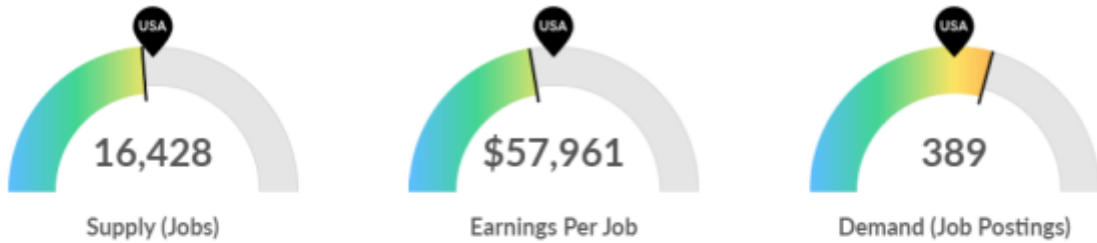
Industry	2016 Jobs	2021 Jobs	Change in Jobs	% Change in Jobs	2021 LQ	2021 Earnings Per Worker	2021 GRP
Transportation and Warehousing	16,354	19,162	2,808	+17%	0.95	\$59,406	\$1.60B
Construction	25,239	27,675	2,436	+10%	0.98	\$72,797	\$3.20B
Health Care and Social Assistance	70,807	73,028	2,221	+3%	1.16	\$72,187	\$6.37B
Government	74,008	76,058	2,050	+3%	1.05	\$80,938	\$8.38B
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	28,706	30,426	1,720	+6%	1.03	\$54,154	\$2.30B
Finance and Insurance	42,925	43,889	964	+2%	2.13	\$129,695	\$14.33B
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	27,837	28,469	632	+2%	0.84	\$123,392	\$5.25B
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	6,915	7,336	421	+6%	0.88	\$65,584	\$2.35B
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	51	105	54	+106%	0.07	\$4,782,674	\$1.09B

*Emsi Q1 2022 Data Set | www.economicmodeling.com

The following information is pulled from EMSI and looks at some of growing industries in Delaware that align with the Delaware Prosperity Partnership's key industries.

Transportation and Warehousing:

Aggressive Hiring Competition Over an Average Supply of Regional Talent



Delaware is about average for this kind of talent. The national average for an area this size is 17,658* employees, while there are 16,428 here.

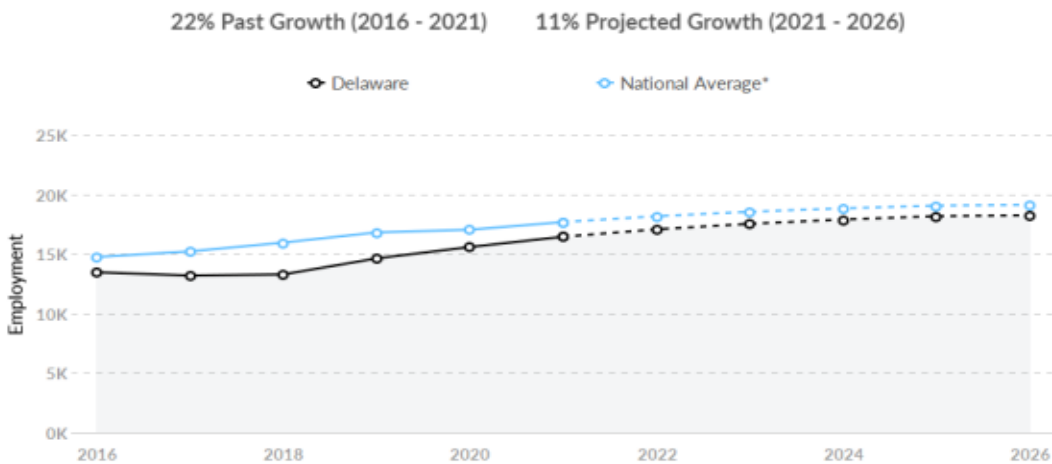
Earnings per job are below the national average. The national average salary for Transportation and Warehousing in an area this size is \$67,697, while in Delaware it is \$57,961. Earnings per jobs is the total industry earnings divided by the number of jobs in the industry.

Competition from online job postings is high in Delaware. The national average for an area this size is 306* job postings/mo, while there are 389 here.

*National average values are derived by taking the national value for Transportation and Warehousing and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and Delaware. In other words, the values represent the national average adjusted for region size.

Supply Is About Equal to the National Average

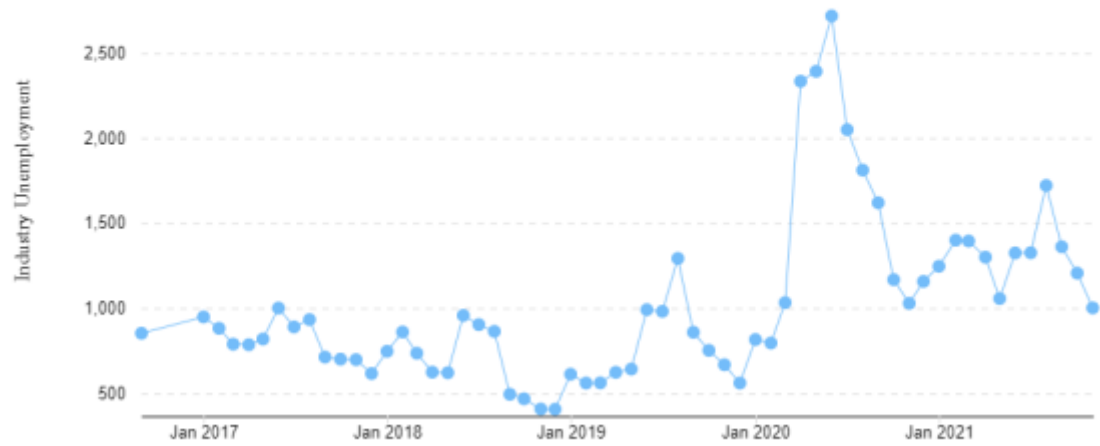
The regional vs. national average employment helps you understand if the supply of Transportation and Warehousing is a strength or weakness for Delaware, and how it is changing relative to the nation. An average area of this size would have 17,658* employees, while there are 16,428 here. The gap between expected and actual employment is projected to narrow over the next 5 years.



*National average values are derived by taking the national value for Transportation and Warehousing and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and Delaware. In other words, the values represent the national average adjusted for region size.

Unemployment Rate Trends

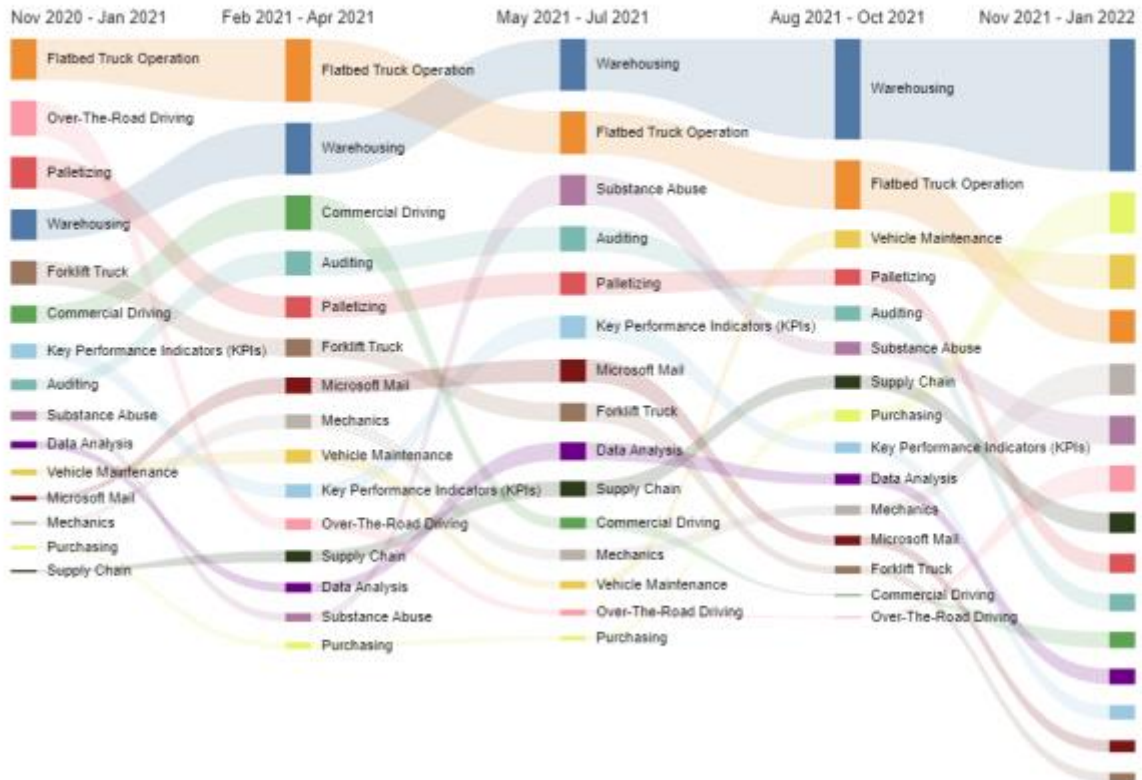
Unemployment shown at the 2-digit sector level.



Top 15 skills over the past year for all jobs in Transportation and Warehousing

Top 15 Skills for All Job Types by Quarter

Skills help us understand the direction an industry is headed.



Construction:

Light Hiring Competition Over an Average Supply of Regional Talent



Delaware is about average for this kind of talent. The national average for an area this size is 22,423* employees, while there are 22,696 here.



Earnings per job are about the same as the national average. The national average salary for Construction in an area this size is \$80,809, while in Delaware it is \$78,718. Earnings per job is the total industry earnings divided by the number of jobs in the industry.

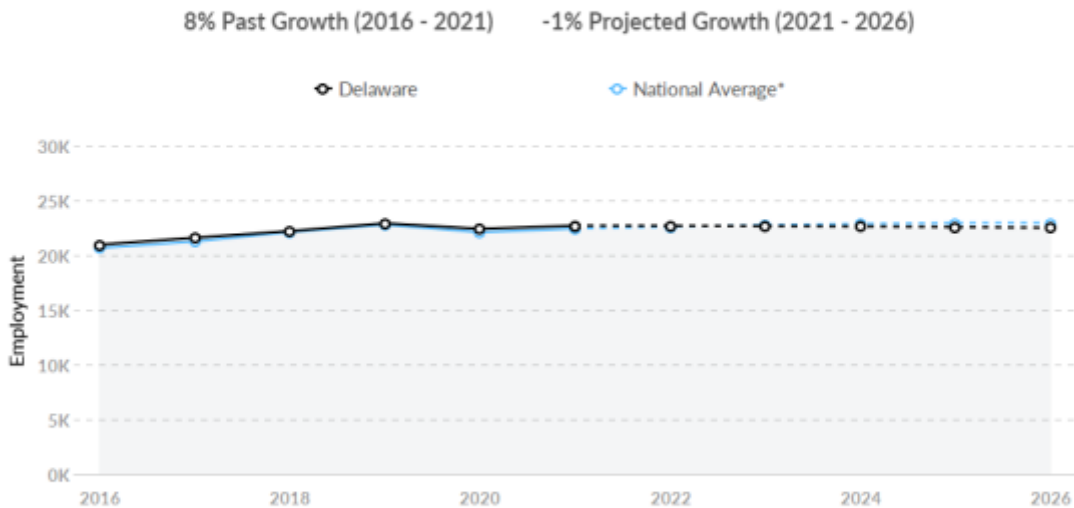


Competition from online job postings is low in Delaware. The national average for an area this size is 232* job postings/mo, while there are 142 here.

*National average values are derived by taking the national value for Construction and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and Delaware. In other words, the values represent the national average adjusted for region size.

Supply Is About Equal to the National Average

The regional vs. national average employment helps you understand if the supply of Construction is a strength or weakness for Delaware, and how it is changing relative to the nation. An average area of this size would have 22,423* employees, while there are 22,696 here. The gap between expected and actual employment is expected to increase over the next 5 years.



*National average values are derived by taking the national value for Construction and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and Delaware. In other words, the values represent the national average adjusted for region size.

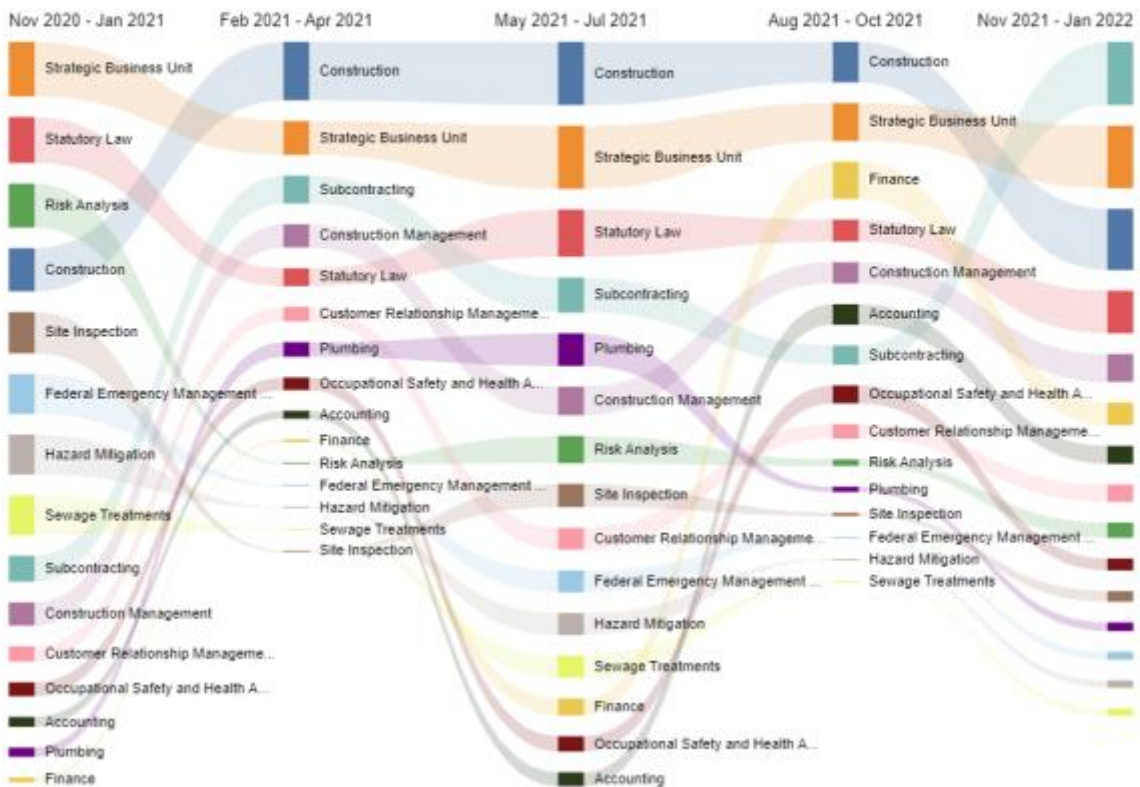
Unemployment Rate Trends

Unemployment shown at the 2-digit sector level.



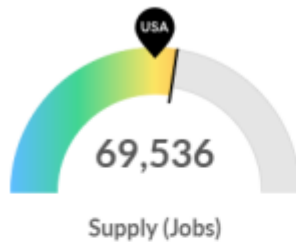
Top 15 Skills for All Job Types by Quarter

Skills help us understand the direction an industry is headed.



Healthcare:

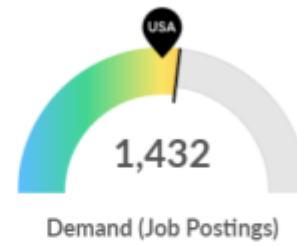
Aggressive Hiring Competition Over a Deep Supply of Regional Talent



Delaware is a hotspot for this kind of talent. The national average for an area this size is 60,578* employees, while there are 69,536 here.



Earnings per job are about the same as the national average. The national average salary for Health Care and Social Assistance in an area this size is \$68,485, while in Delaware it is \$72,793. Earnings per jobs is the total industry earnings divided by the number of jobs in the industry.

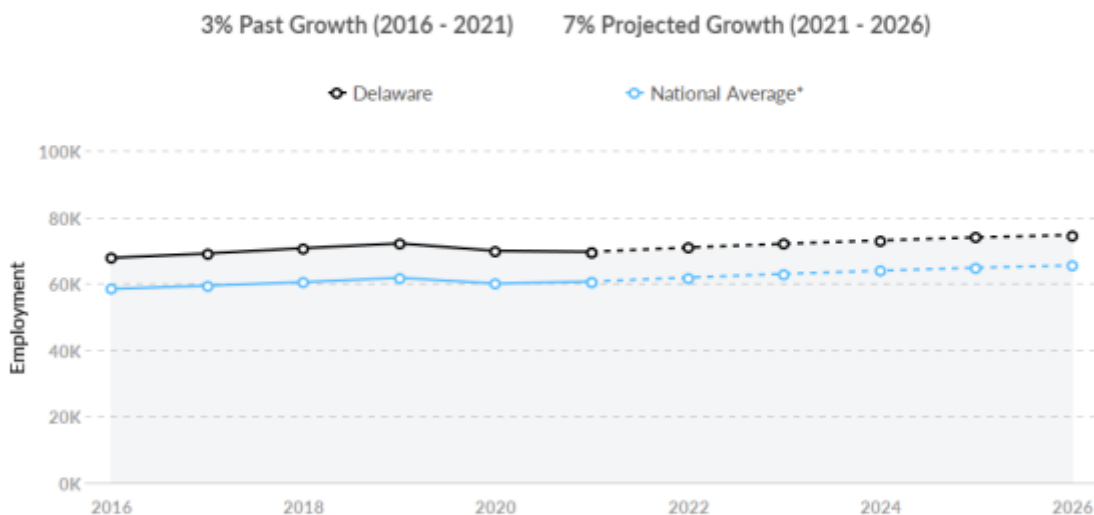


Competition from online job postings is high in Delaware. The national average for an area this size is 1,283* job posting/mo, while there is 1,432 here.

*National average values are derived by taking the national value for Health Care and Social Assistance and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and Delaware. In other words, the values represent the national average adjusted for region size.

Supply Is Higher Than the National Average

The regional vs. national average employment helps you understand if the supply of Health Care and Social Assistance is a strength or weakness for Delaware, and how it is changing relative to the nation. An average area of this size would have 60,578* employees, while there are 69,536 here. This higher than expected supply may make it easier to find candidates. The gap between expected and actual employment is expected to remain roughly the same over the next 5 years.



*National average values are derived by taking the national value for Health Care and Social Assistance and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and Delaware. In other words, the values represent the national average adjusted for region size.

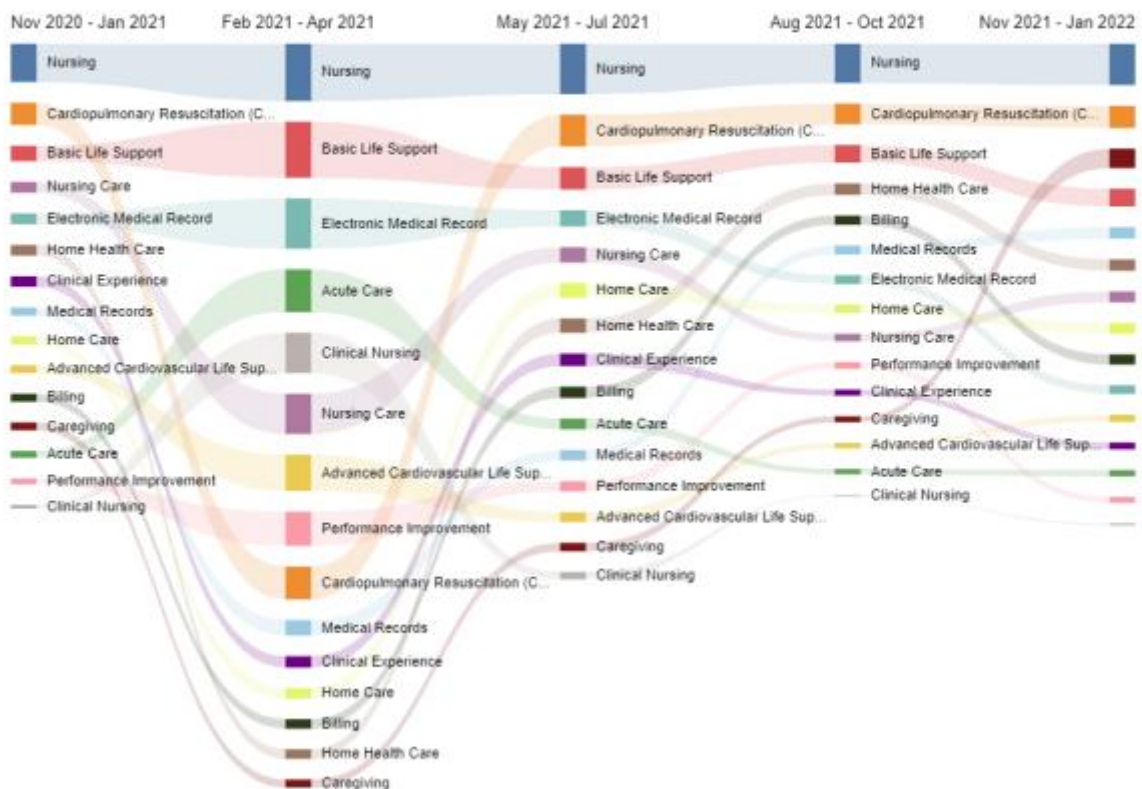
Unemployment Rate Trends

Unemployment shown at the 2-digit sector level.



Top 15 Skills for All Job Types by Quarter

Skills help us understand the direction an industry is headed.



Finance:

Aggressive Hiring Competition Over a Deep Supply of Regional Talent



Delaware is a hotspot for this kind of talent. The national average for an area this size is 18,744* employees, while there are 41,794 here.



Earnings per job are below the national average. The national average salary for Finance and Insurance in an area this size is \$147,273, while in Delaware it is \$130,280. Earnings per jobs is the total industry earnings divided by the number of jobs in the industry.

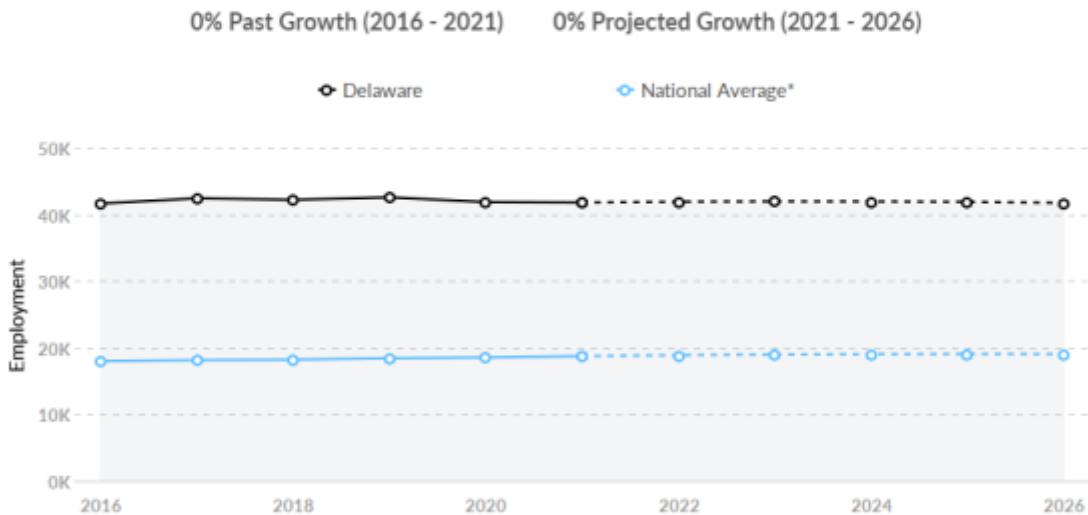


Competition from online job postings is high in Delaware. The national average for an area this size is 527* job postings/mo, while there is 1,506 here.

*National average values are derived by taking the national value for Finance and Insurance and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and Delaware. In other words, the values represent the national average adjusted for region size.

Supply Is Higher Than the National Average

The regional vs. national average employment helps you understand if the supply of Finance and Insurance is a strength or weakness for Delaware, and how it is changing relative to the nation. An average area of this size would have 18,744* employees, while there are 41,794 here. This higher than expected supply may make it easier to find candidates. The gap between expected and actual employment is expected to remain roughly the same over the next 5 years.



*National average values are derived by taking the national value for Finance and Insurance and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and Delaware. In other words, the values represent the national average adjusted for region size.

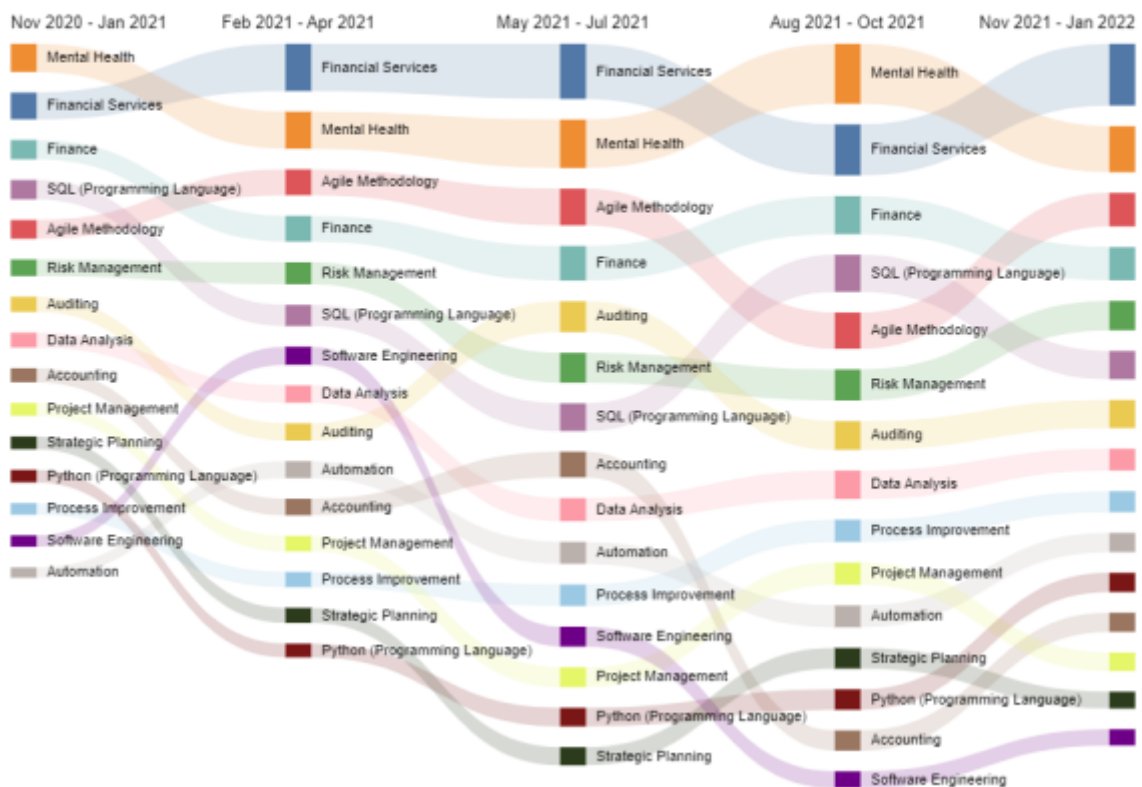
Unemployment Rate Trends

Unemployment shown at the 2-digit sector level.



Top 15 Skills for All Job Types by Quarter

Skills help us understand the direction an industry is headed.



iii. Employer's Employment Needs

The Demand Occupation List: Aligning Talent Investments with Projected Industry Needs

Delaware's publicly funded workforce system is a demand-driven system that uses a range of labor market and industry data (LMI) to help set the conditions of success for its citizens, businesses, educational institutions, and the economy in general. Delaware relies heavily on information produced by the Delaware Office of Occupational and Labor Market Information (OOLMI) alongside time-sensitive labor market intelligence garnered by the (DOL-DET) business services representatives and VETS staff; Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DOL-DVR) employment services specialists. Since the last plan Delaware Economic Development office has been reorganized into the Delaware Public Private Partnership (DPP) and the Division of Small Business. DPP is the nonprofit *state economic development agency* that leads Delaware's economic development efforts to attract, grow and retain businesses; build a stronger entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem; and to support private employers in identifying, recruiting and developing talent in Delaware. DPP and DWDB work closely on enhancing the state's talent pool and supporting employers in their workforce needs. DPP's President and CEO serves as the Business Engagement Committee Chair.

Delaware is acutely aware of the profound impact educational attainment plays on economic vitality for families and communities. Looking at unemployment rates, job seekers with no high school diploma or secondary credential are at a significant disadvantage compared to those who do. While some data suggest a burgeoning job market for non-grads, many of these jobs have high turnover and low wages.

To ensure that Delaware's publicly funded workforce system invests in training and credentials that will lead to jobs, the state investigates current and emerging employer needs to develop a Demand Occupation List. Key steps include:

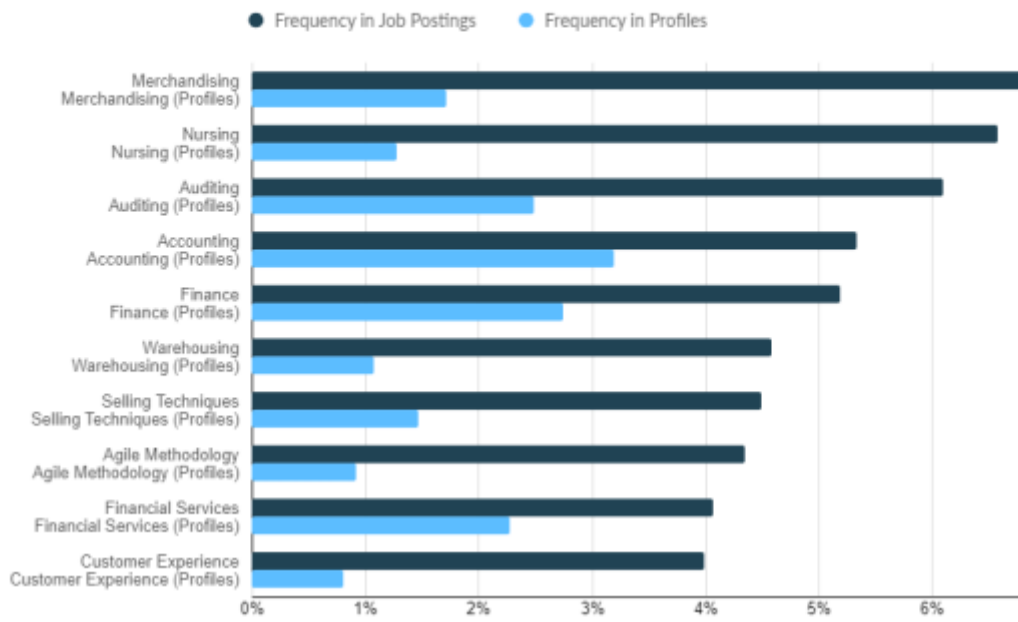
- Analysis by Delaware Workforce Development Board (DWDB) and the staff of OOLMI labor market projections.
- Intelligence gathering from DOL-DET business services representatives and partners that conduct "shoes on the ground" employer visits.
- Analysis of employer survey results and other real-time intelligence.

The list is approved by the board and included in the Annual Funding Guidelines posted on the DWDB website. The Board has the flexibility to add occupations, if needed, based on real-time intelligence. Please see Appendix A for the most recent demand occupation list (developed in January 2022)

While the ever-changing labor market makes it difficult to catalogue and evaluate knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), Delaware has led the way in developing – in partnership with America's Job Link Alliance (AJLA) – a Delaware Job Bank that connects job seeker talents to employer needs using ONET codes.

According to Emsi, the following charts show the top hard and common skills by job postings over the past twelve months.

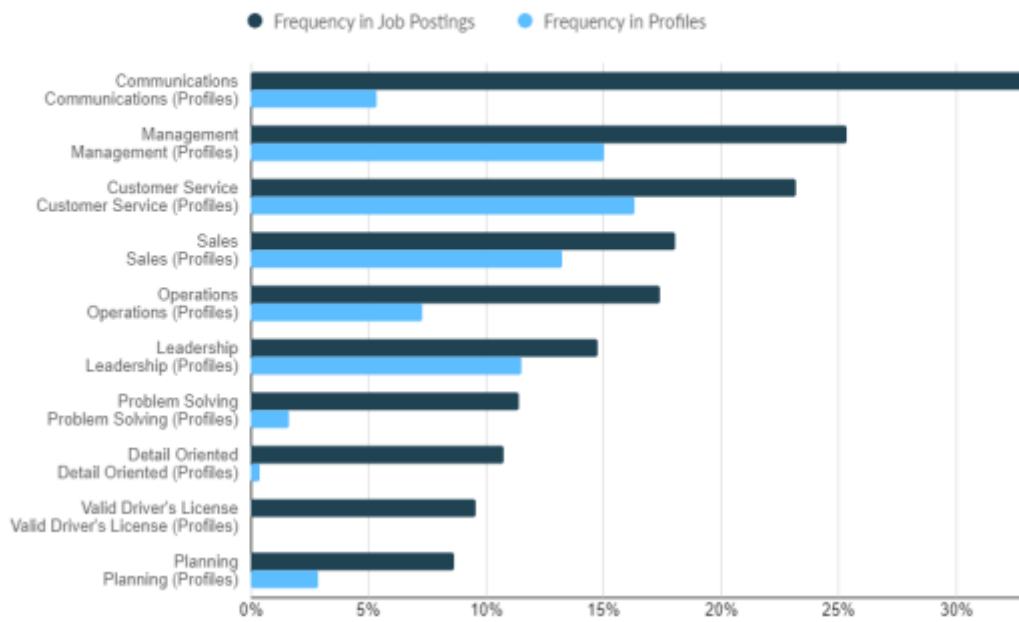
Top Hard Skills



Skills	Postings	% of Total Postings	Profiles	% of Total Profiles
Merchandising	16,796	7%	4,922	2%
Nursing	16,127	7%	3,678	1%
Auditing	14,961	6%	7,149	2%
Accounting	13,093	5%	9,168	3%
Finance	12,722	5%	7,890	3%
Warehousing	11,243	5%	3,083	1%
Selling Techniques	11,029	4%	4,227	1%
Agile Methodology	10,665	4%	2,622	1%
Financial Services	9,983	4%	6,518	2%
Customer Experience	9,776	4%	2,313	1%

*Emsi Q1 2022 Data Set | www.economicmodeling.com

Top Common Skills



Skills	Postings	% of Total Postings	Profiles	% of Total Profiles
Communications	81,024	33%	15,361	5%
Management	62,204	25%	43,085	15%
Customer Service	56,949	23%	46,793	16%
Sales	44,356	18%	38,021	13%
Operations	42,678	17%	20,977	7%
Leadership	36,163	15%	33,021	12%
Problem Solving	28,036	11%	4,660	2%
Detail Oriented	26,330	11%	1,102	0%
Valid Driver's License	23,435	10%	30	0%
Planning	21,186	9%	8,154	3%

Delaware also organizes its Job Bank – with the help of private businesses – to align jobs on the Demand Occupation List along career pathways. While work is ongoing, pathways have been developed for:

- Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources (AgriScience)
- Architecture & Construction
- Arts, A/V Technology & Construction
- Business Management & Administration
- Education & Training
- Finance
- Government & Public Administration
- Health Sciences
- Hospitality & Training
- Human Services
- Information Technology
- Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security

- Manufacturing
- Marketing
- Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM)
- Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics
- Manufacturing Logistics Technician

[Pathways can be explored here.](#)

The vision for Delaware Pathways is to help achieve the "Delaware Promise" through programs and services that link student identities to promising careers. Delaware Pathways is an education and workforce partnership that creates a career pathways system for all youth. This effort builds upon Delaware's rich history in providing Career and Technical Education (CTE) through the state's vocational school districts and Delaware's community college which have produced a robust and highly skilled workforce for Delaware and the surrounding region. This work spans all secondary and postsecondary partners and includes the integration of community-based organizations and workforce partners to ensure that all youth are successful in pursuing postsecondary education and gainful employment. In October 2021, Governor Carney announced additional investments in Delaware's Pathways program to expand into Delaware middle schools, reaching more than 6,000 students, and grow the Pathways program in Delaware high schools to reach 32,000 students.

B. Workforce Analysis

i. Employment and Unemployment

The Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate is a key economic indicator of the health of the economy and one that is widely watched by the public. The Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program is a state and federal cooperative program that generates the unemployment rate for the state, counties, and cities with population over 25,000. The unemployment rate is measured by dividing the number of unemployed by the total labor force. To be considered unemployed, one has to be actively seeking employment and available to work during the month.

Delaware's publicly funded workforce system was jolted in late February and early March when the Corona Virus ripped through the First State causing mass worker dislocations, shuttering of small business, a tsunami of unemployment filings, and closures of state offices. The disruption knocked workforce partners, staff, and leaders back scrambling to embrace new approaches.

In 2020, Delaware's annual unemployment rate was 7.8 percent, 4.1 percentage points higher than the prior year mainly due to the coronavirus pandemic. Delaware's annual unemployment rate was 0.3 of a percentage point lower than the national average's 8.1 percent in 2020. In 2010, Delaware's unemployment rate peaked at 8.7 percent and the U.S. unemployment rate peaked at an annual rate of 9.6 percent following one of the most severe post World War II recessions, ending in June of 2009.

The following table shows information for specific individuals, some that may have barriers to employment.

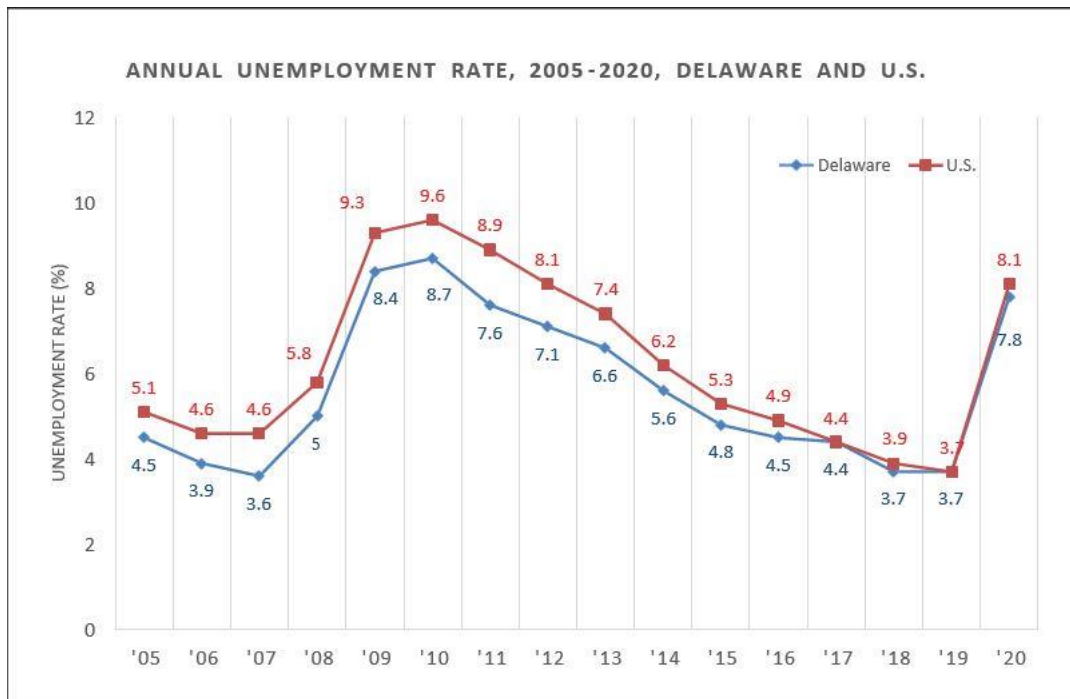
Poverty Level (of all people)	109,400	109,400	42,510,843
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	39,725	39,725	14,171,567
Enrolled in Grade 12 (% of total population)	11,461	11,461	4,422,344
Disconnected Youth	1,418	1,418	423,273

Children in Single Parent Families (% of all children)	73,222	73,222	23,790,005
Uninsured	53,946	53,946	28,248,613
With a Disability, Age 18-64	58,297	58,297	20,187,604
With a Disability, Age 18-64, Labor Force Participation Rate and Size	25,639	25,639	8,509,463
Foreign Born	91,473	91,473	44,011,870
Speak English Less Than Very Well (population 5 yrs. and over)	41,259	41,259	25,615,365

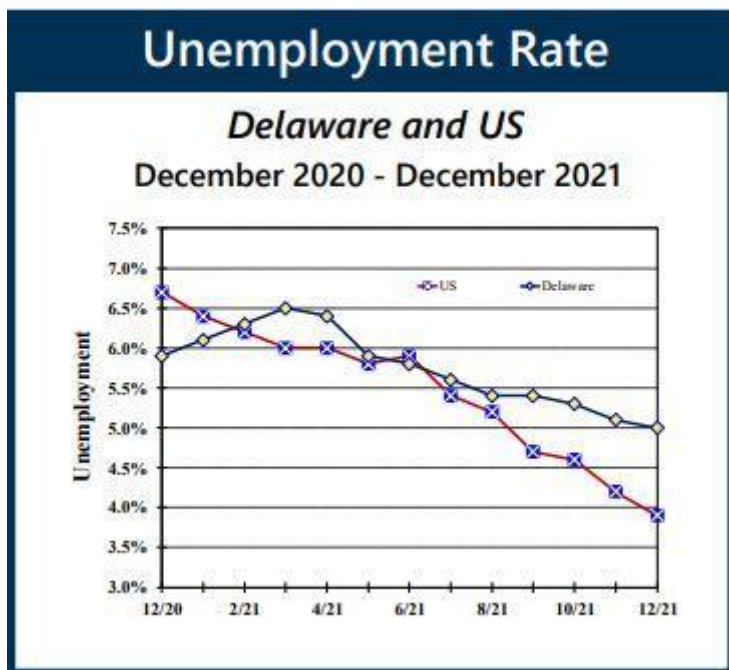
Source: JobsEQ®

Disconnected Youth are 16-19 year olds who are (1) not in school, (2) not high school graduates, and (3) either unemployed or not in the labor force.

ii. Labor Market Trends



Delaware's has shown a steady decline in unemployment since the height in April 2020. Delaware's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in December 2021 was 5.0%, down from 5.3% in December 2020. There were 24,600 unemployed Delawareans in December 2021 compared to 25,200 in December 2020.



The Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program is an important Federal and State government cooperative program that produces monthly and annual data on employment, unemployment, the unemployment rate, and the labor force for States, counties, and cities. The state unemployment rate data below come from the LAUS program.

Delaware and Neighboring States Annual Average Unemployment Rates

Delaware’s annual average unemployment rate of 7.8 percent in 2020 was ranked as the 31st lowest rate in the nation. Of Delaware’s neighboring states of Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, only Maryland had a more favorable ranking in 2020. Maryland annual average unemployment rate of 6.8 percent ranked 23rd lowest in the nation. Pennsylvania’s annual average unemployment rate of 9.1 percent ranked 43rd lowest in the nation, while New Jersey’s rate of 9.8 percent ranked 46th lowest.

Delaware’s annual average unemployment rate increased 4.1 percentage points from 2019 to 2020. Of Delaware’s neighboring states, Maryland’s unemployment rate increased the least. Rising by 3.3 percentage points. Pennsylvania’s unemployment rate increased by 4.6 percentage points, while New Jersey’s unemployment rate increased by 6.4 percentage points from the previous year. The United States annual average unemployment rate rose by 4.4 percentage points over-the-year to 8.1 percent in 2020.

Comparative Annual Unemployment Rates:

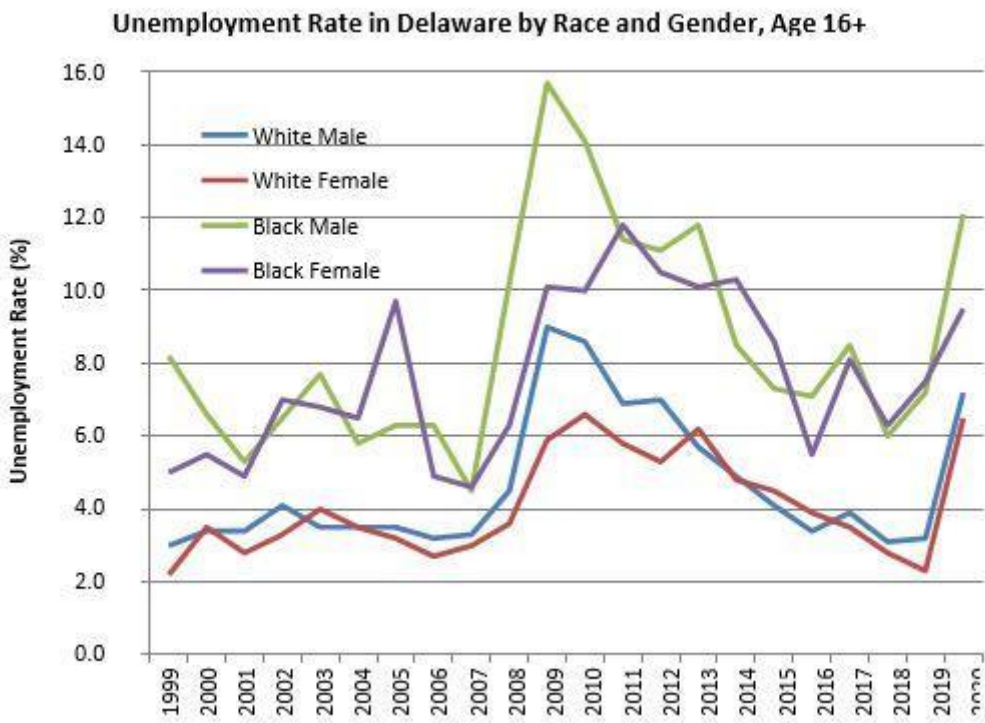
	Unemployment Rate		National Ranking	
	2019	2020	2019	2020
Delaware	3.7	7.8	21(t)	31 (t)
Maryland	3.5	6.8	25(t)	23
New Jersey	3.4	9.8	23(t)	46
Pennsylvania	4.5	9.1	44	43
United States	3.7	8.1		

*Lowest ranking indicates a lower rate. (t) indicates ranking was tied with other state(s).

Unemployment Rate in Delaware by Race and Ethnicity, Age 16+

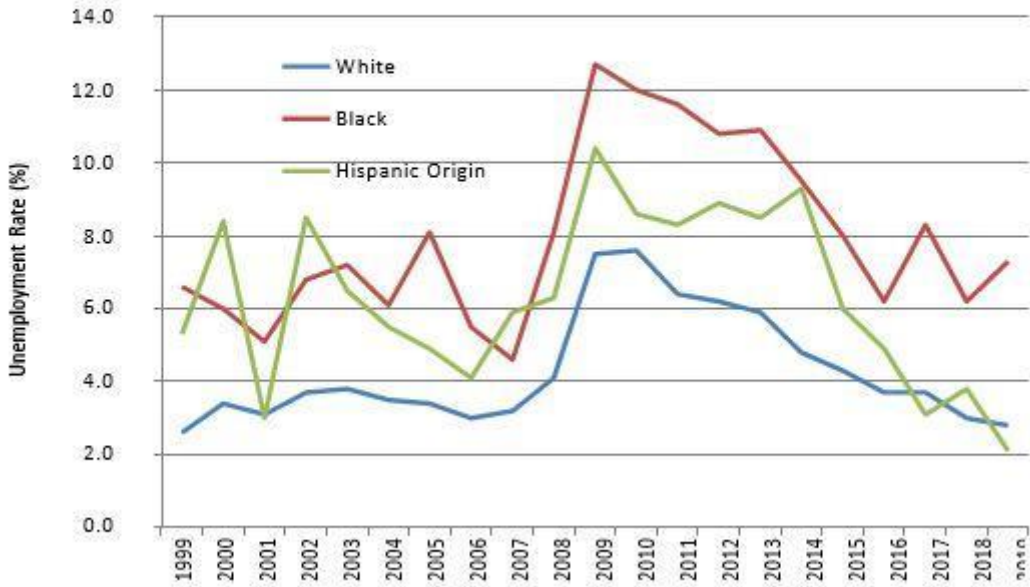
As the national unemployment rate continues to fall, Black and Hispanic unemployment rates remain high relative to white unemployment rates.

The Current Population Survey (CPS), a monthly survey of approximately 60,000 households across the U.S., is the source of the national unemployment rate and a great deal more economic data. In Delaware, about 750 households are in the survey each month. This is too few to generate the state's unemployment rate directly, so the CPS is used as the key component in an econometric model, as in all states. More detailed data, such as the demographic labor force graphs shown below, come directly from the survey. By using annual averages, some of the statistical variation in the data, which would be more evident monthly, is smoothed away.

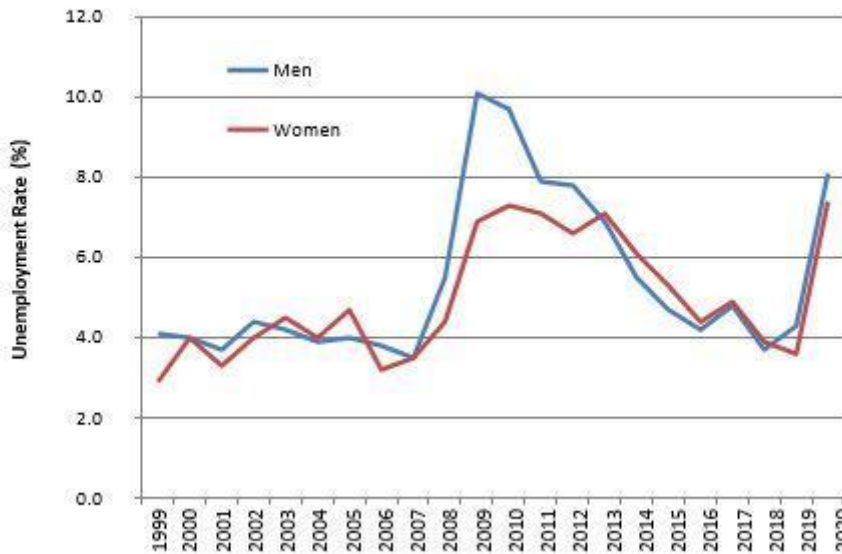


The chart above clearly demonstrates that race and gender matter. Black males and black females have higher employment rates than that of white men and women.

Unemployment Rate in Delaware by Race and Ethnicity, Age 16+



Unemployment Rate in Delaware by Gender, Age 16+



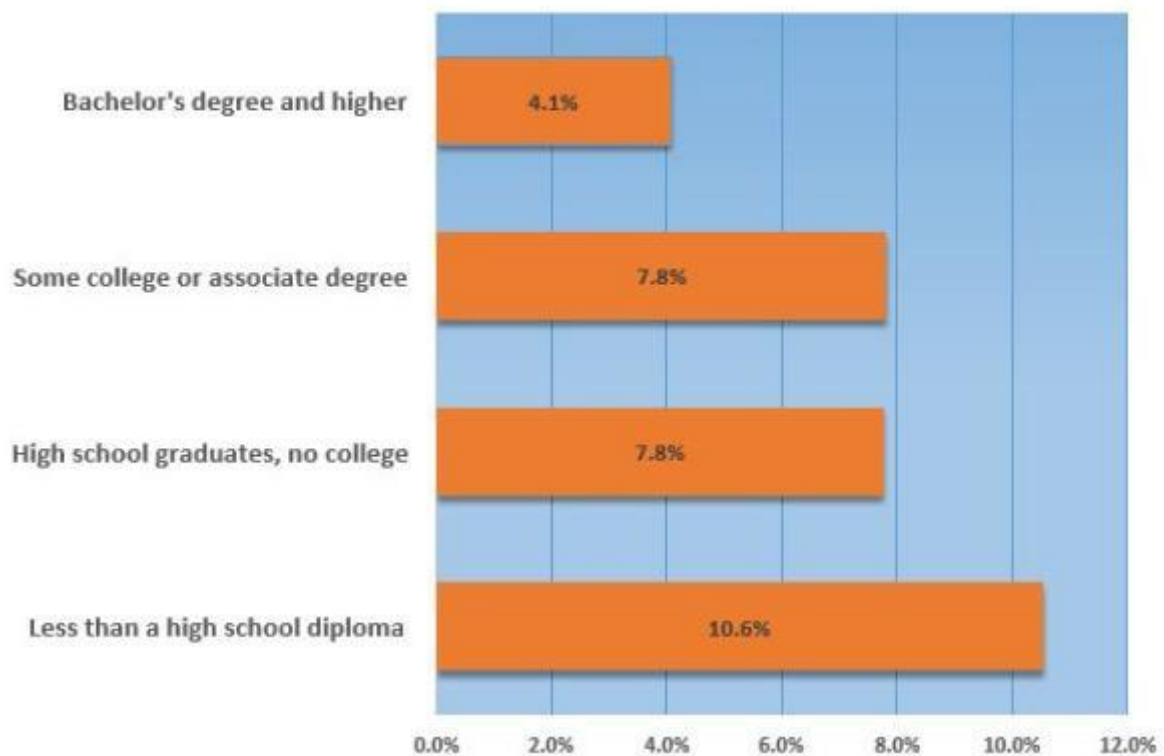
iii. Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

The Unemployment Rate by Educational Attainment

In 2020, Delaware's annual average unemployment rate for all residents was 7.8 percent. In most years the unpublished data from the Current Population Survey on the unemployment rate by educational

attainment shows that those with less education are more likely on average to be unemployed than those with more education. In 2020, the average unemployment rate for those who have less than a high school diploma had the highest rate of unemployment than the other educational categories. The benefits of educational attainment are not only that those with more education are usually less likely to be unemployed, but also that those with more education earn on average higher wages than those with less education. The Delaware Unemployment Rate by Education graph breaks out the unemployment rate by the highest level of education an individual has obtained for persons 25 years of age and older. The average unemployment rate in 2020 for those Delaware residents with less than a high school diploma was 10.6 percent and those with a bachelor’s degree or higher had an unemployment rate of 4.1 percent. The unemployment rate for those with Some college or an Associate’s Degree was 7.8 percent and High School Graduates with no college also had an average unemployment rate of 7.8 percent.

Delaware Unemployment Rate by Education, 2020



Data are for persons 25 and older. Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

In Delaware the average salary for an individual with a high school diploma is \$43,778, compared to a two-year college degree \$52,090, four-year college degree \$89,554, and more than four years \$113,452.

Policy Brief

The landscape of work is evolving. Changes in globalization, automation, technology, and population or migration trends influence the types of job opportunities that are available, the types of skills that are in-demand, and how people perform job functions. By 2026, Delaware will replace half (245,513 jobs) of its existing workforce, with the bulk of jobs being added in middle- and high-skill occupations. Middle-skill occupations require some type of postsecondary education, (e.g., Registered Apprenticeship, certification, or an Associate Degree) and high-skill occupations require a Bachelor’s Degree or higher.

The table represents the top seven (7) industry sectors in Delaware from which the largest growth in job opportunities will occur. The majority of job growth (five of the top seven industry sectors) will occur in

high-skill occupations for which a Bachelor’s Degree is required. The majority of job growth opportunities in the Hospitality and Construction sectors will occur in middle-skill occupations for which language and communication skills are underlying employment characteristics.

Career Cluster	% mid-jobs	% of High Skill Jobs	Employment	Employment	Employment
			2017	Change 2016-26	Growth 2016-26
All Delaware	33%	29%	442,690	28,680	6.10%
Health Science	37%	49%	46,030	6,946	14.60%
Hospitality & Tourism	35%	<5%	57,430	5,822	9.50%
Finance	36%	50%	24,360	3,061	11.10%
Human Services	24%	42%	18,360	2,458	13.90%
Architecture & Construction	52%	10%	25,140	2,035	7.10%
Education & Training	7%	93%	26,410	1,777	6.70%
Information Technology	25%	75%	16,430	1,628	12.20%

iv. Skill Gaps

Skill Gaps Delaware’s Labor Market (source Delaware Department of Labor (DDOL), 2018)

By 2026, 49% of Delaware’s workforce (245,513 jobs) will be replaced. Of which, job growth will account for 6% (28,670 new jobs) and replacements will account for 43% (216,843 jobs). Delaware’s labor market can be organized into three categories of employment: low-, middle-, and high-skill jobs. Low-skill jobs require a high school diploma or less and provide an average wage of \$26,350 per year. Middle-skill jobs require some type of postsecondary education, (e.g., Registered Apprenticeship, certification, or an Associate Degree) and provide an average wage of \$44,960 per year. High-skill jobs require a Bachelor’s Degree or higher and provide an average wage of \$88,510 per year.

Middle- and high-skill employment accounts for 62% of all Delaware jobs and will represent 69% of all projected growth openings through 2026. Employment in middle-skill jobs is consistent in each county across the state and can be accessed through cost-effective education and training programs which are desirable for youth entering the workforce and adults seeking to upskill.

Career Cluster	MS	HS	HW	HD	Employment	Employment	Employment	Avg. Wage 2017
					2017	Change 2016-26	Growth 2016-26	
Health Science	X	X	X	X	46,030	6,946	14.60%	\$70,243
Hospitality & Tourism	X				57,430	5,822	9.50%	\$26,081
Finance	X	X	X	X	24,360	3,061	11.10%	\$76,141
Human Services		X		X	18,360	2,458	13.90%	\$34,826
Architecture & Construction		X	X	X	25,140	2,035	7.10%	\$50,985
Education & Training		X	X	X	26,410	1,777	6.70%	\$59,730

Career Cluster	MS	HS	HW	HD	Employment	Employment	Employment	Avg. Wage
Information Technology		X	X	X	16,430	1,628	12.20%	\$92,568
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	X				34,500	1,153	3.50%	\$37,379
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security	X		X	X	17,620	815	5.20%	\$64,493
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics		X	X	X	7,220	683	9.00%	\$99,755
Marketing	X	X	X	X	51,580	603	1.10%	\$42,679
Government & Public Administration	X	X	X	X	4,940	492	10.70%	\$64,350
Business Management & Administration		X		X	71,710	423	0.60%	\$55,576
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	X				4,070	245	3.60%	\$50,862
Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communications	X	X	X		2,540	-28	-0.80%	\$53,082
Manufacturing	X		X		25,730	-38	-0.10%	\$44,379

Middle-Skill (MS): Occupations requiring some type of postsecondary education (e.g., Registered Apprenticeship, certification, or an Associate Degree) but not a Bachelor’s degree; or High School education with some work experience; or at least one-month on-the-job training; or credential attainment.

High-Skill (HS): Occupations requiring at least a Bachelor’s degree or Associate Degree with either a required Residency/Internship or 5 years of experience.

High-Wage (HW): Occupations paying more than the Delaware all-industry statewide median wage (\$38,850 in 2017).

High-Demand (HD): Occupations with at least four (4) annual job openings due to growth in Delaware.

State & County Job Statistics (source DDOL Wage Projections, 2018)

- 66% of all Delaware jobs are in New Castle County—of which 31% of jobs are high-skill, 32% are middle-skills, and 37% are low-skill;
- 15% of all Delaware jobs are in Kent County—of which 18% of jobs are high-skill, 34% are middle-skill, and 48% are low-skill; and
- 17% of all Delaware jobs are in Sussex County—of which 11% of jobs are high-skill, 35% are middle-skill, and 54% are low-skill (note 2% of all Delaware jobs are multi-county).

Youth Ages 18 to 24, Level of Education for Delaware and Wilmington (source American Community Survey, 2018)

- 52.0% of Delaware youth are prepared for middle- and high-skill jobs;
- 46.0% of Delaware youth who are male are prepared for middle- and high-skill jobs;
- 59.0% of Delaware youth who are female are prepared for middle- and high-skill jobs;
- 37.3% of Wilmington youth are prepared for middle- and high-skill jobs;
- 30.7% of Wilmington youth who are male are prepared for middle- and high-skill jobs; and
- 43.2% of Wilmington youth who are female are prepared for middle- and high-skill jobs.

Adults Aged 25 and Over, Level of Education for Delaware and Wilmington (source American Community Survey, 2018)

- 56.6% of Delaware adults are prepared for middle- and high-skill jobs;
- 55.8% of Delaware adults who are male are prepared for middle- and high-skill jobs;
- 59.5% of Delaware adults who are female are prepared for middle- and high-skill jobs;
- 49.1% of Wilmington adults are prepared for middle- and high-skill jobs;
- 46.2% of Wilmington adults who are male are prepared for middle- and high-skill jobs; and
- 51.6% of Wilmington adults who are female are prepared for middle- and high-skill jobs.

Greater Discussion of skills Gaps. While the popular wisdom says skills gaps abound, Delaware’s Office of Occupation Labor Market Information (OOLMI), recently did an in-depth analysis of the issues, OOLMI concludes: “By disaggregating the unemployment rate by skill level one expected to find those with the most skills benefiting from an increase in vacancies from 2009 to 2012 if there was an excess demand for the most skilled workers caused by a skills gap. However, the most skilled workers had the same movement in the Beveridge curve as those with the least number of skills leading to the conclusion that there is a lack of evidence that there is a skills gap in Delaware. Further investigation of the level of educational attainment to see if the skills of Delaware workers have in fact degraded in recent years revealed the opposite finding, that is, that Delaware’s workforce today has more education than they have had in the past. Disaggregating the unemployment rate by the duration of unemployment has shown that the duration of unemployment does have a differential impact the Beveridge curve. For the short-term unemployed (26 weeks or less), the Beveridge curve did not shift outward away from the origin as it did for the long-term unemployed. For the short- term unemployed, the increase in vacancies is associated with a reduction in the unemployment rate among this group. However, the long-term unemployed did not see the same type of reduction in the unemployment rate as the vacancy rate increases, as had occurred for the short-term unemployed. For the long-term unemployed, as the vacancy rate has increased in recent years, the unemployment rate has been much slower to respond. Disaggregating the unemployment rate by duration of unemployment suggests that the outward shift in the overall Delaware Beveridge curve is caused at least in part by the long-term unemployed.”

2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES

ANALYSIS

Delaware is a single service area.

A. The State’s Workforce Development Activities

Core Program Activities to implement the state’s strategy will be accomplished through the one-stop service delivery system, and the publicly-funded workforce systems will align through the one-stop

service delivery system. The One-Stop system brings together workforce development, educational, and other human resource services in a seamless customer-focused service delivery network that enhances access to the programs' services and improves long-term employment outcomes for individuals receiving assistance. One-stop partners administer separately funded programs as a set of integrated streamlined services to customers. The vision of the One-Stop is to work in alignment and coordination to provide Delaware's workers with the skills, credentials, and support necessary to secure and advance in employment with family-sustaining wages and to provide local employers with the skilled workers the employers need to succeed in a global economy.

Delaware's One-Stop Center services for job seekers include:

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

Delaware's One-Stop Centers offer employers:

- Screening and referral of qualified job candidates.
- Outreach.
- Access to Delawareans on DJL.
- Coordination of job fairs and recruitment events.
- Connection with community service organizations and tax credit opportunities.
- Training for Incumbent Workers.
- Connections to Registered Apprenticeship programs.
- Provision of information regarding the availability of OJT and Customized Training, including referral of employers to sources of funding for worker training.
- Coordination with economic development and other programs that assist business.
- Assistance with layoff aversion.

Delaware's One-Stop Partner Programs and Activities

1. The Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training (DOL-DET) carries out:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Statewide Activities
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Adults & Dislocated Workers
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Wagner-Peyser Act
- Trade Act
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act National Dislocated Worker Grant
- Local Veterans Employment Representative
- Disabled Veterans Outreach Program
- Ticket to Work Program administered by the Social Security Administration established under sec. 1148 of Social Security Act (42 U.S.C 1320b-19)

2. Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation carries out:

- Title I of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act
- The Client Assistance Program (CAP) authorized under sec. 112 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C 732)

3. Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of the Visually Impaired carries out:

- Title I of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act

4 . Delaware Department of Education carries out:

- Adult Education and Literacy Activities authorized under Title II
- Post-Secondary Vocational Education Activities Authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act (20 USC 3201)

Core programs are fully aligned in the one-stop delivery system. Adult Education is nearly fully aligned. Adult education currently operates in three comprehensive DOL sites, but we are located in five DOL sites: Fox Valley, Dover, Chapman Road (formerly Pencader) Hudson Center (supplemental) and Georgetown. Adult Education needs to establish a classroom at the new Chapman Road site (formerly Pencader). Twelve programs are housed in the comprehensive one-stop (WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, Job Corp, Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, Trade Act, Unemployment Insurance, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Job Corp, National Dislocated Worker Grants and Adult Education). The TANF Employment and Training Program and WIOA Youth program are linked electronically. The Division of the Visually Impaired (DVI), Carl Perkins postsecondary education, Older Americans Act, Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), the Criminal Justice Council and programs authorized under the Second Chance Act, and HUD Employment & Training programs have signed memoranda of understanding with the DWDB and the DDL, Division of Employment and Training.

Alignment occurs several ways:

- Memorandum of Understand (MOU) – All partners. Sign an MOU laying out the Rules, Roles, and Responsibilities for each partner
- WIOA Partnership Meetings- To promote cross partner collaboration and resource sharing, state and local county level meetings are held monthly to share information on initiatives and resources and to pose questions for mutual problem resolution.
 - Statewide Leadership Meetings – These meetings occur once a month where workforce activities are aligned, and workgroups are convened to work on systems improvement,
 - County Leadership Meetings. These monthly meetings are foundational to the alignment process because WIOA partners at the staff levels identify systemic challenges and opportunities for improvement. The issues that cannot be solved at the local level are raised to the state meeting for resolution.
 - Executive Committee and Board Meetings. Issues and opportunities needing systemic fixes are raised to the board where state workforce leaders with the necessary organizational gravitas can act. If the issue is larger and needs a long-term fix, the board establishes it as a goal and adds it to its strategic planning.
- Special Projects. The WIOA partners are key participants in special projects designed to improve the states publicly funded workfare system. For example, most workforce partners

participated in business mapping of Phase I of state's process redesign initiative.

- To promote a common understanding between WIOA partners, professional development resources are developed and shared across partner agencies to support front-line staff collaboration and streamlining of client services. (Frontline Staff Survey, Frontline Staff PowerPoint and Client Services PowerPoint)
- To increase re-entry success, WIOA Core Partners present webinars to other partner agencies to increase agency collaboration for successful re-entry of incarcerated individuals. (DOL Bonding, Workplace Opportunity Tax Credit, DVR Opportunity to Prison Education)
- To streamline services, Title II programs amended its Statewide Assessment Policy to include the assessments currently used by DOL and approved by USDOE.
- To comply with WIOA requirements, a new Infrastructure Cost Agreement was developed, and a reconciliation process was developed.
- Strategic Planning. WIOA Partners are full participants at the DWDB annual October planning retreat.
- Delaware Job Link. All customers are enrolled in Delaware JobLink (DJL) when they are determined work-ready, to provide customers with access to the job matching capabilities of the system. This is accomplished either through client registration at the partner site or by the interface/upload of key data elements into DJL from partner systems.
- Delaware has fielded a computer-based referral system called the Delaware **Vocational Portal (VOCAL). This will be Delaware's referral process.**
- **As a result of pandemic conditions, virtual processes were developed to delivery and monitor services.**
 - Use of technology
- WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, & BC:
 - Developed Virtual training for all programs. Created fillable forms and documents for eligibility and options for scanned/electronic document submission.
 - AJC: DET provided virtual and in person services to over 11,000 job seekers, over 1,000 employers and 46 Training Providers. These services range from job posting, job matching to retraining and education.
 - DOL performed virtual monitoring for Blue Collar, One Stop Monitoring, Youth, & Dislocated Worker. The Following Resources were used: MS Teams, Phone, Zoom, DJL website, etc.
 - DOL Vocal development and training for WIOA partners (Online, One Stop) Posted on our WIOA partners website that consisted of a recording of the process and an interpreter.
- Title II enhanced its use of technology to support WIOA services by:
 - Employing virtual learning platforms that learners could access from home or work
 - Surveying learners regarding their needs in relationship to access to adult basic education services and support services needed to persevere in ABE services
 - Providing technology to learners for access to distance learning
 - Initiation of video-conferencing in correctional settings to continue provision of Title II services
 - Providing professional development to administrators and staff in the effective provision of distance learning

- Developing a virtual process to monitor program’s compliance with WIOA requirements and to share program’s initiatives and challenges
- Expanded in person services to align with state health recommendations by convening classes in non-traditional settings, e.g., parking lots
- Increased emphasis on providing support services to support learner participation in WIOA services
- Updated policies to include scan copies of eligibility documentation and to allow for virtual trainings and virtual activities for WEX youth.

For procurement processes for both state and federal contracts, DOL-DET ensures equity and inclusion in applying bonus points to programs that provide service delivery in promise communities. There has also been funding for all women cohorts for non-traditional trainings.

All partners have agreed to:

- Share data across all components to evaluate program and system performance outcomes and identify opportunities for additional collaboration and alignment
- Engage in a regular and consistent communications processes to monitor and recommend workforce development system revisions, as needed, while also identifying and replicating best practices for dissemination.
- Further develop career pathways processes to include supports required for adult learners to complete required courses.
- Survey business and job seeker customers regularly to determine which workforce system services are working well and for which services or processes improvement needs to take place.

Adult Education providers will contextualize academic instruction to increase relevance of instruction and assist customers with development of a career plan as part of their instructional plans. These plans will include researching job market information and developing timelines for attaining further training, as needed.

A process for coordinating the provision of academic skills and enrollment in training programs will be developed, and will include:

- A process for administering and analyzing common assessments across the system for all core providers, to reduce the time spent in assessment. This also provides the opportunity to target academic skills needed for further training or job attainment.
- Job seekers who have not attained a secondary credential or high school diploma will be provided with information on community adult education programs. If they are unable to attain employment after six months due to academic deficits, the adult will be referred to a Title II-funded adult education provider.
- The educational attainment of reentering offenders will be shared with DOL case managers upon consent of the customer.
- A process will be developed for Title II adult education providers’ services, to reduce duplication of services and increase funding for specific skills training programs.

Delaware envisions an aligned education and workforce system that aids youth and adult learners to progress in their careers and supports employers to recruit and train a skilled workforce. Underpinning this effort is an aligned career pathways system that spans the administration of federal and state education and workforce development activities.

Delaware's career pathways system spans the administration of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V), the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). As such, Delaware's career pathway system represents the alignment of education and training programs to in-demand occupations and occupational clusters to help youth and adult learners to advance through higher levels of education and employment. The identification of occupational characteristics, such as middle- and high-skill occupations, high-demand occupations, and high-wage occupations, is coordinated across state agencies and related federal programs to systematically identify critical workforce needs and guide the administration of CTE as part of a statewide career pathways system that is responsive to labor market needs and occupational trends. Career pathway programs connect skill development activities and support services for youth and adult learners, beginning in the public education system through the development and implementation of CTE programs of study, and continuing through adult education, postsecondary education, and other occupational training programs. CTE programs of study provide a structured approach for delivering academic and technical education through an aligned sequence of courses that build through secondary and postsecondary instruction. Students who complete a CTE program of study attain a secondary school diploma or its equivalent and an industry recognized credential, certificate, or license which holds value at the professional and postsecondary level, leads to a registered apprenticeship program, and/or leads to an Associate and Baccalaureate degree program.

Core programming for DVR consumers centers around individualized plans for employment that use Career Pathways, counseling, and assessments, and OOLMI data and business/educational partnerships. This process allows for and supports the goal of all eligible DVR consumers attaining meaningful integrated employment. DVR is working with core partners to develop a single referral process for clients to access multiple support services simultaneously as they work to complete training and employment goals.

DOL Re-entry and Criminal Justice Reform Initiatives

The Delaware Department of Labor is actively engaged along with strategic partners to provide comprehensive employment services to persons who are justice involved. Governor John C. Carney signed Executive Order Number 27 on December 4, 2018, creating the State of Delaware's Correctional Reentry Commission (DCRC).

The core purpose of this initiative is to recognize the State's citizens returning from incarceration face many barriers that often lead them back to criminal activity, such as homelessness, lack of job skills, limited education, mental health issues, substance use disorders, lack of transportation to get to work, and difficulty finding work due to their criminal history and is of paramount interest to the State for the benefit of all its citizens to: improve the transition from correctional custody to communities; increase public safety; reduce recidivism; make better use of resources in correctional facilities; and expand partnerships with communities, nonprofit services providers and reentry advocates, and statewide justice-oriented membership organizations.

The DCRC has several objectives with the following specific to DOL:

- 1.) Oversee implementation and further development of the State's comprehensive strategic reentry initiatives, and ensure that federal, state, and local resources are used most efficiently to reduce duplicative reentry services and ensure alignment with the application of evidence-based approaches.
- 2.) Develop a Memorandum of Understanding between the DOC and the DOE that includes a "distance learning" policy (that does not require internet access) so offenders can benefit from academic and vocational services prior to release in preparation for employment and/or to further their training and education;

- 3.) Renew an enhanced Memorandum of Understanding between the DOC, the DOE, and the DOL for continuation of prison-based services for education and workforce development upon reentry to the community; [Please see Appendix S for the DCRC MOU.](#)
- 4.) Create within the DOL a policy for skills training selection and employment services for clients with criminal justice involvement;
- 5.) Explore ways to incentivize employers to increase employment of those with criminal justice involvement and improve methods to educate employers about existing incentives.
- 6.) Streamline, coordinate, and leverage reentry assets with state agencies (including the Courts, DHSS, DOL, DOE, and DSHA) and with community stakeholders (including victim services agencies, employers, non-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, local reentry coalitions, mentoring organizations, and ex-offender peer support groups).

Several working committees have been developed to support this work including the Employment Committee. DOL Secretary Karryl Hubbard, Co-Chairs the Employment Committee. A n Administrator at DOL serves as Criminal Justice Advisor to inform, plan and assist with the coordination of our programs and initiatives. In addition to the DCRC, the DOL are siting members of the Criminal Justice Council and the Delaware Court Problem Solving Steering Committee.

Other programs include:

Fidelity Bonding Grant

Delaware was one of 23 states awarded the Fidelity Bonding Grant sponsored by the USDOL in the amount of \$100,00 to be spent over the next 4 years. This grant is the first of its kind and equips the DOL to purchase and issue more bonds directly to employers for persons they hire who are justice involved, individuals in recovery from substance use disorders and opioid addictions. Every employer who hires eligible persons may receive a fidelity bond. Fidelity Bonds amounts range from \$5,000 - \$25,000 per person. Other benefits include:

- The Program is free to the employer with no deductible for up to 12 months. It is paid for by the Delaware Department of Labor.
- The Fidelity Insurance Bond is issued by a nationally recognized insurer, The Travelers Insurance Company.
- The bond provides added protection to the employer from breach of trust.
- Eliminates Bonding as an employment barrier for the applicant and employer.

Bonding Certification letters and This Fidelity Bonding Grant spans 48 months. Please see weblink below for more information and Delaware Fact Sheet.

<http://bonds4jobs.com/>

<https://det.delawareworks.com/wotc/>

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a federal tax credit that offers an incentive for private sector businesses to hire individuals in eleven target groups including convicted felons that face significant barriers to employment. Please see the weblink below for additional information and Fact Sheet.

Re-entry Business Services Representative

The Delaware Department of Labor has received a Bureau of Justice Assistance Planning Grant through the Criminal Justice Council to hire a Re-entry Business Services Representative to engage and recruit employers to hire justice involved persons. This is a first for Delaware DOL to have someone who can work directly with the employer community to hire persons who are justice involved. Other core functions shall include but not be limited to:

Work with industry specific associations (labor, private, non-profit, etc.) to educate, develop and/or leverage work councils who will hire justice involved persons.

APEX Pardon and Expungement Program

To help to eliminate barriers to employment and provide comprehensive One -Stop Services, the Apex Program was moved to the Division of Employment and Training in 2021. This program is dedicated to providing direct applicant services and information to individuals with criminal histories by helping them through the pardon or expungement process. Eligible persons are provided one -on-one assistance and guidance through each step of the process to make application. Services are provided statewide and in various community sites including previously as part of the New Castle Community Court Resource Center. The APEX Pardons & Expungement Program provides direct services to justice-involved persons to remove barriers relating to employment, housing, and education.

The state has an MOU with the Administrative Office of the Court (AOC) outlining this partnership. [Please see Appendix S DRCRMOU](#). Please see weblink below for contact detail.

<https://apex.delawareworks.com/>

Jobs for Veterans State Grant-DOL Veterans Employment Team

The JVSG Program is a federally funded by USDOL to local State Workforce Agencies to have personnel that provides specialized services to eligible veterans and eligible persons who may experience significant barriers to employment. This includes criminal justice involvement and or a past felony conviction. At each AJC we have a Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist who provides customized case management to the veteran, eligible spouse or caretaker who are the spouse or family caregiver of a wounded, ill or injured service member receiving treatment at a military treatment facility (MTF) or warrior transition unit (WTU). DVOPs also provide employment readiness services, career advice and support within DOL or through intelligent referral to our diverse partner network, for the aforementioned groups. Also, a Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) works directly with employers to seek and develop employment opportunities for veterans.

For more information on the JVSG program please see the weblink below. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/programs/grants/state/jvsg>

Veterans Treatment Court

To provide direct outreach to Delaware Veterans who are justice involved and or in recovery from substance use disorders and opioid addictions, the DOL DVOP attends scheduled treatment courts sessions statewide. Veterans are offered individual case management and intensive employment services to assist them in re-entering the workforce. For more information on the Delaware Treatment Courts please see weblink below.

<https://courts.delaware.gov/superior/veteranscourt/>

Other one- stop mandatory partners linked into the comprehensive system on a referral basis but not electronically include:

- Senior Community Service Employment Program
 - Employment and Training programs under the Community Service Block Grant
 - Employment and Training Programs carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban development

DOL plans to further support Re-entry Employment Services with designated American Rescue Plan Act funds to provide direct training in the Occupational Career Demand fields and industries to justice involved persons.

State Workforce Development Activities

Delaware’s publicly-funded Workforce System is a demand-drive system that ensures Delaware businesses have adequate workers to meet demands. The First State addresses skills gaps through its Demand Occupation List; career pathways – through Delaware’s Pathways Evolution initiative – that drive adult, dislocated worker, and youth services; and Delaware Job Link, the state’s case management, job seeker and employer matching system. Staff are also equipped to mobilize to provide Adult/Dislocated Worker services and outreach to job seekers unable to come to the American Job Centers.

The Demand Occupation List. As described earlier in the plan and [included in Appendix A, the Demand Occupation List](#) uses an array of data and business input to identify the rank-ordered occupational openings in the state. It is also the basic screening criteria for inclusion of training providers onto the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Simply, training that does not align with the needs of employers is not considered for inclusion to ETPL and is not eligible for Individual Training Account (ITA) or training contract consideration. It is important to note, Delaware’s Demand Occupation list is held in such high regard it is used by the majority of One-Stop Partners as their training list. It is equally important to note the list is also the model included in several Delaware legislative initiatives.

Career Pathways

Adults – Adult workers may have multiple barriers as well large gaps between their current skill set and the skills employers want. Each adult seeking services undergoes several assessments, which include testing, goal counseling, and skills cross-walking. When the assessments are complete, an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) is developed to ensure the adult is either employed based on a match of current skills or sent to training in a demand occupation to fill identified gaps and make the job seeker job ready. **Dislocated Workers** – A satellite office has been established in Newark, Delaware, to provide services to those let go in mass layoffs and/or downsizing. The assessments are similar to those discussed above, with dislocated worker skills relative to employer needs the overarching driver of reemployment activities. The workers who need skill training to fill gaps are enrolled in appropriate programs to assure reemployment.

Basic Skills Deficient Delawareans – Each American Job Center has a dedicated GED and Refresher Class resource. This resource is funded in part by the DWDB. Other funding for this comes from Delaware Adult Basic Education resources as well as money from each of the state’s three counties. When a Delawarean comes to a One-Stop, staff conducts an assessment to determine educational skill level, credentialing, and any remediation needed to facilitate additional skill training.

Youth Pathways Evolution -- Delaware is committed to exposing youth, throughout their school experience, to in-demand employment pathways and to ensuring young people know what is needed to achieve success in a given career. Each Delaware pathway is driven by labor market data and appears on the demand occupation list. The pathways approach is governed by a gubernatorial special committee with the secretaries of Labor, Education, and Economic Development having seats. The president of Delaware’s Community College system chairs the committee, and the DWDB chair also has a seat. It is important to note private business also has representation and also has access to actionable immediate intelligence due to the wide variety of advisory councils imbedded with many members (e.g., DWDB and

Delaware Technical Community College).

Adult Pathways – To ensure the Adult Pathways gets the priority it deserves it has been identified as a strategic goal for this planning period. Delaware’s publicly funded workforce system is also aligning in-demand pathways with its adult and dislocated worker services. To do this, the Demand Occupation List will use the Pathways as its starting point to ensure ITA expenditures and contracted services are aligned with the pathways. The aligning of these approaches will lead Delawareans to mid-wage jobs and family sustaining wages and ensure effective use of resources.

DVR - DVR also works to address skills gaps through its relationships with other agencies, both public and private, that provide services to individuals with disabilities. DVR maintains cooperative agreements with public and private non-profit agencies such as programs that serve individuals with developmental disabilities, individuals with mental health and/or substance abuse disabilities, and community rehabilitation programs. Moreover, DVR works closely with its own providers to mitigate skills gaps and ensure clients meet employer requirements. The pathways initiative includes the DVR client population for in-school students and adult students. Moreover, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has a strong relationship established with the Delaware Department of Education (DOE) and many other transition stakeholders throughout the state.

Delaware Job Link. (DJL). Delaware’s labor exchange is a web-based case management system which connects businesses to qualified talent; jobseekers to jobs and workforce professionals to case management tools. Embedded in DJL is the resume builder and job order system that has intuitive technology to guide users. Delaware’s labor exchange system conducts a skills gap analysis when a client enters his or her resume. The system tells the jobseeker – based on ONET codes – the shortfalls in a resume based on skills needed in a specific career field. This information is used to drive skill development decisions, job search strategies, resume development.

B. The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development

Workforce System Strengths and Weaknesses

The first step in detailing Delaware’s Strengths and weaknesses occurred during 2018 – 2019 during phase I of the DWDB Process Redesign goal. The DWDB and DOL-Det hired the Delaware Manufacturing Extension Partnership (DEMPEP) to conduct a process mapping of the WIOA partners. Each partner participated in a facilitated mapping.

The shortcoming across the partners were:

- Antiquated systems for interface and communication. Heavy dependence on USPS for client communication.
- No shows throughout the process
- Each WIOA partner has their own management and tracking systems
- Process can be frustrating and challenging for customers
- Employee frustration with the process.
- Intake/Screening Requires Documentation. Typically requested from every partner
- < 50% have Documentation.
- Assessments based on program requirements.
- Scheduling is time consuming and inefficient.

- Clients may be eligible, but some waiting lists are long.
- Referrals are made based on Group or Tribal knowledge
- Individual Depth of program knowledge (internal and external) varies.
- For referrals, program information is provided to the client for the client to act on.
- Referral tracking and outcomes data is not available.

The strengths identified and/or verified during the process mapping include:

- Dedicated Staff.
- The “Delaware Way” where just about anyone can contact anyone else to resolve problems.
- A WIOA Partner system that bubbles issues opportunities from the bottom up.
- A Workforce Board that listens to suggestions.
- Annual planning retreat including team members, providers, local governments, and not-for-profits.
- A dedicated board willing to attend board meetings, committee meetings, and volunteer their time for special projects; and to sit on RFP panels. (e.g. DWDB RFP panels; DOE panels).
- A stable of providers who are willing to work on WIOA partner committees.
- Dedicated staff in all divisions and directorates.
- An Eligible Training Provider Lists of such high quality it is used as the “go to” catalogue **of trainers throughout the state system.**
- A system of workforce professional in multiple functional areas (e.g. DOL-DET, DSS, DWDB, DVR, DVI, etc.); and
- Joint planning through all workforce levels (e.g. Delaware’s Combined Workforce Plan; **Perkins V; WIOA team initiatives**).
- Delaware’s “One for All” approach as evidenced by the cross leveling of employment and training, and vocational rehabilitation personnel to assist Unemployment Insurance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Part 2

Delaware was and is well positioned to handle all workforce needs for employers and job seekers in the state. The evolution of the one-stop system to a more integrated comprehensive system is key in this effort. The state has a strong and Employment and Training system with a history of responding to labor market needs. In the recent years DOL played a significant role in the development and expansion of advanced manufacturing training and computer coding initiatives.

In Delaware, there are approximately 75,000 adults over the age of 24. Currently, WIOA-funded programs are serving on average 4,500 adults – 6% of those not possessing a secondary credential.

There is a need for educational services to provide lower skilled Delawareans with “the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with family-sustaining wages” and to provide employers with the skilled workers needed to compete in a global economy.

To address this and other capacity issues, Delaware’s publicly funded system will field and will refine, during the covered period, a centralized One Stop referral system called Delaware Vocational Portal (VOCAL). All partners have access to the new system.

DVR’s capacity to employ workforce development activities is described in detail throughout the VR section of the combined state plan. We expect to have the capacity to serve everyone eligible for VR services.

Title II – Adult and Family Literacy Programs. Prior to Covid 19, there was a need for increased capacity in serving English Language Learners. To address this need we created waiting lists and offered instruction to students as soon as there was an available seat in the classroom. When unemployment is high, there is a need for more ABE instruction, so waiting list process was developed for this also. However, because of Title II’s service delivery transition due to Covid-19, distance learning will be another strategy to work with some ABE and ELL students who won’t be able to access in person instruction due to capacity issues.

Per section 121(d)(9)(A), the Delaware Department of Education coordinates services for student access and equity for those special populations under the Act across state agencies, community stakeholders, and eligible recipients and institutions that support special populations. This includes coordination of various workgroups across the Delaware Department of Education, including the CTE & STEM workgroup, the Higher Education workgroup, the Exceptional Children workgroup, and the Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development workgroup to:

- Align supports and services for students with disabilities, English Learners (EL), foster and homeless youth, and other special populations under the Act;
- Provide and coordinate professional learning opportunities for academic educators, CTE educators, special education staff, school counselors, and EL staff in secondary school programs;
- Promote academic instruction and targeted interventions that reduce the need for remedial education at the postsecondary level; and
- Develop process tools and data models to identify effective programs, coaching, and supports to serve special populations under the Act.

This also includes coordination of various state agencies, including the Delaware Department of Labor— Vocational Rehabilitation Division and the Employment and Training Division as well as the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services—Division of Developmental Disabilities Services and the Division for the Visually Impaired to:

- Align in-school youth programs under WIOA to college and career preparation programs, school counseling programs, and CTE programs of study at the secondary level;
- Align out-of-school youth programs under WIOA to community-based supports, transition supports and services, and CTE programs of study at the postsecondary level;
- Coordinate supports for youth with disabilities across federal and state programs to support preemployment transition services and supports into postsecondary education and employment; and

Coordinate employer engagement and outreach to align work-based learning programs, develop complementary on-boarding services, and discuss labor market research to target in-demand occupations and occupational groupings. Per section 122(d)(4)(C)(vii), the Delaware Department of Education supports secondary recipients and postsecondary institutions to promote youth and adult learner outcomes and the reduction of performance gaps for those defined sub-populations under the Act. Performance of secondary recipients and postsecondary institutions is monitored annually as part of the local funding application process through the eGrants platform and through on-going performance routines.

The local application process ensures that all students are provided with appropriate services and targeted intervention to support their academic and technical skill development within a CTE program of study. On-going performance monitoring routines are conducted every three (3) to five (5) years based on a designed risk analysis. The performance routine includes discussion of student equity and student outcomes in the aggregate, by high school or postsecondary institution campus, and for CTE programs of study aggregated by career cluster. This includes a review of student academic and technical skill development by indicator type and by defined sub-populations under the Act. Findings associated with the performance routine are documented for the LEA or postsecondary institution to address. Additional support is then made available through a tiered engagement model.

It is important to note, so the recent COVID-19 crisis did identify an area for improvement as the Unemployment Insurance (UI) system was quickly overwhelmed. However, Delaware did what it always does and asked volunteers from other divisions, within the Department of Labor to chip processing claims. We assume additional enhancements to the UI system will be a priority, but at this writing we don't know what those might be.

b. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

Delaware Governor John Carney and the Delaware Workforce Development Board (DWDB) envision an integrated workforce system, which brings together diverse partners ensuring all Delawareans have access to a publicly funded workforce system that promotes, prepares, and connects workers with jobs, training, education, and other resources, which provide Delaware employers with the workers needed to ensure financial independence. Gov. Carney sees the process spanning the entire life of a workforce participant. Developmental years focus on four specific skillsets: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) skills; Thinking Skills; Workplace Skills; and Citizenship Skills. Students, benefiting from anticipated improvement in graduation rates, move to post-secondary education and/or training via several tracks including, but not limited to, Delaware's University system, Delaware's Technical and Community College System, and other professional or trades training programs. Adults will continue to hone their skills throughout a lifetime of learning.

Governor Carney determined Delaware will continue to operate as a single service delivery area, with the State Board acting as both a state and local board, in accordance with WIOA.

A single delivery system enables the Governor and Board to build on the successes of the past several years by reinforcing existing relationships among core partners, extended partners, and one-stop partners. This is an essential task, as leaders outside the publicly funded workforce system provide a wealth of knowledge, access, and resources which expand opportunities under limited governmental resources.

The operational vision and overarching goal are to provide a comprehensive integrated system of

employment & training services and develop a cohesive and unified workforce system brand for all Delawareans (individuals and businesses).

For Job Seekers:

- The system will be universally accessible and will include a blend of services varying from self-directed, to group sessions, to intensive one-on-one case management. For example, Delaware JobLink (DJL) services can be accessed via a personal computer on the internet through intensive case managed services provided by a TANF Welfare to Work staff member.
- As part of a single delivery one-stop system, a jobseeker can enter the system at any point and receive the same assessment and services that are most appropriate for them.
- It is characterized by a single portal (DJL), connecting business to qualified individuals. DJL has state of the art technology that includes a smart resume builder and job order system that ensures an accurate job seeker – job order match.
- DET is working on developing Delaware VOCAL (DE VOCAL) that will serve and expand services to jobseekers of all skill levels and will allow for a more efficient referral system for DOL’s WIOA partners. Incorporated in the portal are features such as messaging, chat and calendar scheduling.

For Business Customers the system will meet the needs of employers by:

- Mapping the current state of business services and identifying their needs.
- Developing a statewide unified business service model to coordinate outreach and solutions across WIAO partners and agencies.
- Gaining input from businesses and employers that will drive the development of customized business strategies and products.
- Providing staff-assisted services and outreach as necessary.
- Providing a self-service site to view the full array of services and access to them.
- Sharing resources among partners, thereby limiting duplication in services for businesses.
- Developing a common business outreach framework so that businesses experience a more singular point of contact.

The Workforce Development Board will continue to use demand occupational data from the state’s Office of Occupational and Labor Market Information (OOLMI), the DWDB’s private industry members, intelligence from the Delaware Prosperity Partnership (DPP); and information gathered through the Delaware Department of Labor’s, Division of Employment and Training (DOL–DET) outreach efforts of its Business Services Unit to develop and constantly refine the demand occupations list. This list is the primary source for approving and developing training programs. This integrated approach mirrors the cross-agency and cross-divisional cooperation the Governor expects from all partners in the workforce system.

Priorities. The DWDB, at its annual strategic planning retreat on October 8, 2019, established these goals/priorities for the next four years: It is important to note, Delaware established these goals after conducting a thorough review of those created for the state’s 2018 plan. The 2018 goals were:

- Resource Alignment and Expansion

- Cultural Transformation
- Process Redesign
- Pathways Evolution.
- Prison Re-entry

Delaware made important and dramatic strides completing the 2016 goals. The board determined it made sense to continue three of goals, with a slightly different focus and add two more.

a. Resource Alignment. This is initially the DWDB main effort. The Financial Oversight Committee and the DWDB executive director will lead this effort. This goal ensures the DWDB funds projects, training, and innovative programs with funds from multiple sources. To clarify, the DWDB is looking for workforce partners from multiple agencies, to combine funds to achieve goals. Whenever possible, the DWDB will look beyond WIOA Dislocated Worker, WIOA Adult, WIOA Youth, and Delaware Blue Collar funds to finance activities in the public workforce system. This is a reworking of the 2106 goal.

b. Pathways with An Expansion to Adult Pathways. This is a continuation and expansion of the goal from the previous four-year plan. The DWDB intends to continue weighting this initiative by assigning bonus points for contracts and aligning the demand occupation list with this goal. The DWDB is expanding this goal to include adult pathways (often called Career Lattices). The board envisions this goal being managed by the One Stop Operator with input and staff action at the WIOA leadership team level and the WIOA County teams.

c. Wilmington Youth Initiative. The Wilmington Youth Initiative Committee is a Delaware Workforce Development Board initiative to develop policies and processes to mitigate youth gun violence through workforce development initiatives and wrap around services for Wilmington youth in the city’s most dangerous areas. A Centers for Disease control report was published on November 3, 2015 entitled Elevated Rates of Urban Firearm Violence and Opportunities for Prevention—Wilmington, Delaware. This report available at appendix J said one of the contributing factors to youth gun violence was high levels of unemployment of youths and adults. The DWDB commissioned a study “Advancing Wilmington Through the Workforce” This report is available at appendix K. The DWDB will conduct several pilots upgrade case management and wrap around service to determine process that may be used statewide to influence gun violence and/or youth services.

<https://wib.delawareworks.com/documents/20200224/cdcfinalreport.pdf>

d. Process Redesign. This is a continuation of the process redesign goal from the previous four-year plan. This goal includes executing the action plan developed by the DEMEP mapping process. The initial effort in this goal is the development of a robust referral system characterized by Delaware’s VOCAL initiative and research into developing an Artificial Intelligence (AI) referral system. Delaware will extend the process redesign goal to include a detailed mapping of business in order to improve employer participation in the publicly funded workforce system

e. Re-Entry. The DWDB recognizes returning citizens are a workforce pool, which may need expanded workforce services to achieve employment which offers unsubsidized employment which ensures a living wage and ultimately mitigates recidivism.

The board understands that its strength lies in the ability to establish an appropriate vision, convene the right partners, and broker a comprehensive set of solutions for business and job seekers. As such, the board seeks to take a more active role with the following:

1. Increase employer engagement.
 - a. Implement a strategic business engagement program to manage Delaware’s workforce

- deficit, establish precedents to connect training providers with employers and growth verticals, and build sector partnerships.
- b. Conduct a comprehensive data and business research analysis.
- 2. Promote resource alignment and accountability among agencies and service providers.
 - a. Increase investments with providers that have strong outcomes tied to jobs.
 - b. Establish best practices to match providers with job opportunities.
- 3. Strengthen leadership role as the state’s workforce voice.
 - a. Position the board as the state’s clearinghouse for all state workforce initiatives.
 - b. Expand board membership and committee activity

Assessment. Delaware will assess its workforce system using a complementary set of quantitative and qualitative tools. The State performance accountability system will focus on the six required WIOA common measures as applicable to each core program. Additional goals beyond the six are not planned at this time. As Delaware consists of a single statewide workforce investment area, State performance levels are established to promote accountability while supporting the Governor’s desire to assure that Delaware’s employment and training system is open to the hardest to serve adults and youth with special needs and barriers to employment. In setting Delaware’s performance levels, the DWDB will consider the U.S. DOL Statistical Model, labor market conditions, past state performance trends, past national average performance trends, U.S. DOL Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) goals, continuous improvement expectations, effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the U.S. DOL Youth Vision. In setting performance levels, the State’s goals reflect an expectation of improved performance and an effort to support the U.S. DOL in achieving the GPRA goals, however, due to mass layoffs that continue to occur, coupled with the Governor’s commitment to continue to target the hardest to serve, some goals may be lower than the GPRA levels. The state will assess the actual need for adult education services via an analysis of unemployment rates for:

- Part time vs. full time jobs;
- Family sustaining wages;
- • Job placements in areas of provided training;
- • Long term job areas;
- • Increasing education attainment level of adult workers;
- • Use of career pathways by lower skilled workers;
- • Provider performance target attainment; and
- • Client satisfaction surveys In addition the state will delve deeper into its data to determine the characteristics of those workers unable to access employment while receiving unemployment insurance and become part of the “out of the labor market” cohort.

The state will also assess its publicly funded system looking at the two key stakeholders: Businesses and Job Seekers. The effectiveness of Businesses Customer Services will be evaluated as follows:

- Customer Service Surveys
- Increase of the number of employers utilizing Delaware JobLink (Saturation)
- Focus group feedback
- The effectiveness of services to job seekers is the evaluation of the One–Stop system. This is the delivery system for all customers, but in particular the job seeker: We will evaluate success serving the job seeker by:
 - Customer Service Surveys
 - Success in Seamless Referrals – This refers to the number of individuals that are referred to partner services who actually receive services. This refers primarily to referrals linking affiliated sites or partner programs with the One–Stop. It is thought that outside the One-Stops, in affiliated sites and partner programs little success in referral has been occurring.
 - Implementation Surveys – This refers to the evaluation of operational changes. Among these will be the referral system and the seamless enrollment of core partner customers in Delaware Job

Link. Added by a continuous feedback loop during implementation, a final assessment survey will be completed

- DOL-DET is working with outside contractors to conduct surveys and gather information to determine what and how to address barriers that impact low wage workers from connecting to living wage job.
- Core Partners meeting federal performance measures – Federal Reports
- Other Evaluations as necessary

The DOL-DET Contract Management and Monitoring unit will be lead in compiling program performance data for interim reporting purposes. This unit will report directly to the Delaware Workforce Development Board (DWDB) on contracts managed by DOL-DET and other programs housed in DOL-DET. In the case of core partners, this unit will be responsible to collecting from the partner's information to be reported to the DWDB. The Core Partners not housed in DOL-DET will report directly to the Board. The DWDB will schedule these presentations as part of its quarterly meetings schedule.

Delaware's workforce system will use the information gathered through the above-mentioned methodologies to reinforce successful activities and adjust less successful one via our robust information sharing practices. Partners develop midcourse corrections and report results at DWDB quarterly board and committee meetings, quarterly goal champion meetings, and monthly partner meetings.

Assessment will also be facilitated with a "dashboard graphic" system, which highlights trends, funds expenditures, and select data points such as interagency referrals and customer surveys.

DWDB quarterly board and committee meetings, quarterly goal champion meetings, and monthly partner meetings.

Assessment will also be facilitated with a "dashboard graphic" system, which highlights trends, funds expenditures, and select data points such as interagency referrals and customer surveys.

c. STATE STRATEGY

The DWDB, at its annual strategic planning retreat on October 8, 2019, established these goals/priorities for the next four years. It is important to note, Delaware established these goals after conducting a thorough review of those created for the state's 2016 plan.

- Resource Alignment
- Pathways with an Expansion to Adult Pathways
- Wilmington Youth Initiative
- Process Redesign
- Re-Entry

The Board will continue meeting with outside agencies and develop as needed ad hoc workgroups to address acute opportunities. The Board will continue its practice of biennial strategic planning to ensure alignment with state needs ranging from youth services to adult and dislocated workers programs, to the integration of diverse resources. The DWDB will assign goal champions from the Core Partners and other community resources. The Board chooses to establish command and control through its quarterly board meetings and monthly goal champion meetings where responsible parties review accomplishments and make mid-course corrections. The board intends to execute its vision through a dynamic and integrated One-Stop system exploiting opportunities through a robust multi-partner referral system, which serves multiple populations (e.g., including those requiring vocational

rehabilitative services, veterans, and justice involved persons).

Operational update: DWDB engaged the services of Theories in Practice (TIP) Strategies in September of 2020 to help create a strategic framework for a 5-year goal and investment approach as well as short-term priorities for a two-year period. TIP is a 25-year-old economic development and workforce development strategic planning firm. The strategic framework was a five-month project with a series of different phases, starting with the foundation phase. The foundation phase was to learn as much as possible about workforce development within Delaware. The second phase was to work closely with the DWDB to build a strategic operating framework to help guide investments and programs over the next 24 to 36 months. And finally concluded with technical assistance on how to implement and execute the framework. The framework was developed through surveys and interviews with workforce stakeholders, alongside three board retreats. The vision for this framework was to have the DWDB provide leadership and resources to develop a skilled workforce responsive to the evolving needs of business and communities. The framework and goals were outlined prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and was temporarily put on hold while Delaware responded to the immediate needs of our community.

DWDB 5-Year Goals as Identified by TIP Strategies:

Goal 1: Move Delaware residents towards economic self-sufficiency.

Goal 2: Support the workforce needs and competitiveness of industries that fuel Delaware's economy.

Goal 3: Build a responsive and agile workforce system statewide and locally.

Program and Service Priorities for 2021-2022 as Identified by TIP Strategies:

1. Promote greater alignment of Individual Training Account (ITA) and cohort training to self-sufficiency outcomes and critical industries.
2. Continue support of Wilmington Youth Initiative and justice-involved initiatives, expanding the system's capacity to share resources, strategies, and roles across multiple service providers.
3. Address the needs of those most impacted by COVID-19 pandemic, especially women displaced from the workforce.
4. Enhance the ability to assess changing job skill and occupations.
5. Develop an employer engagement strategy and implementation plan.
6. Rollout employer engagement strategy to a selected number of critical industries.
7. Pilot industry-led cohort training to upskill workers.
8. Enhance board capacity to lead workforce system.
9. Define a set of program and system outcomes measures and evaluation process.
10. Continue to move toward an integrated and coordinated workforce system for Delaware.

The new outlined goals recommended by TIP Strategies needed to have a seamless integration with the four-year goals as they appear in [Delaware PYs 2020-2023 | WIOA State Plan Portal \(ed.gov\)](#):

- **Resource Alignment.** This goal ensures the DWDB funds projects, training, and innovative programs with resources from multiple sources. To clarify, the DWDB is looks for workforce partners from multiple agencies, to combine funds to achieve goals. Whenever possible, the DWDB will look beyond WIOA Dislocated Worker, WIOA Adult, WIOA Youth, and Delaware Blue Collar funds to finance activities in the public workforce system.
- **Pathways with An Expansion to Adult Pathways.** This is a continuation and expansion of the goal from the previous four-year plan. The DWDB will weigh consider this goal and assign bonus points to providers that align the demand occupation with their programs. The DWDB is expanding this goal to include adult pathways (often called Career Lattices). While there are sure to be more initiatives; the DWDB embraces a policy that provides an additional ITA, if available,

for clients who have completed an ITA training program and demonstrated success in the industry in which they were trained.

- **Wilmington Youth Initiative.** The Wilmington Youth Initiative is a Delaware Workforce Development Board initiative established to develop policies and to mitigate youth gun violence through workforce development and wrap around services for Wilmington youth in the city's most dangerous areas.
- **Process Redesign.** This is a continuation of the process redesign goal from the previous four-year plan. This goal includes executing the action plan developed by the Delaware Manufacturing Extensions Partnership (DEMEP) mapping process. The initial effort in this goal is the development of a robust referral system characterized by Delaware's VOCAL initiative and research into developing a "Stitch Fix" Artificial Intelligence (AI) referral system. Process redesign is a long-range project including a mapping of business services.
- **Re-Entry.** The DWDB recognizes returning citizens are a workforce pool, which may need expanded workforce services to achieve employment that offers unsubsidized employment to ensure a living wage and ultimately mitigate recidivism.

The board understands that its strength lies in the ability to establish an appropriate vision, convene the right partners, and broker a comprehensive set of solutions for business and job seekers. As such, the board seeks to take a more active role with the following:

1. Increase employer engagement and support.
2. Promote resource alignment and accountability among agencies and service providers.
3. Strengthen leadership role as the state's workforce voice.

In the spring/summer 2021 it was apparent that the board structure and support would be the top priority. With the retirement of both the Board Chair and Executive Director, it was necessary to work with the Governor's office to develop a succession plan for board/staff leadership and filling immediate vacancies on the board. The Chair and the Executive Director will ensure that the appointments to the board are aligned with the state's critical industries, especially those targeted by DPP.

In addition to the board structure, DWDB developed new committees to direct the work towards the recommended goals. The new committees include:

Youth Committee

The Youth Committee works with our school systems and program providers on how to build the workforce of the future. The committee will provide recommendations on life skills training, expanding work-based learning opportunities, career exploration and exposure, credential attainment, completion of high school or GED program, and making sure our graduating seniors are college and/or career ready. This committee would continue to monitor the Wilmington Youth Initiative.

Adult Dislocated Worker Committee

The Adult Dislocated Worker Committee focus on high-demand occupation programs that train or strengthen skills of Delaware's adult and dislocated workers, particularly in essential career tracts. It will work with providers to identify customized job training programs centered on data determined needs. In addition, this committee will investigate opportunities for businesses to "grow their own" training programs. Our priority will be to invest in businesses that provide training for current lower-level employees so they can advance within their company. This committee would continue the work of the Pathways with Expansion to Adult Pathways and Re-Entry.

Business Engagement Committee

The Business Engagement Committee ensures that the DWDB’s funding priorities are aligned with Delaware’s most current workforce skills needs, as indicated by the state’s business stakeholders. This committee also works to help close the skills gap experienced by employers.

Strategic Planning Committee

Strategic Planning Committee guides the DWDB’s achievement of its overarching goals, objectives, priorities, and activities. It will track the progress and support the Board and its committees in the development of metrics establishing, data collection, and data reporting criteria. This committee would continue to evaluate Process Redesign and Resource Alignment.

The strategy begins with every customer of a One–Stop partner being registered in Delaware JobLink when they are determined work ready.

Delaware has taken the lead, since 2011, in partnership with America’s Job Link Alliance (AJLA), in the development and implementation of several products that will greatly assist in implementing sector strategies and particularly career pathways. Three of these products are:

- Resume Builder – This product builds a resume for the job seeker by enabling them to identify their Talents, Tools and work activities (TT&WA) based on the information located in O’Net. This product begins with the customer entering a “lay title” for the job they want and enables them to code their work experiences and education with the appropriate TT&WA customer resumes that leads to an accurate job order – resume match.
- Intelligent Job Order – This product builds a business’s job order for an employment opening identifying the desired TT&WA based on the information located in O’Net. This product enables businesses to build job orders using the same wording as customer resumes.
- Adult Career Pathways (ACP) is not a reinvention of the Pathways system, it is a widening of the perspective to provide adults with a robust and useful system that will afford them the opportunity to gain skills and advance within the workplace. It is an enhancement on the current process that will identify and remediate gaps in services/supports/funding that adults need to attain a “family sustaining wage.” ACP are developed with an adult’s experiences and responsibilities in mind and are designed to aid adult learners in moving along a continuum from unemployment to employment or from underemployment to better employment in their current profession or in a different industry. This is accomplished by providing “on and off ramps” to progressively more advanced training and employment opportunities coupled with the support services and literacy skills needed to ensure success (Cord, 2013). ACP will address the following populations that may not be able to access pathways in their current design.
 - Dislocated Workers
 - Unemployed Adults
 - Underemployed Adults
 - Adults engaged with VR services
 - Adults who were high school dropouts
 - Adult high school completers who did not pursue further education and training at the time of their graduation
 - College non completers
 - Low skilled adults (those without a secondary credential)
 - Returning veterans who entered the military after high school
 - Immigrants
 - Reentering Individuals who are no longer in prison
 - Adults who need to retool in order to change careers or advance within a career field
 - Other underrepresented populations

In February 2021 DOL-DET implemented the NextGen conversion which resulted in many new features. DJL now has a more modern and enhanced look and is more user-friendly. One-Stop staff and

other users have the ability to upload a pdf version of resumes and there is an enhanced job search displaying details of jobs and requirements.

DOL-DET also implemented the Tableau reporting system for staff users to more easily pull data. Features of the Tableau Reporting System allow reports to be downloaded and exported in different formats. There are active filters and sorting in live reports in Tableau. New interactive Dashboards are being built that show visualizations of up-to-date data. Staff has the ability to click a link on client details and get directed to DJL account details or job postings. These features make it easier to connect job seekers and jobs.

DOL-DET is working with our vendor, AJLA, to enhance DJL for our Career Grant. We have allocated \$2,000,000 for enhancements from this grant. Enhancements include – virtual job fair, virtual scheduler, chat feature, automatic capture of services, and AI to suggest services.

DOL-DET also works closely with our partners and other divisions and beginning to use the Partner Provided Services function in DJL to track services. And finally, DOL-DET utilizes VOCAL chat feature to service clients. VOCAL is the online “one-stop shop” for re-employment information and assistance. [Delaware VOCAL](#) is utilized to support Delawareans' re-employment or career exploration journey. Goals can be achieved by:

- Using single-identity sign-on
- Registration process quick and easy
- Displaying jobs and education opportunities on the home page
- Connecting individuals to personal assistance from career counselors
- Organizing appointments

1. Describe the strategies the State will implement, including sector strategies and career pathways, as required by WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D).

Delaware embraces sector strategies through its commitment to the Pathways initiative. Current pathway sectors include:

- Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources (AgriScience)
- Architecture & Construction
- Arts, A/V Technology & Communications
- Business Management & Administration
- Education & Training
- Finance
- Government & Public Administration
- Health Sciences
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Human Services
- Information Technology
- Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security
- Manufacturing
- Marketing
- Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM)
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics
- Manufacturing Logistics Technician

Delaware is on the leading edge of career pathways evolution. The DWDB members seek to ensure that the pathways initiative is the alignment point for the publicly funded workforce system. The DWDB membership is committed to the following actions:

1. Ensure the Delaware career pathways system supports in-school youth, out of school youth, and adult learners
 - a. Ensure all youth are successful and have robust education, and understanding of career goals beyond high school with clear on-ramps
 - b. Coordinate activities that support ISY and OSY across the career pathways system
 - c. Align secondary, postsecondary, and adult programs across the career pathways/career pathways system
 - d. Focus education and workforce funding to middle- and high-skill occupations in key industry sectors
 - e. Ensure adults are successful and have on-ramps to the state career pathways/pathways system
2. Coordinate employer engagement activities
 - a. Strengthen employer engagement and ownership of work-based learning as well as outreach
 - b. Establish convening routines to expand employer engagement and build regionalized supports
 - c. Expansion of postsecondary education programs in key industry sectors
 - d. Establish sector partnerships
3. Integrate education and workforce development efforts across DE's career pathways **systems**
 - a. Establish policies and procedures that reinforce a statewide career pathways system
 - b. Develop a brand campaign for Delaware's career pathways/lattices
 - c. Coordinate public and private funding
 - d. Coordinate the collection of labor market information and industry skills analyses/research
 - e. Expand career counseling
4. Develop a model of shared accountability across DE's career pathways system
 - a. Develop common performance measures across DE's career pathways system
 - b. Develop a statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS) and governing body
 - c. Validate and capture certificate and licensure data
 - d. Report employment and wage outcomes across the career pathways system
 - e. Establish a sustainable funding method to start and sustain the SLDS

Registered Apprenticeships are offered in a variety of occupations. Most Registered Apprenticeships are four years in length or 8,000 hours of on-the-job training. For each year of training, a minimum of 144 hours of related instruction is required. Upon completion of the required on-the-job training and related instruction, the Registered Apprentice is eligible for Journeyman papers. A journeyman is nationally recognized as having a well-rounded ability in all aspects of his/her trade. Top five occupations for apprenticeships in Delaware:

- Electrician
- Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters
- HVAC

- Sheet Metal Workers
- Construction Laborers

Adult Education instruction will be geared towards the development of career goals over the short and long term. Each learner will develop his/her own learning plan based on individualized career goals. Instruction will address demand occupations identified as most in need of workers currently. Instruction will focus on increasing skills – academic, job readiness and workplace – essential to access and advancement within the Delaware job market. However, learning will also be personalized with the creation of a unique career plan leading to employment with family sustaining wages. The career plan will include a skills profile, career inventory, and investigation of Delaware specific career pathways and O-Net Online career ladders.

Recently Delaware IT Council was created to build and expand an inclusive tech talent pipeline, create a strong tech ecosystem, and strengthen Delaware’s position and perception as a tech hub. This council is building a community of employers and training providers focused on making Delaware a national leader in developing and hiring IT talent. The DWDB hopes to use this successful model to create additional sector partnerships. The Business Engagement Committee is looking at the growth industries in Delaware and will recommend what industry sector partnership will be the next to create.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

a. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

1. STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS

The Delaware Workforce Development Board (DWDB) is the governor’s workforce board reconstituted on February 2020 with the issuing of Gov. John Carney’s Executive Order #36. The board uses a committee system which currently has an Executive Committee and six additional working committees, which meet quarterly to review core partner performance; approve training programs; develop, review, and administer budgets; review workforce system performance; provide guidance to all core programs and One-Stop delivery system partners; and initiate mid-course corrections as needed.

The Board is governed by the Executive Committee comprised of Board members who are officers of the Board, chairpersons of all standing committees, and include the Delaware Secretaries of Labor, Education, and Health and Social Services, and the Chief Executive Officer of the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce.

The Board Chair serves as Chair of the Executive Committee.

The majority of DWDB members shall be from the private sector, and the Board Chair shall appoint the undesignated members. DWDB membership shall not exceed 53 voting members.

Following are the seven workgroups of the DWDB and their main functions. These work groups serve at the pleasure of the chair:

- Executive Committee: Provides governance, leadership and direction. Approves and negotiates federally mandated performance measures. Works with fiscal agent (U.S. Department of Labor) to oversee financial matters (i.e., funding allocations, budget, training provider cost issues, etc.).
- Strategic Planning Committee: Guides the DWDB’s achievement of its overarching goals, objectives, priorities, and activities. Track the progress and supports the Board and its committees in the development of metrics establishing, data collection, and data reporting criteria.

- Performance Measures Committee: Monitors local and State performance indicators. Negotiates performance levels for annual reporting to the U. S. Department of Labor.
- Proposal Review & Certification Committee: Certifies and monitors the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and Individual Training Account (ITA) voucher system. Implements the funding guidelines and assists in the development of criteria for awarding Contract Services for Blue Collar Training Funds. Serves as lead in the Request for Proposal (RFP) process.
- Business Engagement Committee: Ensures that the DWDB's funding priorities are aligned with Delaware's most current workforce skills needs, as indicated by the state's business stakeholders. This committee also works to help close the skills gap experienced by employers.
- Youth Committee: Develops a youth vision for the State. Oversees the delivery of youth services for the neediest and at-risk youth, including both in-school youth and out-of-school youth. The Youth Committee works with our school systems and program providers on how to build the workforce of the future. The committee provides recommendations on life skills training, expanding work-based learning opportunities, career exploration and exposure, credential attainment, completion of high school or GED program, and making sure our graduating seniors are college and/or career ready.
- Adult Dislocated Worker Committee: Focuses on high-demand occupation programs that train and/or strengthen skills of Delaware's adult and dislocated workers, particularly in essential career tracts. This committee works with providers to identify customized job training programs centered on data determined needs. In addition, this committee investigates opportunities for businesses to "grow their own" training programs. The priority is to invest in businesses that provide training for current lower-level employees so they can advance within their company.

Committees are advisory to the Delaware Workforce Development Board. The Committees will provide information, advice, and recommendations to advance DWDB's mission.

Each committee will consist of members of the DWDB, and additional industry or subject matter experts not considered full DWDB board members. Committee Chairs and members are appointed by the Chair. Each committee will be assigned a staff member via the DWDB Executive Director to act as an advisory member.

Advisory members consist of Delaware Department of Labor, Employment and Training, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, WIOA Leadership, and DWDB staff. Advisory members are non-voting members and will be invited to participate in committee work at the discretion of the committee.

The work of each committee shall include the following:

1. Provide recommendations to the Executive Committee or full Board on how to support programs and initiatives that align with DWDB's mission.
2. Provide information and assist with operational and other issues relating to their area.
3. Set goals.
4. Review the strategic plan provided by the Strategic Planning Committee.
5. Identify innovative and new ideas for potential investment.
6. Review the DWDB Operational Framework document periodically and identify open items, ongoing projects and share time frames.
7. Review in detail staff's recommendation for action and relevant issues.
8. Assist the board in carrying out activities.
9. Identify technology to streamline workforce efforts.
10. Investigate and identify data tracking systems to measure success.
11. Embrace a streamlined dashboard to measure data and results.

Committee recommendations cannot be implemented and are not authorized until the Board has given its approval.

The committees are not authorized to act on behalf of the Board, but are authorized to conduct the following activities:

1. Gather information, consider all matters within the committee's scope of work, and provide information, advice, and recommendations to the Board.
2. Communicate the workforce development priorities of the Board to stakeholders or community members.
3. Engage in outreach efforts to advance the mission of the Board.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

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

Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy. Implementation will be accomplished through the one-stop service delivery system, and the publicly-funded workforce systems will align through the one-stop service delivery system.

1. The Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training (DOL-DET) carries out:
 - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Statewide Activities
 - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth
 - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Adults & Dislocated Workers
 - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Wagner-Peyser Act
 - Trade Act
 - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act National Dislocated Worker Grant
 - Local Veterans Employment Representative
 - Disabled Veterans Outreach Program
 - Ticket to Work Program administered by the Social Security Administration established under sec. 1148 of Social Security Act (42 U.S.C 1320b-19)

DOL-DET will:

- Provide an electronic system (DJL) that will enable employers and jobseekers to make informed employment and training choices leading to employment. DJL is the state's labor exchange system which enables customers to register for career services, create and post resumes, create and post job orders, conduct job search and candidate search, access to labor market and training information. DJL also enables job matches (automated) and job referrals (staff facilitated).
- Provide a central electronic location for Partner program information and schedule of services, if applicable.
- Provide a central referral mechanism between Partner programs.
- Assist Partner Programs with reporting on all common performance measures specified in the final Delaware Combined Plan/WIOA Law, Regulations, and guidance.
- Make available all career service products developed. This includes providing training on products to Partner programs to enable Partner program staff to deliver DOL/DET products in a consistent manner.
- Provide Career and Training services described in WIOA Sec. 134 (c)(2)-(3).
- Look for funding opportunities for joint projects.
- Make eligible for an Individual Training Account any customer interested in continuing training who completes their secondary credential through WIOA Title II programs, contingent on the availability of funding.
- Make eligible for an Individual Training Account any Job Corp student who has completed their secondary credential with Job Corps and is interested in continuing training, contingent

on the availability of funding.

- Make eligible for an Individual Training Account any Job Corp student who has completed their occupational skills certification with Job Corp and 12 months of employment and is interested in continuing training, contingent on the availability of funding.
- Work collaboratively with Partners to deliver Employment and Training contractual services to TANF recipients.
- Provide WIOA Youth Service in accordance with the annually published funding guidelines, which address both in-school and out-of-schools programs. The One stop operator will facilitate referrals amongst partners for you youth services via as necessary.

2. Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) carries out:

- Title I of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act
- The Client Assistance Program (CAP) authorized under sec. 112 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C 732)

DVR will:

- Provide access to its program or activities through the one stop delivery system through the agreed upon referral mechanism (Delaware VOCAL) between all partner programs.
- Provide information and schedule of services to DET to enable referral mechanism to refer to services and for public to learn about services.
- Register clients in Delaware JobLink when clients are job ready.
- Attend scheduled partner and Board meeting and activities.
- Provide information and best practices as requested by the Board. The goal is to position the Board to make informed employment and training decisions in order to align and coordinate employment and training activities, when appropriate, for the State's workforce system.
- Work collaboratively with the Board to establish and maintain the one stop delivery system including one stop infrastructure.
- Provide consultation on accessibility and assistive technology.
- Work collaboratively with DET on the Ticket to Work program.
- Provide one on one case management and career services to those who qualify to enable success in employment.
- Enter job openings in Delaware JobLink when unable to fill position.
- Provide support in conjunction with DET for jointly eligible clients who may already be receiving DET training and who require additional funding to cover costs.
- Work jointly to provide services that mutually benefit clients.
- Work collaboratively and provide necessary information and/or documentation to DET and customers (clients and employers) to ensure customers are maximizing tax credits under the WOTC program.

3. Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of the Visually Impaired (DVI) carries out:

- Title I of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act

DVI will:

- Provide access to its program or activities through the one stop delivery system through the agreed upon referral mechanism (Delaware VOCAL) between all partner programs.
- Provide information and schedule of services to DET to enable referral mechanism to refer to services and for the public to learn about services.
- Register clients in Delaware JobLink when clients are job ready.
- Attend scheduled partner and Board meeting and activities.

- Provide information and best practices as requested by the Board. The goal is to position the Board to make informed employment and training decisions in order to align and coordinate employment and training activities, when appropriate, for the State’s workforce system.
- Work collaboratively with the Board to establish and maintain the one stop delivery system including one stop infrastructure.
- Provide consultation on accessibility and assistive technology.
- Work collaboratively with DET on the Ticket to Work program.
- Provide one on one case management and career services to those who qualify to enable success in employment.
- Enter job openings in Delaware JobLink when unable to fill position.
- Provide support in conjunction with DET for jointly eligible clients who may already be receiving DET training and who require additional funding to cover costs.
- Work jointly to provide services that mutually benefit clients.
- Work collaboratively and provide necessary information and/or documentation to DET and customers (clients and employers) to ensure customers are maximizing tax credits under the WOTC program.

4. Delaware Department of Education (DOE) carries out:

- Adult Education and Literacy Activities authorized under Title II
- Post-Secondary Vocational Education Activities Authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act (20 USC 3201)

DOE will:

- Provide access to its program or activities through the one stop delivery system through the agreed upon referral mechanism (Delaware VOCAL) between all partner programs.
- Provide information and schedule of services to DET to enable referral mechanism to refer to services and for public to learn about services.
- Register clients in Delaware JobLink when clients are job ready, as appropriate. (The Department of Education is not required to utilize JobLink for its job postings and application process.)
- Attend scheduled partner and Board meeting and activities.
- Provide information and best practices as requested by the Board. The goal is to position the Board to make informed employment and training decisions in order to align and coordinate employment and training activities, when appropriate, for the State’s workforce system.
- Work collaboratively with the Board to establish and maintain the one stop delivery system including one stop infrastructure.
- Work jointly to provide services that mutually benefit clients.
- Provide ABE/GED courses in all Delaware JobLink Centers.
- Refer all customers who fall into section VII. 9 to DOL/DET in the agreed upon manner.
- Work collaboratively with the Board to align investments and/or programs, as appropriate.

Core programs are fully aligned in the one–stop delivery system. Adult Education is nearly fully aligned. Adult education currently operates in three comprehensive DOL sites, but we are located in four DOL sites: Fox Valley, Dover, Hudson Center (supplemental) and Georgetown. Adult Education needs to establish a classroom at the new University Plaza site (formerly Pendcader). Twelve programs are housed in the comprehensive one–stop (WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, Job Corp, Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, Trade Act, Unemployment Insurance, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Job Corp, National Dislocated Worker Grants and Adult Education). The TANF Employment and Training Program and WIOA Youth program are linked electronically. The Division of the Visually Impaired (DVI), Carl Perkins postsecondary education, Older Americans Act, Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), the Criminal Justice Council and programs authorized under the Second Chance Act, and HUD Employment & Training programs have signed memoranda of understanding with the DWDB and the DDL, Division of Employment and Training.

Alignment occurs several ways:

- Memorandum of Understand (MOU) – All partners. Sign an MOU laying out the Rules, Roles, and Responsibilities for each partner
- WIOA Partnership Meetings.
 - Statewide Leadership Meetings – These meetings occur once a month where workforce activities are aligned, and workgroups are convened to work on systems improvement,
 - County Leadership Meetings. These monthly meetings are the foundational to the alignment process because WIOA partners at the Unit levels identify systemic challenges and opportunities for improvement. The issue that cannot be solved the local level are raised to the state meeting for resolution.
 - Executive Committee and Board Meetings. Issues and opportunities needing systemic fixes are raised to the board where state workforce leaders with the necessary organizational gravitas can act. If the issue is larger and needs a long-term fix, the board established it as a goal and adds it to its strategic planning.
- Special Projects. The WIOA partners are key participants in special projects designed to improve the states publicly funded workfare system. For example, most workforce partners participated in business mapping of Phase I of state’s process redesign initiative.
- Strategic Planning. WIOA Partners are full participants at the DWDB annual October planning retreat.
- Delaware Job Link. All customers are enrolled in Delaware JobLink (DJL) when they are determined work-ready, to provide customers with access to the job matching capabilities of the system. This is accomplished either through client registration at the partner site or by the interface/upload of key data elements into DJL from partner systems.
- Delaware uses computer-based referral system called the Delaware Vocational Portal (VOCAL). Vocal is the one-stop shop for re-employment information and assistance. It allows a single-identity sign-on so Delawareans can login with credentials from DJL. Registration process is quick and easy, and it displays jobs and education opportunities on the home page. Vocal connects individuals to career counselors for one-on-one assistance, organizes appointments, has a job or training program search feature, displays information, and resources for all partners, and connects to one-stop staff virtually. The value of VOCAL for staff is the ability to add referrals for job seekers who qualify for workshops and services based on their education and employment history, allows staff to manage all users within the VOCAL system, and allows staff to check a job seeker’s potential eligibility for programs like VETS or WIOA, set appointments for clients to better support, send individual messages to those seeking employment or education opportunities, and manage new stories related to employment.

All partners have agreed to:

- Share data across all components to evaluate program and system performance outcomes and identify opportunities for additional collaboration and alignment
- Engage in a regular and consistent communications process to monitor and recommend workforce development system revisions, as needed, while also identifying and replicating best practices for dissemination.

- Further develop career pathways process to include supports required for adult learners to complete required courses.
- Survey business and job seeker customers regularly to determine which workforce system services are working well and for which services or processes improvement needs to take place.

Adult Education providers will contextualize academic instruction to increase relevance of instruction and assist customers with development of a career plan as part of their instructional plans. These plans will include researching job market information and developing timelines for attaining further training, as needed.

A process for coordinating the provision of academic skills and enrollment in training programs will be developed, and will include:

- A process for administering and analyzing common assessments across the system for all core providers, to reduce the time spent in assessment. This also provides the opportunity to target academic skills needed for further training or job attainment.
- Job seekers who have not attained a secondary credential or high school diploma will be provided with information on community adult education programs. If they are unable to attain employment after six months due to academic deficits, the adult will be referred to a Title II-funded adult education provider.
- The educational attainment of reentering offenders will be shared with DOL case managers upon consent of the customer.
- A process will be developed for Title II adult education providers' services, to reduce duplication of services and increase funding for specific skills training programs.

Response due to the job market change because of Covid-19:

- Title II supported learners by:
 - Sharing information on job fairs, both in person and virtual
 - Participated in virtual career fairs that provided information on post-secondary training and education opportunities
 - Increased employment services counseling
 - Shared information on in-demand jobs that were least impacted by the changing economy and promoting the need for increased education and skills
 - Virtually shared information on One Stop training opportunities with students and providing enrollment information
 - Participated in employer driven training initiatives for incarcerated learners
 - Participated in Perkins grant to increase the number of pre-apprentices and apprentices in the skills trades

Core programming for DVR consumers centers around individualized plans for employment that use Career Pathways, counseling, and assessments, and OOLMI data and business/educational partnerships. This process allows for and supports the goal of all eligible DVR consumers attaining meaningful integrated employment. DVR is working with core partners to develop a single referral process for clients to access multiple support services simultaneously as they work to complete training and employment goals.

B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

Delaware benefits from being a small state with WIOA partners serving on multiple several planning groups, committees, and initiatives, ultimately leading to contacts and relationships that build bridges to local programs that complement Delaware's Publicly Funded Workforce. These bridges are often girded with follow on MOUs for specific projects. Because Delaware is a small state with high participation rates, this plan aims to ensure alignment of activities to improve employment and training activities and avoid duplication.

It is important to note, participation in outside relationships such as the CDC Gun Violence Report panel, potentially leads to the establishment of the strategic goals such as Wilmington Youth Initiative, which led to the establishment of a Wilmington Initiative Steering Committee, which led the establishment of a Wilmington Initiative DWDB standing committee.

Simply, Delaware leaders are involved with providers and organizations throughout the state, which can both complement and supplement the publicly funded workforce system. These relationships once identified are expanded and domified as needed.

The Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO) was reorganized since the submission of the last plan and is now the Delaware Public Private Partnership (DPP) and organized under the Secretary of State's Office. On or about 6 February 2020, a new Executive Order was signed by Gov. John Carney and designated the DPP's and its Division of Small Business as the replacement entity for DEDO regarding DWDB activities. As part of Executive Order 36, the current President and CEO of DPP is a member of DWDB and currently chairs of the Business Engagement Committee.

Educational activities are provided by Title II adult education providers co-located in the one- stop centers. Where One-Stop capacity is surpassed, job seekers are referred to either the Title II distance learning adult education provider or to local Title II adult education providers. Supports needed for attendance are provided as allowed by each core partner's enabling legislation.

Justice Involved Person are monitored for participation in One-Stop center activities and receive supports as allowed through Second Chance Grant funding. Monitoring for this program and population occurs in close coordination with the Delaware Department of Correction. Attendance, career planning, and the results of services are monitored. Educational information gathered through the Prison Education Program is shared to expedite job attainment and possible job training as permissible by Professional Licensing Board regulations.

Information sharing to avoid duplication happens at the following meetings:

WIOA Partnership Meetings- To promote cross partner collaboration and resource sharing, state and local county level meetings are held monthly to share information on initiatives and resources and to pose questions for mutual problem resolution.

- Statewide Leadership Meetings – These meetings occur once a month where workforce activities are aligned, and workgroups are convened to work on systems improvement,
- County Leadership Meetings. These monthly meetings are foundational to the alignment process because WIOA partners at the staff levels identify systemic challenges and opportunities for improvement. The issues that cannot be solvedthe at local level are raised to the state meeting for resolution.
- Executive Committee and Board Meetings. Issues and opportunities needing systemic fixes are raised to the board where state workforce leaders with the necessary

organizational gravitas can act. If the issue is larger and needs a long-term fix, the board establishes it as a goal and adds it to its strategic planning.

Click here or see Appendix AA for current MOU

C. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

Delaware has chosen to use its One Stop Operator as its aligner. The One Stop Operator convenes ALL partners in monthly workgroups and meeting to facilitate coordination for activities inside and outside the plan. That occurs through:

- WIOA Partnership Meetings. *These meetings were held virtually starting February 2020 due to Covid-19 concerns and have remained virtual.*
 - Statewide Leadership Meetings – These meetings occur once a month where workforce activities are aligned, and workgroups are convened to work on systems improvement.
 - County Leadership Meetings. These monthly meetings are the foundational to the alignment process because WIOA partners at the Unit levels identify systemic challenges and opportunities for improvement. The issue that cannot be solved the local level are raised to the state meeting for resolution.
 - Executive Committee and Board Meetings. Issues and opportunities needing systemic fixes are raised to the board where state workforce leaders with the necessary organizational gravitas can act. If the issue is larger and needs a long-term fix, the board established it as a goal and adds it to its strategic planning.

The alignment also occurs through the partner MOU process that more clearly identifies rules, roles, and responsibilities of ALL partners.

This response would be incomplete without mentioning Delaware benefits from being a small state with WIOA partners serving on multiple several planning groups, committees, and initiatives. For example, the Executive Director of the Delaware Workforce Development Board, the Director of the Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training both serve on the Wilmington Community Advisory Council (WCAC), “The Wilmington Community Advisory Council, a diverse group of state and local stakeholders, was created in 2016 to address youth gun violence based on a 2015 Centers for Disease Control report. The council serves as a convener, broker, and advocate for addressing the root causes of gun violence: stress, trauma, behavioral health, unemployment, and neighborhood safety.” This and others, provide access to programs and organizations outside the plan that work in the same space.

The example above is illustrative because WCAC is like many other organizations, ultimately leading to contacts and relationships that build bridges to local programs that complement Delaware Publicly Funded Workforce. These bridges are often girded with follow on MOUs for specific projects.

It is important to note, participation in the WCAC led to involvement in a CDC Gun Violence Report panel, which led to the establishment of the strategic goal, "Wilmington Youth Initiative," which led to the establishment of a Wilmington Initiative Steering Committee, which led the establishment of a Wilmington Initiative DWDB standing committee.

DOL-DET serves employers with a team of Business Service Representatives (BSR) that can help companies with their workforce needs such as posting jobs, candidate screening and referrals, marketing positions, and much more. Each One-Stop has a BSR dedicated to the employers in their area. In addition, DOL-DET provides the following services to employers:

Job fairs support such as location, connection with other employers or community partners, marketing materials, and social media such as email blasts, press releases, and more.

[Apprenticeship & Training](#) is a learn as you earn model. A Registered Sponsor must employ apprentices. Registered Apprenticeship helps businesses develop highly skilled employees. Registered Apprenticeship programs have also been shown to reduce turnover rates, increase productivity, and lower recruitment costs.

Alien Labor Certification (or Foreign Labor Certification) assists employers in meeting requirements for recruitment of alien workers and assures that regulatory processes are followed to document that American workers are not available. In addition, the program ensures the employment of the foreign worker will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of the U.S. workers that are employed.

[Bonding Program](#) provides fidelity bonding insurance coverage to ex-offenders and other high-risk job applicants who are qualified for a job but fail to get it because regular commercial bonding is denied due to their backgrounds.

[Delaware JobLink](#) is a web-based online network system that provides access to a full range of workforce information for both employers and job seekers.

[Forward Delaware](#) is where jobseekers find Training to enhance or gain skills, and employers connect with a qualified workforce.

Delaware Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act is to direct employers that meet the qualifications of a WARN notification to provide at least 60 days advance notice to the Department of Labor Division of Employment and Training of mass layoffs, plant closings, or relocations. The intent is to provide dislocated workers with the Rapid Response Services and benefits that are due to them through the Department of Labor and other service providers. The desire of the Department is to assist dislocated workers to return to work as quickly as possible with minimal disruption to their economic well-being. Welfare to Work Tax Credit offers incentives to employers to hire members of families that have been long-term assistance recipients.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a federal income tax credit that encourages employers to hire eight targeted job seekers. The tax incentive is designed to help the job seekers most in need of employment gain on-the-job experience and move toward economic self-sufficiency.

Delaware leaders are involved with providers and organizations throughout the state, which can both complement and supplement the publicly funded workforce system. These relationships once identified are expanded and codified as needed. These activities outside the plan become part of the DWDB family and become involved with board initiatives. The Rodel Foundation -- the nationwide education non-profit -- is a perfect example of this. They are key members of the pathway's initiative.

The Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO) was reorganized since the submission of the last plan and is now the Delaware Public Private Partnership (DPP) and organized under the Secretary of State's Office. On or about 6 February 2020, a new Executive Order was signed by Gov. John Carney and designated the DPP's and its Division of Small Business as the replacement entity for DEDO regarding DWDB activities. The DWDB is established ties with the new agency to determine the new rules, roles, and responsibilities.

The Division of Small Business is engaged in the monthly WIOA meetings as well as a seat on the board. The Division of Small Business does the following:

- Provide access to its program or activities through the one stop delivery system through the agreed upon referral mechanism (Delaware VOCAL) between all partner programs.
- Provide information and schedule of services to DET to enable referral mechanism to refer to services and for public to learn about services.
- Refer employers to Delaware JobLink for their workforce needs.
- Attend scheduled partner and Board meeting and activities.

- Provide information and best practices as requested by the Board. The goal is to position the Board to make informed employment and training decisions in order to align and coordinate employment and training activities, when appropriate, for the State’s workforce system.
- Work collaboratively with the Board to establish and maintain the one stop delivery system including one stop infrastructure.
- Provide data as appropriate and mutually agreed upon.
- Work jointly to provide services that mutually benefit customers.
- Work collaboratively on Workforce Development Projects when mutually agreed upon.
- Participate in the System’s Business Services workgroup.

Delaware’s economic development agency (DPP) holds a seat on the board and the current President and CEO is the chair of the Business Engagement Committee. DPP’s Director of Workforce and DWDB ED meet on a regular basis to coordinate activities.

Educational activities are provided by Title II adult education providers co-located in the one- stop centers. Where One-Stop capacity is surpassed, job seekers are referred to either the Title II distance learning adult education provider or to local Title II adult education providers. Supports needed for attendance are provided as allowed by each core partner’s enabling legislation.

Justice Involved Person are monitored for participation in One-Stop center activities and receive supports as allowed through Second Chance Grant funding. Monitoring for this program and population occurs in close coordination with the Delaware Department of Correction. Attendance, career planning, and the results of services are monitored. Educational information gathered through the Prison Education Program is shared to expedite job attainment and possible job training as permissible by Professional Licensing Board regulations.

[The MOU attached in Appendix L](#) illustrates the coordination, alignment and provision of services between the Board, DOL-DET, and a required partner (DVI) to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services.

D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

This is a big planning period for Delaware’s Publicly Funded Workforce System relative to business services as alluded to in goals listed at III B. 4, which say in part “... **Delaware will extend the process redesign goal to include a detailed mapping of business in order to improve employer participation in the publicly funded workforce system**”.

In the spring/summer 2021 it was apparent that the board structure and support would be the top priority. The Chair and the Executive Director will ensure that the appointments to the board are aligned with the state’s critical industries, especially those targeted by DPP and the creation of the Business Engagement Committee to ensure funding priorities are aligned with Delaware’s most current workforce skills needs and to help close the skills gaps, as indicated by the state’s business stakeholders.

Short-term program and service priorities for 2021-2022 for business engagement included:

1. Develop an employer engagement strategy and implementation plan.
2. Rollout employer engagement strategy to a selected number of critical industries.
3. Pilot industry-led cohort training to upskill workers.

In addition, partners will continue to align and coordinate services to business partners. Services for the partners are carried out by the partner employer services staff locate throughout the state. Moreover, a Business Services workgroup was convened at the WIOA leadership Team.

It is important to note, the Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO) is reorganized, and is now the Delaware Prosperity Partnership (DPP). On or about 6 February 2020 a new Executive Order was signed by Gov. John Carney and designated the DPP's Division of Small Business (DSB) as the replacement entity for DEDO regarding DWDB activities. This group is responsible for coordinating business services and eliminating duplication.

The publicly funded workforce system believes the following initiatives will increase its attractiveness to employers:

- The newly redesigned Job Order portal in DJL provides employers with an improved tool they can use. The plan includes extensive outreach, public relations, marketing, and social media marketing to raise awareness to all businesses.
- The DWDB Pathways to Prosperity establishes partnerships with local employers, colleges, and school districts to prepare students to work in high-demand fields.
- DOL–DET Business Services Reps, LVER's, and DVOPs; Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's employment services specialist; and the Delaware National Guard Employer Support to the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) will all work together to ensure members of the Delaware National Guard receive job training and the best resources and opportunities for their civilian employment, including coordinating employment opportunities with local employers as well as providing employment counseling and job referrals.
- Perkins Alignment
 - Build a comprehensive system of career preparation that aligns with the state and regional economies to ensure that youth and adult learners have an opportunity to pursue a great career, we will scale the statewide career pathways system and provide support to educators and employers to effectively serve youth and adults.
 - Scale and sustain meaningful work-based learning experiences for students in grades 5-14. To ensure that learning occurs both in the classroom and in the workplace, we will establish a statewide workforce intermediary to place students into meaningful work experiences and support employers to recruit and onboard student talent.
- Title II providers will provide instruction in demand occupations and career pathways areas that aligns with that DWDB's strategic plan.
- Title II providers will work with local employers to determine skills, information, and attitudes needed to attain entry level jobs and progress within job fields.

E. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Delaware has a single Community College system, Delaware Technical Community College (DelTech) and the president is a board member and several of the vice presidents are members of DWDB committees. Representatives from Delaware State University (DSU) also sit on the board. All three of the state sponsored schools, as well as Wilmington University, have a presence on the ETPL.

It is important to note Delaware's technical schools and the state Department Education are active members in the development of the Demand Occupation List. DOE – after consulting with employers, Delaware's Office Occupational and Labor Market Information – approves pathways, which drive the list. Delaware's technical schools review the list to ensure technical programs are appropriately represented.

F. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

Delaware currently engages other education and training providers by:

- Conducting inspections twice per year at provider locations
- Constant coordination between the DWDB management analyst and Eligible Training Provider
- Asking providers to participate in special work groups (e.g. process redesign)
- Annual renewal letters that reinforce board priorities and enforce performance measures
- Surveying providers about DWDB initiatives

Delaware will increase its engagement during the plan’s period by:

- Reinstating annual provider forums
- Reengage provider advisory council

As a result of Covid-19, all partner trainings and engagements were held online via zoom. The DWDB’s Management Analyst held 8 provider forums over the renewal period, held zoom refresher and additional trainings, and provided weekly full day open zoom links for providers that had additional questions or concerns.

In addition, the Management Analyst reengaged the provider advisory council via online meetings and discussions. This council consists of the most seasoned providers to discuss how processes can be enhanced.

DOL-DET ISY and OSY contract managers host, at a minimum, quarterly Results and Learning for training providers. These sessions consist of review of program participants and progress numbers, an open dialogue on successes and challenges, and an opportunity for providers to ask questions. Training providers look forward to the support the DET and DWDB staff provides.

Title II Adult Education providers continue to develop processes with the State’s community college and adult career and technical education schools to create on-ramps to career-specific skills training and to co-enroll students where possible. Re-entering justice involved persons are being prepared for engagement with the One-Stop Center through the Prison Education Program and through the Department of Correction Re-entry Programs. Education provided within Level 5 prison is aligned with community Title II Adult Education requirements and consequently prepares participants for entry into the One-Stop Center activities.

G. LEVERAGING RESOURCES TO INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

Delaware has reestablished this goal because there is much more to be done. Additional work and updates are forthcoming.

Resource Alignment. This is initially the DWDB main effort. The Financial Oversight Committee and the DWDB executive director will lead this effort. This goal ensures the DWDB funds projects, training, and innovative programs with funds from multiple sources. To clarify, the DWDB is looking for workforce partners from multiple agencies, to combine funds to achieve goals. Whenever possible, the DWDB will look beyond WIOA Dislocated Worker, WIOAAdult, WIOA Youth, and Delaware Blue Collar funds to finance activities in the public workforce system. This is a reworking of the 2106 goal.

Delaware’s workforce system currently uses the funds that are part of each partner’s budget and individual grants. Habitual braiding of funding has been elusive. Even so, some money has been made for training and educational initiatives by braiding some TANF. The Delaware Legislature in 2019 approved state funds for an expansion of work-based learning opportunities through its “Learning for Careers” program where the DWDB the Delaware Department of Labor and DOE

publish a solicitation to expand paid work experiences for students. See <https://philanthropydelaware.org/event-3718879> for the announcement and links.

Two programs were recently passed in Delaware supporting Delawareans.

Elevate Delaware:

Introduced on April 29, 2020, House Bill 166 of the 151st General Assembly, Elevate Delaware provides tuition, up to \$10,000, to Delaware residents who have obtained a high school diploma, Diploma of Alternate Achievement Standards, or a Delaware secondary credential, which includes earning a GED, and have enrolled in an approved non-degree credit certificate program. The Workforce Development Board will create a list of non-degree credit certificate programs approved for the Elevate Delaware program. This Act also allows the Department of Labor to provide participants in the Elevate Delaware Program payments to cover basic living expenses while attending the training program and for a 90-day job search period after completion of the training program.

Focus on Alternative Skills Training Program (FAST):

Introduced on May 25, 2021, Senate Substitute 1 for Senate Bill 65 of the 151st General Assembly, FAST provides tuition assistance, to Delaware residents who have obtained a high school diploma, Diploma of Alternate Achievement Standards, or a Delaware secondary credential, which includes earning a GED, and have enrolled in an approved non-degree credit certificate program. The Workforce Development Board will create a list of non-degree credit certificate programs approved for the FAST program.

Delaware works with partners and individual opportunities often result in some braided funds, but we still need to develop a systems-based approach.

H. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

The DWDB requires all providers to issue industry recognized credentials. Delaware's Pathway Program is based entirely on the attainment of a post-secondary credential in an occupation along a pathway. Delaware's entire ITA and Contract system is set up to achieve just that.

Most if not all Delaware Providers require at least a GED. When clients access Delaware's publicly funded workforce system, they are assessed to determine needs and interests. Those needing remediation or GED help are referred to the appropriate resource. Once the client attains a qualifying credential and training is appropriate, they are sent to training to achieve a credential in an occupation along a pathway.

When providers apply to be in the Delaware system the program must result in an industry recognized credential.

Adult Education Title II programs will continue to improve access in several ways:

- Upon entry into programs, each student will have an individualized learning plan which includes career goals and a career development plan. Each student will also have access to the wide array of partners via the One-Stop partner referral system.
- Programs will provide academic instruction to increase academic skills through career lattice or demand occupation contexts, reinforcing the relevance of the skills being taught.
- Some programs will collaborate with other specific skills trainers to co-enroll learners so

that academic and specific skills can be taught concurrently.

- Some programs will braid their various funding to provide academic and specific skills training at the one location through the same provider.

In Delaware, postsecondary CTE programs span short- and long-term credential programs, the registered apprenticeship system, and two-year degree programs to create a system of stackable credentials and connected degree programs. Postsecondary CTE programs link to local education agencies as well as to the adult basic education system and the prison education system. These designed points of entry and transition create opportunities for youth and adult learners to build skills to enter and progress through education and training systems and placement into employment. Further, this work expands access to CTE programs for special populations and reflects Delaware's career pathway system and shared education and workforce goal to increase the number of youth and adult learners with valued industry credentials and degrees. Collaboration amongst these system providers is organized through state leadership activities and financial support.

I. COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Historically the Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO) was a member of the Delaware Workforce Development Board (DWDB). Since the 2016 submission of the state plan, the Delaware Economic Development Office reorganized, and is now Delaware Private Public Partnership (DPP). To ensure continuity and make sure economic development concerns are represented, Governor Carney has designated the DPP and its subordinate organization the Delaware Division of Small Business (click on the link to see their website) as the economic development entities with DWDB membership.

DPP is a nonprofit **state economic development agency** that leads Delaware's economic development efforts to attract, grow and retain businesses; build a stronger entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem; and to support private employers in identifying, recruiting, and developing talent in Delaware. DPP's Director of Talent Services and DWDB's Executive Director work closely and meet on a regularly basis.

DWDB has expanded its economic development footprint with the inclusion of Matt Meyer, Executive for New Castle County Government, designee is the head of the county's economic development office.

In 2021, a representative of The Greater Kent Committee, a non-profit organization created in the late 1980's by CEO and top business executives in Central Delaware to identify emerging community issues and to take on projects that will improve the quality of life for residents of Central Delaware, was appointed to the board. This appointment allows greater connectivity to economic and workforce development issues in Central Delaware.

DWDB engaged Theories in Practice (TIP) to create a strategic framework for a five-year goal and investment approach. During this engagement, a structured employer engagement strategy was identified as a key goal. The objective is to close the skills gap and create diverse employment opportunities for Delaware residents. Several core take-aways were identified.

- Employer engagement is not a program or activity, rather a systems-level organizing structure for developing and prioritizing workforce activities.
- Employer engagement is essential to poverty reduction by helping diverse populations train for the most current skills and be placed in jobs with upward mobility/employment stability.

To achieve this goal, DWDB, DPP, other economic development, and member associations such as chambers of commerce, must play a central role in employment engagement activities. It was determined

that the best individual to chair the new Business Engagement Committee is the President and CEO of DPP.

b. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

Labor market information produced by the Delaware Department of Labor's Office of Occupational and Labor Market Information (OOLMI) is a driving force behind our planning process, delivery of services, and the foundational demarcation point for the State's operating systems and policies that guide Delaware's workforce strategies. See ITA Process manual at Appendix B.

Delaware's communications system operates at all levels throughout the spectrum of the publicly funded workforce system. From a tactical level (One-Stop System) to an operational level (DOL-DET) to a strategic level (DWDB), the primary communications system is and will continue to be Delaware JobLink. Delaware JobLink, Delaware's web-enabled One-Stop workforce development system, facilitates communications between job seekers and employers, providing self-service job seeker and employer job matching activities; ensures accurate and timely reporting between the State and its Federal partners; provides labor exchange job matching and industry leaders with labor market information; and is the linkage between the training staff, providers and fiscal officers.

Communications between the strategic level and the operational level is primarily interpersonal and is conducted in face-to-face meetings held monthly, quarterly, and on order as needed.

Between meetings, the primary strategic level means of communications is via email and secondarily via phone.

DVR continues to report annually to RSA and works with OOLMI regarding labor market information systems, with UI regarding employment data, and with DET/JobLink and in-house employment specialist teams regarding job search, resume writing, and skill acquisition.

- JobLink is a self-service job matching and workplace information service for employers and job seekers. Job seekers can establish an Internet jobseeker account to manage their job search activities or to register with labor exchange activities. Employers can establish an account to manage job openings and view job seeker resumes.
- ServiceLink is a web-based One-Stop client management application that allows case managers to track their caseloads and report information required under Labor Exchange, Re-Employment Services, TAA, and other Federal programs. ServiceLink provides a standardized process for following participants through the workforce development system network. It eases the caseloads for case managers by providing a tool that can manage and monitor caseloads, assess employment barriers, establish training and employment plans, search for service providers and WIOA eligible training providers and programs, and track job placements. ServiceLink collects all information required to generate reports for these Federal programs.
- FiscalLink allows case managers and program administrators the ability to establish program budgets and authorize participant/vendor payments for all WIOA programs including National Dislocate Worker Grants and TAA activities.
- ReportLink is a web-enabled One-Stop workforce development Federal reporting data management system providing WIOA, TAA, Labor Exchange, JVSG, and National Dislocated Worker Grant participant individual record layout (PIRL) files. The PIRL file generates the ETA 9170, which is the federally required quarterly performance report.

The Delaware Division for the Visually Impaired Case Management System (VICR) currently does not interface with labor market data systems at this time. The agency will be requiring all VR customers that reach status 20 (or ready for employment status) to be enrolled into the Delaware JobLink system (Delaware Employment and Training system) for resume building, labor market

exploration and coordination with state job banks. DVI continues to report quarterly to RSA.

1. THE STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS THAT WILL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S STRATEGIES.

b. State operating systems that support coordinated implementation of State Strategies

Labor market information produced by the Delaware Department of Labor's Office of Occupational and Labor Market Information (OOLMI) is a driving force for the entire Delaware Workforce System. It is a central feature of the state's Labor Exchange and reporting system Delaware JobLink at <https://joblink.delaware.gov/ada/r/>, which serves, jobseekers, employers and workforce professional with a special resource section at <https://joblink.delaware.gov/ada/r/resources>. The products available at OOLMR are behind our planning process, delivery of services, and the foundational demarcation point for the State's operating systems and policies that guide Delaware's workforce strategies. ITA Process manual at Appendix B.

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Between meetings, the primary strategic level means of communications is via email and secondarily via phone.

DVR continues to report annually to RSA and works with OOLMI regarding labor market information systems, with UI regarding employment data, and with DET/JobLink and in-house employment specialist teams regarding job search, resume writing, and skill acquisition.

Tactical level (One-Stop System)

- Job link reports tracking clients, serves rendered, and progress achieved
- WIOA county level leadership meetings where trends, issues, challenges, potential solutions are

Operational Level

- Demand Occupation list development
- Eligible Training Provider List Development
- Provider reporting
- WIOA Leadership Meetings
- WIOA Leadership Workgroups

Strategic Level

- Board meetings and briefing
- Committee Meetings
- Performance and Financial Reports Develop by DJL and similar products

Per section 121(d)(9)(A), the Delaware Department of Education coordinates services for student access and equity for those special populations under the Act across state agencies, community stakeholders, and eligible recipients and institutions that support special populations. This includes coordination of various workgroups across the Delaware Department of Education, including the CTE & STEM workgroup, the Higher Education workgroup, the Exceptional Children workgroup, and the Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development workgroup to:

- Align supports and services for students with disabilities, English Learners (EL), foster and homeless youth, and other special populations under the Act;
- Provide and coordinate professional learning opportunities for academic educators, CTE educators, special education staff, school counselors, and EL staff in secondary school programs;
- Promote academic instruction and targeted interventions that reduce the need for remedial education at the postsecondary level; and
- Develop process tools and data models to identify effective programs, coaching, and supports to serve special populations under the Act.

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

Presently, the data-collection and reporting processes for the WIOA core programs is not integrated. The data-collection and reporting processes for Title I and Title III programs and activities is executed in the DJL system. The data-collection and reporting processes for Title I programs is carried out by the Literacy Pro system for the Adult Education program and the AWARE system for the Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation programs. Information reported by

U.S. DOL and U.S. DOE on August 13, 2015, in a Workforce3 One seminar indicated the WIOA annual report would be submitted by core programs directly to their respective U.S. Federal agencies.

DVR will employ its AWARE case management system and UI data to capture required data points.

- JobLink is a self-service job matching and workplace information service for employers and job seekers. Job seekers can establish an Internet account to manage their job search activities or to register with labor exchange activities. Employers can establish an account to manage job openings and view job seeker resumes.
- ServiceLink is a web-based One-Stop client management application that allows case managers to track their caseloads and report information required under WIOA, Labor Exchange, Re-Employment Services, TAA, and other Federal programs. ServiceLink provides a standardized process for following participants through the workforce development system network. It eases the caseloads for case managers by providing a tool that can manage and monitor caseloads, assess employment barriers, establish training and employment plans, search for service providers and WIOA eligible training providers and programs, and track job placements. ServiceLink collects all information required to generate reports for these Federal programs.
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CertLink

The CertLink online system allows employers and employer consultants to apply for and manage Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) applications and certifications and allows state workforce agencies (and other participating agencies) to administer the WOTC program.

Vocational Portal (VOCAL)

VOCAL brings together resources that jobseekers can take advantage of such as research job and education opportunities in their desired field. Incorporated in the portal are features such as messaging, chat and calendar scheduling. In addition to expanding services to all job seekers, VOCAL will allow for a WIOA partner referrals system to ensure wrap around services to jobseekers. Furthermore, during the brief registration process, the system asks specific questions that identifies whether a job seeker may qualify for dislocated worker, trade benefits or would be an appropriate referral to other WIOA partner agencies. DET intends to use VOCAL to outreach clients, especially during mass layoffs.

ProviderLink

ProviderLink is a self-service provider section, allowing training providers and providers of youth services to create self-service accounts to apply for inclusion on the statewide WIOA Eligible Training Provider (ETP) List and the list of approved youth service providers. Provider and program records may also be added by State Eligible Training Provider (ETP) Administrators

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

The One-Stop delivery system is made up of required, additional, and other partners that have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU establishes Delaware JobLink as the State's Labor Exchange system. The document also establishes that the program information of all partners will be available on DJL and that all partners will participate in the One-Stop referral system. In addition, the MOU establishes that when a customer is enrolled in a program, that program is responsible for eligibility and the cost of the services. This agreement is supportive of dual enrollments, enabling partners to send customers to any service available in a partner program that they determine the customer needs.

Delaware is not consolidating the management information systems but is taking significant steps toward an integrated intake process. All individuals when determined work-ready by the program serving them will be enrolled in Delaware JobLink. This will be accomplished either by uploading customer information from a partner system using JobLink as a work readiness tool and having the customer self-register or partner staff completing the registration. All partners will be able to track service to customers in JobLink. The extent of use by partners of JobLink will be determined by the partners based on their needs, and JobLink is the job matching tool of the One-Stop delivery system for both job seekers and employers.

DVR is an eligibility program and DVR counselors will employ RSA-driven methods to determine eligibility. DVR will participate with core partners in a central referral location.

As mentioned in the adult and dislocated worker section of this submission, Delaware is redoing its Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) with special attention to its master budget and partner memo. The IFA is an addendum to the partner MOU. The entirety of the IFA is available at <https://wib.delawareworks.com/documents/20200618/completedIFA.pdf>

Steps the DWDB and One Stop Partners and one-stop partners used to reach consensus. The WIOA Leadership Team, made up of required and additional partners met several times throughout April, May, and June (most recently June 25, 2021) to determine cost allocations and proportional share. These sessions included cabinet secretaries, leaders empowered to sign MOUs, and the staff of the Delaware Workforce Development Board. These meetings were both facilitated and unfacilitated. Throughout the meeting the partners provided cost information, contributed insight and recommendations. The information was analyzed by the DWDB staff, verified by the partners, and consensus was reached. From these almost three months of discussions and analysis Delaware's WIOA One Stop Partners came to consensus on the following:

a. To conduct reviews of this memorandum semi-annually, or when a partner restructures services, which materially change a partner's presence in the AJC, such as a change to a process flow or personnel staffing within an AJC resulting in a drop or increase in utilization.

b. To purchase, replace, and/or upgrade furniture used by their staff and/or customers in accordance with state budgeting and purchasing procedures. Current budgeted funds will be used as intended by the State of Delaware.

c. The current usage of facilities making up the American Job Centers (AJC) represents proportional usage and relative benefit received and that proportional usage generally reflects the percentage cost allocations listed in the master budget at enclosure #1. Required partners will pay these costs using the currently established systems, due dates.

d. Cost Allocations are based on square footage. The DWDB and the WIOA Partners used square footage as reflected in rental agreements as a foundation of costs allocations for infrastructure costs In Accordance With (IAW) TEGL 17-16, para 4 "Infrastructure costs of AJCs are defined as non-personnel costs that are necessary for the general operation of the one-stop center, including: rental of the facilities; utilities and maintenance; equipment..."

e. Proportional use. Delaware has chosen to base its proportional use calculations on the total number of clients each partner served/the total of all partners served. That is the starting point for all negotiations.

f. Participation Value. This is the real value of partner contributions for participation in WIOA team functions. This is a calculation of in-kind contribution from all partners. The calculation is "annual salary + fringe /52 Weeks in a year). Then divide by 37.5 (hours in a work week). Then multiply by 2 (length in hours of a meeting). Then multiply by 12 (1 meeting per year)." This occurs at both the Leadership and county level leadership teams.

g. Delaware will review additional shared costs at prescribed reconciliations and for the time being only list career services as a shared cost as permitted by TEGL 17-16 which states "The one-stop operating budget may be considered the master budget that contains a set of individual budgets or components that consist of costs that are specifically identified in the statute: infrastructure costs, defined in WIOA sec. 121(h)(4); and additional costs, which must (emphasis mine) include applicable career services and may include shared operating costs and shared services that are related to the operation of the one-stop delivery system but do not constitute infrastructure costs.

h. The Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training (DOL-DET) is solely responsible for costs associated with its affiliate site – the Hudson Center.

i. Delaware’s publicly funded One Stop System is housed in four locations in three counties throughout the state. Because the One Stop Allocation process is “based on partner programs’ proportionate use of the system and relative benefit received,” these locations include the Delaware Department of Labor Divisions of Unemployment Insurance; Vocational Rehabilitation; and of Employment and Training.

Wilmington: Fox Valley American Job Center 4425 North Market Street Wilmington, DE 19802

Newark: University Office Plaza 252 Chapman Road, Second Floor Newark, DE 19702

Dover: Dover American Job Center Blue Hen Corporate Center 655 S. Bay Road, Suite 2H Dover, DE 19901

Georgetown: Georgetown American Job Center 8 Georgetown Plaza, Suite 2 Georgetown, DE 19947

Newark: Hudson State Service Center (Specialized Site), 501 Ogletown Rd., Room 138, Newark, DE 19711

Appeals. Because the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 section 121(h)(2)(E) and 20 CFR § 678.750, Final Rule, dated August 19, 2016, requires appeals process for the Infrastructure Funding Agreement, The partners agree to adhere to DWDB Policy Letter #2017001 Appeals Process for Funding The Infrastructure Cost Of One Stop System dated April 19, 2017. The entire text of the Policy letter states:

SUBJECT: Policy #2017001 Appeals Process for Funding the Infrastructure Cost of One Stop System

References: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 section 121(h)(2)(E)

20 CFR § 678.750, Final Rule, dated August 19, 2016

1. The Delaware Workforce Development Board (DWDB) establishes this appeal process for funding the infrastructure cost of One Stop System.

2. One Stop partners will, to the greatest extent possible, resolve conflicts at the lowest level possible. This resolution usually occurs at the division or comparable unit level.

3. Only a division director of a participating One Stop Partner directly affected by an allocation may initiate an appeal and that appeal only addresses infrastructure costs allocations based on proportional use.

4. The DWDB executive committee will hear appeals with a notification as a special meeting; the DWDB Executive Director will post the special meeting notice on Delaware’s Government Information Calendar Website. Normal quorum rules will apply and the DWDB chairman will chair an appeal hearing.

5. The appellate process is:

- The director initiates the appeal by providing a written request to the DWDB Executive Director. The written request must specifically address the cost allocation/proportional use concern. The request will detail the efforts made to resolve the impasse.
- The DWDB Executive Director will, within 14 days, schedule an appeal hearing. The executive committee will meet as soon as a quorum is available and all parties to the dispute are available.

- The executive committee will hear from all parties and make a final determination using a majority vote of the quorum.

6. Reconciliation. Reconciliation will occur every six months beginning December 2021 and meet the requirements in TEGL 17-16. The reconciliation will also reanalyze shared costs. (Required element).

3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

The DWDB organizational chart can be found in Appendix I.

The Delaware Workforce Development Board is a governor appointed, private business majority board, which provides oversight of Delaware’s Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) publicly funded workforce system. The current committees of The Delaware Workforce Development Board ensure the citizens of Delaware are provided with occupational training and employment services to help them obtain sustainable employment and achieve economic and social stability. The Board communicates with Delaware business industry partners to provide them with qualified workers to meet their employment needs.

The board understands that its strength lies in the ability to establish an appropriate vision, convene the right partners, and broker a comprehensive set of solutions for business and job seekers. As such, the board seeks to take a more active role with the following:

1. Increase employer engagement and support.
2. Promote resource alignment and accountability among agencies and service providers.
3. Strengthen leadership role as the state’s workforce voice.

In the spring/summer 2021 it was apparent that the board structure and support would be the top priority. With the retirement of both the Board Chair and Executive Director, it was necessary to work with the Governor’s office to develop a succession plan for board/staff leadership and filling immediate vacancies on the board. The Chair and the Executive Director will ensure that the appointments to the board are aligned with the state’s critical industries, especially those targeted by DPP.

In addition to the board structure, DWDB developed new committees to direct the work towards the recommended goals. These committees meet at least quarterly and update the board during quarterly board meetings. The new committees include:

Youth Committee

The Youth Committee works with our school systems and program providers on how to build the workforce of the future. The committee will provide recommendations on life skills training, expanding work-based learning opportunities, career exploration and exposure, credential attainment, completion of high school or GED program, and making sure our graduating seniors are college and/or career ready.

Adult Dislocated Worker Committee

The Adult Dislocated Worker Committee focus on high-demand occupation programs that train or strengthen skills of Delaware’s adult and dislocated workers, particularly in essential career tracts. It will work with providers to identify customized job training programs centered on data determined needs. In addition, this committee will investigate opportunities for businesses to “grow their own” training programs. Our priority will be to invest in businesses that provide training for current lower-level employees so they can advance within their company.

Business Engagement Committee

The Business Engagement Committee ensures that the DWDB's funding priorities are aligned with Delaware's most current workforce skills needs, as indicated by the state's business stakeholders. This committee also works to help close the skills gap experienced by employers.

Strategic Planning Committee

Strategic Planning Committee guides the DWDB's achievement of its overarching goals, objectives, priorities, and activities. It will track the progress and support the Board and its committees in the development of metrics establishing, data collection, and data reporting criteria.

The WIOA systems align at the executive committee and the DWDB meetings, which occur quarterly, or when a special meeting is called by the chair. It is important to note, the DWDB tries – to the great extent possible – have private business members chair committees, unless specific expert knowledge is needed and only available by a government official.

The executive committee is comprised of cabinet secretaries responsible for WIOA partner programs, organized, labor, the vocational rehabilitation director, and the State Chamber of Commerce. Each committee is staffed with DWDB staff, DOL- DVR and DET staff, and WIOA leadership.

A Typical Agenda follows:

Welcome and Call for Quorum

Approval of Minutes

Committee Reports

Performance Measures Committee

Youth Committee

Adult Dislocated Worker Committee

Strategic Planning Committee

Business Engagement Committee

Proposal Review & Certification Committee

Financial Oversight Report

Action Items

Adjourn

The DWDB staff are employees of the Delaware Department of Labor and are in the same building as the Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Employment Training (DOL-DET). DOL-DET and the DWDB are the joint administrative entity with DOL-DET filling the role of State Workforce Agency and Fiscal Agent.

B. STATE BOARD

In January of 2022, the DWDB adopted new bylaws. Updates included new term limits as well as updated the Executive Order (EO #36).

BYLAWS:

Section 1.1

The Delaware Workforce Development Board (the “Board” or the “DWDB”) was established pursuant to the authority in “The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA),” and pursuant to Executive Order 36, dated February 6, 2020 (“Executive Order 36”). The purpose of the Board is to review statewide policies and programs and make recommendations on actions that should be taken by the State to align workforce development programs in a manner that supports a comprehensive and streamlined workforce development system.

The Board shall assist the Governor in executing the duties outlined in Executive Order 36. Those duties shall include:

- a. the development, implementation and modification of the state plan required by applicable federal law;
- b. the review of statewide policies, programs, and the activities of one-stop partners, and make recommendations on actions that should be taken to align workforce development programs in the state, consistent with the State Plan, in a manner that supports a comprehensive and streamlined workforce development system in the state, including the review and provision of comments on the combined state plan for programs and activities of one-stop partners that are not core programs;
- c. the development and continuous improvement of the workforce development in the state through:
 - i. the identification of barriers and means for removing barriers to better coordinate, align, and avoid duplication among the programs and activities carried out through the system;
 - ii. the development of strategies to support the use of career pathways for the purpose of providing individuals, including low skilled adults, youth, and individuals with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities), with workforce investment activities, education, and supportive services to enter or retain employment;
 - iii. the development of strategies for providing effective outreach to and improved access for individuals and employers who could benefit from services provided through the workforce development system;
 - iv. the development and expansion of strategies for meeting the needs of employers, workers, and jobseekers particularly through industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand sectors and occupations;
 - v. the development of strategies to support staff training and awareness across programs supported under the workforce development system;

- d. the development and updating of comprehensive state performance accountability measures, including state adjusted levels of performance, to assess the effectiveness of the core programs in the state;
- e. the identification and dissemination of best practices;
- f. the development and review of statewide policies affecting the coordinated provision of services through the state's one-stop delivery system;
- g. the development of strategies for technological improvements to facilitate access to, and improve the quality of, services and activities provided through the one-stop delivery system;
- h. the development of strategies for aligning technology and data systems across one-stop partner programs to enhance the quality of service delivery and improve efficiencies in reporting on performance accountability measures (including the design and implementation of common intake, data collection, case management information, and performance accountability measurement and reporting processes and the incorporation of local input into such design and implementation to improve coordination of services across one-stop partner programs);
- i. the preparation of the Board's annual reports;
- j. the development of the statewide workforce and labor market information system;
- k. the development of such other policies as may promote statewide objectives for, and enhance the performance of, the workforce development system in the state;
- l. the development of the Demand Occupation List and Eligible Training Provider List;
- m. negotiation of performance measures;
- n. conducting oversight of youth activities, career services and training activities, and the one stop system authorized under WIOA;
- o. carrying out the responsibilities of Local Boards; and
- p. ensuring compliance with WIOA, including any subsequent amendments.

ARTICLE 2.0 MEMBERS

Section 2.1 Membership

The members of the Board shall be appointed in accordance with WIOA and Executive Order 36. The number of Board members shall not exceed 53.

Section 2.2 Qualifications

The composition of the Board will satisfy the criteria for membership as delineated in WIOA. Any Board member who no longer represents the organization that served as the basis for his or her initial appointment to the Board shall be succeeded by another representative of that organization or another organization in the same category.

Section 2.3 Nominations.

In accordance with current law and Executive Order 36, DWDB membership originates in the following places:

The Governor of Delaware is on the Board;
The Delaware Speaker of the House appoints two members from that body to the Board;
The Delaware President Pro Tempore of the Senate appoints two members of that body to the Board;
The Governor appoints:
representatives of business in the state;
representatives of the workforce in the state;
individuals the Governor may appoint in order for the membership of the Board to remain in compliance with federal requirements and
Other appointed members, which shall include the following:
one county elected official;
Mayor of the City of Wilmington, or his/her designee;
a representative of the Delaware Prosperity Partnership.

The remainder of the Board consists of:

The Secretary of the Department of Labor or his or her designee;
The Secretary of the Department of Education or his or her designee;
The Secretary of The Department of Health and Social Services or his or her designee;
The Director of the Division of Small Business or his or her designee;
The Director of the Delaware State Housing Authority or his or her designee;
The Commissioner of the Department of Correction or his or her designee;
The Department of Labor Director of Vocation Rehabilitation or his or her designee; and
The Delaware Equal Opportunity Officer or his or her designee.

Private Business Appointments. The Governor will appoint members from a standing list of potential members nominated by the state business organizations, or trade associations as outlined in Federal Regulation 679 § 679.110. The DWDB Executive Director will notify the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions when a vacancy occurs. In the event the standing list has been exhausted, the Executive Director will ask the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce for nominations and will forward them to the Office of Boards and Commissions for consideration.

House and Senate Appointments. The Executive Director of the DWDB will contact after each statewide election the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore to determine if there are any changes to the House and Senate appointments. These appointed members are subject to the DWDB bylaw term limits. The Speaker and President Pro Tempore will send an appointment letter to the DWDB and the member when there are new appointments.

Cabinet Secretaries and State Agency leaders. Board members on the DWDB whose board appointment is due to holding a governmental position (e.g., those listed in paragraph 4(d) of Executive Order 36) will end their terms when they leave said positions. When this occurs, the Executive Director of the DWDB will coordinate with the Governor's office for a smooth transition.

Section 2.4 Term Limits. The terms for Board members of the DWDB are three years. Board Members may serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms, except for members appointed under Section 2.3 (5) & (6). Term limits begin on the date of the gubernatorial appointment letter. Notwithstanding the provisions of this Section 2.4, Board members on the DWDB whose board appointment is due to holding a governmental position (e.g., those listed in paragraph 4(d) of Executive Order 36) will end their terms when they leave the said positions. When a board member reaches the end of their term, they shall remain a board member until their successor is appointed by the relevant appointing authority. The Executive

Director and Chair of the Board will manage the appointments process to ensure that term appointments are staggered to ensure only a portion of the membership will expire in a given year.

Section 2.5 Proxy Voting. The DWDB allows proxy voting when a regular member cannot attend a meeting. The appointed Board member will notify the DWDB Executive Director in writing of the proxies' name and confirm the proxy may or may not vote in lieu of the member.

Section 2.6 Virtual Meetings. The DWDB may hold virtual meetings when permitted to under 29Del. C. § 10006.

Section 2.7 Travel Expense Reimbursement

Members of the Board may receive reimbursement for reasonable and necessary travel expenses incident to their duties as members of the Board to the extent funds are available and in accordance with State law.

2.8 Removal

A Board member may be recommended to the Governor for removal from the Board for cause by a majority of the Board members present at the meeting. The Governor may consider the member to have resigned if the member is absent for three consecutive regular Board meetings.

ARTICLE 3.0

GENERAL POWERS

General Powers

The business and affairs of the Board shall be managed by the Board and in between full Board meetings the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE 4.0 MEETINGS

Section 4.1 Meetings

The Board shall meet annually and additionally as needed, on dates determined by the Chair. Notice of all such meetings shall be noticed publicly in accordance with 29 Del. C. § 10004 and shall also be sent by the Executive Director of the Board to each Board member at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting. Such notice shall state the time, date, and place of meeting, and shall also state the purpose thereof. In addition, meetings will be held in compliance with 29 Del. C. § 10004.

Section 4.2 Quorum

A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a meeting. A vacant position is not counted for quorum purposes. Decisions of the Board must be approved by a majority of those members constituting a quorum at a meeting of the Board.

ARTICLE 5.0 OFFICERS

The Board officers shall consist of the Chair and such other officers as may be required and whose duties may be fixed by the Board. The Chair is appointed by the Governor. The Chair shall be a representative

of business in the state. Should there be a vacancy of an officer other than the Chair, the Chair will appoint a member to serve in that capacity until the next scheduled meeting.

ARTICLE 6.0 COMMITTEES

Section 6.1 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee will be composed of Board members who are officers of the Board, the chairpersons of committees, the Secretary of Labor, the Director of the Division of Small Business, the Secretary of the Department of Education, and the Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services. The majority of the members shall be from the private sector.

Membership shall not exceed 15. The Board Chair will serve as Chair of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall exercise all the authority of the Board during the intervals between full Board meetings. The Executive Committee will meet as requested by the Chair. The quorum and voting requirements in Section 4.2 of these bylaws apply to the Executive Committee.

Section 6.2 Other Committees

Other committees, standing or special, shall be appointed by the Chair as the Board or the Executive Committee deemed necessary to carry out the work of the Board. Except as otherwise prohibited by law and these bylaws, the Chair may invest any such committees with such powers and authority, subject to such conditions, as may be fitting.

ARTICLE 7.0

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Board shall employ an Executive Director to be responsible for day-to-day operations. Other persons or firms may also be engaged or employed to assist the Board in carrying out its programs and responsibilities. All such engagement or employment must be by action of the Chair, with the approval of the Board or the Executive Committee in between full board meetings.

ARTICLE 8.0

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Any member of the Board who is an employee or a board member of an organization applying for funds, or deemed eligible to receive Individual Training Accounts, shall disclose this fact at Board meetings and/or Committee meetings. In all such cases, these individuals shall refrain from voting upon any matter related to such contracts, or upon any matter in which he or she, or his or her, immediate family may have a financial interest. All Board members will comply with the conflict of interest provision of Section 101(f) of WIOA and the State's Code of Conduct.

ARTICLE 9.0

AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

Amendments to these bylaws shall be adopted by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Board present at a meeting held pursuant to 29 Del. C. § 10004.

i. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

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

Name	Pos	Affiliation	Explanation
Hon. John Carney	Gov	Governor	
Hon. Nicole Poore	Sen	Delaware Senate	Governor EO requires 2 from each house
Hon. Elizabeth Lockman	Sen	Delaware Senate	Governor EO requires 2 from each house
Hon. Larry Lambert	Rep	Delaware House	Governor EO requires 2 from each house
Hon. Ed Osienski	Rep	Delaware House	Governor EO requires 2 from each house
Hon. Karryl Hubbard	Sec Labor	Government	Responsible for WIOA Program(s)
Hon. Mark Holodick	Sec Ed	Government	Responsible for WIOA Program(s)
Hon. Molly Margarik	Sec HSS	Government	Responsible for WIOA Program(s)
Hon. Monroe Hudson	Dept. Of Correction	Government	Governor appointment

Kurt Foreman	Delaware Private Public Partnership	Government Economic Development	Governor EO Economic Development Program Appointment
Keith Hunt	EEO	Government State HR Department	Governor appointment
Jordan Schulties	Division of Small Business	Government Economic Development	Governor EO Small Business and Economic Development Appointment
Hon. Matt Meyer	Executive County Government	Government	Local Government
Andrea Guest	DVR	Voc Rehab. State Government	Vocational Rehabilitation Appointment
Hon. Mayor Mike Przycky	City of Wilmington	City Government	Local Government

Hon. Eugene Young	Housing	Cabinet Secretary	Responsible for WIOA Program(s)
Ian Patton	Labor	Labor	Apprenticeship Training Appointment
Mike Hackendorn	Labor	Labor	Organized Labor
Shelly Cecchett	Private	Greater Kent County	Private Business Appointment
John Chrzanowski	Private	Insurance Executive	Private Business Appointment
Barry Crozier	Private	Delaware State Chamber	Private Business Appointment
Lisa Ratliff	Private	The Little School	Private Business Appointment
Kerry Delgado	Private	Christiana Care	Private Business Appointment
Mark Stellini	Private	Assurance Media	Private Business Appointment
Nello Paoli	Private	Preferred electric	Private Business
Mike Quaranta	Private	Delaware State Chamber of Commerce	Private Business Appointment
Steve Lehm	Private	Vandermark & Lynch	Private Business Appointment
Michelle Taylor	Private	United Way	Community-based Organization
Paul Herdman	Community	Rodel	Community-based Organization
Mike Begatto	Labor	Council 81 AFSCME AFL-CIO	Organized Labor
Mark Brainard	President DelTech	DelTech	Higher Education
Patrice Gilliam Johnson	Education	DSU	Higher Education
Alice Coleman	Privet	Coleman counselling	Private Business Appointment
Alicia Bryson	Private	Wayman Fire Protection	Private Business Appointment
Scott Malfitano	Private	CSC	Private Business Appointment
Paul Bean	Private	Waste Management	Private Business Appointment
Ed Capodanno	Private	American Building Contractors	Private Business Appointment
Gerald Brady	Labor	AFL-CIO of Delaware	Organized Labor

ii. BOARD ACTIVITIES

The Delaware Workforce Development Board ensures the citizens of Delaware are provided with occupational training and employment services to help them obtain sustainable employment and achieve economic and social stability. The Board communicates with Delaware business industry partners to provide them with qualified workers to meet their employment needs.

DWDB engaged the services of Theories in Practice (TIP) Strategies to help create a strategic framework for a 5-year goal and investment approach as well as short-term priorities for a two-year period. TIP is a 25-year-old economic development and workforce development strategic planning firm. The strategic framework was a five-month project with a series of different phases, starting with the foundation phase. The foundation phase to learn as much as possible about workforce development within Delaware. The second phase was to work closely with the DWDB to build strategic operating framework to help guide investments and programs over the next 24 to 36 months. And finally concluded with technical assistance on how to implement and execute the framework. The framework was developed through surveys and interviews with workforce stakeholders, alongside three board retreats. The vision for this framework was to have the DWDB provide leadership and resources to develop a skilled workforce responsive to the evolving needs of business and communities. The framework and goals were outlined prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and was temporarily put on hold while Delaware responded to the immediate needs of our community.

In the spring/summer 2021 it was apparent that the board structure and support would be the top priority. With the retirement of both the Board Chair and Executive Director, it was necessary to work with the Governor's office to develop a succession plan for board/staff leadership and filling immediate vacancies on the board. The Chair and the Executive Director will ensure that the appointments to the board are aligned with the state's critical industries, especially those targeted by DPP.

In addition to the board structure, DWDB developed new committees to direct the work towards the goals. The new committees include:

- Executive Committee: Provides governance, leadership and direction. Approves and negotiates federally mandated performance measures.
- Performance Measures Committee: Monitors local and State performance indicators. Negotiates performance levels for annual reporting to the U. S. Department of Labor.
- Proposal Review & Certification Committee: Certifies and monitors the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and Individual Training Account (ITA) voucher system. Implements the funding guidelines and assists in the development of criteria for awarding Contract Services for Blue Collar Training Funds. Serves as lead in the Request for Proposal (RFP) process.
- Strategic Planning Committee: Strategic Planning Committee guides the DWDB's achievement of its overarching goals, objectives, priorities, and activities. It will track the progress and support the Board and its committees in the development of metrics establishing, data collection, and data reporting criteria.
- Business Engagement Committee: The Business Engagement Committee ensures that the DWDB's funding priorities are aligned with Delaware's most current workforce skills needs, as indicated by the state's business stakeholders. This committee also works to help close the skills gap experienced by employers.
- Youth Committee: The Youth Committee works with our school systems and program providers on how to build the workforce of the future. The committee will provide recommendations on life skills training, expanding work-based learning opportunities, career exploration and exposure, credential attainment, completion of high school or GED program, and making sure our graduating seniors are college and/or career ready.
- Adult Dislocated Worker Committee: The Adult Dislocated Worker Committee focus on high-demand occupation programs that train or strengthen skills of Delaware's adult and dislocated

workers, particularly in essential career tracts. It will work with providers to identify customized job training programs centered on data determined needs. In addition, this committee will investigate opportunities for businesses to “grow their own” training programs. Our priority will be to invest in businesses that provide training for current lower-level employees so they can advance within their company.

Additional Board duties include the following:

- Financial Oversight by working with fiscal agent (U.S. Department of Labor) to oversee financial matters (i.e., funding allocations, budget, training provider cost issues, etc.)
- Manage the funding approved for contracts, ITAs and training providers
- Develop processes and procedures for managing the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)
- Select providers for youth programs through the competitive bid process
- Ensure continuous improvement of training providers through continuous feedback, monitoring, and data sharing
- Maintain Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with mandatory service partners to enhance One-Stop service offerings
- Conduct oversight for One-Stop Required and Additional Partners and WIOA training activities
- Establish administrative policies and guidelines for the operation of WIOA activities and One-Stops
- Allocate State Blue Collar funds, providing oversight to DET, which facilitates the RFP and contracting processes
- Develop and submit the Delaware Annual Report to DOL, serving as the State’s point of contact for Delaware’s workforce development system
- Assists the CEO to develop performance measures and, in partnership with the CEO, negotiate the State’s performance standards
- Negotiate final Federal performance measures with DOL on behalf of Delaware
- Oversee and coordinate all State and Federal workforce development programs
- Promote private sector involvement of board members and business community
- Develop immediate corrective action plans upon learning of violations resulting from Federal compliance visits/inspections
- Develop and maintain a Management Information System to monitor eligibility, intake, performance, and compliance with contracts, the DWDB Plan, and WIOA regulations
- Establish and maintain eligibility determination, intake, assessment and referral procedures for those enrolled in WIOA programs
- Assist the Governor in developing the strategic plan for all state and Federal workforce development programs

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

A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE PROGRAMS

Assessment of Core Programs

Delaware will assess its workforce system using a complementary set of quantitative and qualitative tools. The State performance accountability system will focus on the six required WIOA common measures as applicable to each core program. As Delaware consists of a single statewide workforce investment area, State performance levels are established to promote accountability while supporting the Governor’s desire to assure that Delaware’s employment and training system is open to the hardest to serve adults and youth with special needs and barriers to employment. In setting Delaware’s performance levels, the DWDB will consider the

U.S. DOL Statistical Model, labor market conditions, past State performance trends, past national average performance trends, DOL Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) goals, and the DOL's Shared Youth Vision.

In setting performance levels, the State's goals reflect an expectation of improved performance and an effort to support the DOL in achieving the GPRA goals. Some goals may be lower than the GPRA levels. The State will assess the actual need for Adult Education services via an analysis of unemployment rates for:

- Part time vs. full time jobs;
- Family sustaining wages;
- Job placements in areas of provided training;

- Long term job areas;
- Increasing education attainment level of adult workers;
- Use of career pathways by lower-skilled workers;

- Provider performance target attainment; and
- Client satisfaction surveys

In addition, the State will mine the data captured in Delaware JobLink to determine the characteristics of those workers unable to access employment while receiving unemployment insurance.

The State will also assess its publicly-funded system looking at the two key stakeholders; businesses and job seekers. The effectiveness of Business Customer Services will be evaluated as follows

- Customer Service Surveys
- Increase of the number of employers utilizing Delaware JobLink (Saturation)
- Focus group feedback

The Board will also evaluate One-Stop programs and services serving job seekers using the following tools

- Customer Service Surveys
- Success in Seamless Referrals – This evaluation tool tracks the number of individuals who are referred to partner services that actually receive services. Primarily these referrals link affiliated sites or partner programs with the comprehensive One-Stop.
- Implementation Surveys – This tool evaluates operational changes. Among these will be the referral system and the seamless enrollment of core partner customers in Delaware JobLink. Added by a continuous feedback loop during implementation, a final assessment survey will be completed
- Federal Reports document Federal performance measures of core partners

In addition, the DOL-DET Contract Management and Monitoring unit will lead efforts to compile program performance data for interim reporting purposes that can inform the Board's program evaluations. This unit will report directly to DWDB for contracts managed by DOL-DET and other programs housed in DOL-DET. In the case of core partners, this unit will be responsible for collecting partner information to be reported to the DWDB. The core partners not housed in DOL-DET will report directly to the Board. The DWDB will schedule these presentations as part of its quarterly meetings schedule.

The DWDB leadership, partners and upper-level leadership will evaluate results and determine if adjustments are needed, the amount and type of needed adjustments, as well as timelines for each adjustment.

B. ASSESSMENT OF ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS

Assessment of One-Stop Partner Programs

A One-Stop Partner Program Committee was established to create and implement the vision for the One-Stop delivery system under WIOA for Delaware's Workforce Development System.

Monthly meetings among the partner programs focus on program performance, effectiveness, and recommendations for improvement.

Title II programs will rely on several data points to determine program quality, effectiveness, and continuous improvement. These will include:

- Quarterly desk audits to monitor program progress toward performance targets
- Technical assistance meetings with programs that are in danger of not meeting performance targets
- On site State and peer monitoring visits to ensure that programs are delivering services as described in the grant agreement, SOW, and guiding legislation
- Student surveys to evaluate service quality from a client perspective
- Staff surveys to evaluate delivery of professional development from an instructor perspective

C. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Previous Assessment Results

While Delaware did in fact conduct the usual "evaluate this service or that service" questionnaires, the big push for the First State were internal evaluations conducted by outside consultants that evaluated/mapped the totality of the Publicly Funded Workforce System's intake processes. A complete discussion of this evaluation is available in this year's pages 3 through 7 at this link <https://wib.delawareworks.com/documents/20200618/Annual%20report%20final%20py18>

[https://wib.delawareworks.com/documents/20200224/DWDB%20Project%20Report%20-%20Copy%20\(1\).pdf](https://wib.delawareworks.com/documents/20200224/DWDB%20Project%20Report%20-%20Copy%20(1).pdf) and analysis of youth service throughout Wilmington Delaware which is available at

[https://wib.delawareworks.com/documents/20200224/DWDB%20Project%20Report%20-](https://wib.delawareworks.com/documents/20200224/DWDB%20Project%20Report%20-%20Copy%20(1).pdf)

[%20Copy%20\(1\).pdf](https://wib.delawareworks.com/documents/20200224/DWDB%20Project%20Report%20-%20Copy%20(1).pdf).

These evaluations will have a significant impact on how the DWDB will conduct business as we move ahead. Of special note, is a pilot program was established with The Challenge Project in Wilmington to extend and test the findings from the Advancing Wilmington Through Workforce. If the assertions from the project bear fruit, we will realign youth services statewide to leverage lessons learned.

The DWDB conducted a detailed research project during 2019 see Appendix K for details.

Following the Advancing Wilmington Report, there were a series of strategic pilots launched to establish the "foundation of knowledge required to implement the priority recommendations" outlined in the

Advancing Wilmington Report. The first pilot, titled “Amplify,” was intended to “gain clarity” on the capacity (or infrastructure) needed to ensure that workforce development programs provide participants with access to essential wraparound services. To do so, Social Contract proposed to work through three major problem sets: 1) establish a standard of care for case management in WFD programs; 2) understand the capacity required to deliver a high standard of care; and 3) discover structural or systems solutions for how programs deliver wrap-around services to marginalized populations (i.e., learn how to reduce the amount of time and resources required of staff to effectively address the needs of their participants)

To implement the proposed pilots, Social Contract partnered with key stakeholders such as the DWDB, the Delaware Department of Labor (DOL), the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), and the Challenge Program. To encourage additional feedback, guidance, and project oversight, Social Contract helped establish the Wilmington Initiative Steering Committee. The committee consisted of individuals from state agencies, non-profit organizations, philanthropies, higher education institutions, and financial institutions, among others. The committee met on a quarterly basis in 2020. Shortly after establishing the Wilmington Initiative Committee and launching the first pilot, the COVID-19 pandemic hit Delaware. Despite a dramatic shift in priorities and resources for the state and other major stakeholders involved in the project, Social Contract continued with the first pilot with the Challenge Program. In doing so, it became clear that the Challenge Program and other workforce development providers were facing significant challenges and capacity-limitations as a result of COVID-19. For example, participant engagement decreased while barriers to stable employment increased. Like most program providers, Challenge Program staff were forced to find new ways to engage with participants and provide case management services remotely. Social Contract also had to adapt to the limitations of COVID-19 and shift course from the original proposal. After soliciting feedback from stakeholders and committee members, Social Contract focused its resources and attention primarily on Pilot One: Amplify. As such, Social Contract did not pursue Pilots Two and Three as scripted. However, elements of each were folded into Pilot One and addressed in later phases of the Wilmington Initiative.

The Wilmington Initiative evolved significantly since the DWDB commissioned the Advancing Wilmington Study (championed by the Executive Board in 2019). The project's core goals were to establish a foundation of knowledge, clarify case management capacity needs, and design potential upgrades that could lead to greater program efficiencies. The Wilmington Initiative has allowed Social Contract and the Delaware Workforce Development Board to achieve these goals. Most importantly, the project allowed for Social Contract to design and test the concept of Central, which is the backbone organization that will coordinate, implement, and sustain services to improve the capacity and effectiveness of program providers statewide.

The process mapping has already begun to bear fruit as evidenced by the Delaware’s Vocational Portal. (VOCAL).

D. EVALUATION

The DWDB conducted a detailed research project during 2019 see Appendix K for details.

The Wilmington Initiative evolved significantly since the DWDB commissioned the Advancing Wilmington Study (championed by the Executive Board in 2019). The project's core goals were to establish a foundation of knowledge, clarify case management capacity needs, and design potential upgrades that could lead to greater program efficiencies. The Wilmington Initiative has allowed Social Contract and the Delaware Workforce Development Board to achieve these goals. Most importantly, the project allowed for Social Contract to design and test the concept of Central, which is the backbone organization that will coordinate, implement, and sustain services to improve the capacity and effectiveness of program providers statewide.

DWDB received a Statewide Planning Grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration. Delaware’s Statewide Planning Grant, titled Delaware Employment Equity Project, will analyze the needs

of persistent poverty communities and formulate strategies to decrease disparities between those communities and more prosperous areas. Working with partners, DWDB will conduct a several statewide skills assessment and analysis to identify workforce development and training needs based on employer demand. The DWDB will also analyze state innovation and entrepreneurship assets, including mechanisms to access capital and equity financing to support business development and expansion, and identify gaps in access to capital for underserved rural and urban communities.

DOL, DVR and DOE

Evaluates data to determine if there is an equitable provision of services to those with barriers to employability - to reveal gaps, strengths, best practices on a local agency basis and across the system in areas such as recruitment, service design, implementation, support services.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

A. FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

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

(B)(3)

Youth Programs

DWDB provides resources to deliver a comprehensive array of youth services that focus on assisting out-of-school youth, ages 16-24 at enrollment, who have barriers to employment, and in-school youth, ages 14-21 who are in school but have barriers to completion, with one or more barriers to employment prepare for post-secondary education and employment opportunities, attain educational and/or skills training credentials, and secure employment with career/promotional opportunities.

The WIOA Title I Youth program connects eligible youth to a continuum of services and activities aimed at teaching youth to navigate the appropriate educational and workforce systems based on an established pathway.

Services are based on the unique needs of each individual participant, and includes but is not limited to:

- Creating awareness of career opportunities
- Connecting youth's skills, interests, and abilities to career opportunities
- Assistance in addressing and overcoming barriers to education and training
- A connection to education, training, and work-based learning opportunities
- Support in attaining career goals

To be eligible for WIOA Title I Youth program services, an individual must be:

- Between the ages of 16-24, not attending any school and experiencing a barrier to education or employment; or
- Between the ages of 14-21, attending school, low-income and experiencing a barrier to education or employment.

The goal of the Title I Youth program is to improve education and training outcomes for young adults for them to obtain and maintain meaningful self-sufficient employment.

DWDB's Funding Guidelines are the board's annual policy statement, which governs the expenditure of all monies (including State and Federal funds) expended by the DWDB and DOL-DET, outlining how the DWDB and its joint administrative entity, DOL-DET, disburse funds. The funding guidelines work in tandem with DOL-DET Policy 1 "Client Flow," the Demand Occupation list, the ITA manual, and the RFP process to develop a unified approach to youth activities, adult, and dislocated workers.

Examples of In-School and Out of School RFPs are available in Appendices M and N respectively.

Below is a copy of the funding guidelines.

MEMORANDUM

FOR: Record

FROM: Executive Director, Delaware Workforce Development Board (DWDB)

DATE: February 7, 2020

Policy 2020001 Funding Guidelines

1. Purpose. The Delaware Workforce Development Board (DWDB or the board) establishes these funding guidelines to supplement and complement its strategic vision. These guidelines not only establish a baseline of the service delivery for Delaware's publicly funded workforce system, but also serve as an annual policy document.

2. General. The DWDB will fund multiple types of programs throughout the year. These will include but are not limited to youth programs, occupational skills programs, post-secondary education programs, as well as targeted tier one and tier two programs. All programming must ultimately lead to employment and/or increase the likelihood of a person being employed. The DWDB will not fund enrichment programs or education programs that do not directly lead to employment. The primary driver of accessible training is the state's Demand Occupation List, which is developed by the DWDB staff, with input from the Delaware Department of Labor, Office of Occupational and Labor Market Information (OOLMI), the core partners, and training providers. The DWDB intent is to align occupational expenditures with the governor's Pathways to Prosperity initiative, while at the same time, ensuring occupations usually found at technical and vocational schools are represented. Vocational programs prepare students by containing career related skill-based competencies, appropriate credential/license, work-based learning opportunity/immersion activity developed to highlight and reinforce the program goals. The DWDB, primarily in partnership with (DOL-DET), allots funds through its contracting process and the Individual Training Account (ITA) process.

3. Priorities. The DWDB, at its annual strategic planning retreat on October 8, 2019, established these priorities for the next four years: [i]

a. **Resource Alignment.** This is initially the DWDB main effort. The Financial Oversight Committee and the DWDB executive director will lead this effort. This goal ensures the DWDB funds projects, training, and innovative programs with funds from multiple sources. To clarify, the DWDB is looking for workforce partners from multiple agencies, to combine funds to achieve goals. Whenever possible, the DWDB will look beyond WIOA Dislocated Worker, WIOA Adult, WIOA Youth, and Delaware Blue Collar funds to finance activities in the public workforce system.

b. **Pathways With an Expansion To Adult Pathways.** This is a continuation and expansion of the goal from the previous four-year plan. The DWDB intends to continue weighting this initiative by assigning bonus points and aligning the demand occupation list with this goal. The DWDB is expanding this goal to include adult pathways (often called Career Lattices). While there are sure to

be more initiatives; the DWDB embraces – funds permitting – a policy that provides an additional ITA for clients who have completed an ITA training program and demonstrated success in the industry in which they were trained.

c. **Wilmington Youth Initiative.** The Wilmington Youth Initiative Committee is a Delaware Workforce Development Board initiative established to develop policies and initiatives to mitigate youth gun violence through workforce development initiatives and wrap around services for Wilmington youth in the city’s most dangerous areas.

d. **Process Redesign.** This is a continuation of the process redesign goal from the previous four-year plan. This goal includes executing the action plan developed by the DEMEP mapping process. The initial effort in this goal is the development of a robust referral system characterized by Delaware’s VOCAL initiative and research into developing an Intelligencereferral system. Process redesign is a long-range project including a mapping of business services.

e. **Prison Re-Entry.** The DWDB recognizes returning citizens are a workforce pool, which may need expanded workforce services to achieve employment which offers unsubsidized employment which ensures a living wage and ultimately mitigates recidivism.

2. Funds Allocations. This paragraph addresses DWDB priorities. Unlike previous years, the DWDB intends to list its priorities and provide broad general guidance relative to funding these priorities. The DWDB will rely on the Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Employment to make recommendations on the best way to fund priorities.

a. **Initial Allocation Recommendations.** RFP allocation recommendations will go to the DWDB Proposal Review and Certification Committee and the DWDB Executive Committee, which will review DOL-DET recommended initial funding allotments. The board is free to accept or reject, in whole or in part, the recommendations. DOL-DET (and partners as appropriate) will build work experience funds into allocation projection.

b. **Wilmington Youth Initiative.** DOL-DET will develop recommendations for funding at least one and no more than three pilot programs for the Wilmington Youth Initiative and initiate these programs as soon as possible, but no later than June 2020. The DWDB envisions this initiative funded through multiple agencies and sources (e.g., Train, Blue Collar, TANF), with DOL-DET being the coordinating arm. The DWDB has great interest in capturing lessons learned and directs the authors of the RFP to make this a key performance measure. At the completion of any pilot, the Wilmington Youth Initiative Committee will make recommendations to the DWDB on whether to expand, shrink, or end the Wilmington Youth Initiative. The DWDB expects this recommendation at the next DWDB meeting after the pilot ends.

c. **Pathways Expanding to Adult Pathways.** The DWDB is committed to pathways and the expansion of pathways for adult populations. As an initial step the board directs the DWDB staff to continue sculpting the Demand Occupation List to support occupations along approved pathways. The DWDB supports the DOL-DET “Fast Track Policy,” dated October 7, 2019, and revised November 15, 2019. This policy allows additional ITA training for a person who successfully completes an initial ITA training and achieves and maintains employment in an industry associated

d. with the ITA training. The DWDB asks DOE, DSS, and DOL-DET to coordinate for up to \$40,000 to conduct a landscape analysis of adult training programs.

e. **Process Redesign.** The initial effort in this goal is the development of a robust referral system characterized by Delaware’s VOCAL initiative and research into developing a an Artificial Intelligence (AI) referral system. Process redesign is a long-range project including a mapping of business services.

f. **Youth.** There is a strong possibility US DOL will end the current waiver, giving Delaware the authority to split youth money 50% In School and 50% Out of school. DOL-DET and DWDB staff will develop contingency plans in case the split goes back to 25% for ISY and 75% for OSY. Planning will include NO emergency increase in Blue Collar allocations for ISY program beyond the

30% listed in paragraph 4f below.

g. **Youth. In School Training.** The DWDB directs that Blue Collar contributions to In-School-Youth programs do not exceed 30 percent of any contract.

h. **Youth. Out of School.** The DWDB is satisfied with the current funding of these contracts.

i. **Prison Reentry.** Although this is not currently a specific goal for the Combined Four-Year State Plan, The DWDB believes the urgency of this issue will create opportunities and challenges that will need immediate addressing. The DWDB directs the core partners to begin contingency planning to serve this population. This planning should include the use of funding from multiple sources and the aggressive researching of grant opportunities using federal, state, Private, and philanthropic sources.

4. General Guidance. The DWDB and DOL-DET deliver youth services primarily by soliciting proposals from providers for both In-School-Youth and Out-of-School-Youth programming. The DWDB may also solicit proposals for adult and dislocated worker programming. The contract may be a mix of Federal WIOA funds, state Blue Collar Funds, and other funds which may become available through resource alignment activities. Even though the DWDB usually issues an RFP in early January for most of its contract services, the DWDB may issue other RFPs throughout the year as needed. It is the DWDB intent that partners and representatives of different agencies contribute and “braid” funds whenever possible when developing Requests for Proposal (RFP). The DWDB issues the following guidance.

a. The DWDB approves the RFP process and delegates authority to the Consolidation Committee to establish a priority list for funding programs should additional funds become available.

b. The Executive Director of the DWDB and the Director of the DOL-DET will reallocate returned funds to programs who are meeting or exceeding performance measures. Returned funds will not be reallocated to programs not meeting their measures as outlined in current contracts. The DWDB envisions reallocations will be proportional between successful programs. However, the DWDB Executive Director and the DOL-DET Director have latitude to reallocate funds disproportionately if there is an urgent need by a provide. If monies other than returned funds become available, an additional RFP will be issued.

c. Panels have the discretion to fund proposals in whole, or in part, or not at all. When funding programs, RFP panels will – to the greatest extent possible – fund programs in full and not divide limited funds between programs.

d. No more than fifty percent of the Blue-Collar Funds may be used for Youth Programs. The remaining Blue-Collar funds will be used to fund adult training program and to underwrite such other innovative training programs the board finds appropriate.

e. Year – to – Year RFP Process. The board directs the DWDB staff to annually update “The Steps To RFP Success” Letter of Instruction prior to the December Proposal Review Certification Committee (PRCC) meeting and the Executive Committee meeting.

5. Awarding Bonus Points for RFP Submissions. There is only one change to the DWDB bonus point allocation for RFP submissions. The Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training may add an additional category worth five bonus points without

DWDB approval. These bonus points will be listed in the RFP. The DWDB believes the bonus point allocation for Promise Communities and Pathways is still relevant.

a. **Promise Communities.** Promise communities are defined as those underserved communities in which:

- 28.9 % of the children live in poverty;
- 44.9% of residents are considered low income;
- 37.3% of the children are proficient in reading by 3rd grade;
- 18.2% of the population 25 and over have a HS diploma;
- 10% unemployed; and
- 66.5% receive some form of public assistance

The DWDB further defines promise communities as these geographic areas/zip codes:

Promise Community	Zip Codes	*Low Income Population
City - Eastside	19801, 19802	19,875
City - Westside	19805	19,052
NCC - Rte 40	19701, 19702	19,389
NCC - Rte 9	19720	20,086
Kent - North	19901,19904,19977	30,238
Kent - South	19934, 19943,19952	11,596
Sussex - West	19933, 19956, 19973	17,659
To Sussex - Central	19947, 19966	16,111
8	17	154,006

b. Pathways. The DWDB has fully embraced the pathways model and believes skills taught at the state’s educational and vocational/technical institutions provide relevant pathways. The DWDB generally defines pathways as a set of curricula focused on a specific industry-based “pathway,” paired with opportunities to gain valuable workplace experience while still in highschool, which helps students graduate with a head start on a college degree, or gain qualifications needed to go to work immediately.

Pathways apply to Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker training program funding. The ultimate goal for any pathways program is mid-wage employment. A career pathway is a non-duplicative sequence of academic and technical courses that includes secondary- and postsecondary-level content and opportunities for participants to apply knowledge in the classroom and the workplace. Career pathways culminate in industry-based credentials and/or postsecondary degrees and have the following characteristics. The Common Elements of Career Pathways are:

- **Sector-Based Engagement Strategies:** Education and training aligns with the academic and technical skills needed by Delaware employers. Employer engagement occurs within targeted industry sectors, representing high-growth potential to the state or regional economies, to determine prerequisite employment and career progression skill requirements for in-demand occupations.
- **Stackable Educational and Training Options:** Education and training includes the full range of secondary, adult education, and postsecondary education programs, including registered

apprenticeships. Career pathways are a non-duplicative progression of courses clearly articulated from one level of instruction to the next and provide opportunities to earn high school credit, adult basic education, and postsecondary credit, culminating in industry-recognized credentials and/or an associate or bachelor's degree.

- Contextualized Learning: Education and training focuses on academic and technical content. Curricula and instructional strategies are designed to engage employers through authentic work experiences and to help youth and adults attain work-readiness skills.
- Accelerated/Integrated Education and Training: Career pathways combine occupational skill training with adult education services, give credit for prior learning, offer remedial services as needed, and apply strategies that accelerate the educational and career advancement of youth and adults.
- Industry-recognized Credentials: Education and training programs lead to the attainment of industry-recognized credentials and/or an associate or bachelor's degree that has value in the labor market.
- Multiple Entry and Exit Points: Career pathways provide participants with opportunities to transition between formalized education and training programs and competitive employment, thus allowing participants of varying skill levels to pursue education or training to enter or advance in a specific sector or occupational field.
- Wraparound Services: Career pathways incorporate academic and career counseling and support services. Services are targeted at points of transition, provide individualized career plans, and support communities that have poverty rates. Further, career pathways provide supports for nontraditional learners and individuals with barriers to employment.

6. Requests For Proposal (RFP) Procedures. This paragraph presents an overview of some of this year's most significant changes:

- a. The DWDB delegates the authority to approve funding to the Consolidation Committee; a member of the executive committee will chair the Consolidation Committee.
- b. The RFP process will consist of two rounds; a written review and an oral clarification presentation. The submitted written proposal is worth 80 percent of the total score and the oral clarification presentation is worth 20 percent of the total score.
- c. The DWDB will hold a single consolidation day at an offsite venue. The DWDB staff will coordinate logistics for the event. [ii]
- d. The DWDB will award one-year contracts, with automatic one-year renewal for those contracts meeting performance measures. The contracting will evaluate a contract whose training periods extend beyond a program year using historic performance or other "reasonable" criteria established by the DOL-DET contracting team. The DWDB may – at its discretion – extend contracts.
- e. RFP Panels will award bonus points as listed below.
 1. Promise Communities -- 10 Bonus Points
 2. Pathways Programs -- 6 Bonus Points
 3. Level resources – 5 Bonus Points

4. Five points at the discretion of the DOL-DET

j. The DOL-DET, in partnership with DWDB, will conduct a mandatory proposer orientation.

7. Contract guidance. This section issues guidance for all contracts.

a. To the extent possible, definitions provided in the federal law and regulations are the definitions for all sources of funds, including Blue Collar, except the definition of eligibility.

b. The DWDB may, at its discretion, establish local performance measures for specific populations (e.g. Re-entry, underserved youth, and adults) when using state dollars. The DWDB will ensure local performance measures are established in an RFP document as appropriate.

c. Prior to executing a contract, proposers without current contracts, will provide a copy of their most recent tax return, or a copy of a prepared financial statement signed by a third-party financial professional to establish their fiscal soundness and eligibility. In the event a financial statement is too complicated for a layman's analysis, the Financial Oversight committee will evaluate the document.

d. All Providers will offer training which provides the client with the opportunity to earn a Diploma, or a GED, or Industry Recognized Certificate as defined in USDOL TEGl 10-16,

e. Basic language and numeric skills training, when appropriate, will be provided concurrently with skills training. As part of the RFP, proposers will be asked to describe their plan to meet this requirement.

f. The DWDB requires programs with a combination of activities; it prefers programs combining classroom training including internship, and/or clinical, and Participants shall be paid for all work experiences actual work experience.

g. Contractors will provide retention services, as necessary, including during the day and evening to meet performance measures for 12 months following exit except for Adult Blue Collar. Adult Blue-Collar exits will require 6 months of follow-up.

h. The proposal rating criteria will favor those proposals that demonstrate the ability to operate quality, cost effective training programs that result in high placement rates, long term job retention, and credential attainment. Criteria may be expanded from time-to-time to reflect board priorities.

i. DWDB will strive to provide training based on each county's needs and in reasonable proportion to the population. This is a goal, not a hard and fast rule; submissions by geographic area may not support this.

j. Program providers shall define their staff qualifications in the proposal for any position for which they are requesting funding.

k. Proposers will ensure clients use Delaware Job Link to find a job. This will include a current updated resume built in the Delaware Job Link system.

l. Blue Collar adult training contracts will be hybrid. The normal standard for the hybrid is to fund as a 60% Cost Reimbursement and a 40% Performance Based contract.

m. DOL-DET and core partners will ensure all work experience requirements are paid.

8. Specific Youth Contract Guidance. This section provides general guidance on all youth contractors/proposers

n. Youth programs will be contracted. Proposals will be solicited for Out-of-School Youth and In-School Youth programs.

o. In-School and Out-of-School Youth programs may be funded with Blue Collar and/or WIOA funds.

p. Youth proposers will identify the credential obtained when a program is successfully completed.

q. The Youth Council will provide oversight for contracted youth programs on behalf of the

board.

r. A member of the Youth Council will staff the youth RFP panels.

s. Contracted youth programs will:

1. Provide an objective assessment of the academic levels, skill levels, and service needs of each participant, and developmental needs of such participant, for identifying appropriate services and career pathways for participants.

2. Develop service strategies for each participant that are directly linked to one or more of the indicators of performance that shall identify career pathways that include education and employment goals (including in appropriate circumstances, nontraditional employment), and appropriate services for the participant considering the assessment conducted.

3. Provide preparation for postsecondary educational and training opportunities.

4. Provide strong linkages between academic instruction and occupational education that lead to the attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials.

5. Prepare clients for unsubsidized employment opportunities, in appropriate cases.

6. Develop activities leading to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or a recognized postsecondary credential.

7. Create effective connections to employers, including small employers, in in-demand industry sectors and occupations of the local and regional labor markets.

8. Provide at least twenty – five percent of their allocation to provide paid work experience activities.

t. Funded youth providers are not required to directly provide all program elements. All funded providers are required to ensure youth have access to all program elements:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or

2. for a recognized postsecondary credential.

3. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate.

4. Paid work experience that has as a component academic and occupational education, which may include – (i) summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year; (ii) pre-apprenticeship programs; (iii) internships and job shadowing; and (iv) on-the-job training opportunities.

5. Occupational skill training, which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations.

6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate.

7. Supportive services.

8. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months.

9. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate.

10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate.

11. Financial literacy education.
12. Entrepreneurial skills training.
13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services.
14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.
15. Education offered concurrently with – and in the same context as – workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

9. Performance Measures. The DWDB will only approve and/or renew ITA programs which meet or exceed Delaware’s federally mandated performance measures. For Credit programs at open enrollment degree granting institutions are exempt from the credential attainment requirement measure when applying for initial inclusion on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). For credit programs at degree granting institution on the ETPL will meet all performance measures when applying for subsequent renewal. Even so, the DWDB recognizes that some priority populations may require special considerations. The DWDB may at its discretion – on a case-by-case basis – allow providers serving targeted population some latitude

during initial eligibility determination and subsequent renewal. Delaware’s Performance Measures are:

Adult and Blue-Collar Measures

Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after exit	74.5%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarters after exit	74.7%
Median Earns 2 nd quarter after exit	\$5,300
Credential Attainment	53.8%
Measurable Skills Gain	21.3%

Dislocated Worker

Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after exit	77.4%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarters after exit	77.5%
Median Earns 2 nd quarter after exit	\$6,300
Credential Attainment	50%
Measurable Skills Gain	22.1%

Youth Measures

Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after exit	67.5%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarters after exit	59.5%
Median Earns 2 nd quarter after exit	\$2,236
Credential Attainment	77%
Measurable Skills Gain	52.5%

10. ITA General Rules. This paragraph provides general policy guidance.

- a. The DWDB-approved ITA process manual will govern the steps for initial eligibility and subsequent renewal of providers seeking inclusion or maintaining their status on the Eligible Training Provider List.
- b. The DWDB Management Analyst will annually update the ITA Manual in May for approval by the Proposal Review and Certification Committee and the Executive Committee in June of each year.
- c. American Job Centers, when appropriate, will assess career service applicants in reading and math skills.
- d. American Job Center staff will determine and document eligibility for individuals involved in a career/training service.
- e. Any local American Job Center office providing federal services that fails to achieve 85% of its goal in any year may be required to have a correction action plan.

9. I am the point of contact for this policy at 302-761-8163 or William.potter@delaware.gov.

William J. Potter

Executive Director

Delaware Workforce Development Board

Delaware's Publicly funded workforce system contracts for youth services through an exhaustive RFP process which ensures all 14 required elements are present.

Annually Delaware releases a solicitation for Out-of-School and In-School Youth training providers. Please see the RFP examples in Appendices M and N.

Below is the In School RFP which supplements the funding guidelines. This is an abridged copy of the document.

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR PROFESSIONAL
SERVICES IN SCHOOL YOUTH PROGRAMS
ISSUED BY DELAWARE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
BOARD RFP NUMBER LAB 18 001-INSCHTRNG
Program Year 2018
July 1, 2018-June 30, 2020**

I. Overview

The State of Delaware, Delaware Workforce Development Board (“DWDB” or the “State of Delaware”) seeks professional services to provide high quality programming for in school youth with barriers to secondary school completion, employment and post-secondary enrollment.

Programs should include career exploration and guidance, comprehensive guidance and counseling, continuing support for educational attainment, and opportunities for occupational skills training in in-demand industries and occupations. Programs should be designed to culminate with a good job along a career pathway and/or enrollment in postsecondary education. This request for proposals (“RFP”) is issued pursuant to 29 *Del. C.* §§ 6981 and 6982.

The proposed schedule of events subject to the RFP is outlined below:

Public Notice: February 12, 2018

Pre-Bid Meeting, **Mandatory: March 7, 2018 at 9:00 AM-12:00PM**

Deadline for Questions: March 14, 2018,

Response to Questions Posted: March 21, 2018

Deadline for Receipt of Proposals March 29, 2018, at 1:00 PM

Oral Presentations and Clarification: Week of April 30th

DWDB Meeting: May 15, 2018

(Funding Recommendation Vote)

Estimated Notification of Award: Date: May 21, 2018

E. Linkage Teams

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

Below is an excerpt of the Adult RFP. A full copy of the documents is available at Appendix H.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR PROFESSIONAL
SERVICES ADULT OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING
PROGRAMS ISSUED BY DELAWARE WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT BOARD RFP NUMBER LAB 18 001-
ADULTTRNG

Program Year 2018

July 1, 2018-June 30, 2020

I. Overview

The State of Delaware, Delaware Workforce Development Board (“DWDB” or the “State of Delaware”) seeks professional services to provide high quality occupational skills training programs for adult career entrants or adult career changers that lead to a credential and sustainable employment in the identified in-demand occupations. Programs will support the attainment of the Performance Measures identified below. This request for proposals (“RFP”) is issued pursuant to 29 *Del. C.* §§ 6981 and 6982.

The proposed schedule of events subject to the RFP is outlined below:

Public Notice: February 12, 2018

Pre-Bid Meeting, **Mandatory: March 6, 2018, at 9:00 AM-12:00PM**

Deadline for Questions: March 14, 2018

Response to Questions Posted: March 21, 2018

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Mandatory Prebid Meeting

A mandatory pre-bid meeting has been scheduled for March 6, 2018, 9:00 AM-12:00 PM. The meeting will take place at Delaware Technical Community College, Terry Campus, 100 Campus Drive Dover, DE 19904 in the Education and Technology Building, Room 741 A/B. This is a mandatory meeting. In the event the State of Delaware is closed or has weather-related delays that impact the scheduled Pre-bid meeting, a make-up date is scheduled for March 15, 2018, 9:00 AM-12:00 PM at the Buena Vista Conference Center located at 661 South DuPont Highway New Castle, DE 19720. If a Provider does not attend this meeting, they shall be disqualified and shall not be considered for further evaluation. The pre-bid meeting is very important for applicants and those who desire a compliant submission. This meeting will serve to explain the RFP, the RFP process, and address any questions or concerns from potential bidders. To register, email DWDBDETCContracting@state.de.us with your name, organization, contact phone number and email, and number of people attending. You do not have to register to attend, but attendance is mandatory.

II. Scope of Services

A. Funding

The source of funds for this solicitation is the Delaware Blue Collar Jobs Development Act (Blue Collar). The anticipated aggregate amount for BC funding available for all programs to be funded through this RFP is \$1,250,000. The available funding will support multiple training programs. The funding level identified is an estimate, based on historical information. The estimate is subject to change without notice. This is the anticipated amount for one (1) year. It is expected that the same amount will be available for the second year and Providers should propose services covering a two (2) year timeframe and budget to do so.

B. Population

Proposers can target specific populations and should identify them in their proposal(s), but at a minimum, the population served will be:

- a. 18 years or older;
- b. Eligible to work in the United States;
- c. Focused on Delaware Residents; and
- d. Focused on those with barriers to employment and/or barriers to career advancement.

All participants served must be determined and documented as eligible prior to enrolling by the Provider in accordance with the Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training's (DET) policies.

C. Program Design

The intent of this RFP is to fund programs that provide wrap around services that enable adults to obtain the academic, occupational, and work readiness (soft) skills in order to obtain or advance in employment in in-demand occupations. The in-demand occupations can be found in Appendix A. Requests to provide training leading to occupations not found on the in-demand [PW(1)] lists may be made. Proposals for occupational skills training in occupations not targeted on the in-demand occupations list are permissible with comprehensive documentation supporting the need for training. The supportive documentation must accompany the proposal.

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

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

Job seekers, especially those with barriers to employment, must be prepared with training and skills necessary to be included in Delaware's workforce. DWDB provides resources to serve individuals and helps employers meet their workforce needs. It enables workers to obtain good jobs by providing them with job search assistance and training opportunities.

The WIOA Title I, Adult program serves individuals who are age 18 and older, entitled to work in the United States, and those who have met selective service requirements if applicable. Priority of service is granted to Veterans and eligible spouses, public assistance recipients and other low-income individuals, as well as individuals who are basic skills deficient and those with barriers to employment.

The goal of the Title I adult program is to provide career and training services to increase employability and remove barriers to employment. Career and training services include, but are not limited to, career counseling and planning, job search and placement assistance, job readiness training, on-the-job training, skill upgrading and retraining, transitional employment, adult education and literacy activities, and secondary and postsecondary education and training programs.

Delaware intends to focus training that is designed to assist workers and their families who have been impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. Industry focus will be based on high, in-demand occupations. Supportive services will also be available for individual needs to include

transportation, childcare, tools, uniforms, and one-time personal expenses payment. Training will include certificate and degree training programs.

- Focus on re-entrants, justice involved individuals to include wrap around and OJT.
- Focus on youth, women, minorities, veterans, GED / literacy needs, and individuals below poverty level.

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

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

The WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker program serves adults aged 18 or over who have been or will be dislocated from employment due to job loss, a mass layoff, or permanent business closure. The program also serves qualified displaced homemakers, spouses of members of the Armed Forces and previously self-employed individuals.

The goal of the Title I Dislocated Worker program is to assist individuals to reenter the workforce by providing career and training services. Career and training services include, but are not limited to, career counseling and planning, job search and placement assistance, job readiness training, on-the-job training, skill upgrading and retraining, transitional employment, adult education and literacy activities, and secondary and post-secondary education and training programs.

Intensive/Training - Policy 1 Client Flow

The following table indicates the behavioral steps and requires Delaware Job Link entry for individuals on the Intensive Services/Training path:

- Worker Function DJL Function Area Determine if client already has an existing account Search DJL.
- One-Stop Core Registration Create a New Account or Update an Existing Account.
- One-Stop Core Create a Labor Exchange Enrollment Opens Job Service Link under Program Registrations.
- One-Stop Core Conduct Assessment Interview Enter Services under Service & Training (S&T) Plan Link.
- Client watches a video explaining DET services and is given a Green Sheet with available services – client makes self determination as to whether they are interested in intensive services or training.
- *During COVID clients were assisted over the phone, via email or through Zoom sessions and DET staff could provide instruction on how to complete the DJL registration or complete the DJL registration with the client by asking the client the DJL registration questions. Clients would then be given a briefing to explain DET services or the link for clients to watch DET services video. Client would then determine whether they are interested in intensive services or training.*
- One-Stop Core Demographic Verification Client inquiries about Intensive Services/Training LE Staff verifies Demographic information is correct.
- *During COVID the assessment testing for the CASAS testing was stopped due to DET not having the ability to remotely proctor the test for clients. Clients were provided with other assessment tests to include CareerScope and/or DET did permit testing results from the provider to determine eligibility for admission into a ITA program.*
- *One-Stop Core Assessment-Testing LE staff will schedule client for an assessment test (CareerScope). One-Stop Core Assessment-Testing is completed after client completes the CareerScope.*

- ***No referrals were entered for Career Planning Workshops during Covid-19. This step will be reassessed and re-implemented.***
- Individuals who are interested in training/intensive services complete a Service Proposal and are scheduled to meet with a case manager.
- ***All activities during Covid were completed remotely with case manager conducting Zoom meetings to meet with client and paperwork and documentation was being submitted to the case manager from client via fax or email.***
- One-Stop Core Meeting with Case Manager - Review Eligibility (Eligibility date is the date eligibility was determined)
- Case Manager - At this point, case manager needs to confirm Demographics Information. When necessary, documentation to support eligibility is available, the case manager can check the validation box.
- This opens the Workforce Investment Act Link – click on the link and continue to the Add Enrollment screen. Intensive Training

Eligibility Determination Case Manager – Add Service – Eligibility Determination - Enter in the Service & Training (S&T) Plan – Status should reflect Completed. The estimated start, actual start date, estimated end, and actual end date should be the same as the Eligibility and Enrollment date. Intensive Training

Complete an Assessment/Planning Service Case Manager - Add Service – Assessment/Planning Service - Enter in the Service & Training (S&T) Plan – Status should reflect In-Progress. The estimated and actual start dates should be the same as the Eligibility and Enrollment date. The estimated end date should be the tentative start date of training. Please Note: When adding the Assessment & Planning Service, it is only necessary to select a Service Type, enter “DOL / DET” in the Training Agent ID field, select a Status, and complete the appropriate Date fields. The rest of the information on the screen is automatically populated by the system when the service is saved.

Intensive Training

Create the Individual Service Strategy/ Employment Development Plan; Client and Case Manager Sign the ISS/Training Plan Case Manager - Insert a Program Note on the WIA Program Details Screen stating ISS can be found in Participant File and the Training Plan can be found on the Universal Screen – In Uploaded Documents

Intensive Training

Case Manager forwards signed ISS to Supervisor – Supervisor signs off on the ISS. Supervisor – will Approve the Enrollment through their Pending Enrollment List Intensive Training

Complete an Occupational Skills Training Service or a Job Search and Placement Assistance (for those clients who do not want Training scroll down to Client begins Job Search and Placement Assistance If Training is chosen Case Manager - Add Service – Occupational Skills Training Service (OST)-Enter in the Service & Training (S&T) Plan – Status should reflect Proposed. Case Manager will be responsible for creating a budget. If it is a new client a paper budget will be created. If it's a returning client a budget can be created in the system. Please Note: When adding an OST, click on the Training Providers Link at the top of the screen, search for the appropriate Provider and Program, and click on the Add to Training Plan Link at the bottom of the Program screen - this automatically adds the provider and program information to the Service Details screen. The estimated start date should be the tentative training start date. The estimated end date should be the tentative end date of the semester or program.

Intensive Training

Case Manager goes into DJL and creates the budget Existing Client Returns for Additional Funding (OST's need to be created for those with full Pell grants) Client brings copy of Student Schedule/Bill and

book estimates to case manager. Case manager creates new S&T for OST as proposed for the upcoming semester and creates the budget. Supervisor reviews request and either approves or returns. If PELL grant or other grant is received, case manager enters grant information in the WIOA Enrollment under the Educational Grant Link Confirm client start training The case manager will change the OST status from Proposed to In- Progress Supervisor will process payment. The case manager will go into the existing Assessment/Planning Service and insert an Actual End Date and change Status to Completed Case Manager will e-mail supervisor and provider to confirm client did started training. Refer to Policy 15 – Requirements for Entering an OST Intensive Training Supportive Service Request Case Manager - add Service – Supportive Services – enter in the S&T Plan as completed each time a supportive service payment is approved. Confirm client didn't start training Case Manager will e-mail supervisor and provider to confirm client did not started training. A Program Note on the WIOA Program Details Screen will also be entered then Supervisor can move forward with the de-obligation of funds. Case Manager will go into the existing Assessment/Planning Service and insert an Actual End Date and change Status to Completed. Case Manager will go into the existing Occupational Skills Service and insert an Actual End Date and change Status to Failed to Report. Case Manager - add Service – Job Search and Placement Assistance – enter in the S&T Plan the estimated start, actual start date, estimated end, and actual end date should be the same date. Refer to IJS Policy. Intensive Training

Complete contacts while client is in OST or in Job Search and Placement Assistance Case Manager - Enter updates in the Program Notes on the WIA Program Details screen. Intensive Training

Confirms completion of Training

Obtain verification of Credential Case Manager - Go into the existing Occupational Skills Training Service and insert an Actual End Date and change Status to Completed Enter details on the WIOA Program Detail Screen (Outcomes, Third Quarter After Exit Links). Intensive Training

Client begins Job Search and Placement Assistance Add Service – Job Search and Placement Assistance – enter in the S&T Plan. The estimated start, actual start, estimated end, and actual end should reflect the same date. If a training client, all dates should reflect the day after the training completion date. Refer to IJS Policy All services provided to client during the job search phase should be entered with appropriate S&T under the LE Enrollment Link. Program Notes documenting services should continue under the WIOA Program Detail Screen. Intensive Training

Confirm Job Placement

Case Manager - Enter job placement details under the Job Placement Link on the Case Details Screen. Add

Nothing System generates Exit -90 days after the last entered estimated end or actual end date of last service (typically Job Search and Placement Assistance) if no other activity is inputted. Intensive Training

Place placement information, wage information, credential information in folder Case Manager - after the case exits, Complete Outcome and Wages Information on the WIA Program Detail Screen. Intensive Training

General Rules Associated with Client Flow: Every service for client, every contact with the client, etc., should be notated through the completion of a program note in DJL. Notes should be created on the WIA Program Details Screen. Effective Date: June 1, 2009 Revised Date: August 14, 2009 Revised Date: May 17, 2010 Revised Date: June 4, 2010 Revised Date: September 9, 2010 Revised Date: July 14, 2011 Revised Date: July 18, 2012 Revised Date: October 12, 2012 Revised Date: January 30, 2013 Revised Date: May 1, 2013 Revised Date: June 13, 2013 Revised Date: December 17, 2013 Revised Date: February 14, 2014 Revised Date: August 20, 2014

[The Delaware Workforce Development Board funding guidelines are an annual policy statement](#) (ctrl+click to access), which is reviewed and updated every November, and approved by the board, the guidelines are the policy document that governs the expenditure of all monies (including State and Federal funds) used by the DWDB and DOL-DET. Not only that, the funding guidelines are one of several foundational documents outlining how the DWDB and its Joint administrative entity disburse funds.

B. FOR TITLE II

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

The Delaware Department of Education receives Title II allocations from USDOE/OCTAE to provide Adult Education and Family Literacy programming. Through a competitive multi-year "Request for Proposal" process available on the Delaware Department of Education and the State of Delaware Bid Solicitation sites, potential providers can apply for funding through responding to standardized questions and activities that must be submitted by a specific date. As part of the proposal, providers must answer questions and share data regarding their past experiences in providing the types of services that align with the proposal request. Based on a review of the "past experience" responses, applicants are deemed to have demonstrated effectiveness or not. Only applications that have proven demonstrated effectiveness will continue with a review of the remaining RFP responses. A panel of community stakeholders review, score (based on the scoring rubric provided in the RFP) and recommend funding levels. Depending on the type of provider receiving funding, funding may be provided through sub- grants and/or contracts. Proposal cycles span four years - Year One is the RFP Year and Years 2,3 and 4 funding is provided through a "Continuation of Services" application which summarizes the past year's performance, highlights and challenges.

ii. DESCRIBE HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE DIRECT AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS TO APPLY AND COMPETE FOR FUNDS AND HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE THAT IT IS USING THE SAME GRANT OR CONTRACT ANNOUNCEMENT AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS

The eligible agency is the Delaware Department of Education. Direct and equitable access to all eligible providers to apply and compete for funds is ensured through the posting of the "Request for Proposal" application on the State of Delaware Bid Solicitation Website. This website is the state's central repository across all three branches of state government that have open Requests for Information, Request for Quote, Invitation to Bid and/or Request for Proposal. The website provides a centralized location to find state RFIs, ITB, and RFPs without requiring know of the specific structure of state government. The RFP is also posted on the DDOE's website under its Bid Solicitation Directory.

DDOE follows the state's Office of Management and Budget regulations mandating standardized proposals and application processes. All solicitations, both current, closed and not awarded are posted on the Delaware Bid Solicitation Website along with the names of the vendors who applied, and vendor bid documents, and the names of vendors who were awarded funding. This same information is also hosted on the DDOE Bid Solicitation Directory website.

C. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division for the Visually Impaired have signed a Memorandum of Understanding that divides the vocational rehabilitation funding in Delaware. The money is proportioned based on the population of individuals with significant visual loss and staff necessary to provide equitable services to the individuals who require vocational rehabilitation services. The current allocation to the Division for the Visually Impaired is approximately 14% of the overall budget.

6. PROGRAM DATA

A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

i. Interoperability of Management Information Systems

Delaware is dedicated to improving the interoperability of its management information system. We are in the planning phase of improving this and it has our attention.

Please note, at the October 2019 strategic planning retreat this was one of the goals the state WIOA leadership partners presented as an area of emphasis. Interoperability was also an opportunity for improvement determined by the process business mapping conducted in 2019 and presented to the board at the same retreat.

Delaware plans to finalize its plans (COVID-19 allowing) and begin fielding substantial improvement in the next 36 months.

Even so, Delaware has aligned and integrated the data and performance for the following programs:

WIOA Adults • WIOA Dislocated Workers • WIOA Youth • WIOA National Programs • Wagner-Peyser • Trade Adjustment Assistance • TANF Employment and Training • Jobs for Veterans State Grants.

Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws are interfaced with JobLink. The remaining core partners, Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education, have individual electronic systems as does the remaining required One-Stop partners: Job Corp, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Career and Technical Education programs at the post-secondary level, employment and training programs carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Second Chance. The Board continues to look for opportunities for further alignment.

At a minimum, aggregated wage data and employment data will be provided to the two partners not fully aligned in JobLink. The registration of all work ready individuals in JobLink will assist this effort but other means of providing data such as using a flat file. The integrity of the Unemployment Insurance wage data will be maintained.

ii. Streamline Services and Tracking

This has been a major undertaking by the Delaware Workforce Development Board and the WIOA State Leadership Team. As has been described in previous sections, Delaware has taken great strides to improve streamlining and intake by bringing in a consultant from the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) and conducting a business process mapping of the Delaware's intake and other systems. Both Title II and Title IV are key players in this process.

The DJL provides for a single information system serving all DOL programs housed within Delaware's four One-Stop Career Centers: Youth, Adults, Dislocated Workers, Wagner-Peyser

Labor Exchange, Local Veterans Employment Representative Program, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program, Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Program, Alien Labor Certification, Trade Act, and UI Profiling Reemployment Services, as well as the State Blue Collar. Customers of other core One-Stop partners seeking services through the One-Stop Career Centers are offered appropriate services and tracked as they receive services.

In addition, DJL offers employers and job seekers, staff, and training providers seamless self-service access to a wide range of employment and training services and information, including the DWDB's interactive list of Certified ITA Providers and Courses; Delaware's Job Bank; Delaware's Resume Talent Bank; One-Stop Career Center services, bulletins, and links to related sites; as well as links to national electronic workforce information tools such as O*Net Online.

Interfaces are possible with all core programs to maximize the efficient exchange of common data elements. Future plans to make these connections and establish data interfaces are pending final regulations.

iii. Explain how the State board will assist the governor in aligning technology

Eliminating duplicate data collection from customers to streamline the customer experience has been a major goal. All partners have access to JobLink and are able to use it to track customer participation. The referral system tracks referred individuals through partner programs using JobLink. Since JobLink includes the entire job seeker population, including customers who participate in most of the mandatory programs, the interface with unemployment insurance as well as its electronic presence and four full-service One-Stops, offers many opportunities for linkages. Although the DWDB planned to assist the Governor in aligning technology and data systems across mandatory One-Stop partner programs in accordance with WIOA legislation and Federal guidance by establishing a subcommittee, the State Board made instead a mid-course correction and chose to conduct a process redesign and business mapping of the publicly funded workforce system.

It is important to note the Board ensured the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) was added to the recently updated gubernatorial Executive Order.

The Strategic Planning committee will guide the overarching goals, objectives, priorities, and activities of the board. It will track the progress and support the Board and its committees in the development of metrics establishing, data collection, and data reporting criteria. A focus area for this committee will be technology, how to establish best practices, what technology would the board and the workforce system use for better alignment, and how to remove burdens for participants in the system.

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

Delaware JobLink (DJL) is part of America's JobLink Alliance (AJLA), a consortium of more than eight states. AJLA has a documented history of being able to meet deadlines and Federal reporting requirements as required by DOL. Both Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education have national systems targeting their programs. These programs do not produce as broad a selection of Federal reports as AJLA but they also have a history of meeting deadlines and producing reports. AJLA, contains the Delaware Approved Provider list currently and will be able to produce the required reports.

The NextGen conversion in February 2021 implemented many new features. DJL now has a more modern and enhanced look of the DJL system that is more user-friendly. Users have the ability to upload a pdf version of client resumes. There is also an enhanced job search displaying details of jobs and requirements.

DET also implemented the Tableau reporting system for staff users to pull data. Features of the Tableau Reporting System allow reports to be downloaded and exported in different formats. There are active filters and sorting in live reports in Tableau. New interactive Dashboards are being built that show visualizations of up-to-date data. Users have the ability to click a link on client details and get directed to DJL account details or job postings. These features make it easier to connect job seekers and jobs.

DET is working with AJLA to enhance DJL for our Career Grant. DET has allocated \$2,000,000 for enhancements from this grant. Enhancements include – virtual job fair, virtual scheduler, chat feature, automatic capture of services, and AI to suggest services.

DET works closely with our partners and other divisions to use the Partner Provided Services function in DJL to track services and utilizing VOCAL chat feature to service clients.

The data-collection and reporting processes for WIOA core programs is yet not integrated. However, data-collection and reporting processes for all DOL programs and activities are executed in the DJL system. The data-collection and reporting processes for DOE programs is carried out by the Literacy Pro system for the Adult Education program and the AWARE system for the Vocational Rehabilitation programs.

B. ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPANTS' POST-PROGRAM SUCCESS

Assessment of participant success is an essential activity. The Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training (DOL-DET) administers Title I and Title III programs. DOL-DET assesses participant success via different reports available in its labor exchange system, Delaware Job Link. Those reports are used by frontline leaders, administrators, and the DWDB to determine current success and make informed predictions about future success. JobLink captures individual and cohort information which leaders can use to make corrections and reinforce successful trends. Collective reports are submitted quarterly to the DWDB executive committee and full board for review. DOL-DET has implemented Tableau, an enhanced reporting system for staff to pull data.

DDOE Adult Education will be able to track client entry, program participation, and completion through several methods. Since clients will develop career plans while engaged in Title II programming, placement in employment, and/or postsecondary education will be a performance target for each provider.

- For clients entering degree-granting institutions, a statewide data match with the resources of the Delaware P20 council will provide the required information.
- For clients entering DOL-funded specific skills training, a data matching process with DJL will yield the required information.
- For clients entering specific skills training not funded through DOL, Title II providers will work with clients and trainers to attain needed information.
- For clients entering or retaining employment, an agency data match process between DOL-DET and DDOE Adult Education will be developed to document participant progress.

Under the Delaware Division for the Visually Impaired Vocational Rehabilitation program the agency shall use existing surveying and direct contact methods already in place with customers who are entering, participating in, and completing postsecondary education. The agency currently requires records of enrollment, FAFSA completion, transcripts each semester (or applicable progress reporting period) for postsecondary support from the agency. The agency shall also utilize existing case

management methods to track individuals entering or remaining in employment in addition to wage verification through the State of Delaware's Unemployment Insurance database.

The DVR will run a scheduled task, monthly or quarterly, that will select candidate cases. The candidate cases will be "successful outcomes" that have not been previously selected for quarterly wage reporting. An Intermediate Database Table will be used to store all candidate wage data information. This table will be used to create a file that will be forwarded to UI for wage data processing. The results from the UI process will then be used to update the Intermediate Database Table. Reporting of the wage information will be generated using the Intermediate Database Table.

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

III (b) (6) (C) Use of Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Record Data.

On a quarterly basis, Delaware Unemployment Insurance wage records, complemented by additional wage records, are obtained through active participation in the State Wage Interchange system (SWIS) and are utilized to determine employment, retention, and wage gain-related outcomes for DOL programs. Quarterly extracts of information for all workers on the Delaware wage record database are maintained by the Division; access is restricted to designated DOL-DET staff. This comprehensive, historic wage record database facilitates the computation of the required U.S. DOL employment-related performance levels and also allows for the adoption of similar measures across the entire One-Stop system in order to track and set goals for the continuous improvement of the quality and effectiveness of services provided to customers. DDOE Adult Education will electronically share participant data with DOL-DET. The data will be scrubbed of any unique information that would identify a specific individual.

D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

Privacy Safeguards

To ensure that personally identifiable information collected in Job Match and Case Management is protected, Delaware JobLink has implemented security measures that include limiting the people who have physical access to our database servers, installing electronic security using 128-byte encryption SSL, and individual password protection to guard against unauthorized access for all accounts.

All Title II programs will be informed of their responsibilities under GEPA provisions and will be monitored to ensure that participant information is kept confidential and secure.

- All providers will be required to share their processes with DDOE Adult Education regarding their privacy safeguards.
- Any Adult Education MIS design revisions will be developed to ensure that program information is kept secure, confidential and is accessible only to appropriate parties.
- As part of the Intake Process, all Title II participants will be requested to sign a release of information statements that has been approved by DOL-DET and DDOE. This release will allow the sharing of information between agencies for accountability and research purposes only.
- When sharing participant information electronically, only encrypted processes will be used to ensure privacy.

To ensure that personally identifiable information collected through the Delaware Division for the Visually Impaired is protected, the agency has implemented security measures that include limiting the people who have physical access to the database servers, installing electronic security using 128-byte encryption, and individual password protection to guard against unauthorized access for all accounts within the agency's database. In addition, the Division works with the Department's Information Resource Management Unit to ensure that all employees are provided information and sign agreements to protect client information consistent with GEPA (FERPA) and HIPAA. The agency's policies, procedures, forms, and systems are reviewed by the Attorney General's Office to ensure legal compliance with all applicable state and Federal privacy safeguards.

All information exchanged between DVR and UI will be encrypted.

DVR also uses encrypted e-mail when it is necessary to send information such as Social Security Numbers. DVR's case management system, AWARE, has an additional level of security, username and password, beyond that which is required to log into the State network. All DVR locations have badge-only security access.

As part of the Delaware DOL, all DVR staff is required to participate in cybersecurity training.

7. PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS

Information and assistance regarding veterans' Priority of Service will continue to be provided by DOL-DET One-Stop staff and DVOP specialists and LVERs co-located in the One-Stops. The Delaware JobLink registration process determines veterans' eligibility, and an American Flag identifies veterans' resumes listed on JobLink for employers. Veterans are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities and services available at the One-Stops by declaring their veteran status. Priority of Service signs are prominently displayed in all State One-Stops and on Delaware's Mobile One-Stop when in use. One-Stop staff are available to explain mandatory program eligibility and veterans' priority requirements.

DOL-DET has developed and implemented the applicable Employment Services (Labor Exchange) Service Delivery Process Policy – LE Policy # 10 Veterans Priority of Service to govern agency processes and procedures. All employment services staff, including management, have been trained on this policy. These policies have been catalogued on the DOL-DET virtual data warehouse drive. All DOL-DET policies are reviewed and updated annually and/or as required. A copy of the referenced policy number 10 is included as Appendix O. Additional staff development by the DET Director and Administrator will continue to be conducted during planned quarterly meetings and as needed with impacted service delivery staff to include DVOP specialists and LVERs.

The Administrator for the Jobs for Veterans State Grant shall generate periodic DJL monthly monitoring reports related to Veterans Services administered at the Delaware One-Stops (Dover, Pencader, Fox Valley, and Georgetown) to monitor Priority of Service to veterans as well as JVSG compliance and performance. To further support compliance, refresher training is provided to all One-Stop staff on an ongoing basis and also includes DVOP specialists, LVERs, and Business Service Representatives on the use of Priority of Service for veterans to maintain system integrity and sustainability. Delaware will examine and use monthly monitoring report results for continuous system improvement.

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

As part of the One-Stop MOU agreement process, VR will certify the One-Stop system

addressing any accessibility issues. Relying on VR's expertise in this area, it will make recommendations and assist in program development when applicable.

In addition to VR's technical assistance for One-Stop certification, each One-Stop has updated Equal Opportunity posters with several persons to contact in the event they believe they have been subjected to discrimination under WIOA. Each screen in Delaware JobLink has a link to the One-Stop's non-discrimination policy and individuals to contact if they believe they have been subjected to discrimination.

Under WIOA, there will be monthly partner meetings for all One-Stop partners to share information, including technical assistance from VR on providing services to individuals with disabilities.

While individuals with unidentified disabilities usually receive services within the general population due to personal choice, when disabilities are identified specific services are available. DOL-DET is a Ticket to Work Employment Network provider. Through signage, videos, and discussion with One-Stop staff, individuals who are receiving social security and want to learn more about this program are offered an initial assessment with a case manager.

Within each One-Stop an individual has been identified as the Ticket to Work case manager. This individual works closely with a VR designee to determine the best service plan for the individual and if they chose to enroll in the Ticket to Work program.

During the initial assessment interview, one of the three service options below will be chosen.

- The individual will be serviced by the Ticket to Work case manager and receive one-on-one service, including referrals to additional services
- The individual is not in need of case management services and will perform self-service job search and may self-select for additional One-Stop services
- The individual is in need of more intensive services and will be referred to VR for service. The division of Vocational Rehabilitation is located within each One-Stop.

The disability expert working with other One-Stop staff enables services to be provided in the One-Stop. VR often refers individuals with disabilities to the One-Stop when services are not immediately available at VR. Both agencies are housed within the One-Stop and work closely together.

DDOE Title II providers will serve participants requiring services under ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. DDOE Adult Education will provide mandatory trainings, in person and/or electronically to ensure that all providers are aware of student rights and program responsibilities under these laws. The DDOE Adult Education will use its Student Accommodations Application Process to identify, monitor and track requests and accommodations provided. DDOE Adult Education will continue to collaborate closely with Delaware Vocational Rehabilitation to provide our mutual clients with the supports they need to be successful in the workplace.

All One-Stop locations are compliant with ADA. This includes either an elevator or ramp access to building and automatic doors. All One-Stop locations are on fixed and paratransit bus routes.

Each One-Stop has a designated computer in the resource room which has JAWS and a screenreader to serve individuals who are blind and visually impaired. For the deaf we have interpreter services available.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, or other certified disability accessibility evaluation entity, will conduct an accessibility checklist at least bi-annually.

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

To ensure DOL–DET meets the needs of English Language learners and others, DET trains staff through monthly meeting to address Q&A’s. Also, local One-Stop Centers conduct monthly training sessions based on local county needs. All information is located in a commonly accessible staff folder and is shared and discussed by One-Stop Area Operations Managers and Supervisors.

- Furthermore, each One-Stop has trained Employment Services Specialists in the Registration and Resource Room area that identify client’s needs for English language learning. Staff then refers these clients to approved DDOE Adult Education certification classes, such as Delaware Technical Community College and University of Delaware.
- For hearing impaired, all of Delaware’s One-Stops are in close proximity (same building) to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Due to this, sign language translators are easily accessible based on client’s needs and requirements.
- Besides the above, DOL-DET and WIOA partners refer clients based on their needs to local resources who could better serve their needs.
- DOL-DET’s One-Stops have trained Spanish speaking Employment services Specialists who are trained to assist clients. One-Stop’s and WIOA partners also have Applicant Services brochures in Spanish.
- DOL-DET’s case management system is equipped with a translation band for languages other than Spanish.
- DOL-DET has access to the state’s pool of interpreters that will provide assistance in finding interpreters in other languages.

IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

The WIOA partners jointly developed Delaware’s Combine Plan using several In Progress Review (IPR) strategies.

1. The monthly state level WIOA partner meetings were used as workgroup to ensure planning was on target and on track.
2. The combined state plan was an agenda item at each WIOA partner.
3. Executive Committee and Board meetings were used to check the progress of plan development.
4. The Big Submitter developed a MS Project template to keep track of submissions.
5. The Big submitter worked via email to ensure authors and editors made deadlines.
6. The final draft was reviewed with a collective group of editors and authors prior to submission.
7. The Big Submitter coordinated with writers and leaders who had to submit corrections to ensure they were on time.
8. The Big Submitter coordinated with each WIOA leader to provide details on modifications.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;	Yes
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) 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

Performance Indicator Appendix. All WIOA Core Programs

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Effectiveness in Serving Employers:

Delaware's publicly funded workforce system has chosen the following as its two approaches for Effectiveness in Serving Employers:

- Penetration Rate which addresses the programs' efforts to provide quality engagement and services to all employers and sectors within a State and local economy
- Repeat Business Customer Rate which addresses the programs' efforts to provide quality engagement and services to employers and sectors and established productive relationships with employers and sectors over extended periods of time

The following is the Employer Satisfaction measure from the PY20 Annual Report:

Penetration Rate:

Numerator 2,061 Denominator 35,078 Rate 5.9%

Repeat Business Customers Rate:

Numerator 1,263

Denominator 2,874

Rate 43.9%

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

a. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

A. General Requirements Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas.

The state of Delaware is a single service delivery area. The state will explore a regional initiative during the covered period of the plan, starting with a thorough analysis of labor force migration between Delaware and adjoining counties from Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, and possibly Virginia.

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

Delaware Executive Order #36 designated Delaware a single service delivery state. See EO 36 at [Executive Order 36 - Governor John Carney - State of Delaware](#)

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

Delaware Executive Order #36 designated Delaware a single service delivery state. See EO 36 at [Executive Order 36 - Governor John Carney - State of Delaware](#)

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

April 19, 2017

SUBJECT: Policy #2017001 Appeals Process for Funding the Infrastructure Cost of One Stop System

1. The Delaware Workforce Development Board (DWDB) establishes these appeals process for funding the infrastructure cost of one stop system.
2. One Stop partners will, to the greatest extent possible, resolve conflicts at the lowest level possible. This resolution usually occurs at the division or comparable unit level.
3. Only a division director of a participating One Stop Partner directly affected by an allocation may initiate an appeal and that appeal only address infrastructure costs allocations based on proportional use.
4. The DWDB executive committee will hear appeals with a notification as a special meeting; the

DWDB Executive Director will post the special meeting notice on Delaware's Government Information Calendar Website. Normal quorum rules will apply and the DWDB chairman will chair an appeal hearing.

5. The appellate process is:

- The One Stop Partner director initiates the appeal by providing a written request to the DWDB Executive Director. The written request must specifically address the cost allocation/proportional use concern. The request will detail the efforts made to resolve the impasse.
- The DWDB Executive Director will, within 7 of receipt of the appeal, schedule an appeal hearing with the executive committee.
- The executive committee will meet within 7 of being notified a meeting is required. The meeting will include all parties to the dispute.
- The executive committee will hear from all parties and make a final determination before the meeting adjourns with a majority vote of the quorum.

6. I am the point of contact for this memo at 302-761-8163 or William.Potter@state.de.us

William J. Potter
Executive Director
Delaware workforce Development Board

The board developed the appeal process based on the implicit authority in paragraph 12 of Executive Order 36 which reads in part:

1. The Board shall be responsible for the following:

“a. The development, implementation and modification of the state plan required by applicable federal law; and ... j. Development of such other policies as may promote statewide objectives for, and enhance the performance of, the workforce development system in the state.

However, to ensure clarity on the topic Delaware will get additional explicit authority in the next six months from the governor.

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

Delaware has issued many policies relating to the workforce development system: Equal Opportunity & Complaints; Administration & Operations; Multi-Program Administration Requirements; One Stop Centers; WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth; Wagner-Peyser; Vocational Rehabilitation Services; Displaced Homemaker; Foreign labor Certification; Migrant & Seasonal Farmworker; Senior Community Services Employment; Trade Adjustment Act; Work Opportunity Tax Credit; and new elements under WIOA.

DET has developed a local American Job Center (AJC) Complaint procedure for customer information and use. With an aim of continuous quality system improvement with our customers, DOL-DET will review and evaluate service delivery through this process. DOL-DET has elected to use ETA Form 8429 as its Complaint form and has developed a local Customer Complaint log tracking form, LE Form #15 for

data collection. DET Management and front-end program personnel were trained prior to implementation. To support internal awareness and compliance, LE#44 is housed on our interdepartmental policy data share drive. For customer and general public awareness, LE#44 policy and LE Form #15 Complaint log are located on our electronic jobseeker network, Delaware JobLink.

Delaware's guidance on use of state funds for workforce investment activities is as follows. Use CTRL + Click will take you to guidelines. [2022 Funding Guidelines FINAL appendixF.docx \(live.com\)](#)

Delaware's guidance on statewide activities currently is as follows: these funds support a portion of the cost of the Business Service's Unit. This unit performs the activities required under 20 CFR §682.200 including acting as the lead for the state's rapid response unit.

Additionally, these funds support a portion of the cost of the Delaware Workforce Development Board staff who maintain the eligible training provider list.

These funds also support a portion of the operation of the fiscal and management accountability information system, based on guidelines established by the Secretary. Including a portion of the fiscal unit staff who manages the WIOA funds and the fiscal auditor who performs audits.

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

Delaware utilizes state set aside funding to support required and allowable statewide employment and training activities. Below are several of the required activities which Delaware currently funds with the Governor's set aside:

- A portion of Delaware JobLink (DJL). DJL is a federal reporting, case management and fiscal accountability system. DJL also provides direct client services. For job seekers and employers, it is a talent matching and career exploration tool. This system also houses the eligible training provider list including training providers cost and performance.
- Technical assistance to local One-Stops. Technical assistance is provided monthly in person to One Stop supervisors and case managers who administer WIOA adult, dislocated worker and youth programs.
- Monitoring and oversight of activities for services to youth, adults, and dislocated workers.

Delaware plans to utilize this funding to continue to support allowable statewide employment and training activities. Below are several initiatives the state has funded and will continue to support (along with other initiatives as new needs are identified).

- Refresher training to increase skills of job seekers with basic skills deficiencies. Through an assessment, Delaware targets this service to jobseeker/career service customers who could most quickly benefit from a refresher course in math and English – individuals who had once demonstrated these skills but, due to not utilizing them in their current careers, had become deficient.
- Basic Computer/Job Surfing. Delaware offers a two-part basic computer class designed for the customer who is deficient in basic computer skills. There are several points in the service delivery system where candidates are assessed for this training. Individuals may self-refer or be mandatory for this course. This training will help job seekers/career service customers use self-

service tools, such as creating a resume in Delaware JobLink, job searching on the internet, and applying for jobs through the internet.

These funds support a portion of the cost of the Business Service's Unit. This unit performs the activities required under 20 CFR §682.200 including acting as the lead for the state's rapid response unit. This unit also serves as the main outreach arm to the business community for hiring, recruitment and identifying workforce needs of Delaware employers.

Additionally, these funds support a portion of the cost of the Delaware Workforce Development Board staff who maintain the eligible training provider list.

These funds also support a portion of the operation of the fiscal and management accountability information system, based on guidelines established by the Secretary. Including a portion of the fiscal unit staff who manages the WIOA funds and the fiscal auditor who performs audits.

Rapid Response

Delaware conducts rapid response activities to dislocated workers primarily through employer outreach. Employers are identified and contacted through WARN notices and other notifications of mass layoffs. Because no two layoffs are identical, the needs of employers and dislocated workers will differ, as will the type and scale of needed services, the impact on the economy, and the availability of job opportunities. While Rapid Response must be consistent across all layoffs with respect to the quality, effectiveness, and timeliness of service delivery, the response must be customized and responsive to each specific event.

The most common activity is to provide information to dislocated workers in the form of group settings or rapid response workshops. Workshops are held on site at the employer location, union halls, community centers and other locations within the community. On-site rapid response workshops are generally held when there are larger groups of dislocated workers.

These workshops are usually facilitated in conjunction with the DOL Division of Unemployment Insurance (DOL-UI). They cover topics such as services available through the local One-Stops, job search and training opportunities, general Unemployment Insurance information, and other services available through DOL. At the conclusion of each workshop, feedback is provided by participants regarding other services they are interested in and offer suggestions how to improve the Rapid Response workshop.

Based on the worker survey results and other information, Rapid Response provides a comprehensive array of service to accelerate reemployment. While most of the effort is usually expended in the early stages of a dislocation event or an impending dislocation, it is important to continue Rapid Response services until all worker and employer needs are met. Delaware has the distinct advantage of ensuring seamless service delivery for affected workers receiving Rapid Response services because the DOL-DET Rapid Response unit is part of the One-Stop Career Center integrated service design.

The state also established a Specialized One Stop office at the Floyd I. Hudson State Service Center (Hudson), which serves as a central service center for workers affected by mass layoffs. Hudson provides core, intensive, and training services; offers a resource room where clients can register with DOL-DET, take assessments, and conduct job search; and serves as an outreach center that really strives towards engaging the affected workers, labor unions, and employers rapidly when a mass layoff occurs.

Layoff Aversion

The Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO) has been reorganized since the submission of the

last plan and is now the Delaware Public Private Partnership (DPP) and organized under the Secretary of State's Office. On or about 6 February 2020 a new Executive Order was signed by Gov. John Carney and designated the DPP's Division of Small Business (DSB) as the replacement entity for DEDO regarding DWDB activities.

Pending further input, we expect the Division of Small Business to executive previous DEDO functions. is the lead agency in providing layoff aversion strategies to employers. DOL-DET's Business Services Unit contacts DSB when they are notified or become aware of a company at risk. This has historically been a difficult task with employers in Delaware, as they tend not to be too forthcoming when having difficulties. However, sometimes at-risk companies are identified through Business Service Representatives' (BSR) regular employer outreach. If an employer conveys information regarding possible layoffs with the representative, the BSR immediately contacts his or her supervisor, the Community Services Coordinator (CSC), who contacts and shares initial information with DSB. From this point on, DSB acts as the lead agency, with DOL- DET BSRs providing assistance. Communication and coordination are facilitated by DSB's participation on the DOL Business Services Team, which meets monthly to share employer information, including business expansions and/or layoffs.

The BSRs are always looking for ways to help employers, whether it is to help them get started with getting new employees or help them with layoff aversion. They educate employers about their responsibilities to issue notifications of layoffs and closures, and try to promote the effectiveness of services, including Rapid Response. BSRs have these conversations before any layoff to build the relationship and demonstrate support, which encourages companies to work with the state before it is too late.

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

Delaware has updated LE Policy 28 Rapid Response Activities to include how to respond during a natural disaster. This includes having a designated member of the Business Services team to contact a designated staff person from the Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) to provide them with updates on a weekly basis. Historically, the Delaware Emergency Management Agency would be the point of contact with FEMA during any natural disaster or pandemic. Our office would then tailor our services based on the needs of the employer and jobseeker during that time. The updates would consist of outreach services, performance data, updates on new strategies and an invite to attend all or any services in order to understand our delivery of services procedures more clearly.

Through the flexibility of an internet-based system, Delaware JobLink can be accessed anywhere the internet is available. This combined with the internet-based Unemployment Insurance (UI) application system allows individuals to apply for UI benefits, register for work and search for employment remotely.

Moreover, if a natural disaster occurred, DOL-DET would immediately apply for a national emergency grant when applicable.

In the event an employer experienced a natural disaster, a BSR would assess their needs and determine the best course of action based on the resources available in the state. For example, several years ago a portion of Kent County, Delaware experienced a flood. Several small businesses had to remain closed for several weeks. DOL-DET worked with several other agencies in the state and provided temporary office space to several small businesses during their time of evacuation due to the flood. The businesses were able to meet with clients and remain minimally operational during this time.

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.

Trade activity in Delaware has been rare. Early intervention to worker groups on whose behalf a TAA petition has been filed is the same as any plant closure or mass layoff. In most cases, by the time a TAA petition is filed, WIOA Rapid Response activities have already taken place and the workers are being informed of the benefits and services. Once a TAA petition has been filed, Delaware provides additional information specific to Trade, for example ensuring workers are aware of particular deadlines. Also, individuals are co-enrolled in WIOA Dislocated Worker activities while TAA petition eligibility is still being determine, which provides access to early intervention services under WIOA that could lead to better outcomes. Staff can answer questions during the conversation as well as create a Q&A to be sent to attendees at a later date. Each attendee will complete a sign-in sheet as well as a survey asking if they're interested in more information about DOL programs. Case managers will be assigned based on client information.

Rapid Response teams are proactive to facilitate the assessment of a potential dislocation. The state BSRs and other staff are continually trying to build and maintain relationships with various stakeholders, including employers, labor organizations, workforce and economic development agencies, training institutions, service providers, and community organization to be able support companies at risk of dislocation. Early intervention can help with the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition process. Similarly, early intervention can assist with fact-gathering for a strong National Dislocated Worker Grant application if the dislocation is one that cannot be accommodated within the state's existing formula-based Dislocated Worker resources. These are held at the employer site whenever possible, but meetings are and have sometimes been held at nearby facilities. Our mobile One Stop has been deployed at times to insure effective communications. It has been important that the team remains flexible and customizes its approaches so that employer and affected workers can all be accommodated. When Rapid Response sessions are held after a WARN or other announcement of layoff, it is a time to not only communicate information to the affected workers about services and benefits (including DOL-DET services, unemployment insurance, health insurance, the Health Care Tax Credit, severance and retirement pay, and potentially social services related to financial management, childcare, housing and legal issues), but it is also a time to gather information. Surveys give the state a wide array of information on the demographics, skill sets, and training needs of the workforce. State uses this customer-driven information to provide a comprehensive array of services provided in an accessible area, to accelerate reengagement into the workforce. While no two layoffs are the same, DOL-DET in collaboration with UI, does have an established procedure including presentation tools and materials, as well as experienced staff conducting rapid response sessions for any employer as already described. For worker groups on whose behalf a TAA petition has been filed, it is likely they have already received at least one rapid response session or contact with DOL-DET staff prior to the TAA petition being filed. Once DOL-DET knows that a petition is filed, the states reach out to workers, labor unions, and the employer again to ensure TAA information, including how to access TAA services, is communicated. The state also established a Specialized One Stop office at the Floyd I. Hudson State Service Center (Hudson), which serves as a central service center for workers affected by mass layoffs. Hudson provides core, intensive, and training services; offers a resource room where clients can register with DOL-DET, take assessments, and conduct job search; and serves as an outreach center that really

strives towards engaging the affected workers, labor unions, and employers rapidly when a mass layoff occurs. In all these activities, Delaware is committed to improvements in services that can lead to early intervention and rapid reengagement into the workforce. The state provides continuous training for staff for both Trade and National Dislocated Worker type layoffs. Staff will also participate in the ASK ME ANYTHING TAA Webinars to gain knowledge and information from other states. Policies and procedures are continually being reviewed and updated and then shared with staff, and a Self-Assessment Rapid Response Tool helps identify areas in need of improvement.

b. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

Alternative Training Models. If the state were to utilize alternative training models (e.g., incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, and customized training) the state would use existing policies and procedures to operate our Job Driven On-the-Job Training initiative the most appropriate model to benefit both the employer and participant. Delaware is currently working on creating a Work-Based Training Policy. Currently, our Business Services Representatives provide employers with information on WIOA training opportunities for their employees, a designated staff person would work with an employer to determine needs, then an agreement detailing those needs and appropriate performance measures is created and monitored by staff. Our policy will also look to provide employers the opportunity to utilize OJT or Incumbent Worker Training opportunities. This offer will allow the employer to receive assistance in training potential employees and also having their current employees upgrade their skills for advancement opportunities within their company.

OJT will be specialized, and meaningful training provided to an employee by an employer to help the employee develop the necessary skill and abilities to perform the job.

The strategy for utilizing OJT's is to invest funds that will be driven to address the need to fill high priority occupations and related targeted industry clusters by local employers. "High priority occupations are job categories, within selected industry clusters, that are in demand by employers, have higher skill needs and are likely to provide family-sustaining wages".

Participants who enter an OJT will be given the opportunity to access training by an employer that is provided to a paid participant while engaged in productive work that could lead to permanent employment.

Also, by providing reimbursement to the employer of up to 50 percent of the wage rate of the participant for that decreases the extraordinary costs of providing workplace training and additional supervision related to satisfactory job performance. Training can be a minimum of 4 weeks up to 6 months.

By utilizing these strategies that OJT experience for an individual can provide high quality work-based training for the participant and employer due to the collaboration of performing job duties. In order to ensure a high-quality training experience for the individual, an OJT contract will be limited to the period of time required for a participant to become proficient in the occupation for which the training is being provided. In determining the appropriate length of the contract, consideration will be given to the skill requirement of the occupation, the academic and occupational skill level of the participant, prior work experience identified in their Employment Development Plan (EDP). The "employment development plan" is an individualized career service that is developed jointly by the participant and the Case Manager when determined appropriate by the AJC. The plan serves as an ongoing strategy to identify employment goals and achievement objectives that will be appropriate for the participant to achieve the employment goals.

An incumbent worker must be:

1. Employed;
2. Meet the Fair Labor Standards Act requirements for an employer-employee relationship; and
3. Have an established employment history with the employer for six (6) months or more.

Monthly monitoring will be conducted for both programs.

Learning for Careers

In 2020, DWDB and DOL- DET released an RFP to support Learning for Careers. This program worked to engage Delaware's business community in a planning process that results in the creation or expansion of paid work experiences for youth and adult learners in Delaware. The purpose of the investments is to increase employer participation in student education, training, and employment programs that leads to an increase in the number of:

1. Youth served through summer youth employment or other DOL funded programs; or
2. Secondary school students participating in work-based learning and/or co-operative education programs; or
3. Postsecondary students participating in work-based learning and/or clinical/experiential learning programs.

This program was a success and has been re-released for 2022.

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

The incorporation of Registered Apprenticeship into Delaware's strategy for service design and delivery and has provided Delaware the opportunity to take advantage of the AJC services for both employers and jobseekers. In 2016 Delaware was awarded a State Apprenticeship Expansion grant. This gave the state funding to expand the Registered Apprenticeship Program into new occupations and to expand existing occupations to better meet the needs of Delaware's Employers. With the recent infusion of USDOL funds to support Registered Apprenticeship expansion, Delaware has done three key items to facilitate further incorporation into the workforce agency daily operations:

- **Communication and alignment with the State's Business Services Unit.** Personnel from Registered Apprenticeship attend the monthly Business Services Unit meetings. During these meetings, Registered Apprenticeship can identify any potential occupations and employers that may benefit from Registered Apprenticeship and more importantly, the Business Services Unit continue to learn about Registered Apprenticeship as another workforce tool that they can refer employers to. Register Apprenticeship has a referral process where it receives referrals from the Business Services Unit and partner education institutions. The Business Service Unit has helped to expand the outreach of Registered Apprenticeship in way that would not be possible without this integration and alignment. The status of referrals is a topic of conversation during these monthly meetings and helps ensure Delaware employers are informed about a variety of workforce tools. Another alignment is that every New Sponsors is automatically offered an Employer Account and connected to a Business Services Representative if they want assistance in finding their next apprentice or simply their next employee. This connects them to the workforce system.
- **Standard schedule of Registered Apprenticeship personnel available in each AJC.** Each AJC has time every month where Registered Apprenticeship staff have a presence in the

AJC lobby to address jobseeker, employer, and AJC staff interest and questions about Registered Apprenticeship. This has further helped connect jobseekers to a new career option as well as continue to orient AJC staff to this program. The working relationship with the AJC helped the Registered Apprenticeship staff better understand the jobseeker.

- **Support Related Instruction of Registered Apprenticeship through AJCs.** Delaware is currently working on a policy and procedure to braid WIOA Adult and USDOL Apprenticeship grant that provides the funding for tuition and supportive services to targeted populations (e.g., Unemployed, Low Income, and Dislocated Workers) for the related instruction component of Registered Apprenticeship as well as case management and job placement support. The AJC staff will help recruit and refer candidates to this program. So far, the process is mirrored off the WIOA Adult ITA process. Having processes in place that are similar help further integrate Registered Apprenticeship into the service design and delivery of Delaware's workforce system. This process and the Apprenticeship grant supporting it requires similar data collection and reporting as other USDOL workforce programs. This furthers integrates Registered Apprenticeship and as we work through this process, new items of alignment are expected to pop up.

3. TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

For a comprehensive look at the First States training provider eligibility please see Delaware's Draft ITA manual is available at [ITAManualwithcover112109\(wjp\)AppB c1.pdf \(delaware.gov\)](#)

It is important to note this is a companion document to the state's Funding Guidelines which is available at [2022 Funding Guidelines FINAL appendixF.docx \(live.com\)](#)

Eligibility Criteria – All programs on the Delaware Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) must be on the state's High Demand Occupation List and be on a defined Pathway, developed by Delaware's Department of Education in conjunction with Delaware Technical Community

College (the workforce intermediary), and the state's Vocational Schools. All potential providers are notified they must meet all US DOL-ETA approved performance measure and are told the current performance measures. All programs must lead to an industry recognized credential and be available and ready for general use. Prospective providers can submit applications anytime. However, only the Proposal Review and Certification Committee may approve a provider and its programs. The DWDB staff will only accept complete applications from prospective providers. Complete applications include:

- a. A signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU);
- b. A complete program information form for each program;
- c. Provide verifiable program specific information;
- d. Completed initial eligibility form;
- e. An initial monitoring visit form (completed by DWDB staff);
- f. Debarment disclosure;
- g. Delaware Department of Education (DOE) Certification;
- h. DWDB staff will make an onsite visit to the prospective providers training site. The visit will determine and ensure the provider facilities are adequate, safe, and reflect an atmosphere appropriate to the trade being taught;
- i. Must have at least one-year experience training job seekers in high demand occupations and have an established a track record in course completion and job placement;

- j. A factor leading to performance – must have credential rate equal to or greater than the current approved performance measures;
- k. Must be up to date with all Delaware required Unemployment Insurance Tax commitments;
- l. Must provide a financial statement prepared by an accounting firm or a signed tax return; and
- m. Must provide a copy of their current business license.

A flow chart is available at appendix v for your convenience

Continued Eligibility (aka subsequent renewal) The executive director of the DWDB will annually publish a renewal Letter of Instruction in early May announcing the renewal period. The notification includes the performance measures for the upcoming Training Year, deadlines, and special concerns (if any).

The subsequent renewal process generally mirrors the initial application process, with one major exception – subsequent renewals are also judged on the provider’s success achieving performance measures from the previous year. To be considered for renewal providers must:

- a. Attend the provider forum;
- b. Submit updated forms;
- c. Submit required performance information;
- d. Meet the previous year’s negotiated federal performance objectives;
- e. Still offer training programs on the demand occupations list; and
- f. Submit an updated contact and email list with the renewal application.

When a provider submits its renewal application the DWDB staff will check the performance measures. The DWDB staff will flag any performance measure failure of a subsequent program renewal application for removal from the provider list.

DWDB staff will recommend to the Proposal Review and Certification Committee approval/non-approval for providers and specific programs. It is important to note, successful programs which are no longer training high demand occupations are subject to non-renewal. The Proposal Review and Certification Committee may only renew programs that achieve performance measures but is free to accept or reject all other staff’s recommendation(s) in whole or in part. The committee is free to accept all programs, some programs, or none of the programs.

When the committee approves a subsequent renewal, the DWDB will notify the provider and they can submit their changes into Delaware Job Link.

The DWDB executive director will notify, in writing, non-approved providers and/or programs of the committee’s decision. As a minimum the letter will:

- a. Be sent to providers via email within 15 working days of the committee’s decision; and
- b. Clearly inform providers of their opportunity to appeal

A Flow Chart for renewals and another for appeal are available at [Appendix W](#) and [Appendix X](#) Respectively

Appeals. Policy 2017004

1. Purpose. The Delaware Workforce Development Board (DWDB) establishes this policy to facilitate Training Provider appeals.
2. Scope. This policy applies to Individual Training Account (ITA) denials and removals of programs based Initial Eligibility Submissions and/or Subsequent Renewals.

3. Appeal Process. Is a 6 step process.

- Providers will have 30 days to submit an appeal from the date of notification by the DWDB Executive Director of a denial or removal of a program from the Eligible Training Provider List.
- The DWDB will only accept written appeals.
- The DWDB Executive Director will either favorably consider an appeal or forward non-favorably considered appeals to the Proposal Review and Certification Committee (PRCC) within seven days.
- The PRCC – at its next scheduled quarterly meeting – will evaluate the appeal and decide the disposition of the appeal. The PRCC may ask the provider to attend the PRCC meeting.
- If the PRCC does not favorably consider the appeal, the Executive Director will convene, within 14 days, a panel of non-board member director-level officials to adjudicate the appeal.
- The non-board member panel will review the appeal, the supporting documents, and may ask the appellant and the DWDB Executive Director to discuss the issues relating to the appeal.

4. Substantive Appeals. The DWDB will only accept substantive appeals. Substantive appeals typically concern the designation of a demand occupation, employment opportunities/results for those completing training; median earnings for specific occupations; and achieved performance measures.

5. Non-Substantive Appeals. Simple disagreement is not a substantive reason for appeal. Simply, “We don’t agree” is not sufficient cause for an appeal. Providers are required to attest whether they are in partnership with business.

6. Weight of Responsibility. The appellant will provide supporting documents with the appeal. For example, Indeed.com job postings for a given zip code is adequate information to demonstrate an occupation is in demand. If an appellant wants to change the reasons for an appeal after the process starts, the appellant must resubmit the appeal from beginning of the process.

The DWDB asks providers to declare business partnerships during program submissions. See page six of our AJLA manual at [AJL User Guide ProviderLink Self Service 13.pdf \(delaware.gov\)](#)

Institution/Organization Type	Select a Type ▼
	* Are reasonable accommodations available for people with disabilities requested?
	Please select ▼
* Are you in any partnership(s) with business?	N/A ▼
	If yes, please describe. (4000 character max.)
	<input type="text"/>
	* Do you provide access to training to individuals who employed?
	N/A ▼
	* Do you provide access to training to individuals with

The application process for inclusion on the Delaware ETPL list includes the submission of several [Individual Training Account \(ITA\) Forms - Delaware Department of Labor](#)

Those form include:

- A form outlining the process. Available at [DWDB ITA 2019 Approval Process Form.pdf \(delaware.gov\)](#)
- The current MOU between the DWDB and a provider (this form is under revisions) [DWDB MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.pdf \(delaware.gov\)](#)
- Program Information form [DWDB ITA 2019 Provider Program Information Form FILLABLE 4.pdf \(delaware.gov\)](#)
- Initial eligibility form. [Initial Eligibility Form.pdf \(delaware.gov\)](#)
- Program Removal Worksheet. [DWDB ITA Program Removal Worksheet 01302017.pdf \(delaware.gov\)](#)
- ITA Approval Criteria. [DWDB ITA Approval Criteria.pdf \(delaware.gov\)](#)

SUBJECT: Policy #2020003 Procedures for Adding Sponsors to the Eligible Training ProviderList (ETPL) _____

1. Purpose: This memo provides a description of the procedures, criteria, and information requirements for the inclusion of Registered Apprenticeships on the ETPL.
2. References: US DOL Regulation 680.470 dtd. August 19, 2016, Procedures For Including AndRemoving Registered Apprenticeship Programs On A State List Of Eligible Training Providers And Programs.
3. Background: All registered apprenticeship programs that are registered with the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship, or a recognized State Apprenticeship Agency, areautomatically eligible to be included in the State list of eligible training providers and programs.
4. Inclusion of a registered apprenticeship in the State list of eligible training providers and programs ensures job seekers are aware of registered apprenticeship opportunities and maximizes the program’s visibility within the workforce system and allows an individual who iseligible to use WIOA title I, subtitle B funds to use those funds toward registered apprenticeshiptraining.
5. Discussion. The Delaware Workforce Development Board (DWDB) establishes this process for including registered apprenticeship programs on Delaware’s State list of eligible training providers and programs. When initial acknowledgment of acceptance as a sponsor of RegisteredApprenticeship has been issued by the State Apprenticeship Agency, the registered apprenticeship sponsor is invited to join the ETP list. The will provide the following required information.

- Sponsor Name
- Sponsor Address
- Sponsor Phone Number
- Sponsor Fax Number
- Contact Name and Title
- Contact Number
- Occupation(s) included in the Registered Apprenticeship program
- Name and Address of the Related Technical Instruction provider (if different from the sponsor’s location)
- The method and length of instruction
- The number of apprentices (active, non-active, all)

6. Steps in the process. The following occurs after the information above is provided.

- The DWDB Management Analyst will enter the required information in Delaware Joblink, which will be visible to the general public on the Statewide List of Eligible Training Providers.
- The DWDB Management Analyst and Staff will provide guidance to the sponsor with any questions regarding WIOA and its key provisions, such as the State list of ETP’s, State and Local Workforce Boards and other aspects of the system.
- The DWDB Executive Director will notify the sponsor, in writing, that they are now listed on

Delaware’s Statewide List of Eligible Training Providers.

- The State Apprenticeship Agency will update the DWDB on the status of Registered Apprenticeship programs in order to ensure that it remains certified and removes any apprenticeship programs from the ETPL that are no longer registered either voluntarily or

involuntarily deregistered.

5. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR THE PRIORITY FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS, OTHER LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF WIOA SEC. 134(C)(3)(E), WHICH APPLIES TO INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES AND TRAINING SERVICES FUNDED BY THE ADULT FORMULA PROGRAM

The State of Delaware implemented DET General Policy #10 in September 2017. This policy addresses priority for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient. This policy was created using WIOA Public Law 113-128, WIOA Final Regulations, appropriate TEGs, and existing DET policy.”

Historically during times of low unemployment and high employment and job opportunities, Delaware has not seen a demand for WIOA services that exceeds its capacity, hence all individuals who are eligible for services have received them.

During economic times when unemployment has been higher and job opportunities have been fewer, we typically see a demand for WIOA services that exceeds our financial capacity. During that time, priority of service comes into play. Once this occurs, any individual who is requesting WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker funding or services is put on a waiting/outreach list with the priority indicators reflected. As funding becomes available, the individuals are outreach for services based on their ranking in Policy #10 which includes:

The priority of service will be applied in the following order:

1. First, to veterans and eligible spouses who also are included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA adult formula funds. This means that veterans and eligible spouses who also are recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient would receive first priority for services.
2. Second, to non-covered persons (individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA adult formula funds, (these are recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient).
3. Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA’s priority groups.
4. Fourth, to any other populations identified by the Governor or Local Board for priority. (Currently Delaware does not have any identified categories)
5. Last, to non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA.

Monitoring will be accomplished through DJL reporting. All adults receiving services are monitored through the state’s system to ensure the mitigation of barriers and successful completion on their Individual Service Strategy. The DOL–DET leadership reviews the day-to-day implementation of prioritization and makes adjustments as necessary via monthly meetings. To date, this has never been a problem.

5. DESCRIBE THE STATE’S CRITERIA REGARDING LOCAL AREA TRANSFER OF FUNDS BETWEEN THE ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

MEMORANDUM

FOR: Record

FROM: William J. Potter, Executive Director, Delaware Workforce Development Board

DATE: June 21, 2020

SUBJECT: Policy #2020004Transfer of Funds Between Adult and Dislocated Worker

References: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 and section 683.140 of the WIOA Final Rule

1. Purpose. This policy provides guidance for transferring, Adult, and Dislocated worker funds. It is effective upon receipt.
2. Background. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 and section 683.140 of the WIOA Final Rule authorize individual states to reallocate funds from the above grants. Because the decision rests solely with the governor and that official is a member of the Delaware Workforce Development Board and authorizes the board to make these type decisions on his/her behalf, the DWDB or its Executive committee may make the transfer of funds through its quarterly meetings.
3. Procedure. When the Delaware DOL-DET, and/or the DWDB executive director identify a potential need for reallocation, either may make a recommendation for action to the Board or the Executive Committee. While it is desirable for the whole board to approve a transfer of funds, the Executive Committee may act if the issue is time sensitive.
4. General Criteria. While it is impossible to predict all eventualities justifying a transfer of funds, the DWDB establishes these guidelines:
 - a. Funds may be transferred when the “burn rate” of available funds in either WIOA Dislocated Worker or WIOA Adult program is such that one of the programs may run out of money before it can be replenished; and
 - b. There is sufficient money to cover the transfer without damaging the program from which funds are being transferred.
5. General Guidance. Prior to effecting any transfer, the director of the Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training (also the fiscal agent) will conduct a thorough review which includes:
 - a. The amount of funds to be transferred
 - b. How long this action may be needed; and
 - c. What is causing the increased spending in the particular program.

I am the point of contact at 302-761-8163 or William.potter@delaware.gov.

William J. Potter

Executive Director

Delaware Workforce Development Board

**c. WITH RESPECT TO YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES
AUTHORIZED IN SECTION 129 OF WIOA—**

**1. IDENTIFY THE STATE-DEVELOPED CRITERIA TO BE USED BY LOCAL BOARDS IN
AWARDING GRANTS OR CONTRACTS FOR YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT
ACTIVITIES AND DESCRIBE HOW THE LOCAL BOARDS WILL TAKE INTO
CONSIDERATION THE ABILITY OF THE PROVIDERS TO MEET PERFORMANCE
ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES BASED ON PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE
FOR THE YOUTH PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 116(B)(2)(A)(II) OF WIOA IN
AWARDING SUCH GRANTS OR CONTRACTS.[11]**

Through Request for Proposals (RFP), Delaware competitively procures youth workforce investment activities on an annual or biennial basis with options to extend resulting agreements year to year. Historically comprehensive programs providing or linking youth participants to all 14 mandated elements are solicited. All proposals received in response to issued RFPs are reviewed by an evaluation team who is led by a DWDB member. More DWDB members may also take part in the evaluation team but may also include relevant stakeholders. All RFPs include weighted (maximum point allocations) criteria that is used by the evaluation team assign points to each proposal. Below is an example of the most recent Out of School criteria published in the RFP. Criteria historically have included:

- Demonstrated Ability
- Cost/Budget
- Linkage Team (program partners for referrals and service delivery)
- Program Design
- Outcomes
- Point for the Presentation/Clarification component
- Bonus Points which may fluctuate to meet the desires of the DWDB or DET.

These are not anticipated to change greatly in future RFPs for youth services and below is an example taken from an Out of School Youth RFP:

Criteria	Maximum Points
<p>Demonstrated Ability-</p> <p>Provider demonstrates the ability to operate like or similar high quality training programs that have resulted in at a minimum high employment rates or similar outcomes or performance measures as described in (II)(F).</p>	15

<p>Cost/Budget-</p> <p>Costs are reasonable and competitive as compared to other similar programs. Costs will be reviewed as a cost per proposed enrollment as well as a cost per proposed training hour.</p>	10
<p>Linkage Team-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkage Team members include applicable stakeholders that add value to the program. 	10
<p>Program Design-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program design provides adequate case management and training to achieve planned results. • Program has or plans to hire qualified staff who can meet the service needs of youth with barriers. • All required program elements are addressed in proposal. • Design's inclusion and intensity of work-based learning activities (e.g. job shadowing, paid/unpaid work experience/internship, and clinical). • Use of employers' feedback and linkages are incorporated in design. • Design provides training in "soft skills" (problem solving, working with others, etc.) as integrated parts of the training curriculum. • Design provides for outcomes placement and retention services. 	20
<p>Outcome Placement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider demonstrates ability to prepare participants for employment (e.g. 	15

Criteria	Maximum Points
<p>soft skills/job readiness, resume and interview preparation, financial literacy, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider demonstrates the ability to establish solid relationships with local employers to increase job opportunities and placements. • Provider demonstrates ability to prepare and educate youth on the variety of post-secondary options. 	
Oral Clarification/Presentation	30
<i>The following Bonus Points may be awarded where applicable. Proposals may receive Bonus Points in more than one (1) area:</i>	
<p>Promise Communities-</p> <p>Proposal includes service delivery targeted to serve Promise Communities as defined in Appendix E and in this RFP.</p>	10
<p>Pathways OSY-</p> <p>Provider proposes to replicate at least one in-school career pathway as described in Appendix E under “Pathway” and in this RFP.</p>	6
<p>Leveraged Funding/Resources-</p> <p>Proposal maximizes collaboration through direct financial or in-kind contributions by other programs, employers, investors, stakeholders, etc.</p>	4

Regarding how 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 is taken into consideration in awarding such grants or contracts, each RFP states, ““For all Providers who have had a contract with DWDB or DET in the past, DET will provide the Proposal Evaluation Team with information about past performance, which will be taken into consideration when making funding recommendations.” This gives DET and the evaluation team the to consider performance when funding decisions are being made. Two different performance methods are used:

- All resulting contracts are monitored on “real time” performance and the primary indicators of performance. The real time performance are indicators of success which is defined by the primary indicators of performance. The real time performance includes:
 - Day 1, 30, 60, and 90 Outcome. This measures placement and then retention in an outcome which is defined as employment and/or post-secondary education;
 - Credential attainment
 - Median Day 1 wage for those employed
 - Measurable Skills Gains

The real time performance is monitored and validated monthly with providers.

2. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH AS DESCRIBED IN 129(A)(1)(B), INCLUDING HOW IT WILL LEVERAGE AND ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE.

On a recent analysis on just Out of School programs’ achievements compared to the three performance indicators that have a negotiated performance rate.

December Quarter			
Time Frame	Measure	Rate	OSY RATE
1/1/2021 to 12/31/2020	Youth Placement 2nd Quarter	69.63%	67%
7/1/2019 to 6/30/2020	Youth Placement 4th Quarter	71.33%	56%
1/1/2021 to 12/31/2020	Median Earnings	\$ 2,386.43	42%
7/1/2019 to 6/30/2020	Credential	76.19%	79%
1/1/2021 to 12/31/2020	Measurable Skills Gain	66.21%	74%

This is a point in time our OSY programs are successful. With that said, there is always room for improvement. Delaware is working to pilot several initiatives to strengthen the programs we solicit and funds. Pilots are with a current OSY provider, but lessons are applicable to all programs funded by the workforce system. They include:

- Barrier busting to enhance and inform wraparound services needed to fully serve OSY participants. Focus is on legal, housing, and mental health.
- Enhancing Case Management. This include defining what is required by Case Management and then working into agree upon standards into RFP for youth services that is scheduled to be issued in January of 2021.

In addition, Delaware is working with Department of Education to identify and refer youth who have specific criteria that if unserved are likely to drop out. The goal is to engage them earlier- prior to drop out, not afterwards when the typical OSY program is able to serve them. This will capture a population of youth who have been historically considered ISY (since they have not technically dropped out) but are OSY as they have the characteristics that are likely to lead to dropping out. DOE looked at characteristics of dropouts before dropping out and identified them for DOL. They include attendance issues, 2 or more school violations, DOE and state reporting offence, and failing reading and math. We are hopeful this may change the focus to serve these youth and help them complete High School or obtain GED while focused on their life and career goals.

Delaware believes that maintaining the comprehensive programming Delaware has historically solicited, is important. This supports the intense case management model we are seeking and really support the youth from recruitment to 12-month post exit.

Delaware values seamless service delivery and current WIOA Adult and WIOA youth policy support alignment between these programs. Any youth who has participated in and is referred by a youth program provider is considered eligible for WIOA Adult services-specifically an ITA- and is dually case managed if applicable. This creates a system where youth are provided services, plans are created and implemented, and the WIOA Adult program simply picks up the cost to implement the agreed

upon plan while providing the added support of support service and employment services-linking the youth to the One Stop. Alignment between WIOA Adult and WIOA Youth occurs with added linkage to WIOA Adult ITA.

Lastly, in 2017, Delaware launched a robust referral system and local coordinating teams for all of the frontline staff in the One Stop System-including youth programs. This really helps connect providers to other workforce programs and allows them to share best practices, resources, and participants when appropriate. There are monthly county meetings where the youth providers attend with other frontline personnel from Core Programs and other partner programs. This allows the system in place to be connected and deepen the knowledge of the personnel on the front line. It also allows issue to rise to Leadership for systemic change if needed.

3. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT ALL 14 PROGRAM ELEMENTS DESCRIBED IN WIOA SECTION 129(C)(2) ARE MADE AVAILABLE AND EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED, INCLUDING QUALITY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS UNDER THE WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM ELEMENT. [12]

When youth programs are solicited, the RFP states, “Programs should offer youth a broad range of services that may begin at age 14. Listed below are mandated program elements. While programs are not required to directly provide all of the following program elements, programs are required to ensure youth have access to every program element in order to provide a comprehensive program. Proposals should clearly identify which mandated elements will be directly provided and which will be provided by partners, by purchasing (e.g., Occupational Skills Training), or by other linkages. In addition, not all youth are required to receive all mandated program elements. Youth should receive all elements that are appropriate to achieving their education and employment, goals as identified in their individual service strategy plans.”

Currently, monitoring staff review files for service documentation, case notes, and Individual Service Strategy plan development and implementation. Staff ensure that all these things align and work together. In addition, providers enter the mandated element being provided so the way services are captured in our case management and reporting system are a tool to support monitoring.

As a result of a recent USDOL monitoring, Delaware is reviewing how to better collect and monitor this to ensure that all 14 program elements are made available and effectively implemented. Process improvements expected in the next release of a youth services RFP are revision of the template proposal format to collect in the proposal what mandated element is being providing internally and what mandated element is being outsourced and the requirement of agreements prior to contract execution that provide documentation of a formal relationship for any provider outsourcing a mandated element.

4. PROVIDE THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE STATE POLICY FOR “REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO ENTER OR COMPLETE AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT” CRITERION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(III)(VIII) AND FOR “REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO COMPLETE AN EDUCATION PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT” CRITERION FOR IN-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(IV)(VII). IF THE STATE DOES NOT HAVE A POLICY, DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT LOCAL AREAS WILL HAVE A POLICY FOR THESE CRITERIA.

1. In School Youth
 - a. Limitation: this barrier may be used for up to 5% of the total enrollment defined in

the Agreement. Contractors shall manage this limitation during their enrollment process, and it will be monitored by the assigned Contract Specialist.

b. Definition: An individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment is a youth who has any of the following:

- i. Excessive school absences and/or chronic tardiness;
- ii. Recipient of School/Department of Education issued disciplinary actions or violations;
- iii. Failing grades in Math, English Language Arts, Science, or Social Studies in the current period, most recent completed school quarter, marking period, or appropriate reporting period;
- iv. Demonstrated behaviors that indicate mental health/safety concerns that include treatment for gunshot wound, stabbing, blunt weapon injury, physical fight, suicidal ideation/attempt, self-inflicted injury, or clinical encounter that involves police;
- v. Individual who is a current or recovering drug and/or alcohol addict and is either participating in or recently participated in a rehabilitation/recovery program;
- vi. Enrolled or previously enrolled in an alternative school or detention center;
- vii. Demonstrating Behaviors of Multiple Acute, Chronic or Trauma-Centered Stressors;
- viii. Individual who has been part of or a member of a family with a child welfare investigation history;
- ix. Resides in a Promise Community; or
- x. Individual whose parent/guardian is anyone of the following:
 1. currently or was previously incarcerated;
 2. current or recovering drug and/or alcohol addict; or
 3. has recently been treated for mental health issues.

2. Out of School Youth

a. Limitation: this barrier can only be used for those youth who are also documented as low income. Contractors shall manage this limitation during their enrollment process, and it will be monitored by the assigned Contract Specialist.

b. Definition: An individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment a youth who has any of the following:

- i. Resides in a Promise Community;
- ii. Poor work history, or no work history, or who has been fired from a job within the last six months prior to enrollment;
- iii. Individual who has been part of or a member of a family with a child welfare investigation history;
- iv. Demonstrated behaviors that indicate mental health/safety concerns that

include treatment for gunshot wound, stabbing, blunt weapon injury, physical fight, suicidal ideation/attempt, self-inflicted injury, or clinical encounter that involves police;

- v. Individual who is a current or recovering drug and/or alcohol addict and is either participating in or recently participated in a rehabilitation/recovery program;
- vi. Previously enrolled in an alternative school or detention center;
- vii. Demonstrating Behaviors of Multiple Acute, Chronic or Trauma-Centered Stressors;
- viii. Meets the definition of Low-income; or
- ix. Individual whose parent/guardian is anyone of the following:
 - 1. currently or was previously incarcerated;
 - 2. current or recovering drug and/or alcohol addict; or has recently been treated for mental health

5. INCLUDE THE STATE DEFINITION, AS DEFINED IN LAW, FOR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL AND ATTENDING SCHOOL AS SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(I) AND SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(I). IF STATE LAW DOES NOT DEFINE “NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL” OR “ATTENDING SCHOOL,” INDICATE THAT IS THE CASE AND PROVIDE THE STATE POLICY FOR DETERMINING WHETHER A YOUTH IS ATTENDING OR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL.

There is no state law defining “attending school” or “not attending school.”

Delaware’s code includes:

- 1. A school attendance policy which simply states that Delaware Code and which defines and describes the district's rules concerning attendance for students K to 12”;
- 2. Definition of Truant which is “a student who has been absent from school without valid excuse for more than 3 school days during a school year”; and
- 3. Compulsory attendance requirements.

As a single service delivery area, in order to have statewide policy and not dependent on individual district policy, Delaware defines not attending school as anyone 14 and older and has not attended school for at least 30 cumulative days within an academic year. A youth’s enrollment status with the secondary school shall have not impact on this definition.

Delaware did not update our youth eligibility policy to reflect the new definition during the modification period due to Covid-19.

6. IF USING THE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT DEFINITION CONTAINED IN WIOA SECTION 3(5)(B), INCLUDE THE STATE DEFINITION WHICH MUST FURTHER DEFINE HOW TO DETERMINE IF AN INDIVIDUAL IS UNABLE TO COMPUTE OR SOLVE PROBLEMS, OR READ, WRITE, OR SPEAK ENGLISH, AT A LEVEL NECESSARY TO FUNCTION ON THE JOB, IN THE INDIVIDUAL’S FAMILY, OR IN SOCIETY. IF NOT USING THE PORTION OF THE DEFINITION CONTAINED IN WIOA SECTION 3(5)(B), INDICATE THAT IS THE CASE.

Delaware is using WIOA section 3(5)(A) as the definition for basic skills deficient.

d. SINGLE-AREA STATE REQUIREMENTS

1. ANY COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD THAT REPRESENT DISAGREEMENT WITH THE PLAN. (WIOA SECTION 108(D)(3).)

2. THE ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISBURSAL OF GRANT FUNDS, AS DETERMINED BY THE GOVERNOR, IF DIFFERENT FROM THAT FOR THE STATE. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(15).)

3. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND AVAILABILITY OF WIOA TITLE I YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND SUCCESSFUL MODELS, INCLUDING FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(9).)

Delaware invests in comprehensive youth programs that provide services focused on long-term intervention strategies to enable in-school and out of school youth with barriers to secondary school completion, employment, and post-secondary enrollment to complete High School career and college ready or obtain secondary credentials or other certification to jump start their career. Programs offer youth a broad range of services (14 mandated elements) that are really rooted in case management. In Delaware, we believe in inclusion and youth with disabilities are part of service delivery like other eligible youth. In the summer of 2020, Delaware is implementing a summer youth programming (state funded) braided with Vocational Rehabilitation Pre-Employment funds to give specific focus to this population and providers additional support to be successful. Initiatives like this often pave the way for additional linkages and partnerships.

We believe a best practice is investing in our community-based organizations (CBO) to deliver youth services, not focusing service delivery physically in the One Stops. CBOs are better equipped to meet youth where they are, engage and leverage partnerships, and can gain the trust of our young workforce. Our CBOs are encouraged and connected to use the great resources the workforce’s system provides but are also focused on youth centric service delivery and positive program outcomes.

4. A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ONE-STOP PARTNERS.

Shortcoming in Delaware's Partner MOU and IFA were identified in a recent inspection by ETA. At the submission of the State Plan Telamon's MOU was not signed. These corrective actions have been resolved and all MOUs have been received. Delaware's Infrastructure Funding Agreement was approved in September 2021 and is currently working through the IFA reconciliation and negotiating with the contributing partners. The Table Below lists all partners.

Name	Required Partner	Other Partner	MOU	Review of IFA Contribution for Reconciliation
Delaware Department of Labor	X		Y	Pending

Delaware Department of Education	x		Y	Pending
Delaware Department Health and Social Services	x		Y	Pending
Lightquest One Stop Operator	x		Y	Pending
DOL-Division of Employment and Training	x		Y	Pending
Criminal Justice Council	X		Y	Pending
Delaware State Housing Authority	X		Y	Pending
DHSS Division for Aging & Adults With Physical Disabilities	X		Y	Pending
Division of Small Businesses	X		Y	Pending
DHHS Division of Social Services	X		Y	Pending
DHSS Division of State Service centers	X		Y	Pending
DOL Division of Unemployment Insurance	X		Y	Pending
DHSS Division of Visually Impaired	X		Y	Pending
Division of Financial Empowerment	X		Y	Pending
DOL Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	X		Y	Pending
DHSS Office of Financial Empowerment	X		Y	Pending
Wilmington Job Corps	X		Y	Pending

Delaware DepartmentState Division of Libraries		X	Y	Pending
Telamon (NFJP)	X		Y	Pending

5. THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS USED TO AWARD THE SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR TITLE I ACTIVITIES.

The DWDB competitive process is outline in its Funding Guidelines, which can be viewed at [2022 Funding Guidelines FINAL appendixF.docx \(live.com\)](#) and its Steps to RFP Success Memo, below;

MEMORANDUM

FOR: Executive Committee, Delaware Workforce Development Board

FROM: Executive Director, Delaware Workforce Development Board (DWDB)

DATE: January 16, 2020

SUBJECT: RFP Redesign Proposal; 16 Steps to RFP success

Purpose. This memo formalizes the Request for Proposal 16-step process.

1. Step #1. Demand Occupation List. The RFP process begins with the development of the Demand Occupation List by the DWDB Staff, in consultation with the Delaware Department of Labor, Office of Occupational Labor Market Information (OOLMI), Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training (DOL-DET), and DWDB partners. The Demand Occupation List, while an enclosure to the Funding Guidelines, is also a standalone document. The Demand Occupation List prescribes the occupations Delaware will fund for training. This task is usually completed before the June Executive Committee Meeting, where it is voted on and approved.

2. Step #2. Develop Funding Guidelines. The Funding Guidelines are an annual policy document prioritizing workforce spending for a Program Year (July through June). It formalizes the priorities of the board and is prepared for the board by DOL-DET, DWDB, and Core Partners. This document prescribes the use of both State and Federal funds in relation to the publicly funded workforce system. These guidelines may segregate funds for special projects. The DWDB and Core Partners will develop the funding guidelines in June for approval by the Proposal Review and Certification Committee (PRCC); the Executive Committee in September; and the full Board in October.

3. Step #3. RFP Written. The DOL-DET contracting staff will use the most current RFP template from Delaware's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as a guide to develop the Annual RFP, ensuring the RFP reflects the DWDB and Partner priorities. The DOL-DET contracting staff will review the funding guidelines before writing the RFP. The Executive Director of the DWDB and the Director of the DOL-DET will approve the RFP before it is submitted to the OMB for official release. The staff will complete the above RFP tasks and submit the RFP to OMB before Thanksgiving.

a. Scoresheets – The DWDB and DOL-DET contracting staff will develop a rubric for the panel to use when assessing both the written presentation and clarifying questions portion of the RFP judging.

b. DOL-DET contracting staff will ensure the RFP supports the priorities outlined in the funding guidelines.

4. Step # 4. Submitting the RFP. The DOL-DET contracting lead will forward the RFP document to OMB, allowing ten working days for review and posting. The contracting lead is the sole point of contact/coordination with OMB. This process will usually occur during the first two weeks of December.

5. Step #5 Proposer Orientation. The Proposer Orientation will occur within 15 days of the RFP posting to the OMB web site. This is a mandatory provider event. DOL-DET contracting staff is the

proponent for this step. The contracting team will review the RFP in detail to Proposers. The contracting team will field questions and develop a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document and post it to the state's OMB contracting web site.

6. Step #6. Proposals Received. About 30 days after the RFP is posted at OMB, providers will submit their bids to the DWDB. The DWDB staff will reject all late submissions. DWDB staff will open all bids; note the contact information; develop an Excel spreadsheet, which includes: Who submitted, What the training program is; Where the training will occur; and When the training will take place. This Excel Spreadsheet is the historic document the DWDB will use to track the process.

7. Step #7. Proposal Review. The proposal review is the first step of the adjudication process. DOL-DET contracting will develop a checklist of required information and forward it to the DWDB any time before this step. DWDB staff will audit the submissions against that checklist and will reject submissions failing to meet the minimum requirements. The DWDB will send a letter to proposers who are disqualified DWDB will complete this task within two weeks.

8. Step #8. Development of Categories. The DWDB Executive Director and the DOL-DET contracting lead will jointly develop panel categories based on historical occupations/industries represented by submissions. To the greatest extent possible, categories will reflect approved pathways from which the Demand Occupation List was created. Even so, it is important to remember some occupations – important to Delaware employers – may not yet fit into a pathway and they too must be categorized.

9. Step #9. Applying Resources. The DOL-DET contracting lead will develop an initial funding breakdown for all the categories. Any number of methods can be employed by the contracting lead to make these recommendations. Regardless, the PRCC will review the recommendations; accept them, or reject them in whole or in part. The PRCC will return rejected recommendations to the DWDB and DOL-DET contracting staff for editing or will forward approved guidelines to the Executive Committee approval.

10. Step #10. Developing Review Panels. Once the categories are developed, the DWDB Deputy Director will recruit at least four review panelists for each category. Each panel will have – to the greatest extent possible – a subject matter expert; a Division of Industrial Affairs Representative one target population representatively (e.g., vets, Voc. Rehab, ex-offender); and a board member, which will chair the panel. Panelists will remain on the same panel for the entire life of the process.

11. Step #11 Panels Review Written Proposals. Panelists will receive written proposals from the DWDB staff no later than one week after the March Executive Committee meeting. DOL-DET contracting will assign a staff member to help the panel. Panelists will, in one week, individually review and score the written proposals. At the end of that week panelists will meet either by phone or in person and agree on the “best proposals” for their category. The DWDB staff will invite only the “best proposals” to Proposal Clarification Day. This is not a public meeting. Each panel will prepare at least four and no more than ten clarifying questions, for each “best proposal” before Proposal Clarification Day. Panel leads will ensure questions are specific and elicit clarifying responses pertaining to the proposal. If in the panel's assessment all submissions are inadequate, the panel may request that the consolidation committee[i] eliminate an entire category. Panelists will submit all notes to the DWDB Executive Director so he/she can develop a “lessons learned” document for proposers.

a. Step #11.5. After a panel review written proposals and determines the dissolution of a category is appropriate, the panel lead will notify the DWDB Executive Director. The DWDB Executive Director will convene the consolidation committee. The Consolidation Committee may eliminate the category or require the panel to reevaluate the packets. In the event a category is eliminated, its allocated funds become available to all panels at the Consolidation Meeting.

12. Step #12 Proposal Clarification Day. The DWDB staff will coordinate for meeting space,

schedule proposers, and provide all logistics for the clarification day. The DOL-DET staff will ensure each panel has a contracting staff member to provide technical assistance and answer questions. After the clarifications (and on the same day) the panel will rank all proposals. The written portion will comprise 80 percent of the total and the clarifying session 20 percent. The panel will rank all proposals and apply funding recommendations. The panel will track proposed awards and bring unused monies to the consolidation meeting. Panelists will submit all notes to the DWDB Executive Director so he/she can develop a “lessons learned” document for proposers.

13. Step #14 Consolidation Meeting. The Consolidation Meeting is an extension of the Proposal Clarification Day. The consolidation meeting will make the final decisions on funding programs. It is NOT a public meeting. Shortly after Proposal Clarification Day, panel leads, the DWDB Executive Director, the board chair, the DOL-DET contracting lead, and contracting staff will meet to finalize their work. Although, the panel may fund programs in whole, in part, or not at all; it is the intent of this process to award best programs fully and not spread funds too thinly among multiple programs. Any funds not awarded by a panel may be reallocated to other categories. Before the Consolidation meeting adjourns, the panel members will develop a ranked priority list of programs that were not funded in the event additional monies become available. The DWDB Executive Director will ensure this priority list is voted on by the consolidation committee.

14. Step # 14. Notifying the Board of Spending. The DWDB executive director and the DOL-DET contracting lead will present a formal information briefing to notify the board to the allocations, spending, and provide an overview of the entire process.

15. Step #15. Contracts Written, Negotiated, Signed. The DOL-DET contracting staff will prepare the contracts for signature, negotiate changes as necessary, and administer the contracts. The DWDB Executive Director and the DOL-DET Director will sign contracts. During the first week of July the DWDB Deputy Director will prepare a press release and forward it to the DOL Communications Manager, which will forward it to the appropriate media contacts. The DWDB Executive Director will send formal letters notifying Proposers of the final determination.

16. Step #16. Providing Feedback/After Action Review. The DWDB Executive Director and the DWDB Deputy Director will annually conduct an After Action Review (AAR) of the RFP process. The AAR will include surveys of panelists, board members, and providers. The AAR will also include interviews with select panelists and staff. The staff will also prepare an information briefing/after action review for the Board’s October meeting. The DWDB staff will develop a “lessons learned” information paper for distribution to providers.

17. I am the point of contact at 302-761-8163 or William.potter@delaware.gov.

William J. Potter

Executive Director

Delaware Workforce Investment Board

Consolidation Committee. The Consolidation committee consists of the panel leads, the Board Chair, the Chairman of the Proposal Review and Certification Committee, the Delaware Secretary of Labor (if they are not already on a panel), and The DWDB Executive Director.

6. HOW TRAINING SERVICES OUTLINED IN SECTION 134 WILL BE PROVIDED THROUGH INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS AND/OR THROUGH CONTRACTS, AND HOW SUCH TRAINING APPROACHES WILL BE COORDINATED. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MEET INFORMED CUSTOMER CHOICE REQUIREMENTS REGARDLESS OF TRAINING APPROACH.

Customer choice is driven through the demand occupation list that covers approximately 130 different occupations; if it is a demand occupation it is eligible for funding. The eligible training provider list is the least restrictive of all training options relative to customer choice with 400+ programs and 28 providers.

Contracts are more restrictive. As Delaware has chosen to more fully fund contract programs resulting in fewer programs being funded for more students and/or cycles. Even so the DOL- DET Request for Proposal (RFP) – usually issued in early winter – solicits only programs on the demand occupation list. Clients can choose from any number of opportunities the board chose to fund. Programs are available in each Delaware County by 60 percent in New Castle County; 20 percent Kent County; and 20 percent in Sussex County.

Special Grants programs often have greater flexibility than do traditional programs, wherein a specific program of study can help a dislocated worker – for example – can get an individual back to work (Master of Library Science is a good example) that would not help the jobseeker population at large.

Delaware's ETPL – and by extension the demand occupation list -- is the predominant source used by state agencies to find training providers throughout the First State.

Delaware training services are delivered via contracts and Individual Training Accounts. While a detailed discussion is available in the ITA Manual in Appendix B, a brief overview follows:

- The DWDB reviews occupation data provided by the Delaware's Office of Occupational and Labor Market Information.
- Working with the Delaware Department of Education (CTE Office) and the state's trade schools, the state culls the data to develop an aligned occupation list with approved pathways.
- The DWDB approves the demand occupation list; it is published, and ITA providers are added or renewed based on the demand occupation. Approved providers are added to Delaware Job Link and those occupations and providers are presented to clients when they consider training opportunities.
- Providers must meet performance measures and provide training in a demand occupation to be initial/renewed providers.
- The DWDB develops its funding guidelines (an annual Policy statement) establishing training and spending priorities.

Contract providers use the same demand occupation list as ITA providers. The DWDB funding guidelines further refine board priorities and contract guidance.

7. HOW THE STATE BOARD, IN FULFILLING LOCAL BOARD FUNCTIONS, WILL COORDINATE TITLE I ACTIVITIES WITH THOSE ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE II. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL CARRY OUT THE REVIEW OF LOCAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED UNDER TITLE II CONSISTENT WITH WIOA SECS. 107(D)(11)(A) AND (B)(I) AND WIOA SEC. 232.

The board will coordinate activities through its quarterly board meetings, monthly partner leadership meetings (convened by Light Quest, the One Stop Operator); local partner leadership meetings (also convened by Light Quest). The DWDB has folded the requirements of a local board into its structure; the board has always done this, even prior to WIOA. Even so, the Secretary of Delaware's Department of Education is a board member, as is the president of Delaware Technical Community College. The DWDB also includes the Secretary of Delaware Health and Social Services and the Director of Vocational Rehabilitation as board members.

Delaware has a robust annual Request for Proposal (RFP) system that is accessible for use by all WIOA partners. It is so well regarded, state legislators have – in recent years – used that infrastructure to facilitate state workforce initiatives including an expansion of education-based workforce programs. The DWDB – acting as a state and local board – publishes solicitations for Adult, Dislocated Worker, In School, and Out Of School Youth training programs. These programs are used in all Delaware counties. DWDB staff and member often adjudicate RFPs originate in individual departments, whose initiatives are tangential to DWDB activities.

From a Title II perspective coordination occurs:

1. Title II RFP questions are shared with the DWDB Executive Director for recommendations prior to release of the RFP.
2. Title II RFP contains DOL job market information and DWDB State Plan as references for applicants to use in responding to the RFP.
3. Title II applicant responses regarding DWDB are shared with the DWDB Executive Director for review prior to funding of any Title II providers.
4. Title II is an active member of the WIOA Leadership Team that focuses on aligning processes of WIOA partners.
5. Title II is invited to DWDB meetings though Title II is not a board member.
6. Title II and DOL Apprenticeship/PreApprenticeship have collaborated on providing blended funding for integrated education and training programs.
7. Title II programs and state administration are active members of the Adult Career Pathways initiative, which is a DWDB focus.
8. Title II state staff have served as reviewers for DOL Title ??? applications.
9. Title II and DOL/DWDB are collaborating on reentry employment supports for returning justice involved citizens.

8. COPIES OF EXECUTED COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WHICH DEFINE HOW ALL LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL CARRY OUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR INTEGRATION OF AND ACCESS TO THE ENTIRE SET OF SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM, INCLUDING COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH ENTITIES ADMINISTERING REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

The DWDB uses a single MOU with its partners. See Partner MOUS at appendix L.

e. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

During PY20 Delaware had one active waiver.

Eligible Training Provider Performance Reporting for Non-WIOA Participants:

This waiver waives the requirement that ITA providers report on all students, WIOA Sections 116 (related to performance) and 122 (related to the Eligible Training Provider List), and at 20 Code of Federal regulations (CFR) 677.230 and 20 CFR 680.400-680.530.

Statutory/Regulatory Provisions	Eligible Training Provider Performance reporting for Non-WIOA Participants
Citations	WIOA, Sections 116 (related to performance) and 122 (related to the Eligible Training Provider List), and at 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 677.230 and 20 CFR 680.400-680.530.
Entity	State of Delaware

Statutory and Regulatory Sections to be Waived:

WIOA, Sections 116 (related to performance) and 122 (related to the Eligible Training Provider List), and at 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 677.230 and 20 CFR 680.400-680.530.

Actions undertaken to remove state or local barriers:

Delaware has worked closely with providers to develop procedures providers to help providers meet this requirement. We’ve had forums, planning sessions, and one-on-one technical assistance, but through it all the complexity of such reporting is universally perceived as onerous, intrusive, and burdensome.

State strategic goals and Department of Labor priorities supported by the Waiver:

Among Delaware Strategic Goals is its Pathways initiative. Attainment of this goal requires alignment of the Eligible Training Provider Lists (ETPL) with 14 designated Pathways. Aligning the ETPL with Pathways entails recruitment of new training providers. Many potential and current providers have balked at joining or expanding (respectively) their presence on the ETPL due to – what they believe – are onerous tracking/reporting requirements. As we attempt to expand opportunities for Delawareans waiving the reporting requirement would facilitate recruiting and retaining quality providers.

Projected Programmatic Outcomes from Implementation of Waiver:

Outcomes from the Waiver:

- Recruitment of new providers and programs
- Improved assessments of provider performance
- Ease the addition of new training programs from current providers
- Greater accuracy relative to consumer choice as prospective WIOA students view outcomes of current and previous WIOA students
- Employer participation in WIOA customized training programs and the benefit of a labor pool with marketable skills
- Relieves the burden on training providers to ensure a robust ETPL that facilitates consumer choice

The individuals impacted by the waiver are Delaware job seekers, American’s Job Center staff, DWDB staff, and training providers. The Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training, and the Delaware Workforce Development Board are requesting a waiver to absolve the approved providers on the Delaware ETPL based on the undue burden it will cause for the

providers, staff and participants.

Individuals Impacted By the Waiver:

Delaware Job Seekers, America’s Job Center Staff, DWDB Staff and last but not least Training Provider Staff as they will be doing the Lion’s share of the data collection for reporting.

How the state plans to monitor waiver implementation, including collection of wavieroutcome information.

The DWDB Staff will continue to hold annual site reviews and the annual provider renewals forthe Eligible Training Provider List, with special attention on validating negotiated performance measures to ensure state and Federal monies are well and correctly spent. As well as the collection of pertinent information such as updated licenses, financial statements, surety bond certificates of insurance and DE Department of Education certification. The DOL-DET and the DWDB will submit both an interim and final report to the USDOL detailing the impact of the waiver.

Public Comment:

Delaware did post the waiver request on its web site, advertise the public comment period in the state’s newspapers of record and accept comments in person or in writing.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient;	Yes
2. The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program’s Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;	Yes
3. The State established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;	Yes
4. The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);	Yes
5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership;	No
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

ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	71.0	74.5	73.0	75.5
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	74.7	74.7	74.7	74.7
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	4575.0	5300.0	4575.0	5,500.0
Credential Attainment Rate	45.0	53.8	50.0	56.0
Measurable Skill Gains	21.3	21.3	21.3	22.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable 1	Not Applicable 1	Not Applicable 1	Not Applicable 1
Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	71.0	74.5	73.0	75.5

Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	74.7	74.7	74.7	74.7
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	4575.0	5300.0	4575.0	5,500.0
Credential Attainment Rate	45.0	53.8	50.0	56.0
Measurable Skill Gains	21.3	21.3	21.3	22.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	77.4	77.4	77.4	77.4
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	77.5	77.5	77.5	77.5
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	6277.0	6300.0	6300.0	6300.0
Credential Attainment Rate	45.0	50.0	50.0	50.0
Measurable Skill Gains	22.1	22.1	22.1	23.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
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Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	66.7	67.5	66.7	69.0
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	52.0	59.5	55.0	61.0
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	2236.0	2236.0	2236.0	2236.0
Credential AttainmentRate	82.0	77.0	77.0	77.0
Measurable Skill Gains	52.5	52.5	52.5	52.5
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

1 “Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

**PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR WAGNER-PEYSER PROGRAM
(EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)**

a. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL STAFF THE PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES UNDER THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT, SUCH AS THROUGH STATE EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO STATE MERIT STAFF EMPLOYEES, STAFF OF A SUBRECIPIENT, OR SOME COMBINATION THEREOF.

Delaware plans to use a combination of contractual staff as well as state merit staff to provide employment services at Delaware’s four One -Stop centers and satellites offices. Delaware will hire contractual staff as needed and based on availability of funding. The services provided will include assisting jobseekers, employers, and workforce professionals. Services provided will include assisting jobseekers at the AJC registration and resource room areas, intake assessment, orientations (group and individual), registration in Delaware JobLink – Delaware’s electronic case management system, job search and placement assistance, career counseling services, job referrals, workforce related workshops (job search, interviewing strategies, career planning workshops, financial literacy and job clubs), assessment tests, provision of labor market information, assisting veterans, referrals to training programs, supportive services to Delaware’s WIOA partner programs, and serving employers and businesses with their hiring needs. In addition, one stop staff will assist individuals seeking assistance in filing a claim for unemployment. One stop staff will also conduct community outreach activities and provide career and employment services to jobseekers and community members.

Trained DOL staff (contractual and State merit employees) will also aid by phone, zoom, or via other technology, such as the chat feature. Furthermore, DOL staff will outreach and provide services to individuals and communities in zip codes that are not closely located to DOL’s one-stop locations.

Delaware’s One-Stop Wagner Peyser staff assist RESEA claimants to register in Delaware JobLink (DJL), Delaware electronic case management system. Wagner-Peyser staff checks for thoroughness and completion and ensures that the RESEA claimant is properly registered in the DJL. Wagner-Peyser staff provides RESEA claimants an orientation of the AJCs services, programs, Job fairs and other AJC activities. Wager-Peyser staff make appropriate referrals to DOL services, programs as well as referrals to Delaware’s WIOA partner’s services. Wagner-Peyser staff explains to RESEA claimants

DJL's various functionalities, resources, tools and calendar of services that can be accessed at the AJC or remotely. Also, during this initial intake process, Wagner-Peyser staff provides RESEA claimant with resume and job search assistance and referrals to open job orders. Additionally, Wagner-Peyser Staff refer Veterans with Specific Barriers to Employment (SBEs) to DVOPs for one-on-one case management. Wagner-Peyser staff explains the process for RESEA claimants to apply for WIOA funds for Training and makes appropriate referrals to WIOA training staff. Wagner-Peyser staff refers, schedules, and administers RESEA claimants to various assessment tests such as CASAS and CareerScope. Wagner-Peyser staff assist RESEA claimants over the phone with any of their questions that they have pertaining to DJL or reemployment goals. RESEA claimants attend various workshops such as Career Planning, Interviewing Strategies and Job Search workshops which are conducted and facilitated by Wagner-Peyser staff.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF TO ENSURE STAFF IS ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY

Employment Service Professional Staff Development. Wagner-Peyser, JVSG, Reemployment services, Business Service Representatives and WIOA staff meet monthly at the local AJC and a statewide quarterly meeting, to review policies, procedures, receive technical assistance, and are notified about upcoming projects or initiatives. During COVID-19 these meetings were held via zoom. All DOL-DET policies and procedures are kept on a central electronic policy drive that can be accessed by staff. In addition to policies and procedures, DOL-DET created an electronic helpdesk to assist staff at any level with questions or interpretations of policies or procedures. These helpdesk questions with an appropriate answer are reviewed at the monthly meetings. The questions, referred to as Q&As, are also housed on the electronic policy drive.

When a new employee is hired, their initial training is on-the-job and is conducted by their immediate supervisor. As the new hire progresses through the initial training, he/she is included in other group training sessions, as specific job duties require, such as employees who conduct workshops in a group setting which peer review is provided.

As Delaware continues to develop additional products and workshops, standard formats are developed to deliver the services. Policies and procedures are developed relating to the service delivery of the product(s). When the product is fully developed, the State trains staff statewide utilizing a standard format.

The products which are developed are kept centrally and staff are not permitted alter them. If updates are required on a product, it is done centrally and distributed to all one-stops.

In September 2018, DOL, DOL-DET made arrangements for Microsoft Staff to train DET's One-stop staff on LinkedIn at the State's Buena Vista conference center. Training workshop topics included – LinkedIn: Grow your Network. The goals of the workshop were to introduce the use of LinkedIn in DET's workshops and Job clubs, and jobseekers would learn how to use LinkedIn to:

- Create an engaging overview of their capabilities and accomplishments
- Develop a profile highlighting what you have done, what you can do, and what you stand for

Build an online network of professional relationships, business insights and customer leads.

In October 2018, Governor Carney signed an Executive Order 24, making Delaware a trauma-informed state. As part of this initiative, training tools and resources are being developed to train state employees on the life-long impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and improving how

agencies respond to those facing trauma with appropriate services and interventions. As a people serving agency, Delaware DOL is developing a preliminary Strategic plan for implementing a trauma informed service delivery system. This plan is designed to integrate Trauma-Informed Care into the related employment services provided by Delaware DOL. Beginning February 2020, mandatory staff training is planned on Trauma Awareness for each county (Newcastle, Kent and Sussex).

In 2019, as part of ongoing professional development activities, DOL Managers, Supervisors, Administrators and Directors participated in the Managerial Assessment of Proficiency (MAP). This consisted of an assessment of proficiency in 12 managerial competencies – 2 management styles and 8 personal values relating to how one communicates. With the completion of this assessment, participants can gain valuable information about their managerial tendencies, strengths and opportunities for development. The assessment is designed to provide information and feedback that can assist in the participants developmental efforts.

In 2020, Delaware introduced CyberU Trainings as a resource for staff development. Included in these training sessions are subjects such as:

- Leadership & Management
- Personal Development
- Office Productivity
- Compliance
- Technology
- Continuing Education & Certifications

In May 2021 at the 6th Annual Convening of the One-Stop an extra day of learning focused around “Work From Home Tech Tips”, and staff was offered several online presentations on mental health and mental health support due to COVID-19 concerns.

3. DESCRIBE STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING PROVIDED FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND WIOA STAFF ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES AND REFERRAL TO UI STAFF FOR ADJUDICATION

Wagner–Peyser, JVSG, Reemployment Service Eligibility and Assessment (RESEA), Business Service Representatives (BSRs) and WIOA staff meet monthly and quarterly to review policies, procedures, receive technical assistance, and are notified about upcoming projects or initiatives. During these monthly meetings, awareness and general understanding of Unemployment Insurance rules are shared with program staff.

DOL–DET staff who conducts Reemployment Services Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) workshops receive additional training on potential eligibility issues. This is done by UI staff attending the DOL–DET RESEA staff training for these specific workshops. A feedback loop has been established in the One-Stops for reporting UI individuals who are non-compliant in DOL–DET programs as well as possible eligibility issues.

Delaware DUI closed staff assisted UI counters beginning January 2019 through May 2019 at the 4 one-stop locations. To further streamline the process and better serve UI claimants at the One-stops, DET and DUI cross trained front-line staff to better understand functionality of each division and provide prompt assistance to clients. Training topics included: Assisting the UI claimant navigate the UI claims

filing system online, answer Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), Answer most common UI registration issues, identification of UI eligibility issues, creating a jobseeker account in Delaware JobLink (DJL), job search assistance, and other career services. Since closing of the UI counters, claimants file for UI benefits online or onsite utilizing the four One-Stop's Resource Room Registration area computers. Additionally, DUI have trained UI staff present on site in each One-Stop location in the Resource room Registration area to assist with claimant's questions on unemployment Insurance or on questions regarding their claim status. Furthermore, DUI have trained staff to answer their UI telephone hotlines that are allocated for each of the One-Stop locations.

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

Unemployment Insurance is co-housed in all four full-service One-Stops. DUI closed staff managed UI counters at the 4 One-stops/AJCs (January 2019 – May 2019). DUI claimants file for UI benefits online or onsite utilizing the four AJC's Resource Room Registration area computers. With this streamlined process, UI claimants have the ability to complete both the UI registration as well as Delaware JobLink registration at the same time on the same PC. DOL-DET staff have been trained in UI requirements such as work registration requirements and mandatory work activities. DET Staff assist with claimant's questions and more in-depth UI eligibility questions are referred to UI staff who are also present on site in the One-Stop Resource Room Registration area. In addition, each One-Stop has a telephone helpline and a contact UI person who can assist in customer issues and questions from individuals filing for UI benefits.

c. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UI CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

Delaware law requires applicants and recipients of Unemployment Insurance to register and search for work. There are several exempt categories, such as individuals with a return-to-work date or those who are members of an active union hiring hall.

Delaware will continue to improve and expand its self-service tools for job seekers and services that can be provided in group settings. This is the most effective and efficient way to provide services to larger groups of individuals when having minimum staffing levels.

Individuals who must register for work in Delaware are required to complete registration (demographic) questions in Delaware JobLink (DJL) and create a resume through Delaware's intelligent resume builder. Through the job seekers' home page on DJL, individuals can immediately look for work and conduct career exploration through Delaware's Career Pathways. DJL will immediately begin to search for jobs for job seekers and place job postings for review on their home page, email them to the individual, and will begin to text job opportunities to individuals.

Any individual who comes into a One-Stop has his or her resume reviewed, receives job search assistance, and a job referral, if one is found. Individuals are required to view a One-Stop services video and may self-select for additional services.

Each One-Stop center has a dedicated staff person who works with the Business Service Representatives and employers to search for candidates to meet employers' hiring needs. This individual searches DJL daily and reviews resumes of individuals included in the DJL. Thus, an individual who creates a job seeker account (or registers for work, as required by UI) has an immediate opportunity for referral to employment.

Individuals receiving UI and are more likely to exhaust their UI, are referred to the RESEA program. This

is done electronically through the demographic and work history information the UI applicant enters when they ‘register for work’. Individuals are run through a statistical ‘profile’ model nightly.

The RESEA program is a structured series of workshops, job clubs, and other services targeted at getting individuals back to work quicker. For these individuals, the services outlined are mandatory and UI is notified if clients fail to attend the services.

d. 1. 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:

Delaware will continue to improve and expand its self-service tools for job seekers, including UI claimants, and services that can be provided in group settings. This is the most effective and efficient way to provide services to larger groups of individuals when having minimum staffing levels.

Individuals required to register for work in Delaware complete registration (demographic) questions in Delaware JobLink (DJL) and create a resume through Delaware’s intelligent resumebuilder. Through the job seekers home page on DJL, individuals can immediately look for work and conduct career exploration through Delaware’s Career Pathways. The DJL system searches for jobs for these job seekers and places them on their home page, as well as emailing them to the individual.

Since DJL is internet-based, individuals can access DJL wherever there is access to the internet. Individuals can register at home, libraries, partner locations, or at the One-Stops locations.

Any individual who comes into a One-Stop at a minimum has their resume reviewed, receives job search assistance and a job referral if one is found. Individuals are required to view a One-Stop services orientation video and may self-select for additional services. Additionally, One-stop staff identify the client’s reemployment needs and make appropriate referrals to DOL programs and WIOA partner services

2. REGISTRATION OF UI CLAIMANTS WITH THE STATE’S EMPLOYEMTN SERVICE IF REQUIRED BY STATE LAW

Delaware will continue to improve and expand the self-service tools for job seekers, including UI claimants, and services that can be provided in group settings. This is the most effective and efficient way to provide services to larger groups of individuals when having minimum staffing levels.

Individuals required to register for work in Delaware complete registration (demographic) questions in Delaware JobLink (DJL) and create a resume through Delaware’s intelligent resumebuilder. Through the job seekers home page on DJL, individuals can immediately look for work and conduct career exploration through Delaware’s Career Pathways. The DJL system searches for jobs for these job seekers and places them on their home page, as well as emailing them to the individual.

Since DJL is internet-based, individuals can access DJL wherever there is access to the internet. Individuals can register at home, libraries, partner locations, or One-Stops.

Any individual who comes into a One-Stop at a minimum has their resume reviewed, receives job search assistance and a job referral if one is found. Individuals are required to view a One- Stop services video and may self-select for additional services. Additionally, One-stop staff identify the client’s reemployment needs and make appropriate referrals to DOL programs and WIOA partner services

3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE WORK TEST FOR THE STATE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION SYSTEM, INCLUDING MAKING ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENTS (FOR REFERRALS TO UI ADJUDICATION, IF NEEDED), AND PROVIDING JOB FINDING AND PLACEMENT SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS; AND

At three different points in the service delivery process, individuals are reported back to UI as not registered, not compliant, or possible eligibility issue:

- DJL and UI's data management systems interface nightly for the purpose of updating demographic information for common customers and reporting back to UI if individuals have registered for work. This interface began in spring of 2014 and has replaced manual forms being sent back and forth from agencies. Individuals who have been identified as not registered through the interface are sent notices by UI notifying them their registration is not complete. UI benefits are stopped until the customer updates what has been required.
- Individuals are reported to the UI contact person for their One-Stop if there is a potential eligibility issue. This can include individuals not available for work or who failed to report to an interview, etc.
- Any UI client who does not report for a mandatory service - such as a workshop - is reported to the UI contact person as non-compliant.

Additionally, each week Delaware DUI randomly selects 50 claimants per office to participate in Work Search Audits with a UI Claims Interviewer. Claimants are sent a letter to submit their work search information including NAME OF EMPLOYER CONTACTED, DATE OF CONTACT, METHOD OF CONTACT, AND WHAT RESULTS THEY YIELDED

4. PROVISION OF REFERRALS TO AND APPLICATION ASSISTANCE FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

There are several different tracks which will connect an individual with application assistance for training and education programs and resources. They include through Rapid Response Services, Unemployment/Employment Service/Fast Track referrals and RESEA individuals.

Unemployment Insurance recipients that participate in Rapid Response services are provided with information on all services available through the AJC including the availability for skills training or intensive services. The Rapid Response presentation includes how to apply for training funds and how to receive one-on-one career services as indicated above. Additionally, individuals who attend Rapid Response workshops, complete a questionnaire regarding the services they are interested in receiving. Through the survey, individuals who indicated an interest in training or education are outreached through our satellite office which handles special projects and mass layoffs. Due to the mass layoff or special project, these individuals are proactively outreached at least twice to engage them in training services. Individuals who are in need of AJC services including Unemployment Insurance recipients are required to view the Career Services Video or are provided a one on one overview of the full menu of services available at the AJC. This orientation covers the full array of our programs including, funds for training and education programs. During the triage provided at the AJC or through a referral for services, a client may request or be encouraged to advance their skills or education. Once a client has shown an interest in applying for an Individual Training Account (ITA), staff will determine the next steps to take in order for them to receive those services. Clients are instructed to create/update their Delaware JobLink Account and then participate are signed up for the CASAS or FAST Track those who have been referred to WIOA Partners. Upon completion of the CASAS, clients then sign up for the Career Planning Workshop and/or then referred to Training Unit Supervisor to be assigned to a case manager for case management services. Unemployment Insurance recipients selected for the RESEA

program will automatically receive additional information on how to apply for training funds as part of the orientation to the program. Those who have been identified by staff as needing upskilling or those who self-identify, would automatically be scheduled for Career Planning Workshop or connected with the Training Unit Supervisor to be assigned to a case manager for case management services.

e. AGRICULTURAL OUTREACH PLAN (AOP). EACH STATE AGENCY MUST DEVELOP AN AOP EVERY FOUR YEARS AS PART OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN REQUIRED UNDER SECTIONS 102 OR 103 OF WIOA. THE AOP MUST INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF NEED. AN ASSESSMENT NEED DESCRIBES THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

1. ASSESSMENT OF NEED. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

Delaware is in compliance with section 102 or 103 of WIOA as the last AOP was developed and approved in the last WIOA Combined submission as required.

Farmworkers do often present needing supportive services and are referred to local agencies in the Dover AJC and the local community to receive services. Those services include but are not limited to food, shelter, clothing, medical care, and employment.

2. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY IN THE STATE MEANS: 1) IDENTIFYING THE TOP FIVE LABOR-INTENSIVE CROPS, THE MONTHS OF HEAVY ACTIVITY, AND THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF PRIME ACTIVITY; 2) SUMMARIZE THE AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS' NEEDS IN THE STATE (I.E. ARE THEY PREDOMINANTLY HIRING LOCAL OR FOREIGN WORKERS, ARE THEY EXPRESSING THAT THERE IS A SCARCITY IN THE AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE); AND 3) IDENTIFYING ANY ECONOMIC, NATURAL, OR OTHER FACTORS THAT ARE AFFECTING AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE OR ANY PROJECTED FACTORS THAT WILL AFFECT AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE

Delaware agriculture is thriving thanks to farming, the state's No. 1 industry with a worth of \$8 billion and an \$1.2 billion-dollar economic impact. About 2,451 (586 females owned) farms spread across 510,250 acres of farmland. Corn is the First State's top crop, which grown over two-fifths of Delaware's cultivated land. Broilers are the most valuable agricultural product, while apples are the leading fruit crop. Other important commodities include soybeans, wheat and dairy.

The top five labor intensive core crops in Delaware that use migrant workers are: watermelon, cabbage, asparagus, apples, and pumpkins. Delaware has one mushroom farm with approximately 30 workers. This farm operates all year long and uses migrant workers throughout the year to harvest mushrooms. More farms are reverting to the use of H2-A workers to harvest their crops as well and are considered migrant workers. Watermelon farms also continue to access personnel through licensed brokers during the peak season. The peak seasons annually for harvesting and related labor are from June through

September. While there is some local employment interest, most farmers are utilizing migrant workers to manage their farms. These farms are located in the Kent and Sussex counties in Delaware.

COVID19 -The State continues to experience the COVID-19 Pandemic, Delta, and Omicron variants to date. COVID19 has impacted all citizens in Delaware, employers, and migrant workers. The SWA along with the Departments of Agriculture, Health and Social Services/Public Health and Migrant Employers developed and issued a COVID19 Healthcare Advisory for Migrant Workers to provide education about the disease, prevent the spread of illness and promote awareness.

3. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS MEANS SUMMARIZING MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKER (MSFW) CHARACTERISTICS (INCLUDING IF THEY ARE PREDOMINANTLY FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES, WHAT LANGUAGE(S) THEY SPEAK, THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MSFWs IN THE STATE DURING PEAK SEASON AND DURING LOW SEASON, AND WHETHER THEY TEND TO BE MIGRANT, SEASONAL, OR YEAR-ROUND FARMWORKERS). THIS INFORMATION MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DATA SUPPLIED BY WIOA SECTION 167 NATIONAL FARMWORKER JOBS PROGRAM (NFJP) GRANTEEES, 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

During Delaware's peak farm season, approximately 1,000 migrant workers come to Delaware from Puerto Rico, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador Dominican Republic, South Africa, Haiti, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. The core language used is Spanish, French Creole (Caribbean version of French). Many workers are bilingual and primarily use English. During the pre-season approximately 100 or more migrant workers may be requested to assist the agricultural growers prepare for the upcoming season. Given the consistent socio-economic conditions of deprivation in Haiti, persons of Haitian descent often chose to travel with other migrants to the next state harvesting crops or to remain stay in Delaware. In the case where Delaware is chosen as the home state, transition services are provided at the point of notice via the NFJP partners, community resources and DOL for housing employment, health and other ancillary support as requested. During the low season we anticipate approximately 100 migrant workers will be in the state.

Farmworkers often present needing supportive services and are referred to local agencies and partners in the Dover and Georgetown One-Stops and in local communities statewide to receive services. Those needs and services include but are not limited to food, shelter, clothing, medical care, and employment

4. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The Administrator oversees the SWA's Migrant Outreach Program. To further enhance its outreach efforts, the SWA utilized the Wagner Peyser Flexibility Rule (TEN 13-19, issued January 13, 2020) to hire a Contractual position in October 2020 that conducts full time outreach during the Peak Season and highest MSFW activity (June -September at 37.5 hours per week for 150 hours per month) and part time during the non-peak Season of at least 20 hours per week for 80 hours per month). This position is bilingual. This position serves as the primary Outreach worker and joins the Foreign Labor Coordinator as part of the Outreach Worker Team. The Senior Administrator may assist throughout the year as well for a total number of outreach workers to (4) who will work all service areas. Delaware has three geographical counties with migrant concentration in two of those counties, Kent and Sussex.

To preserve safety of assigned staff, migrant outreach shall be conducted by a two-person team and or with cooperating agency personnel providing services at all times. The SWA's goal is to outreach at least 500 -600 migrants in the state annually.

The Outreach worker team shall conduct outreach to MSFWs to provide job services information, including offers of assistance for the full range of employment services available at the local office, specific employment opportunities currently available, information on the Employment Service Complaint System, and a basic summary of farmworker rights related to terms and conditions of employment. Outreach will occur at farms at the beginning of the Peak Season and coordinated at the sites of community-based agencies and partners where services are provided to MSFWs throughout the farming season.

The state is and will continue to conduct outreach separately to locate and identify migrant workers traditionally not reached at the one-stop sites or in routine occurrences by working with community-based partners to provide specific and direct services to migrant workers. The SMA works closely with and serves as the back up to the Foreign Labor Certification Coordinator. Both personnel are cross trained in core program functions, federal guidance requirements and reporting.

A. CONTACTING FARMWORKERS WHO ARE NOT BEING REACHED BY NORMAL INTAKE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES OFFICES

Per section 2 above the Outreach team conducts outreach to MSFWs to provide job services, including offers of assistance for the full range of employment services available at the local office, specific employment opportunities currently available, information on the Job Service complaint system, and a basic summary of farmworker rights related to terms and conditions of employment. Outreach will occur at farms at the beginning of the Peak Season and coordinated at the sites of community-based agencies and partners where services are provided to MSFWs.

Per our MOU with the NFJP Grantee, the SWA coordinates outreach with the WIOA Title 1 section 167, grantees (Telamon) as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups whenever possible. The state is and will continue to conduct outreach separately to locate and identify migrant workers traditionally not reached at the One-Stop sites or in routine occurrences by working with community-based partners to provide specific and direct services to migrant workers.

B. PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO OUTREACH STAFF. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MUST INCLUDE TRAININGS, CONFERENCES, ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, AND INCREASED COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ON TOPICS SUCH AS ONE-STOP CENTER SERVICES (I.E. AVAILABILITY OF REFERRALS TO TRAINING, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, AND CAREER SERVICES, AS WELL AS SPECIFIC EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES), THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE AND EMPLOYMENT-RELATED LAW COMPLAINT SYSTEM ("COMPLAINT SYSTEM" DESCRIBED AT 20 CFR 658 SUBPART E), INFORMATION ON THE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS SERVING MSFWs IN THE AREA, AND A BASIC SUMMARY OF FARMWORKERS RIGHTS, INCLUDING THEIR RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.

The SMA gains valuable experience and support by participating in related conferences, webinars, forums and learning opportunities as presented to support and strengthen knowledge needed for the

MSFW program. These opportunities include but are not limited to the annual DOL Convening, (DOL provider network invitees), the DOE Adult Pathways Conference, the annual Summer School Education Consortium Meeting and other related conferences that shall be determined as opportunities present during this plan term.

Routinely the SMA provides technical assistance as the subject matter expert to peers in collaborating agencies on support services and other organizations that provide migrants in the area and farmworker rights, including their rights with respect to the terms and conditions of employment. This includes Partner One -Stop Meetings held in all three (3) counties with diverse attendees from the education, health, criminal justice, Business Services Representatives that work with Delaware employers and representatives from the non-profit and private sectors, the NFJP representative (Telamon) and with representatives from the American Job Centers in each county. These meetings are convened by the DOL One Stop Operator. The SMA, FLC Coordinator and Senior Administrator attend these meetings.

The SWA representatives provide information about career and supportive services, the availability of referrals to training, as well as specific employment opportunities, the Employment Service and Employment-Related Law Complaint System (“Complaint System” described at 20 CFR 658 Subpart E.)

C. INCREASING OUTREACH WORKER TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS PROGRAMS INCLUDING THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES.

The Outreach Team receives ongoing training on DOL operational programs by routinely participating in planned Quarterly DET Labor Exchange meetings to ensure their familiarity across core program information, including Unemployment Insurance issues, Career and Supportive Services, and attending Regional and National meetings with peers across core programs.

Employment specialist from Unemployment Insurance is co-located with members of the Outreach Team in the American Job Centers and will benefit from information sharing and technical assistance mutually. To further support professional development and increase awareness across core programs more training will be provided in core programs to include Unemployment Insurance, and the Administrator shall seek interdepartmental, regional and national virtual courses for the outreach team.

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

Please see Sections B and C above. Additionally, members of the Outreach team will seek opportunities for professional development throughout this term and shall participate in local, regional, and national training opportunities to include online courses and webinars in this subject area.

E. COORDINATING OUTREACH EFFORTS WITH NFJP GRANTEEES AS WELL AS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCIES AND MSFW GROUPS

Farmworkers often present needing supportive services and are referred to local agencies and partners in the Dover and Georgetown One-Stops and in local communities statewide to receive services. Those needs and services as include but are not limited to food, shelter, clothing, medical care, and employment.

The Delaware SWA has a working alliance with the National Farmworker Jobs Program Grantee,

Telamon, to provide supportive services, emergency housing and related employment services to the Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers during their tenure in Delaware. The Outreach Team Members provides and in some cases during field visits, the SMA may reissue the contact information to the workers for awareness and helps to facilitate direct contact, upon request, for MSFWs and/or the agricultural growers. The SWA, through its Administrator, will continue to ensure regular meetings and information/resource sharing and reporting continue between the SWA, SMA and Telamon representatives to support and further strengthen this partnership. Per our MOU with the NFJP Grantee, (Telamon) that is further defined and supports our working relationship to provide comprehensive employment services to migrants. Routinely, the SMA provides technical assistance as the subject matter expert to peers in collaborating agencies on One-Stop center services (i.e., availability of training and other resources, supportive services, and career services, as well as specific employment opportunities),

Additional outreach efforts are conducted and coordinated by direct contact with through MSFW partner services:

- Visiting community groups and organizations, church groups, migrant school recruiters, and service agencies to exercise all possible efforts to contact MSFWs.
- Providing copies of the bilingual "Service to Farm Workers" pamphlet.
- Attending monthly meetings with other partner services, as necessary. The SWA thinks there are sufficient outreach resources in the state. Our resources include but are not limited to the following agencies and organizations that provide direct resource to migrants:
- La Esperanza, provides outreach and supportive services to include referral to local health services, legal services, childcare, etc.
- La Red provides direct medical services
- Telamon (NFJP Grantee) provides onsite supportive services, health information and information on available medical services, emergency housing and employment services to MSFW's.
- Westside Family Healthcare provides health information and direct medical services.
- Bay Health Medical Center - Full-Service Healthcare center
- Kent/Sussex County Counseling -Mental Health services
- Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition
- Beebe Health Services -Full-Service Healthcare Center
- Delaware Department of Education - Migrant Education Program
- The Hispanic, African and Caribbean Affairs Commissions

The Hispanic and African and Caribbean Affairs Commissions members are appointed by the State's Governor to promote awareness, advocate on behalf of and to provide assistance to migrants in Delaware. There are also various farmworker advocacy groups, churches statewide.

5. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

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

The SWA continually strives to provide all customers with comprehensive One-Stop access to the complete array of state and federal employment and training programs. Universal access and integrated services, including access by migrant and seasonal farm workers (MSFWs), is a central principle of the service delivery system.

The basic tools used to conduct outreach to farmworkers includes personal contact, printed bilingual matter and/or bilingual digital video recordings. Upon outreach to the farmworkers, the Wagner Peyser, WIOA Adult or WIOA Dislocated Worker staff would provide one on one services. Referrals are also made to long-term, year-round employment opportunities as alternatives to seasonal or migratory agricultural work; and training opportunities; social services, including Federal and State assistance programs; and information regarding farm worker rights and the DOL-DET Complaint System are provided.

The SMA ensures this occurs and routinely consults with statewide agricultural employers to determine what services may be needed and provided through the workforce system. The SMA analyzes data collected by the SWA on employer labor needs to ensure employers' schedules are met, including follow up with employers to rotate crews when necessary. During the pre- and post-agricultural employer visits, the SMA coordinates with Outreach staff to ensure labor exchange information and materials to employers is provided. DOL-DET serves the agricultural community by locating, screening, and referring qualified workers from other areas through the Agricultural Recruitment System when qualified local workers are unavailable. The SMA will ensure the following occurs for agriculture employers:

1. Visit agricultural employers prior to the beginning of their planting season to discuss their employment needs and advise them of support services that are available to workers and their families.
 - During these visits, determine the anticipated MSFW arrival dates, ensures outreach staff orients the workers on specific job requirements and check to ensure their contractors have required registration certificates.
 - Outreach sessions are scheduled with the MSFWs and establish a schedule of visits for the season.
 - Upon arrival of the migrant crews, the SMA ensures contacts are made with the Farm Labor Coordinator, who examines his/her Farm Labor Contractor Certificate of Registration to ensure compliance with federal requirements. On this visit, the outreach worker will prepare all appropriate forms and discuss the full range of services available at the AJC offices.

MSFWs have access to the full array of employment and training services available at the American

Job Centers, and or through the NJFP partner at a community-based partner site to be determined. MSFWs are entered in the Delaware JobLink system upon notice of their arrival from the agricultural growers and are registered by the State Monitor Advocate. At this point of entry, employment service delivery begins and the Wagner Peyser, WIOA Adult or WIOA Dislocated Worker staff would provide one on one services.

Services to agriculture growers and employers will be improved by the development of a directed marketing tool on Delaware JobLink, DOL Facebook page and within a monthly electronic news via an email notification system. These strategies will include information on the national, regional and local MSFW programs, Federal guidance letters and notices, relevant DOL policy letters and employer services, a frequently asked questions and answers section, and more.

The SMA, FLC Coordinator and Administrator shall serve as subject matter experts to inform content and will begin production with the DOL Communications Coordinator by 5/1/22 with an intent to go public no later than 6/1/22.

B. MARKETING THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE COMPLAINT SYSTEM TO FARMWORKERS AND OTHER FARMWORKER ADVOCACY GROUPS

DOL uses a brochure to directly explain the employment complaint system to farmworkers, employers, community services partners and advocates. This is printed in English and Spanish. DOL also displays the ETA-approved employment service complaint system poster in each AJC. A link to the complaint system information, policy and forms is provided on the Delaware JobLink and webpage that is available to the public.

C. MARKETING THE AGRICULTURAL RECRUITMENT SYSTEM FOR U.S. WORKERS (ARS) TO AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH PUBLICITY

DOL currently does not market the Agricultural Recruitment System, however, the agency proposes to develop an in-service video in English and Spanish that will explain and market the Agricultural Recruitment System to agricultural employers. A link to the video will be placed on Delaware JobLink and included in the e-news and electronic e-mail notification system. This will be completed no later than 6/1/22.

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. COLLABORATION

As noted in earlier sections, the Delaware DOL has established several points of collaboration with partners to ensure services are maximized and costs are contained. Some examples include:

- An ongoing Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Human and Social Services, Division of Public Health to conduct pre-occupancy housing inspections and subsequent reported violations of Agricultural Growers who hire Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers in accordance with OSHA federal and state laws. A working alliance and Memorandum of Understanding with the NFJP Grantee, Telamon has been executed to provide supportive services and alternative employment services to the Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers during their tenure in Delaware. The State Monitor Advocate provides the contact information to the workers for awareness and helps to facilitate direct contact upon request of the MSFW and or the Agricultural Growers. New opportunities for collaboration will continue to be pursued.

The Delaware DOL, through the Administrator, State Monitor Advocate and Outreach Team, have increased outreach to human and social services to support our customer base of MSFW and Agricultural Growers by:

- Identifying and verifying services offered by and where mutually agreeable develop agreements with existing providers.
- Serving as the principal liaison with the outreach partners
- Maintaining working relationships with Delaware State's Department of Agriculture and other agencies that provide services to MFSW workers and Agricultural Growers, as identified. (Ongoing)
- Becoming participating members of established Agricultural Growers Associations, Farm Bureaus and other relevant professional organizations, as identified. (Ongoing)
- Participating in related conferences, webinars, forums and learning opportunities to support and strengthen knowledge needed for the MSFW program (As identified throughout each plan year)

B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

The AOP was submitted for public comment from **February 10 th, 2022 through March 15th, 2022**. This was also listed on the agency Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts to include clients and business leaders.

C. DATA ASSESSMENT

The State has generally met 3 out of 5 performance measures the majority of the previous four years. The goals that were not met and strategies to address are as follows:

- Placed in a Job
- Placed 50 above minimum Wage
- Placed in a long-term Non-Ag Job

The SWA believes it has not met these goals as it is the prerogative of the client/migrant worker to determine if they would like to pursue employment other than agriculture. Many of the migrant workers who come to the State to work, leave the State to go back to their native countries after the Season ends. Should a participant register for ES it is done by choice. Participants are not mandated to register. The SWA cannot control whether the participant continues to seek assistance or is in compliance with Employment Services (ES). All ES is provided and customized to meet client needs in partnership with and informed by the participant. The SWA via outreach workers will follow up with participants after registration and AJC staff will continue to advise this client group of employment opportunities, job fairs, career development and training availability in English and Spanish for career demand fields. The SWA will continue to work to meet established goals.

D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The State believes it has enhanced overall MSFW Program management and has a good working relationship with agriculture employers and improved in outreach to farmworkers through strategic planning and partnerships. Farmworkers and Agricultural employers are contacted on a scheduled basis, and there has been a significant increase in the development of strategic partnerships with direct service providers to support farmworkers as needed. Delaware satisfied all 2018 Monitoring review findings.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved of this plan.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers, or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time (sec 121(e)(3));	Yes
2. If the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111, State Workforce Agency staffing requirements;	Yes
3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser Act services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and	Yes
4. SWA officials: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services; 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued; 3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued; 4) Approve corrective action plans; 5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days; 6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and 7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested hearing a wish to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing. 	Yes

WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (SecondQuarter After Exit)				
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)				
Median Earnings (SecondQuarter After Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

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“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS

a. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

In 2010, DDOE adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCRS) as the state's academic standards. In 2013, DDOE Adult Education adopted the Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education. The implementation of the CCR standards has been multi-faceted. To engage local programs, state staff discussed with program administrators the importance and value of the CCR standards. State and program staff were trained as leaders in "unpacking" of content standards. Professional development focusing on the standards was designed and delivered statewide. Representatives from all programs participated in these trainings and shared the information with colleagues upon returning to their sites. The state office monitored PD attendance and provided technical assistance where requested. Finally, the state monitored program performance targets to provide technical assistance where required as demonstrated by the data.

To provide programs with assessment options that better align with services being offered, in 2021 the State's Adult Education Assessment Policy was expanded to include both TABE 11/12 and OCTAE approved CASAS tests for pre and post-testing purposes. Since the Delaware Department of Labor also uses CASAS to assess clients, this addition supports adult learners by familiarizing the student with the same test across two agencies and may reduce the need for additional testing.

To support continuous improvement in the implementation of CCR standards, a Schoology site has been dedicated to CCR standards and is accessible to staff and administrators. This site is continuously updated with resources including LINC offerings, model lessons, and CCRS based content videos. Asynchronous chat rooms have been established on Schoology to allow adult education staff to join in statewide discussions about CCRS best practices and concerns. In addition, new adult educators are introduced to the CCRS during the New Teacher Orientation course which is also hosted on Schoology.

b. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

The Delaware Department of Education is recipient of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funding. The Secretary of Education has authority of State law to receive, hold and disburse Federal funds made available under this plan and the Director of Adult and Prison Education Resources Workgroup has authority to submit this plan. As required, the DDOE must submit a State Plan regarding the adult educational services provided under this funding. In addition, under Delaware Code, Title 14 § 122 "Rules and Regulations", the DDOE shall adopt rules and regulations, consistent with Delaware law for the provision of adult education and family programs including but not limited to adult basic education, literacy education, adult high school, prison education, apprenticeship programs and family literacy. This plan will serve as the basis for Delaware's operation and administration of each provision of the AEFLA funds. Further, DDOE will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act.

This plan is made available for public comment on the DDOE website and DDOE's Twitter and Facebook accounts.

Funding for Title II programs follow Delaware Department of Education guidelines. The DDOE's financial processes are based on accepted accounting principles (GAAP) in accordance with the Delaware Code, the State's Budget and Accounting Policy Manual and Division of Accounting guidance. In addition, the management of federal funds includes procedures for compliance with the Delaware State Clearinghouse Committee, federal guidance and WIOA fiscal requirements. Through the DDOE's "Request for Proposal" process, any eligible provider can apply for grant funding in alignment with

section 203(e) of WIOA. Availability of these funds are advertised through public announcements. The public announcements direct parties interested in applying for funds to websites where the RFP application is hosted, the State of Delaware Bid Solicitation Directory and the DDOE Bid Solicitation website. Prior to submission, a pre-bid meeting is held to explain the various components of the RFP application, submission dates and to answer any questions that may arise from the interested parties. Questions and answers arising during and after the meeting but before the question deadline are posted on the DDOE Bid Solicitation website and on the State of Delaware Bid Solicitation Directory. All applicants that have demonstrated effectiveness in providing services are reviewed through the same evaluation process. Responses are scored on a predetermined rubric by a team of community and state evaluators. The scoring rubrics are a part of the RFP package. Since Delaware has one statewide Workforce Development Board (DWDB), responses to questions relevant to the DWDB are shared with the DWDB Executive Director for Board or designee for review. Board reviews are included in the proposal evaluation process. The applications that receive high scores and provide services in high need areas are selected for funding. Programs receiving funding are announced on the DDOE and the State of Delaware Bid Solicitations websites to ensure transparency.

DDOE determines areas of high need for adult education services based on American Community Survey/US Census data reporting the number of individuals with low literacy rates and/or the number of individuals with limited English Language skills. The RFP requests that each respondent address how it will provide services in these areas in alignment with WIOA goals and outcomes. To support the goals of the RFP, WIOA Title II language, the Delaware Workforce Development Board's Strategic Plan and Delaware Department of Labor Employment and Training (DDOL-DET) in-demand job data is referenced in the RFP application. The application includes an explanation of how each respondent will provide for one or a combination of the following services: adult education; literacy; workplace adult education and literacy activities; family literacy activities; English language acquisition activities; integrated English literacy and civics education; workforce preparation activities and/or integrated education and training activities. The RFP states that AEFLA funding is made available only for individuals deemed eligible under AEFLA regulations.

The RFP requires each applicant to address one or more of the 13 considerations listed within the law:

- (1) support of a state literacy resource center;
- (2) development and implementation of technology applications, translation technology or distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology;
- (3) development and dissemination of curricula including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults;
- (4) development of content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways;
- (5) provision of assistance to eligible providers in developing and implementing programs that achieve the objectives of this title and in measuring the progress of programs in achieving such objectives, including meeting the State adjusted levels of performance;
- (6) development and implementation of a system to assist in the transition from adult education to postsecondary education, including linkages with postsecondary education institutions or institutions of higher education;
- (7) integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupations skills training, including promoting linkages with employers;
- (8) activities to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities;

(9) identification of curriculum frameworks and alignment with rigorous content standards that specify what adult learners should know and be able to do in the areas of reading and language arts, mathematics, and English language acquisition taking into consideration the Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards adopted by the Delaware Department of Education; the adult skills and literacy assessments approved by USDOE and used in Delaware; the common indicators of performance in addition to any other indicators deemed necessary by the Delaware Department of Education; standards and requirements for entering postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education; and where appropriate, the content of occupations and industry skills standards widely used by business and industry in Delaware

(10) development and piloting of strategies for improving teacher quality and retention;

(11) development and implementation of programs and services for adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners and low skilled students;

(12) outreach to instructors, students and employers; and

(13) any other activities of statewide significance that promote workforce development.

Potential providers identify the types of services they are offering and explain in detail how they will provide these services. Applicants may choose to deliver one or more types of services from the above listing.

Proposals also address the services proposed by applicants in support of the Workforce Development Board's strategic plan, e.g. identification of barriers to employment and better coordination of services; support of career pathways for low skilled adults, youth and individuals with disabilities; more effective outreach to employers and development of industry/sector partnerships. Information and data from DDOL and the Delaware Workforce Development Board is cited within the RFP application as resources for providers to integrate into their responses.

All respondents must provide satisfactory information on previously offered services that are similar to the requested services in the RFP. If a respondent provides satisfactory evidence, the application will proceed to a complete review for funding consideration. If a respondent can not provide satisfactory evidence of demonstrated effectiveness, the application will not be reviewed. Each respondent's application is reviewed and scored based on these considerations and budgetary considerations. A rubric describing minimum and maximum scores for responses to each section is included in the application package. Individual applications are evaluated by a minimum of three reviewers resulting in a total score for each application. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis to those applications garnering the highest scores for the geographic areas in which they propose to provide services. The RFP for vendors providing services to adult learners is developed on a four -year funding cycle with program performance measured on a quarterly basis. Each funded program completes a continuing services application in the years between the RFP applications. This report documents the strengths, challenges and innovations of the current fiscal year and the areas of focus in the next fiscal year.

RFP for Leadership monies is developed on a five year funding cycle with program performance measured on a annual basis. The funded provider of leadership activities completes a continuing services application in the years between RFP applications. The continuing services application documents the leadership activities completed and the focus for activities in the next fiscal year.

Based on statewide program performance, general technical assistance in meeting WIOA performance targets is offered to all programs. Based on individual performance, programs not meeting performance targets receive targeted technical assistance. Programs exhibiting a consistent inability to meet performance targets can receive reduced funding and may be defunded.

As a part of the application process, all respondents must provide the information on how they will support the purposes of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act through:

- Provision of services and supports to adults with barriers to employment including: low skilled; English Language learners; displaced homemakers; low income individuals; Indians, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals; youth exiting foster care; individuals with substantial cultural barriers; migrant and seasonal farmworkers; long term unemployed; individuals exiting SSA, title IV, part A; and single parents;
- Demonstration of the ability to provide services required in the RFP;
- Equitable access to and participation in the services being offered;
- Use of valid and reliable data demonstrating past effectiveness in delivering literacy services to adult sub-populations including those targeted as possessing barriers to employment;
- Support of the DWB's strategic plan while preparing participants for the entry into or promotion within the workplace and/or postsecondary education and/or training options;
- Flexible scheduling of service provision that will support successful completion of studies;
- Use of accelerated instruction and technology for academic instruction for learners who can benefit from these options;
- Provision of evidenced based reading instruction geared to adult learners;
- Provision of reading, writing, speaking, mathematics and/or English language acquisition instruction based on best practices, current scientifically valid research, and effective educational practice;
- Delivery of contextualized academic instruction that aligns with the state's workforce development plan and Common Core/College and Career Readiness Standards;
- Strategies that will engage participants in knowing and exercising their rights and responsibilities as citizens;
- Use of trained staff that meet DDOE Adult Education certification requirements;
- Delivery of high quality professional development focused on program delivery and improvement to staff;
- Coordination of services with WIOA partners, postsecondary education and training entities, one-stop centers, community based organizations, nonprofit organizations for the development of career pathways;
- Coordination with other state and community entities to support supplemental services needed by participants to successfully complete their studies;
- Provider's experience with maintaining high quality data management that can measure student and program progress toward specific objectives;
- Location in an area with a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition and civics education programs based on valid and reliable data.

All programs funded through Title II are required to deliver work preparation instruction or integrated education and training instruction; basic academic skills; critical thinking; digital literacy skills; and self-management skills aligned to the participant's unique needs and in accordance with federal and state goals.

c. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

To fund this project, the DDOE issues a request for correctional services as part of the Adult Basic Education RFP process. Adult basic education services in a correctional setting is an optional component of the ABE RFP to be completed only by vendors desiring to provide the services outlined in section 225 of WIOA. Applicants may elect to offer academic, integrated education and training or transitional reentry services. The funds allocated to this component will not exceed 20% of the state's total Adult Basic Education allocation. Vendors are selected based on several factors including: (1) the range of services being offered; (2) the locations where services will be provided; (3) use of technology in

providing services; and (4) intensity of services. All providers receiving this funding must collaborate with WIOA partners to facilitate an easy transition to community services upon release from work-release centers.

Within this RFP application, each applicant addresses how it proposes to prepare reentering offenders for unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and/or entry into postsecondary training or education. The proposal must also include transitional services offered in support of the Delaware Correctional Reentry Commission's Reentry Plan (DCRC). Information and data from DDOL, the Delaware Workforce Development Board and the DCRC are included in the application as resources for respondents to use if desired. RFP applicants must address topics such as instructional delivery strategies; integration of work readiness skills; continuous program improvement; alignment with the state's Workforce Development Plan; and linkages with the One Stop Centers in gaining unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and reduced recidivism.

Each respondent's application is reviewed and scored based on the above considerations and budgetary considerations. A pre-determined rubric describing minimum and maximum scores for each section of the request is included in the application package. Individual applications are evaluated by a minimum of three reviewers resulting in an average score for each application. All programs must provide satisfactory information on demonstrated effectiveness prior to a complete review of the application. If programs do not provide satisfactory evidence of demonstrated effectiveness, the application will not be reviewed. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis to those applications garnering the highest scores for the geographic areas in which they propose to provide services. Request for proposals are based on a four-year funding cycle with performance measured on a quarterly basis. Each funded program completes a continuing services application in the years between the RFP applications. The continuing services application documents information on the funded program's strengths, challenges and innovations for a fiscal year and its areas of focus for the coming year.

Based on statewide program performance, technical assistance in meeting WIOA performance targets is offered statewide to all selected correctional services providers. Dependent on individual program performance, programs not meeting performance targets receive specifically targeted technical assistance. Programs exhibiting a consistent inability to meet performance targets receive reduced funding and may be defunded. This process mirrors the process used for awarding Adult Basic Education grants to selected providers.

As a part of the application process, all respondents must provide the following information:

1. Demonstration of ability to provide the requested services through sharing of data on similar services offered previously;
2. Use of valid and reliable data reflecting past effectiveness in delivering literacy and workforce skills in a correctional setting;
3. Correctional instructional services based on evidence based practices;
4. Support of the Workforce Development Board's strategic plan while preparing participants for the entry into and/or postsecondary education and/or training options;
5. Flexible scheduling of service provision that will support successful completion of studies;
6. Incorporation of accelerated instruction and technology, where permitted, for learners who could benefit from these options;
7. Provision of evidence based reading, writing and mathematics instruction geared to adult learners;
8. Provision of workplace readiness skills;
9. Collaborative initiatives with the Department of Correction;
10. Use of trained staff that meet DDOE Adult Education certification requirements;
11. Delivery of high quality professional development focused on program delivery and improvement to staff;

12. Coordination with WIOA partners, postsecondary education and training entities, one-stop centers, community based organizations, nonprofit organizations for the development of adult career pathways;
13. Coordination with other entities to support transitional services needed by participants to successfully complete their studies; and
14. Provider's experience with maintaining high quality data management that can report measurable participant outcomes and monitor program progress.

d. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program services are established and operated by the DDOE Adult and Prison Education Workgroup. The DDOE seeks to support these programs through a collaborative effort using various funding streams such as WIOA Title II funding, DOL pre-apprentice and apprenticeship funding and state vocational training monies. These services are funded through the same RFP process as used for Adult Education services. Programs wishing to provide IELCE services must complete the IELCE Services component of the ABE RFP application package. The evaluation of these requests follows the same process as used for the ABE application evaluation.

The IELCE component is an optional component to be completed only by providers desiring to provide the services outlined in 243(a) of WIOA. These services are funded through the IELCE allocation of the state's Adult Basic Education grant. Selection of providers is based on the need for IELCE services as determined by an analysis of American Community Survey/US Census and state data, response to employer need, and ability to integrate language acquisition, academic skills and vocational training into a process that will benefit participants.

Within the RFP application, each applicant addresses how it proposes to prepare English Language Learners for unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency. The proposal also addresses the services offered in support of the Workforce Development Board's strategic plan. Information and data from DDOL and the Delaware Workforce Development Board is included in the application as resources for respondents to use. RFP applicants must address topics such as the use of technology to provide instruction; best practices for ELL instruction; continuous program improvement; outreach to instructors, students and employers; linkages with the One Stop Centers and other WIOA partners to support English language learners in gaining unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Each respondent's application is reviewed and scored based on the above considerations and budgetary considerations. Prior to a complete review of the application, the respondent must present satisfactory evidence of previously providing similar services. If the respondent presents satisfactory evidence, a complete review of the application is conducted. If a respondent cannot present evidence of demonstrated effectiveness, the application will not proceed to a complete review. A pre-determined rubric describing minimum and maximum scores for each section of the request is included in the application package. Individual applications are evaluated by a minimum of three reviewers resulting in an average score for each application. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis to those applications garnering the highest scores for the geographic areas in which they propose to provide services. Request for proposals are based on a four-year funding cycle with performance measured on a quarterly basis. Each funded program completes a continuing services application in the years between the RFP applications. The continuing services application is a report of the program's strengths, challenges and innovations for the current fiscal year and the areas of focus in the next fiscal year.

Based on statewide program performance, technical assistance in meeting WIOA performance targets is offered statewide to all IELCE providers. Based on individual program performance, programs not

meeting performance targets receive individualized targeted technical assistance. Programs exhibiting a consistent inability to meet performance targets receive reduced funding and may be defunded. This process mirrors the process used for awarding Adult Basic Education grants to selected providers.

As a part of the application process, all respondents must provide the following information:

- (1) Demonstration of the ability to provide requested services based on similar services previously provided;
- (2) Use of valid and reliable data reflecting the benefit of IELCE services in the proposed area; effectiveness in delivering literacy and workforce skills to English Language Learners; and the need for the specific occupation or occupational cluster training being proposed;
- (3) Support of the Workforce Development Board's strategic plan while preparing participants for the entry into or promotion within the workplace and/or postsecondary education and/or training options;
- (4) Equity in providing access to and participation in the services being offered;
- (5) Flexible scheduling of service provision that will support successful completion of studies;
- (6) Incorporation accelerated instruction and technology for academic instruction for learners who can benefit from these options;
- (7) Provision of evidence based reading, writing and mathematics instruction geared to adult learners;
- (8) Provision of workplace readiness skills within a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- (9) Strategies that will engage participants in knowing and exercising their rights and responsibilities as citizens;
- (10) Use of trained staff that meet DDOE Adult Education certification requirements;
- (11) Delivery of high quality professional development focused on program delivery and improvement to staff;
- (12) Coordination with WIOA partners, postsecondary education and training entities, one-stop centers, community based organizations, nonprofit organizations for the development of career pathways;
- (13) Coordination with other entities to support supplemental services needed by participants to successful complete their studies;
- (14) Provider's experience with maintaining high quality data management that can report measurable participant outcomes and monitor program progress;
- (15) Valid and reliable data that the services will be provided in locations accessible to the targeted populations.

This project is designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency through an integration of education and training activities.

The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program provides instruction in reading, writing and speaking competencies, comprehension of the English language and citizenship skills to English

language learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials from their native countries. Instruction is delivered through a contextualized approach focusing on workforce preparation for a specific occupation or occupational cluster designated as ‘in demand’ by DOL’s in-demand job listing. The goal of this program is to prepare the English Language learners for educational and/or career advancement. Instruction in academics, work readiness and specific skills training is coordinated through integrated lesson plans based on the alignment of subject matter across the three areas of study.

The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program integrates into classroom instruction Delaware specific information regarding employment opportunities for in-demand industries and occupations. Programs incorporate DDOL website and print resources into student activities and the WIOA partner referral process developed by the WIOA Leadership Team to support learners in completing their educational and career goals.

The skills trainings offered through this project must be based on in-demand industries and occupations for the area being served based on Delaware Workforce Development Board's data. All trainings must lead to employment that enables economic self-sufficiency. Program transition supports and DOL collaboration facilitates placement in unsubsidized employment. Funding for this program can be provided through a combination of DOE and DOL funding. The skills areas targeted by providers are based on the needs of the workforce development system and funding entity guidelines.

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 State uses the State Leadership funding under section 223 of WIOA to carry out the following required activities:

(1) the alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core program and one-stop partners through actions such as: co-location of adult education classes in One Stops; referral of participants for support services to other WIOA partners; improved usage of service intersections with other WIOA partners through participation multi-agency projects; and participation in state and local WIOA partner team meetings;

(2) the operation of high-quality professional development programs to improve instruction including reading instruction; instruction provided by volunteers; and dissemination of information about models and promising practices through activities such as summer and winter academies for professional development; maintaining the STAR reading instruction; online webinars; and the best practices component of monthly administrators’ meetings;

(3) the provision of technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities concerning rigorous and scientifically valid research in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics; English language acquisition; and distance education. Specific staff training is provided through targeted assistance to programs experiencing difficulty meeting performance targets. Assistance is provided to programs regarding access to employment and training programs through collaboration with DDOL. General assistance to programs regarding the use of technology to support system efficiencies through the LACES system or through instructional online/offline software packages is scheduled throughout the year;

(4) improved delivery of distance learning programming to support adult learners with barriers to participation such as transportation or childcare; fluctuating work schedules; and concurrent family responsibilities heightened by pandemic and job market conditions. This support will be in the form of professional development regarding effective distance learning for program administrators and staff,

maintenance of distance learning platforms, and specific technical assistance requested by programs as needed;

(5) the monitoring of instructional delivery and continuous improvement in adult education and literacy activities and the dissemination of information concerning instructional and programmatic models are delivered through quarterly monitoring, online chats, Schoology resource sites, monthly administrator meetings and on-site visits.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE

The State will use State Leadership Activities to fund the following permissible State Leadership activities:

- the support of a state network for literacy resources
- professional development to support the use of instructional technology
- dissemination of curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults
- development of models for integrated education and training and career pathways
- provision of assistance to eligible providers in developing and implementing programs that achieve WIOA objectives
- development and implementation of a system to assist in transition from adult education to postsecondary education
- integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupations skills training including promoting linkages with employers
- identification of curriculum frameworks and aligning with rigorous content standards
- development of strategies for improving teacher quality and retention
- development of services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners
- outreach to instructors, students, and employers
- other activities as designated by the WIOA partners for implementation of WIOA

f. ASSESSING QUALITY

Title II programs will rely on several data points to determine program quality, effectiveness and continuous improvement. These will include:

- quarterly desk audits to monitor program progress towards performance targets based on MIS data input;
- technical assistance meetings with programs that are in danger of not meeting performance targets;
- on site and virtual state and peer monitoring visits to ensure that programs are delivering services as described in the grant application and established in legislation;
- student surveys to evaluate service quality from a client perspective;
- staff surveys to evaluate delivery of professional development from an instructor perspective; and
- WIOA Frontline Staff surveys to determine gaps in understanding among WIOA partners referring clients to Title II services

- data analysis to determine gaps and strengths in equitable provision of services to populations with barriers to employment

**ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM
CERTIFICATIONS**

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;	Yes
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;	Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;	Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;	Yes
5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;	Yes
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;	Yes
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and	Yes
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;	Yes

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding the supplement-not- supplant requirement);	Yes
2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;	Yes
3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not “eligible individuals” within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA;	Yes
4. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.	Yes
5. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).	Yes

AUTHORIZING OR CERTIFYING REPRESENTATIVE

APPLICANT’S ORGANIZATION	Enter information in this column
Applicant’s Organization	Delaware Department of Education
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	Enter information in this column
First Name	Maureen
Last Name	Whelan
Title	Director of Adult and Prison Education Resources
Email	Maureen.whelan@doe.k12.de.us

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

Delaware works hard to ensure compliance with GEPA regulations on a state level. All WIOA Section 223 Leadership funds targeted for professional development will include steps to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, leadership activities by local adult education personnel, including administrators, teachers and other staff. For example, professional development regarding distance learning will be provided in a live format and recorded for viewing by those staff unable to attend the live broadcast. Program participation will be monitored to ensure equity of access. If a pattern of non-participation by a

program's staff is detected, state staff will reach out to the program to determine barriers to participation and develop solutions, e.g., additional trainings to increase instructor comfort level with technology use.

The Delaware Department of Education ensures equal access to and participation in federally funded Adult Basic Education programming by working to overcome barriers to equitable participation, including barriers based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability, and age for all eligible students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries in any project or activity. All applicants for funding must acknowledge compliance with General Education Provision ACT.

In addition to seeking equity, the Delaware Department of Education Adult and Prison Education Workgroup seeks to have students and teachers meet high standards through their participation in the program. This is accomplished through:

1. Adherence to relevant Delaware Department of Education Policies regarding equity in access and participation such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and the Technology Accessibility Policy.
2. Marketing of Adult Basic Education services through a variety of strategies, including electronic and paper- based resources that are accessible to populations with barriers to participation.
3. The funding process for Adult Basic Education services on the state level is standardized to ensure equal access to all interested participants.
4. Adult Basic Education monitorings and desk audits of program performance are reviewed for equity and quality.
5. The selection of state level Adult and Prison Education Resources staff through an objective and standardized process ensuring equity for qualified instructors. As noted in the Department’s Employment Philosophy:

"We (the Delaware Department of Education) seek to empower every learner with the highest quality education through shared leadership, innovative practices and exemplary services. The Delaware Department of Education is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate in its employment practices or educational programs, services or activities based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, veteran’s status or any other legally protected category. This policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1975 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990."

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	45.2%		46%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	46%		46.5%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5400		\$5450.0	
Credential Attainment Rate	38%		39%	
Measurable Skill Gains	65.0%		65.2%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL)

a. INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

1. INPUT PROVIDED BY THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, INCLUDING INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPORT, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS PART OF THE COUNCIL'S FUNCTIONS

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the State Rehabilitation Council maintain open lines of communication. The DVR Director and Deputy Director participate in SRC meetings. The Director reports key activities to the SRC as a regular agenda item at each meeting. The SRC is kept abreast of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act as it relates to new performance standards and the combined state plan with the DET and WDB. The SRC frequently designates a representative to participate in the state budget process for DVR, attending the DOL Budget Hearings with the Office of Management and Budget and the Delaware Legislature's budget hearings before the Joint Finance Committee. The State Rehabilitation Council is invited to comment on the state plan as part of the annual plan development process. The SRC recommendations for DVR policy and program improvements to be reflected in the combined state plan are received during the annual Effectiveness Evaluation and delineated below.

At the February 14, 2022, meeting of the SRC, the membership was offered the opportunity to review documents, receive programmatic updates, and ask questions. This included program information and policy updates. It is noted that members of the SRC sit on the DVR Policy Committee and attend meetings and/or receive updates of all policies during the revision process. Subsequently the SRC was

asked to provide written input and recommendations. The format for their written input had been updated to reflect the priorities in WIOA. In addition, due to the Covid -19 Pandemic the process was changed to a virtual platform. The change to a virtual meeting had no effect on the overall process. It created an environment for accommodating transportation for a number of individuals and added enhanced technology with virtual breakout rooms for question-and-answer goal sessions.

Below are the numerical ratings and the unedited comments received at the meeting. The comments related to the effectiveness of DVR in reference to the goals and priorities identified on a scale of 1=low and 5=high are as follows:

Goal 1: Provide quality employment outcome for people with disabilities.

Builds Relationships with Business	5	
Employment Outcomes for Consumers with Significant Barriers to Employment		4.5
Services support Financial Independence	4	
Access to Services is Non-Discriminatory	5	

Comments:

1. Group discussed that the employment trends are getting better each year.
2. Really hard to compare data from previous years since it is all so relative and close.
3. Glad to know that DVR looks at needs of employers with skills of people with disabilities

Goal 2: Support training programs that reflect opportunities in the labor market.

Helps consumers to focus on their Career Pathways	4.5	
Appropriate Training Opportunities leading to Business-Recognized Credentials		5
Coordination with WIOA Partners	5	
Measurable Skills Gains (added in 2021)	5	
How we work with our vendor partners (added in 2021)		5

Comments:

1. How do you determine and support training programs that reflect the labor market?
2. More information on available resources and who provides what services.
3. Doing a wonderful job to improve and expand partnerships.

GOAL 3: Expand opportunities for students to transition from school to work.

Quality of Pre-Employment Transition Services		4.66
Quality of Transition Services	4	
Coordination with Partners (e.g., DOE & DDDS)		4

Comments:

1. The group was happy to learn about a new Pre-ETS ‘must respond’ field in IEP Plus (DE DOE). This strategic IEP template addition will promote knowledge and availability of Pre-ETS programs for in-school students.
2. This Pre-ETS “‘must respond’ field in IEP Plus galvanizes conversation with students with disabilities and their families that employment is expected, possible and the end goal of education.
3. Students who receive Pre-ETS are documented in IEP Plus. DDOE & DVR share this information.
4. The group was happy to learn RFPs require all vendors to provide the core service of WBLE.

5. The group also supported the use of the Pre-ETS in-house unit focusing on students earlier and assisting them in selecting CTE pathways.
6. There is a Schoology page with Pre-ETS resources.
7. Kent and Sussex counties have higher number of students involved Pre-ETS vs. New Castle County. Discovering work on how to increase NCC students' involvement in Pre-ETS is on-going.
8. Dave Frye shared a story about the importance of teaching Self-Advocacy skills (a Pre-ETS core service), from Delaware School for the Deaf. Students need to learn and have practice in scheduling interpretation services for themselves, before exiting the school system.
9. Discussion was held on targeting Pre-ETS services to meet the specific needs of students. We need better coordination in guiding students towards Pre-ETS programs that meet their specific transition needs; versus directing students to service because it merely exists.
- 10 The landscape of transition services has shifted greatly since the introduction of WIOA. This legislation proactively positions VR to work more collaboratively with LEAs assisting in their transition work with students. It also allows for access to VR potential clients earlier.
11. Executive Director Andrea Guest shared DVR is serving more youth under the age of 24 than ever before.
12. The group has happy with the collaboration between DOE and DVR in hosting the monthly (10 months) Transition Cadre meetings. All stakeholder groups are welcomed and represented including transition coordinators, families, DVR District Administrators, DDDS, disability advocacy organizations. These meetings are consistently well attended each month.
 - a. All transition stakeholders become informed on their roles and the stakeholders work in a youth's transition plan.
 - b. Informed choice by students and families is enhanced with this level of communication infrastructure.
 - c. The creation of DVR videos was also discussed for stakeholders who cannot attend Transition Cadre or to further reach potential clients/parents who might not be as ready to learn about DVR and IPEs.
13. The group has happy to hear about DVR's collaboration with Appoquinimick School District (3 High Schools) in sponsoring a newly position. This person specifically supports students with disabilities having full access to CTE Pathways, including receiving work-based learning experiences embedded in the curriculum.
14. The Pipeline Project has greatly enhanced students with disabilities allowed to gain entry into CTE Pathways.
15. Behind the discussion of Pre-ETS programs, this section also had a lengthy conversation.
16. Emphasis of transition planning under IDEA has expanded in the last 10 year is a positive for VR. The challenge, however, is keeping up with personnel changes on Transition Coordinators and Case Managers at the LEAs and schools.
17. Discussion was also suggested that coordination be teased out with DVR's multiple collaborative partners. A suggested coordination with Partners could be broken down to the following:
 - a. State Agencies
 - i. Education
 - ii. Division of Developmental Disabilities
 - iii. Behavioral Health
18. Revisit MOU - 2003
 - a Delaware Substance Abuse and Mental Health
 - b Kids Department
 - c Disability Advocacy Organizations supporting families

Add-On's

How will the statewide assessment survey be used to guide 2023 Goals & Priorities. (SIDE NOTE: 527 surveys were received).

One group member brought up creating an Adult Project SEARCH program for students who have not been encouraged in applying or have been declined acceptance the current Project Search programs.

Discussion was also sparked about barriers to applying to the state apprenticeship program.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation agrees with each of the unedited comments received at the February 14, 2022, SRC meeting. All unedited comments will receive a response in this plan. To reduce redundancy, like comments will be grouped together.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

DVR did not reject any of the SRC's recommendations.

b. REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

1. A LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY WILL PROVIDE THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WAIVER REQUEST;

Delaware DVR does not request a waiver of statewideness.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

Delaware DVR does not request a waiver of statewideness.

3. REQUIREMENTS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATEPLAN WILL APPLY TO THE SERVICES APPROVED UNDER THE WAIVER.

Delaware DVR does not request a waiver of statewideness.

c. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) maintains relationships with other agencies, both public and private, that provide services to individuals with disabilities. DVR maintains cooperative agreements with public and private non-profit agencies such as programs that serve individuals with developmental disabilities, individuals with mental health and/or substance abuse disabilities, and community rehabilitation programs. Some of these agreements have been in effect for more than 20 years. The agreements provide for cooperation in key areas such as respective roles related to joint constituents, agency financial responsibilities including terms of reimbursement, liaison relationships to promote information flow, joint referral processes, and dispute resolution.

As required by the Rehabilitation Act, DVR developed a Memorandum of Understanding with the public institutions of higher education in Delaware, specifically, Delaware Technical and Community College (DTCC), Delaware State University, and the University of Delaware. DVR and DTCC have collaborated with a separate Memorandum of Understanding to provide supported education services to DVR clients who are enrolled in remedial education programs at DTCC. The program provides additional training in study skills, time management, study techniques, and accommodations necessary for students to be successful in the school environment.

Since 2011, DVR has had a memorandum of understanding with the Delaware Division of Social Services, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families with minor children under title IV–A of the Social Security Act (TANF) in order to: a. Determine the employment needs TANF recipients who have medical waivers through assessment and identifying services that foster employment and self-sufficiency. b. Create an unimpeded path of entry for eligible TANF recipients into DVR’s programs directly from DSS and from other TANF funded employment and training providers. c. Create agreed upon communication pathways between the Divisions that maintains regular communication regarding shared clients. d. To provide funding to DVR to provide additional supports to TANF recipients as determined by family circumstances.

In October of 2012 the Division of Social Services, the Delaware Economic Development Office, and DVR entered into a MOU to create the Advancement through Pardon and Expungement (APEX) program to address barriers to employment for consumers with criminal histories. The APEX program assists consumers in the process of expungement and pardon of a criminal history to reduce the barriers of employment to seek high quality high demand employment. Those consumers who are eligible under the law for expungement and/or pardon are assisted throughout the process by APEX via form completion, filing, payment of finger printing and court documents and representation at court expungement hearings and/or Pardon Board Reviews.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

Each county in Delaware has an Assistive Technology Resource Center (ATRC). The ATRCs acquire pieces of equipment that may be loaned to individuals so that they may try the equipment before it is purchased. DVR works in conjunction with the ATRCs to identify vocationally applicable equipment. DVR clients work with ATRC staff to assess the individuals’ needs, select, and use equipment that, if used successfully, will enable the clients to participate in education/training or to perform their employment. Upon successful identification of assistive technology, a recommendation for the purchase of that equipment is given to DVR.

DVR has an active representative on the Assistive Technology Loan Advisory Board as required by the Assistive Technology Act. The board is coordinated through the Eastern Seals of Delaware and Maryland’s Eastern Shore. The representative attends the board’s scheduled meetings, providing input into the running of the program, receiving information on the loans that have been made and reviewing the programs financial information with an eye on sustainability. The DVR representative also brings information about the loan program back to DVR.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

The AgrAbility Grant through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has been a resource to DVR and rural Delawareans engaged in the State’s agriculture labor sector. Those services assist consumers in concert with contracted service providers of assistive technology to support and enhance employment outcomes. The AgrAbility Grant through USDA was not renewed for Delaware. DVR has recently coordinated services through the Purdue University and was directed to a local vendor.

4. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services have partnered to foster the development of a Young Adult Advisory Council. The council targets youth and young adults ages 16-25, who want to make a difference in their communities and who have lived experience with mental health. The Young Adult Advisory Council was developed to provide young adults with a meaningful opportunity to have a voice in decisions made about resources, policies and services that target their needs. Councils are run by and for young adults themselves, with the silent support of staff/organizations.

Youth who utilize the APEX program, referenced above, may regain access to Pell Grants for postsecondary education.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS

In Delaware, the State Use Law requires that State agencies purchase goods and services from specific organizations that promote the employment and financial self-sufficiency of individuals with disabilities. DVR, following the State Use Law, procures goods and services through the Ability Network of Delaware.

d. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

1. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S PLANS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AS WELL AS PROCEDURES FOR THE TIMELY DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF INDIVIDUALIZED PLANS FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR THE STUDENTS

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has a strong relationship established with many transition stakeholders throughout the state. DVR collaborates with the Delaware Department of Education (DOE), including the Exceptional Children Resources and Career & Technical Education Work Groups as well as with the Local Education Agencies and Charter Schools. DVR continues to participate in the Statewide Transition Council, the Delaware Community of Practice on Transition, and the monthly DOE Cadre meetings. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation works closely with the DOE and other organizations on a variety of other initiatives to facilitate the transition process for students with disabilities. Some of these initiatives include the annual Transition Conference, Customized Employment Bootcamp, Project SEARCH, the Start on Success program (SOS), Early Start to Supported Employment (ESSE) and Intensive Technical Assistance from the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT). DVR and DOE, in collaboration with the Delaware Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI), the Delaware Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS), and the Developmental Disabilities Council plan and financially support the statewide Transition Conference which had over 900 attendees in 2019, half of whom were transition students. In 2019, DVR, DDDS and DOE held the semi-annual Customized Employment Bootcamp for school personnel, DVR staff, community rehabilitation program (CRP) staff, other state agency personnel, families and businesses. This is a long standing training program focused on employment strategies for working with individuals with disabilities, especially high school students and those requiring supported employment services.

The Start on Success Program (SOS) is a collaboration among a variety of partners including DVR, DOE, community businesses, local school districts and Humanim, a community rehabilitation program. The

2018–2019 school–year marked the sixth year of SOS which is a successful employment training program targeting three main factors for transition students: 1) Job Exploration, 2) Workplace Readiness, and 3) Work-based Learning. The major focus is a four– month paid internship in a business where students learn on site experience through various work opportunities. Students are mentored by current employees at the business and supported by SOS staff from Humanim and the VR Counselor. Three school districts have entered into MOUs with Humanim to contribute funding for the paid internships. Each school supports 10-15 students to participate in the program and DVR funds Humanim for the job exploration and workplace readiness workshops and on-site support for the internships. The businesses providing internship sites include multiple YMCA locations and two hospitals. The program has also expanded to offer a summer Pre-Employment Transition Service (Pre-ETS) program to support student from any school district in the county during the summer months, where DVR provides funding to Humanim to support the paid work-based learning opportunity.

Project SEARCH is another example of a strong collaboration with DVR, DOE, local schools, businesses and a community rehabilitation provider. The program continues to serve students in 4 different businesses and all three counties in the 2018-2019 school year including Christiana Care Health Services (CCHS) in New Castle County, Bayhealth Hospital and the Delaware Department of Transportation in Kent County and Nanticoke Hospital in Sussex County. Each site has a host school district providing the instructor and classroom support, however students from any district or school are encouraged to apply and have the ability to use the school choice process in order to participate through the host district. Delaware has been nationally recognized for the high rate of successful employment among the graduates of the CCHS, Delaware Department of Transportation and Bayhealth Project SEARCH sites. These three programs consistently achieve 80%-100% placement rates with each cohort of students. Two of these three sites have also received the “Superstars in Education” Award from the Delaware Chamber of Commerce.

In order to reach more transition students at a younger age (summer prior to senior year or younger), DVR has worked with many of the CRPs, training vendors, local businesses and a local university to develop summer and school-year programs specifically related to Pre–Employment Transition Service activities. In 2019, 10 providers were funded by DVR to offer 12 different programs including activities related to paid or unpaid internships and job shadows, career preparation, skills training and college exploration activities. These programs have the capacity to serve over 600 students statewide with most of them reaching their capacity. DVR works closely with the local schools to ensure students are informed of the opportunities available during the school year and summer break.

Continuous Improvement

a. Project Search/ Steering Committees exist for all Project SEARCH (PS) programs in Delaware and are comprised of representatives from each of the partners; the host business, DOE, DVR, Local Education Agency and provider agency. Although each program operates slightly differently, the committee meetings are held regularly, generally monthly, but no less than quarterly. The purpose of the committee is to monitor and evaluate the program based on adherence to the Memorandum of Understanding. The committee reviews roles and responsibilities, process and procedures, and the timeline of events to evaluate program effectiveness and efficiency. With all partners at the table on a regular basis, we have the ability to provide continuous program evaluation. When situations arise in which a change is required, the partners discuss options, the impact the change may have on the program and considerations for each individual partner. The Committee will consult with the PS on-site team to receive feedback and communicate changes for program implementation.

The PS on-site team consists of the instructor, paraprofessional(s), skills trainers and the VR Counselor. The PS on-site team meets weekly to review operational needs, plan coverage, identify and address concerns, and facilitate communication and collaboration. A member of the Steering Committee meets with the PS on-site team at least monthly in order to maintain communication, evaluate the daily operations, and assist with identifying and resolving programmatic barriers.

The partners of the Start on Success (SOS) program also meet quarterly at a minimum. This committee includes representatives from the DOE, DVR, LEAs and the provider, Humanim. The committee's purpose is to evaluate the program, addressing the areas of program structure and timelines, funding and expansion, eligibility requirements, marketing and recruiting and student outcomes. The daily operations are often addressed by many of the same individuals but may also include the VR Counselor and employment specialists.

Given the size of Delaware and the ability of all parties involved in PS and SOS to maintain regular contact, issues can be identified and addressed quickly. Some program sites are more established than others and there is a lot of opportunity to learn from those programs. Each program, however, is unique and requires continuous and thoughtful evaluation to establish, enhance or expand in order to provide effective and relevant services to students with disabilities.

b. Pre-Employment Transition Services. Since 2015, DVR has worked with local provider agencies to develop programming related to the 5 core Pre-Employment Transition Services for transition students ages 14-21 potentially eligible for DVR. In the summer of 2015, DVR was able to offer 11 different programs related to work-based learning experience, career exploration and employment readiness training, and exposure to opportunities for higher education. In 2016, that initiative was expanded to 20 summer and school year programs. In 2019, DVR scaled back to 7 programs, increasing the capacity of a few, but also hiring 4 internal Pre-Employment Career Counselors to work directly with the LEAs and the students. Pre-ETS Career Counselors meet with the LEAs to identify needs of the students and gaps in career preparation services. Together they develop a plan for which core Pre-ETS services are most needed and how they will be carried out. DVR prefers to work with the youngest age (14) eligible for Pre-ETS to help students develop a foundation of skills related to career interests and exploration, self-advocacy and disability awareness, but recognizes each school has different resources so DVR remains flexible to meet the needs of the students. The collaboration among DVR, DOE, the LEAs, Pre-ETS Career Counselors and providers has been exceptional with everyone seeing the value of connecting students to these opportunities. DVR monitors and evaluates the programs and services provided by the Pre-ETS Career Counselors, both formally and informally. On-site monitoring, observations, soliciting feedback from schools, students and families and using pre/post tests are all strategies used to evaluate the Pre-ETS services being provided. In addition, agencies and Pre-ETS Career Counselors are asked to collect information on each student participating, submit monthly reports or formal program summaries upon completion of the program. In addition to the more formal documentation, anecdotal information is shared by students, school staff and family members who see the benefits students gain by participating in these programs.

There is a lot of valuable information available, and DVR continues to utilize the case management system to find the most effective way to track and share information on the students who participate in Pre-ETS services, especially if/when they do become DVR consumers. This is information that can be used by schools, the DVR Counselor, students themselves and any provider they may work with in the future. Due to the difficulty in sharing individual information, DVR sees this as an opportunity to encourage providers and Pre-ETS Career Counselors to help the students have a better understanding of their own strengths, barriers, disability and accommodation needs in order to develop and utilize their self-advocacy skills to the best of their ability.

c. Anticipated changing needs of TR/Pre-ETS students. Delaware DOE, DVR and LEAs participate in a monthly cadre meeting to share transition information, receive professional development and participate in collaborative transition planning. This has provided the "transition professionals" with valuable, first-hand feedback directly from stakeholders to stay informed and align services for students across all partner organizations.

In addition, Delaware has continued to work with the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) to be an intensive technical assistance state. Utilizing the expertise and resources through NTACT as well as WINTAC and Y-TAC for evidence-based, effective and promising practices has

helped Delaware as we work to better understand the needs of transition students and youth with disabilities and develop programing and planning for these young adults.

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;

On 12/10/2019 the Memorandum of Agreement between the Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Delaware Department of Education, Exceptional Child Resources and Delaware Local Education Agencies was updated to serve as a mechanism for DVR, the DDOE and, as appropriate, LEAs to clearly specify the plans, policies and procedures for coordinating services to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services, including:

- Pre-employment transition services;
 - Consultation and technical assistance to assist the DDOE in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including pre-employment transition services, transition services, and other vocational rehabilitation services;
 - Transition planning by DVR and educational personnel that facilitates the development and implementation of a student's individualized education plan (IEP);
 - Outreach to and identification of students with disabilities and assessment of their potential need for transition services and pre-employment transition services;
 - Documentation requirements set forth in section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act with regard to students with disabilities who are seeking subminimum wage employment;
 - Assurance that neither the SEA nor the LEA will enter into an arrangement with an entity holding a special wage certificate under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act for the purpose of operating a program under which a youth with a disability is engaged in work at a subminimum wage;

For the past four years, DVR has been a regular participant in the monthly DOE Cadre Meetings in which a majority of school districts and charter schools send teams ranging from Administrators, Special Education and Transition Coordinators, and middle and high school teachers from within their districts/charters. Since May 2015, DOE and DVR have held monthly cadres meeting with the districts and charter schools throughout the state with the purpose of establishing regular opportunities for planning and professional learning. At a minimum, the DVR Transition Coordinator and a staff member from each of the four DVR offices attends each meeting to provide schools with information and support related to DVR services for students with disabilities. It is an opportunity for all DVR Transition staff to receive training and technical assistance provided by DOE and for Counselors to work with teams from their assigned schools to develop goals for collaboration, allowing VR to be further integrated in the school processes, procedures and resources and enhancing transition services for students with disabilities

at the state and local level. Throughout the school year, DVR works closely with the local schools to develop and participate in student and parent information sessions, career and college fairs and general transition fairs. These events serve to inform current consumers of DVR and transition services as well as to provide outreach to younger students and families who may not know about or be receiving VR services yet.

There is continued collaboration between DVR and Delaware Technical Community College (DTCC) in the initiative to provide intensive educational supports for graduating transition students enrolled in remedial programs at DTCC. The supported education project provides workshops in Math, English and Reading to transition youth, along with some additional specialized study skills training. Over the years, the initiative has grown from one campus to all of the four DTCC campuses statewide. DVR started a pilot program in New Castle County by providing a VR Counselor to work primarily on the Wilmington and Stanton DTCC campuses. This initiative began in August 2015 in order to provide additional VR supports to college students and allow the high school transition counselors to begin working with transition students prior to their Senior year. This initiative has been beneficial for students to receive more adequate supports while in college, but also to establish a stronger relationship with DVR and the community college. This is no longer considered a pilot as it has expanded to all 3 counties.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

Delaware has a long history of collaboration between DVR and Education. The DVR Transition Coordinator works closely with the DOE Education Associate to facilitate meetings, develop training, and plan for transition services statewide. There are many opportunities for DVR to interact with DOE and LEAs/Charters whether through meetings, training, email or phone calls. In addition, DVR often participates in outreach events through the schools and other state agencies to ensure students and families are familiar with a variety of transition related services and resources including pre-employment transition services for potentially eligible transition students who have IEPs and 504 plans. Regular communication is encouraged and supported to ensure proper outreach and connection to services that are critical to the successful transition of students with disabilities.

The cooperative agreement ensures DVR is part of the School Transition Team and provides all entities with regular opportunities to share information and provide technical assistance and outreach to students and support students with their post-school goals. Due to the structure of the DVR transition program in which VR Counselors are assigned to schools, and in order to ensure timely eligibility determinations and development of individualized plans for employment, there is regular interaction between DVR, transition students, and school personnel. DVR Transition Counselors work with the students, primarily in the schools, to develop their Individualized Plan for Employment and plan for services related to their post-high school employment goals and to provide students with career exploration and vocational counseling and guidance, including Pre-Employment Transition Services. Counselors have, at minimum, monthly meetings with students at the schools; they participate in IEP meetings (in-person, by phone or by providing information to be shared) and have regular opportunities to communicate with school personnel. DVR Transition Counselors participate in Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings to explain services and make recommendations to assist the student, family and school staff with transition planning and career preparation. School personnel assist Counselors with obtaining space within the school and accessing students during the school day. Information is easily shared among all the parties and allows for everyone involved to be aware of and supporting the student's plan and goals.

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 Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) within the Department of Labor holds an interagency agreement with the Exceptional Children & Early Childhood Education Group, Delaware Department of Education (DDOE), Local Education Agencies (LEA) and Charter Schools. The agreement outlines the commitment of DVR and DDOE to ensure the transition of individuals who are potentially eligible for DVR services from the receipt of educational services to vocational rehabilitation services in a programmatically sound manner which reduces the disruption of services to the individual. As outlined in the Interagency Agreement between DVR and DDOE, the educational and vocational training of students ages 3-21 who are eligible for special education and related services is the responsibility of the education system prior to graduation. Local Education Agencies (LEA) and Charter Schools are to provide effective secondary education programs to students with disabilities and ensure they are linked to appropriate adult services prior to leaving the school system. LEAs and Charter Schools are responsible for identifying a transition team to oversee and facilitate the transition process for the qualifying students. In regard to the coordination of education and vocational rehabilitation services, the transition team will inform students and their parents of DVR as early as a student's initial IEP. The LEAs and Charter Schools will coordinate with and invite DVR Counselors to IEP and other transition planning meetings to develop, implement and monitor the transition process.

Although DVR maintains no absolute lower age limit for eligibility, vocational rehabilitation services are generally offered to students between the ages of 16 and 21 with the exception of pre-employment transition services which may begin at age 14. LEAs and Charter Schools will ensure informed written consent for release of information is obtained from students and/or parents prior to referring a student to DVR or inviting DVR to an IEP or planning meeting and typically will make referrals to DVR in a student's Junior year of High School, or 2 years prior to exit for students participating in an 18-21 year old program. When special circumstances warrant, LEAs and Charters may refer a student prior to the Junior year. DVR will provide services for those students who are approaching or are of working age (out of school) and who are determined by DVR to be eligible for services and not placed on the Order of Selection waiting list. DVR will assign a qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) to all school programs serving students from grades 9-12. The VRC will maintain a regular schedule with each of their schools to maintain a cooperative working relationship and the LEA/Charter will provide locations within the schools for the VRC to meet with students and staff for planning purposes. The VRC works with the student to explore career opportunities, discuss post-school goals, and collaborate with the schools to develop and implement additional vocationally related training and employment initiatives as needs of students are identified by the transition team.

The VRC will also collaborate with schools to address the needs of youth with disabilities at risk of dropping out of school and provide outreach to students potentially eligible for DVR. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation works closely with the DOE and other organizations on a variety of other initiatives to facilitate the transition process for students with disabilities and provide pre-employment transition services. Some of these initiatives include the annual Transition Conference, Customized Employment Bootcamp, Project SEARCH and the Start on Success program (SOS). The monthly cadre meetings and statewide transition meetings, in which all districts and VR Transition Staff are invited, are other opportunities to provide training and share information.

The cooperative agreement also outlines the financial responsibilities for both DVR and DOE. It emphasizes the adherence to the specific responsibilities of both agencies as delineated by their applicable rules and regulations. These responsibilities include the provision of services specified and required by each student's Individualized Education Plan and Individual Plan for Employment. In the development of these plans both agencies' staff will ensure that duplication of services, which could occur in instances where responsibilities overlap, does not occur. In cases where the primary responsibilities for those

services would rest with the most appropriate agency, as determined by the student's status at that time, and when an agency is legally obligated and funded to provide that service. Nothing in the agreement relieves either agency of the responsibility to provide or pay for any transition service that the agency would otherwise provide to students with disabilities who meet the eligibility criteria of that agency. The strong relationship between DVR and DOE as well as with LEAs and Charter Schools has allowed for very successful sharing of resources to ensure transition services are provided in an efficient and effective manner.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

The School to Work Transition Program at DVR consists of eight Transition Counselors four Pre-ETS Career Counselors and four Transition Assistants throughout the state. Each counselor is assigned to specific school districts, charters and non-public schools in order to ensure students with disabilities are receiving VR services prior to exiting from high school. VR Counselors work with the students, primarily in the schools, to develop their Individualized Plan for Employment and plan for services related to their post-high school employment goals and to provide students with career exploration and vocational counseling and guidance, including Pre-Employment Transition Services. In addition, VR Transition Counselors attend Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings to explain services and make recommendations to assist the student, family and school staff with transition planning and career preparation.

e. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

All DVR Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations are established within the parameters of Delaware Code Chapter 69 State Procurement and submitted to the State's bidding portal at <http://mymarketplace.delaware.gov/>. The State of Delaware Procurement Portal is an all-inclusive site providing information on how to do procurement business with the state.

The Contracting unit within Government Support Services manages all statewide contracts for goods and services and administers agency contracts, as requested. This team is the State of Delaware's central contracting unit that acts on behalf of State agencies, local government units, authorized volunteer fire companies, and School Districts.

In Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19- October 1, 2018- September 30, 2019), DVR awarded Purchase of Services Agreements to 15 Nonprofit Organizations to provide Career Path Employment Services, providing opportunities for individuals with significant disabilities to increase the likelihood of successful integrated employment and successfully retain employment for 90 days. This process was established through a Request for Proposal competitive bidding process, in which applicants were scored and ranked based on pre-determined scoring criteria.

In the first quarter of FY19 Contract Amendments were sent to 7 Non-Profit organizations who were previously awarded Purchase of Service Agreement contracts providing Pre-Employment Transition Services to eligible youth enrolled in school ages 14-21 with a disability and potentially eligible for DVR services leading to employment for qualified individuals.

Professional Services Agreement (Purchase of Service) was added to specify the updated terms and conditions of the Contract, and requirements of Del C. 29 § 6981.

The Scope of Work (Appendix A) was added to enhance and clarify DVR's expectation of the Non-Profit Organization regarding the delivery of Pre-Employment Transition Services, including the five service component areas.

The Scope of Work Contractor Response (Appendix B) was added to capture Contractor's delivery of services and program description.

The Budget Summary (Appendix C) was added to capture summer/year-round session, number of students, unit cost, total cost for each student served and total contract award amount. Contract attachments were added to update The Monthly Progress Report, Referral Form and Invoicing requirements.

At the close of FY19 DVR reported the following metrics to RSA: 252 Total Referrals were distributed to 7 Non-Profit organizations providing Pre-ETS services: \$467,988 was spent on Career Services and \$294,093 was spent on training services. As a result of the Contract Amendments, DVR captured accurate and timely reporting metrics that increased the service delivery to DVR Pre-ETS clients. It is anticipated in the spring of FY20 DVR will issue a Request for Proposal for the Pre-Employment Transitional program (Pre-ETS) utilizing past performance data to determine funding allocations.

In the third quarter of FY19, DVR issued a Request for proposal for Employment Readiness Services. These services are intended for consumers where it has been established and documented by the VR counselor, consumer and vendor that job placement and coaching services are insufficient in meeting the consumer's needs adequately, and that the individual requires additional employment preparation experiences to build their resume and develop soft skills prior to entering job development, placement, and retention services. The RFP was issued in accordance with Delaware Code Chapter 69 State Procurement. As a result of this solicitation DVR awarded 3 Non-Profit organizations Purchase of Services Agreement Contracts to provide Employment Readiness Services.

In the fourth quarter of FY19 DVR issued a Request for Proposal for Supported Employment Services (SE) for individuals with the most significant disabilities, both physical and cognitive. Individualized services are to be provided to enable the individual to achieve meaningful employment consistent with the consumer's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interest, and informed choice. An RFP had not been issued in over 5 fiscal years, whereas DVR was tasked with implementing the new Supported Employment model in conjunction with Federal Regulations on Supported Employment sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and Rehabilitation Services Administration. The RFP was issued in accordance with Delaware Code Chapter 69 State Procurement. As a result of this solicitation DVR awarded 14 Non-Profit organizations Purchase of Services Agreement Contracts to provide Supported Employment Services.

DVR reeducated the SE vendor community with the payment for services established through a new milestone payment system. In previous fiscal years' the milestone payments were weighted more on the front end by way of assessments and job placement plans. Within the new Purchase of Services agreement for Supported Employment the milestone payments were restructured to focus more on Job Coaching to teach the essential skills needed to learn and maintain employment, provide the necessary prompts and possible behavioral changes and build natural supports to ensure continued success at work.

The Project SEARCH RFP awarded in late 2014 is in the fifth year of a five- year Contract cycle. Project SEARCH has expanded from one (1) site to four (4) sites statewide in FY18 with a capacity to serve 48 students. Current FY19 student roster has 41 active participants in its workplace readiness and work-based learning experience (unpaid internships). This contracted service will be extended in FY20, in which an RFP will be considered for publishing to award new contracts in FY20. The companion service of Start on Success (SOS) Program, a similar model to SEARCH, is successful in the State of Maryland. The program combines classroom training in job readiness and soft-skills, with skill training at an employer site, using onsite supports. Upon publishing the Pre-ETS RFP, the provider, Humanim, was compelled to bid to continue doing business with the state. It had previously operated under a pilot and awarded a contract outside the scope of the 2013 RFP for placement services. The program operates in 4 school districts in New Castle County as of FY19.

Under the Ticket–To–Work Initiative and MOU with The Social Security Administration, DVR has contacted all Employment Networks (EN) that have agreed to serve Delaware. Currently, eight community rehabilitation facilities contracted through DVR are registered as ENs. The Delaware Department of Labor’s Division of Employment and Training became registered as an EN in 2011 and began receiving Ticket to Work referrals. There have been no changes in this contracted service from FY16 to present. After providing a training program to agency and EN staff that included training by SSA and Mathematica, DVR is increasing its use of the Partnership Plus program.

As of FY20 there are roughly 50 active cooperative agreements which DVR has established through the RFP process and contract extensions per Delaware Code Chapter 69 State Procurement to provide vocational rehabilitation services to eligible and potentially eligible DVR clients.

DVR continues to maintain effective working relationships with their contracted service providers through quarterly meetings that include training opportunities in addition to discussing work operations and policy changes. In FY19, quarterly meetings were held, and the DVR Contracts Administrator organized, set agenda, arranged training and moderated the meetings. DVR continues to collaborate with the Delaware Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (DeLARF) now renamed Ability Network of Delaware. These members are part of the body of DVR Contractors participating in quarterly provider meetings. DVR is committed to provider engagement, collaboration, program development, standardization of reporting and quality improvement through the Contractor Provider Quarterly Meeting and one on one with a contracted provider.

f. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Describe the designated State agency’s efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

In order to provide supported employment services throughout Delaware, DVR has a cooperative agreement with the agency that serves individuals with intellectual/cognitive disabilities, the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS). The agreement is monitored by workgroups that review the program, identifying best practices and areas that need improvement. As delineated in the cooperative agreement, DVR and DDDS collaborate to provide supported employment services to transition–age students and youth and to adults with cognitive disabilities. The Early Start to Supported Employment Model provides Supported Employment Services to students with cognitive disabilities transitioning from school to work. The Department of Education, the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation have a cooperative agreement to reflect collaborative practices that promote early intervention and preparation for employment.

For individuals with cognitive disabilities, DVR and DDDS have a long-standing agreement on the Supported Employment (SE) process and financial responsibilities of each agency. For out of school youth and adults being referred to SE, typically the referral is made to DDDS and then sent to DVR with supporting documentation. DVR will assist the individual with selecting a SE provider and provide funding to that provider for 1.) supported employment career profile and community-based assessments, 2.) development of a job placement plan, 3.) job placement, 4.) job coaching/training, and 5.) stabilization/closure. The milestone structure is paid under Title 1 until job placement is reached, at which time Title VI funds are allocated. DVR pays the final milestone of stabilization/closure once the individual has stabilized and is ready to transition to long term support. DVR continues to monitor the case for an additional 90 days, however once DVR payment ends at stabilization, funding shifts to DDDS for extended services, when available. DVR, DDDS and the providers work together to ensure individuals

with disabilities receive quality and seamless SE services. The WIOA provision allowing VR to provide extended services has not impacted this process for those who qualify for DDDS.

In regard to students who are still in school, the only variation to the process is the responsibility of the schools to identify and inform students and families of the SE opportunity and assist with helping families to connect to the related services, i.e., DDDS. Once the school refers the student to DDDS for Supported Employment (2 years prior to high school exit), the process is the same. This model, Early Start to Support Employment (ESSE), increases the collaboration with adult service providers and schools, facilitates better communication and sharing of information and increases employment opportunities for students near the time they exit from high school. SE providers are able to include information from the schools and observations of the students in the SE career profile and assessment process and begin job development while the student is still in school. The providers also share information with the schools to help them better understand how they can support students with more targeted skill development and employment preparation related to the student's employment goals and the needs of the businesses. Funding for ESSE remains the same as for general SE services as outlined above.

Although DVR and DDDS have had a long-standing partnership and agreement for providing Supported Employment services, there are still individuals with disabilities who do not qualify for DDDS yet need this level of service in order to achieve and maintain employment. DVR assists individuals to identify other potential sources of funding for extended services (Mental Health, Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities, PASS plans, etc.) as well as work with the SE provider agencies to develop natural supports on the job in order to provide the long-term supports an individual may require. The WIOA provision allowing VR agencies to provide extended services for youth up to four years or until the youth reaches age 25 is an additional resource which assists our agency to more adequately support individuals who require SE services who do not have access to any other formal funding stream. This funding allows DVR to support SE providers longer for those individuals who require more intense coaching supports or for whom developing natural supports may take longer.

g. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

1. VR SERVICES; AND

Co-located within the Delaware Department of Labor, the Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has enriched connections to workforce information, resources, and other advantages for serving individuals with disabilities. Career exploration, employer engagement, and assisting our job seeker population to go to work are at the forefront of DVR's strategic goals. Consequently, working with employers and employer engagement is not a new role for DVR staff but has become an enhanced focus. Since September of 2007, the Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has operated with an in-house Business Relations Unit to help guide business practices. The unit consists of one Statewide Business Relations Manager, five full-time and 2 part-time Business Relations Specialists, all of whom have post-secondary degrees with concentrations in areas such as marketing, communications, or human resource management. Unit team members consistently receive training in job development and placement, labor market and career information, marketing to business customers, employment readiness, soft skills training, the Americans with Disabilities Act and other areas required to bring proficiency to the job. The Business Relations Unit uses information from the Delaware Office of Occupational and Labor Market Information such as the Delaware Career Compass, the Delaware Monthly Labor Review and other labor market information as a guide for creating career opportunities for people with disabilities who want to go to work and for establishing linkages with business. Utilization of Delaware Job Links, the States free job matching and workforce information service for job seekers and business from the Division of Employment and Training, is also a resource used by the unit for serving its dual customer population. The Business Relations unit currently functions from a dual customer perspective and exists to:

- Assist the counselors in obtaining meaningful employment opportunities for all assigned job seekers who want to gain successful employment

- Identify and prepare the DVR job seekers in a timely manner in response to employer recruiting needs.
- Build solid relationships and engage business and industry in collaborative activities as a resource to meet their workforce needs.
- Increase state agency knowledge and participation in the State of Delaware's Selective Placement and Agency Aide programs to help advance hiring opportunities for people with disabilities seeking employment in State government.
- Work closely with local workforce development agencies, schools and community-based organizations who seek to build relationships with employers by engaging in career fairs, parent nights and other activities.
- Facilitate statewide communication, training, marketing, resource sharing and other activities related to consumer placement and business development.
- Work closely with state and local Chambers, SHRM, rotaries, and other professional organizations to promote a structure for networking and sharing information.

The DVR Business Relations Unit works with the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Program to assist businesses with Federal contracts to fulfill the Section 503 requirements regarding employment of individuals with disabilities. The OFCCCP has referred businesses that are seeking compliance to DVR for assistance. Federal contractors send lists of open positions to the Business Relations Unit. In addition, Business Relations Specialists work with the State's office of Government Support Services where state federal contracts are awarded.

Moving forward, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue to develop and enhance established partnerships with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of VR services. Utilizing the current practices in place, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will also:

- Engage employers in activities as strategic partners and not use them only in an advisory capacity.
- Use employers to help identify high demand industries and occupations in Delaware
- Utilize their expertise to develop career options and credentialed programs for individuals with disabilities who want to work.
- Promote and encourage their expertise in activities such as apprenticeships, OJT, internships, and other work-based learning opportunities where employer input is valued.
- Pursue careers, not just jobs, with individuals with disabilities who are interested in seeking employment.
- Use Delaware labor market trend information to assist with developing career options.
- Use the Talent Acquisition Portal to highlight Delaware's workforce talent and connect job seekers with a larger network of employers from across the country.
- Make use of available tools and resources that address workforce needs and job seeker skill sets.
- O'NET

- Talent Acquisition Portal
- Division of Employment and Training, Delaware Job–Link
- Delaware Office of Occupation and Labor Market Information (OOLMI)
- Collaborate with business, community service providers, colleges, universities, and other organizations for skill development training.
- Work with employers to identify skills gaps and collaborate with local training programs to customize training to meet the needs.
- Seek business guidance for developing curriculum for training programs.
- Encourage employer feedback regarding program services through activities such as open forums, surveys, and attendance at meetings in the business community.

The Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) will utilize their in-house Business Relations Unit staff, resources from Business Relations staff within the Department of Labor’s Job Career Centers, and contractual job development and placement staff from the rehabilitation provider community to develop, build and maintain partnerships with business and industry. These statewide joint efforts will serve to create coordinated business outreach and services to connect business and industry to information and resources to meet their workforce needs and demands and create widespread employment opportunities for people with disabilities in Delaware. DVR will collaborate with business partners for specific events and activities which help to market career opportunities for people with disabilities. These business activities may include targeted job fair events with business that focus on demands of precise markets and help meet the needs of specific industries, career/job fair opportunities with business as a way for employers recruiters, and schools to connect with potential candidates and give pertinent information to potential employees/recruits, sponsored business disability mentoring days as a way of raising awareness of employment opportunities for people with disabilities and the talents they bring to the workplace, and disability awareness training and lunch-time learning offered to business partners as who are interested in creating a diverse workforce to learn on topics such as specific aspects of disabilities, assistive technology, workplace accommodations, tax credits and workforce incentives.

DVR will encourage business participation in the National Employment Team (NET) to develop a strategy across the footprint of a company. In addition, to offering business the advantage of national qualified applicants, DVR will facilitate business demonstrations of and access to the Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP), an online system that includes both a national talent pool of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) candidates looking for employment and a job posting system for businesses looking to hire individuals with disabilities.

The DVR in-house Business Relations Unit will utilize labor market information and work with businesses to identify those jobs considered in-demand and high growth sectors. The information will be provided to DVR counselors for developing career pathways in addition to creating training and work opportunities for individuals with disabilities. In partnership with business, DVR will gather real-time labor market information based on current conditions, industry and skills segments to identify workforce needs and supports and align credentialed training with community programs to meet those needs and demands. DVR will work cooperatively with business and industry and education to determine business recognized training opportunities that meet workforce demands and creates employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the community. In collaboration with WIOA partners who serve the business community, an employer survey is being developed to determine what business and industry need in terms of resources, information, and services, and then follow-up with survey tool(s) for the level of customer satisfaction derived from the workforce services received. The survey will serve to gauge areas of best practices, met and unmet business needs, and areas of improvement for providing future

workforce supports. DVR will collaborate and engage in training opportunities with WIOA core partners for how to better serve the business community based on their needs.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

The Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) will utilize their in-house Business Relations Unit staff, resources from Business Relations staff within the Department of Labor's Job Career Centers, and contractual job development and placement staff from the rehabilitation provider community to develop, build and maintain partnerships with business and industry. These statewide joint efforts will serve to create coordinated business outreach and services to connect business and industry to information and resources to meet their workforce needs and demands and create widespread employment opportunities for people with disabilities, including students and youth, in Delaware. DVR will collaborate with business partners for specific events and activities which help to market career opportunities for students and youth with disabilities. These business activities may include targeted job fair events with business that focus on demands of precise markets and help meet the needs of specific industries. DVR holds an annual statewide Transition Conference for students, which is a collaborative effort between the Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), the Department of Education (DOE), Division for Visually Impaired (DVI), and the Division of Development Disabilities Services (DDDS) along with a variety of other agencies and organizations. The event is instrumental with assisting students hear directly from employers and identifying potential career pathways. DVR's in-house Business Relations Unit staff collaborate with local employers to create diverse workshop panels as well as coordinating seminars on workplace readiness and soft skills. Career/job fair opportunities are developed with business as a way for employer's recruiters and schools to connect with potential candidates and give pertinent information to potential employees/recruits. DVR works with businesses and schools statewide to coordinate and sponsor disability mentoring days as a way of raising awareness of employment opportunities for students and youth with disabilities and the talents they bring to the workplace. Disability awareness training and lunch-time learning is also offered to business partners who are interested in creating a diverse workforce to learn on topics such as specific aspects of disabilities, assistive technology, workplace accommodations, tax credits and workforce incentives, etc.

DVR will encourage business participation in the National Employment Team (NET) to develop a strategy across the footprint of a company. In addition, to offer business the advantage of national qualified applicants, DVR will facilitate business demonstrations of and access to the Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP), an online system that includes both a national talent pool of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) candidates looking for employment and a job posting system for businesses looking to hire individuals with disabilities. Similarly, DVR has worked with employers across the state to develop four Project SEARCH sites, increasing opportunities for students and youth with disabilities to participate in internships within those businesses and allowing businesses to be part of training the local workforce and preparing them for employment in high demand jobs in their local communities.

The DVR in-house Business Relations Unit will utilize labor market information and work with businesses to identify those jobs considered in-demand and high growth sectors. This information will be provided to DVR counselors for developing career pathways in addition to creating training and work opportunities for students and youth with disabilities. In partnership with business, DVR will gather real-time labor market information based on current conditions, industry and skills segments to identify workforce needs and supports and align credentialed training with community programs to meet those needs and demands. DVR will work cooperatively with business and industry and education to determine business recognized training opportunities that meet workforce demands and creates employment opportunities for students and youth with disabilities in the community. In collaboration with workforce partners who serve the business community, DVR will create a standard needs assessment to initially determine what business and industry need in terms of resources, information and services, and then follow-up with survey tool(s) for the level of customer satisfaction derived from the workforce services received. The survey will serve to gauge areas of best practices, met and unmet business needs, and areas

of improvement for providing future workforce supports. DVR will collaborate and engage in training opportunities with WIOA core partners for how to better serve the business community based on their needs.

DVR has contracts with 16 community rehabilitation providers (CRPs) for the purpose of assisting DVR consumers with job placement. As is the case with the in-house Business Relations Unit, the CRPs work with both students, youth, and adults who are seeking employment. DVR counselors work with the CRP staff to ensure that the consumer's employment outcome is commensurate with their vocational goals and preparation.

h. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

1. THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

The State of Delaware, Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Social Services was awarded a federal grant through SNAP, USDA (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) to address the barriers to employment in a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of consumers with wrap around services. DVR was invited to partner to strategically address the needs of participants as it relates to eliminating or reducing the impact of a criminal history on securing employment through the expansion of the Advancement through Pardon and Expungement (APEX) program services. The criminal background barriers to employment to be addressed via the APEX program include supporting consumers towards either expungement or pardoning of charges. The APEX program was signed into agreement in 2012 and serves all Delawareans in the pursuit of expungement and/or pardon as a barrier reduction. Criminal backgrounds continue to be a legitimate barrier to employment for anyone seeking employment, and disproportionately so for people with disabilities. In a 50/50 partnership with the Division of Social Services (DSS), DVR manages three employees who serve DSS and DVR consumers statewide. In 2016 a MOU has been crafted and signed between DSS and DVR to support administrative filing consumer costs up to \$250 per.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) and DVR have a seamless continuum of service delivery of SE client from DVR to DDDS for follow-up and DVR requires SE providers be approved DDDS providers and in compliance with annual training requirement per DDDS via Medicaid. SE clients have access to barrier reduction services e.g., APEX and assistive technology, e.g., Empowerability –contracted service provider in addition to Independent Living and Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities resources where applicable.

DVR began providing Pre-Employment Transition Services with summer programs in 2015. Since that time, the program has expanded to work-based programs in every county, including programs during the school year. This is in collaboration with Department of Education, the Division of Services for Children, Youth, and Families and community-based partners through RFP awards. Project Search, implemented on or about 2012 as a pilot, has expanded to all three counties.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

DVR continues to work with the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDDS) to maintain good inter-agency relationships. DVR, DDDS and DSAMH have Memorandums of Understanding to address program integration, shared staff and employer training, customized employment, the overall shared serving of our mutual consumers and post-employment follow along services. The collaborative efforts with DDDS and DSAMH have enhanced integrated competitive employment and wrap around support services for persons with significant mental illness and cognitive disabilities statewide.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) and DVR have a seamless continuum of service delivery for supported employment clients from DVR to DDDS for follow-up and extended services and supports. DVR requires supported employment providers be approved DDDS providers and in compliance with annual training requirement per DDDS via Medicaid. On a semi-annual basis, staff training is provided through a Supported Customized Employment Bootcamp program that trains DVR supported employment staff, along with representatives from DDDS, DSAMH, the Department of Education, LEAs including individuals from the school districts, charter schools and community rehabilitation providers. This program is jointly funded by DVR, DDDS and DOE and offers training on effective supported employment and business engagement processes. This training facilitates skill building, networking and cross-agency understanding and collaboration to better serve our mutual consumers and local businesses.

The cooperative agreement specifies which agency is responsible throughout the supported employment process with DVR responsible through employment stabilization. DVR provides funding to the SE provider for 1.) discovery and community-based work assessments, 2.) job placement, 3.) stabilization/closure. DVR pays the 3rd and final milestone once the individual has achieved 90 days of employment and continues to monitor the individual for an additional 60 days (150 total). Once DVR pays the final milestone at 90 days of employment, DDDS, through a community provider, assumes responsibility for the long-term follow-along extended services.

The Early Start to Supported Employment Model provides Supported Employment Services to students with developmental disabilities transitioning from school to work. The model has been refined since its inception in 2005, adding Customized Employment principles and working with providers to begin services earlier, in the year prior to the student's exiting year. The Department of Education, the Division of Developmental Disabilities and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation have updated their cooperative agreements to reflect newly implemented effective practices

The Project SEARCH model was first implemented in Delaware several years ago through collaboration with Red Clay School District, the Delaware Department of Education, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Christiana Care Health Services. The project provides employment services to people students, many of whom are eligible for long term support services through the Division for Developmental Disability Services. DDDS provides long term supports to eligible consumers who received job training and placement through project SEARCH. Project Search currently has a site in all three counties in Delaware.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

DVR is currently meeting semi-annually with all Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team community partners, specifically front-line workers and supervisors, DSAMH ACT management and DVR front line workers to share best competitive integrated employment practices and to apply consistency across providers and agencies. All new community partner employment specialists experience customized employment training via DVR. Quarterly meetings are held with community partners to review contractual employment responsibilities. Contracts with community partners have been modified to require all job ready consumers be registered with DOL one-stop Employment and Training JobLink web-based career pathways-focused case management system. Progress reports are required monthly. DVR and community partners also work closely with the Business Leadership Network, the Workforce Development Board and with DOL Employment and Training to maximize competitive, integrated employment opportunities for participants of the ACT team programs.

i. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT; DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

1. SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

A. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS

i. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL WHO ARE EMPLOYED BY THE STATE AGENCY IN THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES IN RELATION TO THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY;

The Delaware DVR serves clients out of 4 offices and 1 satellite office across the 3 counties.

Per DVR AWARE case management system, the end of year statistics for activity initiated in FY20 are as follows:

1,251 consumers applied for services, 1,246 were determined eligible for services, 1423 began receiving services, 674 successfully worked for 90 days and were closed and 1,395 consumers left DVR and were not successfully employed (97 from application, 676 from eligibility, 616 from service and 6 from employment). As of 9/30/2020, 81 consumers were in application status, 63 were eligible for services, 72 were receiving services and/or looking for employment, 23 were solely looking for employment, 46 were employed and 6 were receiving post-employment services.

Per DVR AWARE case management system, the end of year statistics for activity initiated in FY21 are as follows:

1,246 applied for services, 1,154 were determined eligible for services, 1,045 began receiving services, 702 successfully worked for 90 days and were closed and 786 were not successfully employed (53 from application, 132 from eligibility, 597 from service and 4 from employment). As of 9/30/2020, 91 consumers were in application status, 59 were determined eligible for services, 69 were receiving services and/or looking for employment, 38 were solely looking for employment, 58 were employed and 6 were receiving post-employment services.

New Caseload Items	FY 2020	FY 2021
Applications	1843	1246
Individuals entering into service, eligible/OOS	1246	1154
TOTAL # of individuals receiving services at closure of FY	1423	1045
Closed successfully	674	704
TOTAL # engaged in the VR process	5135	4295

Currently, January 2022, the Division is staffed by the following personnel categories:

Administrative Specialists (inclusive of job titles);

Fiscal Staff – 4 full time filled positions, with 0 additional staff member working part-time

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors- The DE DVR has 31 full time VRC positions, with 28 of the positions filled and operational, and 1 part-time Counselor. Often counselors are not dedicated to a specific case type and may work both a general caseload and with individuals with severe and persistent mental illness.

- 9 Counselors are dedicated to serving applicants for VR services that are of transition age seeking VR services. DVR has three full-time vacancies, two in the Wilmington and one in the Georgetown offices.
- 10 Counselors are dedicated to working with Community Rehabilitation Providers serving **individuals with severe and persistent mental illness and/or substance abuse diagnosis.**
- 7 Counselors are dedicated to serving individuals going through Supported Employment, our Early Start to Supported Employment program that collaborates with the DD agency, and each school to engage students identified as benefiting from supported employment services, and more recently serving the individuals exiting sub-minimum wage employment.
- 9 Counselors are dedicated to general referrals.
- 1 Counselor is serving individuals who are deaf.
- 1 part-time Counselor is serving students at the local community college.

Vocational Rehabilitation District Administrators- 4

Business Services Representatives- 5Sr.

Social Services Administrator- 3 Social

Services Administrator- 3

Deputy Director- 1

Division Director- 1

Over the course of FY 2020 and FY 2021, the division experienced turnover in 1 Deputy Director, 1 Senior Social Service Administrator, 1 out of 4 District Administrators, 1 Social Service Administrator, 10 VR Counselor positions. A number of these positions were vacated during the Covid-19 Pandemic when the need for staff to expedite good services via a virtual environment became critical. Losing staff impacted service delivery and outreach significantly as many were senior seasoned counselors and leadership staff and several were serving the transition program where services are initiated by DVR outreach vs individuals knowingly seeking VR services. We were able to find ways to strategize through these challenging times with case re-assignments, bringing on new hires, and using temporary part-time staff.

For the delivery of Pre-Employment Transition Services, the DE DVR hired 4 part-time staff to work with schools to deliver the 5 required services, with the assistance of 1 Administrative Specialist.

DE DVR has 4 Pre-ETS counselors and DE DVR also hired 2 Social Service Administrators to coordinate training for the VR staff. These 2 staff serve to coordinate Pre-ETS and transition services.

The DE DVR no longer employs a Social Services Administrator to coordinate training for the Vocational Rehabilitation Staff. Training needs are met by the 4 District Administrators, pairing newer counselors with senior counselors and utilizing the YESLMS/VR Development Group for on-line training.

ii. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

Fiscal Staff – 4 FTE,

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors- 31 FTE, 1 PTE

Vocational Rehabilitation District Administrators- 4

Business Services Representatives- 5

Sr. Social Services Administrator- 3 (Manager of the Business Relations Unit, Contract Administrator, and Statewide Transition Services Coordinator)

Social Services Administrator- 3 (Upstate and downstate transition coordinators)

Deputy Director- 1

Division Director- 1

iii. PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY, WHO WILL BE NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES IN 5 YEARS BASED ON PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL EXPECTED TO RETIRE OR LEAVE THE FIELD, AND OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS.

Job Title Projected 5–year Vacancies

Administrative Specialists- 7 of the FTE.

Fiscal Staff- 3

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors- 11 Rehabilitation

District Administrators- 2

Business Services Representatives- 2

Sr. Social Services Administrator- 2

Division Director- 1

Deputy Director- 1

B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

i. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM;

Delaware does not have an institute of higher education with a vocational rehabilitation program; however, we maintain communication and close working relationships with our institutions in the Mid–Atlantic Region that do offer the master’s program. DE DVR also shares out information when the online programs are recruiting.

ii. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKENDOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND

University of Wisconsin Stout, Master of Science in Rehabilitation Counseling - 1 in progress

University of Maryland eastern shore, Master of Science in rehabilitation counseling - 1 in progress

Emporia State University, ASD Master's Certificate Program - 1 in progress

iii. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED DURING THE PRIOR YEAR FROM EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS WITH CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, OR WITH THE CREDENTIALS FOR CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, BROKEN DOWN BY THE PERSONNEL CATEGORY FOR WHICH THEY HAVE RECEIVED, OR HAVE THE CREDENTIALS TO RECEIVE, CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE.

Three counselors

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

The District Administrators maintain a relationship with the University of Delaware, Delaware State University, Wilmington University and Delaware Technical & Community College and regularly provide internships for students pursuing degrees in Human Services. Upon notice, job openings are sent through contacts at the universities. Delaware DVR regularly invites graduate students in these programs to complete their practicum and internship experiences with Delaware DVR, particularly where there is a projected void in staffing.

The State of Delaware has a Selective Placement Program in which agencies can interview qualified individuals with disabilities without having to post a position. This program was developed to recruit more individuals with disabilities. The Division has provided training about Selective Placement statewide to all Counselors and Employment Specialists, as well as community partners who have contracts to do job development and job placement services.

Once hired, VRC's receive an On Boarding Plan that introduces the agency, provides a prescribed training plan that will be scheduled out over their first few months. They navigate with a competency checklist of various activities outlined to understand what they will need to know by way of introduction to the Delaware DVR and employment services to people with disabilities.

3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR -RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND

It is a standard practice that a master's level candidate be hired in Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor positions. To fill specialized positions with special linguistic requirements or positions in rural locations or in the complete absence of candidates who meet the established personnel standards, DVR recognizes

that it may be necessary to hire individuals who will not meet the State requirements. In order to minimize the number of individual's not meeting State requirements; DVR has marketed employment opportunities to universities with Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling programs by posting positions through their networks and conducting presentations to graduate seminars to recruit graduate interns.

Currently, 26 of the 31 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors have Master's Degrees in Rehabilitation or a related field. While it is not a requirement by the State to possess or be eligible to sit for the CRC, DE DVR does hold the Commission in high regards as the only certifying body directly related to the field of helping people with disabilities achieve employment. District Administrators encourage staff to pursue the additional coursework to gain a Master's degree and/or a CRC. All of our Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors are required to attend at least 20 hours of training annually directly related to serving people and businesses in regard to supporting people with disabilities.

Every permanent position within DVR has an established job description which outlines the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for the position. DVR uses competency-based interviewing, a process for determining whether the job candidate has the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities in the job description, to fill open positions.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATIONACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

The Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has set the following as its personnel standard for rehabilitation counselor:

1. Possession of a Master's degree or higher in Rehabilitation Counseling, Social or Behavioral Science or related field OR Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) designation.
2. At least one year experience in vocational rehabilitation.
3. Six months experience in health or human services work which includes applying theories, principles, laws and practices of health or human services programs and services that assist with and improve life for individuals, families, or communities such as financial support, employment including a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities, unemployment, housing, health care, disease prevention, substance abuse, child protective services, physical/mental health treatment and prevention or rehabilitation.
4. Six months experience in analyzing and interpreting medical, psychiatric, psychological, psycho-social, educational and vocational reports from medical, psychological, and other experts to determine eligibility or an individual's vocational rehabilitation needs.
5. Six months experience in case management which includes assessing, planning, developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating options and services to meet an individual's human service needs.
6. Six months experience in interpreting vocational rehabilitation laws, rules, regulations, standards, policies and procedures

The DE DVR hosted or participated in the following trainings to ensure staff have 21st century understanding of the evolving workforce and to encourage cross-sector collaboration with other one stop partners since October 2018.

-Training has been offered in our case management system, AWARE, as it relates to the updates reflecting new reporting schedule and data elements.

-The DE DOL hosts an Annual One Stop Partners Convening, giving all partners the opportunity to network, receive information on the other programs and build plans for service integration. All staff is highly encouraged to attend.

-The DE DVR hosts, in collaboration with DOE and DDDS, an annual Transition Conference that all transition staff are highly encouraged to attend.

-The DE Pathways to Prosperity Network hosts a conference annually to bring employers, secondary and post-secondary education together to demonstrate where education is working to meet the needs of the labor market and discuss opportunities to strengthen the supports for students. All staff is encouraged to attend.

-DVR hosts annual full team trainings mandatory for all staff to attend

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

A. A SYSTEM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS WITHIN THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO ASSESSMENT, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING, JOB PLACEMENT, AND REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING TRAINING IMPLEMENTED IN COORDINATION WITH ENTITIES CARRYING OUTSTATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998; AND

In the spring of 2019, DVR coordinated a training on using Assistive Technology with individuals who have vision loss. The training focused both on assisting staff and consumers to be successful in the workplace.

The performance of all DVR staff is formally evaluated annually. Specific performance expectations relative to the mission of the Division and the duties of the position are listed on each staff member's performance plan. The performance plans of all Rehabilitation Counselors and Business Relations Specialists include the goal of completing a minimum of 20 hours of In-Service Training. The 20 hours of In-Service Training requirement is consistent with the requirement of the Commission of Rehabilitation Counseling Committee for those with the CRC designation. During the Performance Review process, the staff member is evaluated based on his or her ability to meet the outlined expectations. When training is recommended to improve performance, it is noted on the performance plan and incorporated into the individual's training needs assessment.

B. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS.

A sub-committee of the WIOA Leadership Team is working on developing Adult Career Pathways. The sub-committee is charged with assessing how effectively adults seeking employment in Delaware are accessing Career Pathways and correlating labor market information in each county with available

business-recognized, credential-bearing training. There is also mass email distribution to staff, when publications and webinars are available and applicable to their work, through our national resource centers such as the WINTAC, Mathematical Institute for Community Inclusion, and Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification.

5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

Within the Division, a Counselor position has been designated as Rehabilitation Counselors for clients who are deaf or hard of hearing. The incumbent is deaf and fluent in American Sign Language, making DVR services accessible to consumers who use manual communication.

Within New Castle County, one position is designated for a bilingual, English, and Spanish, Counselor in order to serve the Hispanic population. We currently have two Counselors in the state who speak both English and Spanish fluently. The division hires interpreters to work with clients when there is no available Counselor to serve the client at hand based on language barriers.

6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

The DVR and the Delaware Department of Education (DOE) work closely to provide Transition services to high school students with disabilities. DVR has an assigned Counselor to all public, and many private, charter and alternative school in the state. Counselors maintain regular business hours within their assigned schools. Where there is not a Counselor assigned, the office District Administrators handle referrals from the schools on a case-by-case basis. The DVR Senior Social Services Administrator for Transition Services works closely with the DOE Educational Associate to coordinate transition programs throughout the state. DVR also employs 2 Social Service Administrators to help coordinate transition and Pre-ETS services up and downstate.

The DVR Senior Social Services Administrator for Transition Services program is a member of the Mid-Atlantic Transition Council and the State Transition Council. The Transition Coordinator represents DVR on the Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens and the adult transition services subcommittee. DVR and DOE have partnered with various agencies and organizations and the Delaware Community of Practice on Transition to hold an annual statewide transition conference.

The Statewide Transition Cadre holds quarterly meetings where DOE Administrators, school district administrators, local education agency personnel, DVR Counselors and DVR Administrators come together to collaborate, share ideas and work on enhancing services, post-school planning and outcomes for transition-age youth. Since Covid-19, all of these meetings have been held using virtual platforms which allowed for better attendance due to no travel.

j. STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

1. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE REHABILITATION NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING WITHIN THE STATE, PARTICULARLY THE VR SERVICES NEEDS OF THOSE:

A. WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

A committee made up of several members of the SRC and the DVR developed the survey for the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) during FY 2020. A new CSNA will be completed in FY 2020 and reflected in the 2022 State Plan update.

As required by Federal regulations, the committee developed questions, both open and closed-ended, that address the five topics that are required for the assessment. The survey was created to be completed both using the Survey Monkey online system or via paper copy. The online survey was distributed through numerous disability listservs as well as through the DVR social media on Facebook and Twitter. The paper surveys were available primarily through the DVR field offices. Five hundred twenty-eight individuals began the survey, while nearly 354 completed the entire survey. The respondents were from New Castle County (56%), Kent County (22%), Sussex County (20%) or from outside of the state while providing services in Delaware (3%). The plurality of respondents were individuals with disabilities (60%) with service providers (15%) and parents/guardians/advocates (24%) also represented.

Participants were provided with Likert scales that included neutral and don't know/no answer as possible responses. Although "don't know/no answer" was a possible response for all questions that included a Likert scale (e.g., Strongly Agree...Strongly Disagree), respondents were able to skip questions or topics on which they did not wish to respond.

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

Participants responded positively (70% agreement) to a statement indicating that DVR provides services to individuals with the most employment challenges but (54%) also agreed that DVR could improve those services. When asked what services would be most needed, work readiness training, job coaching, job placement, on-the-job training, and work experiences were all identified by at least 45% of the participants.

When asked about the availability of supported employment services, (25%) agreed that they were available to people with the most significant employment challenges. In response to an open-ended question about improvements, participants indicated timeliness/speed of services, longer assessments, follow-along for people with more types of disabilities, transportation, longer follow-along, more training for service providers, and better communication as potential areas.

The DVR Leadership Team meets to review the results of the assessment to determine the necessary improvements to identified services and how best to implement improvements through best practices and access to all available DVR resources and services.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

While 55% of the participants agreed that individual who are minorities had access to DVR services, only 10% disagreed; however, when asked the open ended question about how DVR could improve services to people who are minorities, participants indicated that minorities should include Spanish and other non-English speaking individuals, more outreach, resources in alternate languages and formats, greater hours of operation, more staff and staff training, and establish a review team for when major requests are denied.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

In response to a question about which individuals have the hardest time obtaining services, participants indicated that some disability groups had more difficulty, people with language barriers or who couldn't advocate for themselves, people with criminal backgrounds, were homebound or homeless, lacking transportation, looking for advancement or self-employment, or were students without good support systems. To overcome those barriers, participants

recommended greater and more varied outreach, increased staff which language abilities or who have disabilities, services on college campuses, order of selection changes (some indicating more restrictions while others indicating that people should not be lost on the waiting list), getting people who are homeless into the system more rapidly, better transportation, not overlooking adults in favor of students, and hiring a behavior analyst.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

Participants were asked about which often WIOA partner programs they had requested services and from which they had actually received services. In almost every case, except for one which had been requested by only 2% of the respondents, the number receiving services was less than the number requesting them.

When asked about which reason services had not been received, 43% indicated no barriers, 42% indicated problems with transportation, 24% were not aware of the programs, 14% indicated a language barrier, 12% indicated a disability-related barrier, 7% indicated that the program was not available locally, and 3% indicate lack of physical accessibility. Among the other barriers indicated was a comment about being referred back to DVR when trying to access a non-VR partner.

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

Although a description of Pre-ETS and Transition Services preceded the survey questions, several questions in Topic IV received a plurality of “don’t know/no answer” responses. It is anticipated that the response rate to this topic will increase in the 2020 survey.

When asked when asked about access to the pre-employment transitions services needed for employment, 43% agreed and 13% disagreed that students have access. Respondents indicated 22% agreement and 23% disagreement to a statement that DVR and schools coordinated Pre-ETS programs. When asked about services to prepare for employment for transition youth (14-24), 33% agreed that the youth have access while 18% disagreed.

To an open-ended question about additional services needed for transition age youth, the participants responses included training (e.g., specific vocational training, parent training, youth training about their disabilities), work experiences, services in lower and western Sussex County, more counselors, more outreach, and funding for specific services such as speech therapy and behavior supports. When asked how transition and Pre-ETS services could be improved, responses included outreach to parents, students, and counselors, more work experiences, more staff and staff support, greater availability of programs, more services in Kent and Sussex counties, better integration with IEPs, and placement services for summer employment.

2. ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

In response to a statement that CRP services meet the needs of people in Delaware, 34% agreed and 20% disagreed. When asked about ways that services could be improved, 55% indicated location

(including all counties), 54% indicated the types of training (e.g. specific vocational programs, for individuals with specific disabilities such as autism and traumatic brain injury), 35% indicated accessibility (e.g. need for paratransit, for individuals with specific disabilities such as mental health and traumatic brain injury), and 35% had other recommendations (e.g. more outreach, transportation, staff, better placement after training, incentives for higher quality job placements, and faster follow-up after referral).

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

DVR requested feedback from the community via the CSNA, per above, and from the SRC via their agency assessment as noted in Section a of this plan.

In both of the aforementioned assessments, the need for coordination and communication were evident in the responses. Efforts to increase coordination and communication are ongoing.

- DVR has had liaison counselors in all of the public and private/parochial school programs in Delaware and served home-schooled students that are identified for 20 years. In addition to participating in IEP meetings for many of the students, the liaison counselors and DVR statewide transition staff participate in school and district level meetings to make presentation about transition to parents and school staff.
- The annual Transition Conference, sponsored by a Community of Practice that includes DVR, the Department of Education, and the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, occurs annually in the fall. The conference in 2017 had record-setting attendance and provided tracks for students and for parents/educators. The opening plenary featured students and recent graduates who emphasized the need for students to be educated about self-direction and involved in their educational and vocational planning. Current students also opened each of the workshops throughout the day and participated in many of the presentations.
- DVR has hired four Pre-ETS counselors to work directly with students in their final year of middle school as they transition to high school. The goal is to begin to offer Pre-ETS to students at age 14 so that they are aware and prepared as they enter high school.
- DVR participates in monthly Transition Cadre meetings where DVR and education participants share information about transition activities. DVR also participates in the Statewide Transition Council meetings.

Respondents to both the CSNA and SRC feedback survey both indicated the need to expand work experiences and training, particularly in the southern counties of the state, Kent and Sussex.

- DVR has expanded its Project SEARCH offerings. There are now four locations, including one in Kent County and one in Sussex County. The program has the capacity to serve 48 students. DVR is continuing to look at additional sites statewide to meet the needs of students.
- Start on Success continues to occur in New Castle County only but has expanded to work with students from four school districts. An attempt to initiate a program in Kent County encountered logistical barriers. The program may be initiated in an upcoming school year.
- The statewide Early Start to Supported Employment program, as in all supported employment programs, occurs in employment sites in the community. To the extent possible, Early Start brings students into the community to assess students or provide work experiences in integrated, competitive situations.

- Pre-ETS programming outside of the schools is available in all counties. Pre-ETS are provided in integrated settings, very often competitive employment settings, where participants get hands-on opportunities to expand their knowledge of and skills for future employment.

k. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES

According to the U.S. Census Bureau approximately 82,000 Delawareans 65 and under or 8.5% of the population identify as having a disability. Overall, 64.4% of the total population participates in the civilian labor force. The participation rate for those with disabilities is 33%. It is estimated that approximately 1,800 new applicants will be determined eligible for DVR in FY2021.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

Including people carrying over plans from prior years, DVR estimates that approximately 6,000 individuals will receive services through individualized plans for employment (IPEs) under Part A of Title I and/or Part B of Title VI in FY 2023. The estimated cost of providing services to these individuals will be \$1268 estimated average cost per client. We also estimate that DVR will only have \$7,383,499. available FY 2023 Federal allotment to provide services for DVR clients.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

Out of the 6,000 individuals who will receive services, approximately 200 are expected to receive services under Title VI-B. All clients served under Title VI-B are considered to be in Category 1 – Most Significantly Disabled.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION.

No longer under an order of selection

3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

No longer under an order of selection

4. BE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES. IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION, IDENTIFY THE COST OF SERVICES FOR EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY.

2021 DVR is not under an order of selection.

\$7,383,499 is the FY23 estimated amount of funds

6,000 estimated number of clients served

\$1,268 is the estimated average cost per client

I. STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

1. IDENTIFY IF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES WERE JOINTLY DEVELOPED AND AGREED TO BY THE STATE VR AGENCY AND THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, IF THE STATE HAS A COUNCIL, AND JOINTLY AGREED TO ANY REVISIONS

Each year, the State Rehabilitation Council and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation review, define, and update DVR's goal and priorities. In keeping with the Delaware's WIOA Combined State Plan timeline, the review of goals and priorities occurred at the February 2019 meeting of the SRC. The Goals and Priorities below were jointly developed by the State Rehabilitation Council and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. At a previous meeting in 2018, the SRC and DVR had decided to maintain three of the goals from the previous plan; however, the criteria that determined the focus of the goals has changed as indicated below.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

GOAL 1. Provide quality employment outcome for people with disabilities.

Performance Objectives and Measures

1. Builds Relationships with Business
 1. Continued participation with the NET/TAP, SHRM, and the Chamber of Commerce.
 2. Educate employers on the benefits of working with DVR
2. Employment Outcomes for Consumers with Significant Barriers to Employment
 1. Educate parents and guardians on the benefits that working has to the well-being of the client.
3. Services support Financial Independence
 1. Increase the overall average hourly wage by \$.10 each year over the previous year.
 2. Increase the adult average hourly wage by \$.10 each year over the previous year.
 3. Increase average hourly wage for transition students by \$.10 each year over the previous year.
 4. Increase average hourly wage for supported employment by \$.05 each year over the previous year.
5. Access to Services is Non-Discriminatory
 1. Percentage of minority participation is equal or greater than the percentage in the general populations

GOAL 2. Support training programs that reflect high demand opportunities in the labor market.

Performance Objectives and Measures

1. Helps Consumers to Focus on their Career Pathways
 1. DVR will continue with the Dept. of Education and other WIOA partners in the development of Career Pathways programs both for youth and adults.
 2. At least annually, provide information and training to DVR staff regarding accessing credential-bearing programs that lead to employment within identified Career Pathways.
2. Appropriate Training Opportunities leading to Business-Recognized Credentials
 1. In conjunction with WIOA partners, including the Delaware Technical and Community College and the Department of Education, identify and/or develop training opportunities in each county that lead to credentials and employment in the top five fields of employment in each county.
3. Coordination with WIOA Partners

1. Participation in the monthly WIOA Leadership Team meeting
2. Participation on work teams related to the WIOA Leadership Team goals that were created in conjunction with the Delaware Workforce Development Board plan.
3. Participation in the WIOA Partners projects related to making good referrals and coordinating services between partners.

GOAL 3. Continue to provide pre–employment transition services and transition career services to transition–aged individuals with disabilities.

Performance Objectives and Measures

1. Quality of Pre-Employment Transition Services
 1. Focus on maximizing the number of students who receive Pre-ETS.
 2. Focus on accurate documentation of Pre-ETS services in the client information system
2. Quality of Transition Services
 1. Communication is ongoing with education on the State and local levels
 2. Services for clients are identified in coordination with the schools including the use of Labor Market Information and Career Pathways
3. Coordination with Partners (e.g., Department of Education and the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services)
 1. Continue Project SEARCH in the current 4 locations and look to expand the program.

3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

WIOA expands the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, Section (j) Statewide Assessment, to include input related to transition services. In FY 2017, DVR, with support and guidance from the SRC, conducted a Comprehensive Statewide Needs assessment that included the new section on transition and Pre-ETS services. Feedback was incorporated into Section (j) as well as into the goals and priorities outlined above.

B. THE STATE’S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

Section 116 of WIOA, the common measures, was woven tightly into the goals and priorities above. The measures are included in the performance goals including business engagement, measurable skill gains and credentialing in identified Career Pathways, and focus on employment and wages.

C. OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON THE OPERATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VRPROGRAM, INCLUDING ANY REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MONITORING ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED UNDER SECTION 107.

The State Rehabilitation Council, jointly with representation from DVR, participated in an effectiveness evaluation in order to review the goals and priorities established by the previous State Plan and to establish the goals and priorities above. They were presented with performance data from the previous

year and participated in discussion. Following the discussion DVR received written input from the SRC members. Their written input, identified in section a of the State Plan, was incorporated into the goals and priorities. Prior to submitting the goals and priorities outlined above, the draft goals and priorities were sent out to the SRC members for comments and recommendations.

m. ORDER OF SELECTION

1. WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

A. THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES

The Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation believes that it will have the funding and resources to be able to provide services to all individuals who are eligible under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended (the Act).

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation does not forecast implementing an order of selection.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation does not forecast implementing an order of selection.

D. TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER; AND

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is not currently under an order of selection.

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Not applicable.

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

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has updated its policy to state: An eligible individual who is employed at application and requires specific services or equipment to maintain employment may receive services.

n. GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS

1. SPECIFY THE STATE'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) funds supported employment services statewide for consumers under Title VI, Part B of the Rehabilitation Act and allocates all funds for services. Program Funds are used to purchase supported employment services from the community rehabilitation programs under a Purchase of Services Agreement with DVR. In order to provide supported employment for all consumers who require services, Title I funds are used to supplement the Title VI, Part B allocation. Supported employment is competitive employment or employment in integrated work settings in which individuals are working toward competitive work, with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred, or for whom competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has a long-standing partnership with the DE Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) regarding providing supported employment (SE) services. Individuals with intellectual disabilities who need long term supports in order to obtain and maintain employment are referred to DVR and DDDS. The individual works with a community rehabilitation provider (CRP) of their choice to complete a supported employment career profile and community-based assessment to identify a vocational goal and the necessary supports to be successful in employment. The CRP assists the individual with job placement and coaching for a total of 90 days or until the individual is stable on the job. At that time, DVR pays the CRP the final milestone payment after which DDDS provides funding to the CRP for the long term supports for the individual to remain on the job. DVR continues to monitor the case for an additional 90 days once the individual enters extended services through DDDS; however, no additional funding is provided by DVR. For individuals not eligible for DDDS services, but needing long term supports in order to be successful on a job, DVR assists the individual to identify other sources of long-term funding or natural supports on the job. Delaware Supported Employment services may be provided for up to 24 months or longer if necessary.

Although Delaware has a strong SE program in place with excellent partnerships with the Department of Education (DOE), DDDS, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and DVR, there are still many students who are potentially eligible for SE services who are not being referred. Each year the DOE identifies the number of students statewide who are enrolled in school and have a disability typically meeting the criteria for DDDS services and/or requiring SE services in order to obtain and maintain employment. There are a variety of factors which influence the referral process for students, including school staff not believing a student can work (low expectations, lack of understanding of adult services and supports available, etc.), families not supporting employment as a goal for their child (safety concerns, fear of losing benefits, lack of understanding of adult services and Supported Employment, low expectations etc.), students not choosing employment (limited or lack of exposure to career options, limited understanding of disability and support needs, lack of training in self-advocacy, etc.), and lack of CRP experience to provide SE services to individuals with the most significant disabilities (lack of training and/or experience). Goals and priorities for supported employment (SE) services include: • expanding the reach of SE services to more students prior to them exiting from high school by providing more outreach to schools, students and families • connecting students to adult services while still in school, thereby eliminating gaps in services, • providing students opportunities to participate in assessments and career exploration activities • increasing student understanding and preparation for work and the chance of becoming employed right out of high school and providing them access to a team of professionals all working towards the same goal.

Update 2022

DVR will provide quality supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities. DVR intends to increase the number of people served to ensure eligible people with most significant disabilities have a greater opportunity to achieve successful employment outcomes.

Goal 1: Ensure fiscal policies, procedures and practices are fully aligned with Title VI regulations and fiscal controls are implemented.

Goal 2: Provide staff with continual training, oversight and guidance regarding Title VI fiscal regulations in relation to purchased services and allowable costs. Ongoing training will include:

Supported Employment Title VI funds are to be used for the provision of supported employment. Allowable costs include:

- **Ongoing Support Services** are needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, in supported employment. Ongoing support services begin at the time of job placement and last until the transition to extended services. May include activities such as an assessment of employment stability and the provision or coordination of specific services at or away from the worksite that are needed to maintain stability. Other examples include the provision of skilled job trainers for the individual at the worksite, social skills training, follow-up services, facilitation of natural supports at the worksite. Title I funds may also be used for ongoing supports.
- **VR Extended Services** are only available to youth with the most significant disabilities. Youth may receive extended services for up to four years or longer. Extended services are ongoing services needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, in supported employment and can be provided by a State agency, a private nonprofit organization, employer, or any other appropriate resources.
- **Post-Employment Services** are available if services are required to maintain or regain employment or advance in employment.
- (Basic VR) Title I funds are used for all services that are not allowable Title VI funds but necessary for supported employment eligible consumers to achieve their employment outcomes. Examples include:
 - job placement
 - situational assessments
 - skills training
 - interview clothing
 - assistive technology

2. DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED, WITH FUNDS RESERVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 603(D), FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING:

A. THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 4 YEARS; AND

DVR leverages long-term extended services that are funded by the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services or, for transition students and youth with mental health disabilities, the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health. By leveraging the long-term supports through DDDS and DSAMH, DVR is able to expand supported employment services to youth with the most significant disabilities. DVR also uses Title I funds to supplement Title VI funds for supported employment. When extended services are not available through the support of DDDS, DSAMH, or other outside resources DVR will support extended services for a period not to exceed four (4) years for youth. During the four years of DVR-supported extended services, alternate sources of extended services supports will be pursued, including the development of natural supports.

The pandemic has impacted our extended support services with our partner agencies DDDS, DSAMH and other providers. Many consumers were afraid to leave their homes and did not want to seek employment. Many employers have minimized in-person community base assessments, job shadowing that impacted consumers with more complex disabilities with finding employment. The newest concern

is centered around the nationwide labor market shortage. The providers are having a difficult time maintaining job coaches for job development and placement.

DVR works in collaboration with the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services to leverage funds for extended supports for youth with more significant disabilities who receive supported employment services. DVR also works with the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health in order to connect youth with mental health disabilities to necessary services and extended supports for employment. When a youth is not eligible for extended services from some other entity, DVR will support extended services for a period not to exceed four years or longer in order to develop natural supports and/or explore other sources of extended services.

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.

Pursuant to section 603(d), DVR recognizes the requirement to reserve 50% of its supported employment allocation on transition-age consumers with the most significant disabilities and will achieve that requirement through the Early Start to Supported Employment program (ESSE). The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Education and the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) collaborate with the local education agencies, community rehabilitation providers, businesses, families and students with disabilities to implement ESSE. The ESSE philosophy is that all persons, regardless of disability, are able to be employed and be successful, active, participating members of their communities. The ESSE program starts two years prior to the student exiting high school through the identification of students and assistance and encouragement to apply for services under DVR and DDDS. The program offers students an opportunity to gain exposure to work in the community and assists them with learning and retaining employment related skills. It provides a more seamless transition from school to work and alleviates student and family stress during the transition to life after high school. DVR is also collaborating with other state agencies, community rehabilitation providers, businesses, families and students with disabilities to identify other potential sources of funding for extended services (DDDS, DSAMH, DSAPD, PASS Plan, etc.); as well as providing technical support with SE provider agencies to develop natural supports on the job.

DVR will reserve 50% of its supported employment allocation on youth with the most significant disabilities. DVR will utilize the long-standing collaborative relationship with the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, Local Education Agencies, students, families, employers and Community Rehabilitation Providers to begin the supported employment process early (ESSE) and ensure youth with disabilities are connected to employment services prior to exiting high school.

ESSE is intended to create a more seamless transition for students leaving school and entering the adult workforce. The outcome of the paid work with post-school supports in place before the student leaves school is the primary goal of the ESSE program. The ESSE program participants receive ongoing support services to help them stay employed. The collaborative program is a partnership between the Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), the Delaware Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS), the Delaware Department of Education (DOE) and local school districts.

This provides opportunities for sharing information, exposing youth to careers and helping them learn about and apply for community services that were historically offered only once a youth turned 18.

o. STATE'S STRATEGIES

1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

DVR will engage with a wide range of stakeholders in the community in order to expand and improve services including consumer organizations, public and non-profit agencies, community rehabilitation programs, education, and employers. By listening to input from stakeholders and building programs that have value and address the objectives of multiple members of the rehabilitation community, the impact of vocational rehabilitation is increased. DVR is active with the state-level WIOA Leadership Partners Meeting, a group that meets monthly, as well as the local WIOA team meetings occurring monthly on the county level. Through these meetings, DVR personnel share information about vocational rehabilitation services and learn about the wide range of services available through the WIOA partners. Other examples of collaboration include the Transition Community of Practice, the Early Start to Supported Employment, the Project SEARCH program, Supported Education, and the Start on Success Program, as well as the numerous committees and programs to which DVR staff contributes and through which DVR reaches out to the community. DVR has specifically identified the expansion of business-focused training programs for transitioning students, specifically Project SEARCH and Start on Success, as its innovation and expansion project. Additional pre-employment transition services programs for transition students have been developed, and the process of refining and expanding the business-focused opportunities will continue.

In 2022

In order to expand and improve services, DVR will leverage the many opportunities to engage with stakeholders. These include educational programs, community organizations, service providers, employers, other state agencies, families and consumers. DVR will continue to be an active partner with the other WIOA core partners which provides many regular opportunities for information sharing, planning and an overall effort to streamline services. During the monthly partner meetings, DVR shares information about vocational rehabilitation and learn what is available from other partners. DVR will also continue to participate in the Early Start to Supported Employment initiative, Transitions, Pre-Ets and Project Search. Listening and being responsive to the needs of the community, engaging with multiple partners, and sharing information will assist DVR with improving services and helping the community better understand vision services and the abilities and needs of the individuals we serve. Engaging stakeholders and community partners will also assist DVR with the goals of expanding Pre-employment Transition Services and increasing quality employment outcomes. Additional Pre-ETS programs for transition students have been developed, and the process of refining and expanding the business focused opportunities will continue.

2. HOW A BROAD RANGE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES AND DEVICES WILL BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AT EACH STAGE OF THE REHABILITATION PROCESS AND ON A STATEWIDE BASIS

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation makes assistive technology goods and services available to individuals with disabilities at all stages of the rehabilitation process. DVR maintains collaborative relationships with organizations and entities that provide rehabilitation technology goods and services, including the Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative (DATI), Easter Seals Society of Delaware and Maryland Eastern Shore, and with other technology providers. DVR and Easter Seals Society of Delaware and Maryland Eastern Shore jointly administer Financing Your Independence, the AT Loan Program and Telework Loan Program in Delaware and a DVR staff member is on the Advisory Board. DVR has relationships with vendors who provide a wide array of assistive technology goods and services. Counselors who have clients with assistive technology issues collaborate with one of several vendors with specialized knowledge in rehabilitation technology when serving clients with specific AT needs. DVR

has a check-off item on every Individualized Plan for Employment to prompt counselors to consider AT needs for every client in the planning process.

Assistive technology (AT) services and devices are important to the success of individuals with Disabilities. As such, assessment, demonstration, and training related to the needs of individuals with disabilities is provided to DVR population who may have a need. To facilitate informed choice, the DVR offers a variety of services and rehabilitation technology devices through outside resources so consumers can use and identify devices that maximize their capacity to engage in vocational training, educational training, and/or a work environment.

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

DVR counselors maintain a broad array of referral sources to provide outreach services to people with disabilities in Delaware, including minorities and individuals with the most significant disabilities. DVR has been working with the Brain Injury Association in Delaware, BIAD, to make an effort to reach and serve individuals with physical disabilities which has been identified as an underserved population in the on-site review process. The largest DVR office is located in the city of Wilmington, which has the largest population of minority residents in the state. DVR has a Spanish speaking counselor and a Spanish speaking District Administrator who serve the Hispanic population and provide outreach to churches and community centers in the city. DVR has a strong collaborative relationship with the local school district transition coordinators and Delaware Department of Education Special Education Coordinator. DVR receives referral information from all public and most private high schools in the state, including adjudicated youth, regarding transition students and reaches out to the students, often on an individual basis, to connect the students with DVR services. DVR has been a Delaware Pathways partner since 2016, with the goal of students with IEPs receiving equal access and matriculation through Pathways curriculum, in the public schools, aligned with Delaware labor market needs. DE DVR is working with the National Alliance of Partnerships in Equity, NAPE, to identify and address the root causes behind why students with disabilities do not receive access to Pathways curricula and work-based learning experiences when compared with students without disabilities. A substantial proportion of these students are minority students and students with significant disabilities. DVR Counselors, District Administrators, and Program Managers conduct outreach activities to advocacy organizations, other state agencies, non-profit service providers, individual and organizational health-care providers and mental health providers to offer DVR services to their clients. Specifically, DVR has partnered with DE DOL and WIOA partners to provide wrap around support for Wilmington's promise community at the Dual Generation Center, a repurposed elementary school in downtown Wilmington.

In 2022

DVR will continue with its outreach effort to increase minority participation with those individuals who have the Most Significant Disabilities. We will perform outreach in a variety of ways. DVR will host public information sessions with our educational partners across the state that would include schools (ESSE) and 18-21 year old programs. DVR will host several events and workshops each year that are open to the public. In addition, the agency frequently exhibits at community events, job fairs and health fairs; many of which are designed to attract minorities, unserved and underserved such as the Delaware Hispanic Festival and the Diabetes Expo.

4. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES)

DVR has a long history of providing transition services that begins with developing relationships with the Delaware Department of Education, as well as leadership within each of the local education agencies, and designating a liaison vocational rehabilitation counselor for each of the high school programs in the state. Even prior to the implementation of pre-employment transition services, DVR had implemented both Project SEARCH and Start on Success and had developed a supported employment program, Early Start on Supported Employment, that focused considerable resources on transition age individuals. DVR plans to continue to expand the models currently in place while expanding on the business-based opportunities for transition students. DVR coordinates Pre-ETS programs for students during the summer and maintains several of the programs during the academic year. In addition, DVR has employed four Pre-ETS counselors who are providing services to students in the eighth grade, paving the way for these students to be aware of and participate in Pre-ETS programs while in high school. Delaware DVR co-hosts an annual Transition conference attended by 900 students, educators and family members. This conference also hosts 25 community partners who provide a variety of services to students and their families. Break-out sessions encompass the Pre-employment services.

In FY 2016, DVR implemented a focus on career pathways for all DVR consumers. Implementation included agency-wide training on what career pathways are and how to include career pathways information in vocational rehabilitation counseling and guidance. Career pathways and informed choice are keys to assisting students and youth to identify steps in building the credentials to meet their goals. Programs at the postsecondary level, both at community rehabilitation facilities and postsecondary education institutions, are being given DVR support to develop and offer industry-recognized credentials that coordinate with employment opportunities in the local economies. DVR participates in the planning and development of the Annual Career Pathways Conference that encourages professionals, including DVR staff, WIOA partners, and education staff, students, and families to learn about career planning. A Career Pathways focus for staff and consumers continues to be at the forefront of how DVR does business.

Effective FY18, Delaware DVR became the first state in the country to embrace the National Alliance in Partnership and Equity, NAPE, who is working with DVR and DOE and specific school districts statewide, to understand why students with disabilities are not engaged in high school career pathways at the same rate as students who do not have IEPs. In FY19, a 2nd cohort of school districts began the process. Currently 6 districts have agreed to examine why students with disabilities are not matriculating in or completing high school career pathways and have developed plans to improve outcomes for students with disabilities with support from DVR. For the purpose of the project, students with disabilities is defined as students with IEPs who graduate from high school following their senior years at age 18.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE

DVR provides rehabilitation services and training to individuals with disabilities through contracts with community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) in Delaware. DVR follows a request for proposal (RFP) process and solicits proposals from all CRPs in the state to provide services on a two-year cycle. DVR and the community rehabilitation programs have strong collaborative relationships. Referrals for services flow both ways.

DVR holds quarterly meetings with the community rehabilitation programs to review accomplishments and identify ways to improve effectiveness. The division has helped the community rehabilitation programs to understand changes under the WIOA regulations. In incorporating WIOA and the move towards implementing the use of career pathways, DVR is moving away from programs that offer certificates of completion towards programs that offer national industry-recognized credentials and is in the process of incorporating the requirement of industry-recognized credentials as fully as possible. For occupations for which there are no nationally recognized credentials, DVR, in conjunction with businesses, education and training providers, and WIOA partners, is moving towards the development of local, industry-recognized standards and credentials.

DVR provides training services through programs that serve both people with and without disabilities. DVR has contracts with some of these programs and seeks to identify programs that meet training needs in high demand occupations and in parts of the state where CRPs are not located or are less available.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

DVR has established memoranda of understanding with other workforce partners that will enable the division to calculate the common performance accountability measures under Title I, section 116 of WIOA. DVR has completed memoranda of understanding with the Division of Employment and Training and the Division of Unemployment Insurance. DVR is in the process of learning to use the SWIS system to gather additional information on employment and wages after exit. DVR maintains processes to continually monitor progress and seek ways to improve performance. DVR maintains a quality assurance process, conducting reviews of cases to evaluate quality and timeliness of services, and conformance to the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act and regulations and internal DVR practices. Counselors, program managers, and fiscal staff review randomly selected case records to evaluate quality casework standards. The reviews look for accurate identification of skills gains and certification. The results of the reviews are shared with the counselors and their supervisors. They are used to evaluate the quality of services provided by DVR, and to identify training needs, performance deficiencies, and policy issues. DVR's efforts to improve services and training opportunities for people with disabilities as part of the revised RFP process are intended to improve agency performance in addressing the common measure requirements for establishing credential training programs.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The DVR Director is a member of the State workforce Investment Board and advocates for the inclusion of people with disabilities in all of the Boards initiatives.

DVR actively participates in the Statewide WIOA Partners Leadership meeting as well as in the meetings held on the county level. The Leadership team and county level teams share resources on a monthly basis and contribute to the planning of the Annual Statewide WIOA Partners Convening. DVR, with the WIOA leadership team, reports annually to the Workforce Development Board regarding interagency collaboration, Adult Career Pathways integration, and data collection.

DVR is co-located in the four Delaware Department of Labor locations that house the American Job Centers for the State. DVR is working with the rest of the DE DOL to promote the vision and

implementation of one-stop and no wrong door. Currently, DVR receives referrals from the Division of Employment and Training (DET) and assists DVR clients in accessing the resources from the American Job Centers. DVR, through resources obtained in previously funded grant programs, has assisted DET in becoming physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities. DVR will continue to work with DET to provide training to their staff so that they are better prepared to assist individuals with disabilities.

In addition to working with resources within the Delaware Department of Labor, DVR has a strong relationship with the Delaware Department of Education and the statewide Delaware Technical & Community College. DVR and Delaware Tech have created the Supported Education to assist DVR-sponsored students to acquire academic and study skills that foster success in the educational process. The Workforce Development Board is represented on the State Rehabilitation Council, assisting the Board in understanding the impact of disability on employment.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

(A) Strategies to Achieve Goals and Priorities.

As part of the Effectiveness Evaluation and in conjunction with the results of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, DVR and the SRC discussed recommendation for way to address the goals and priorities. Ways in which DVR will continue to support the goals and priorities include:

1. Provide quality employment outcome for people with disabilities. The priority relates to concerns that there is the need for employment in jobs with enough pay and employee benefits to become self-sufficient. Accordingly, DVR is responding by:
 - Building relationships with business resulting in FY19 900 consumers went to work for more than 500 businesses
 - Increasing employment outcomes for consumers with significant barriers to employment
 - Increasing services to support financial independent via DVR's in-house Benefits counseling program, working in partnership with Stand by Me and by increasing referrals to local Employment Networks to support SS beneficiaries who are working to continue working
 - Ensuring access to services is non-discriminatory
 - Educating clients, both transition and adults, on career pathways and the development of short and long-term vocational goals.
 - Working with postsecondary education and training providers to develop and implement credential-bearing that are geared to labor market information and career pathways.
 - Increasing the number of individuals obtaining employment through Supported Employment, including individuals identified in accordance to section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Self-Employment as part of the overall goal of increasing employment outcomes.
 - Focusing on increasing the hourly wage of employed consumers as part of a focus to increase the quality of employment outcomes.
 - Continue to provide benefits counseling to assist clients to understand the impact of employment on benefits and the positive effect of employment on independence and self-sufficiency.
 - Promote the availability of work-based learning for both students, including programs such as Project SEARCH and Start on Success, and adult, through the use of individual on-the-job training opportunities or through employer-initiated programs.
2. Support training programs that reflect opportunities in the labor market. The priority relates to the employment services/employment needs as well as the need for information.

- Continued coordinating with WIOA partners and leading the Adult Pathways sub-committee to ensure DVR consumers access jobs aligned with careers and labor market demand
- Continued use of training programs that are approved by the DWDB to ensure integration with Delawareans without disabilities and align with labor market demands specific to Delaware
- Continued focus for all DE DVR consumers on Careers that align with DE DOL demands
- Utilize employment trend information available from the Delaware Office of Occupational and Labor Market Information by:

a) using the labor market information to advise community rehabilitation programs in the development of training programs

b) seeking additional programs that offer training in fields where the employment outlook is positive, and

c) using labor market information during the counseling/informed choice process with DVR clients.

- Implement the use of career pathways developed by the Division of Employment and Training as a tool for career guidance.
- Continue to work with Community Rehabilitation Programs as part of the RFP process to use the labor market information to develop credential-bearing training programs that reflect labor market trends. Enable clients to make informed choices about their vocational training by providing information about the training programs through the updated Choices booklet.
- Work directly with employers and with Community Rehabilitation Programs to develop training programs that are held on-site at places of employment in the community.

3. Expand opportunities for students to transition from school to work. Transition students and youth served by DVR have a wide range of disabilities and vocational needs. They require quality training programs that focus on careers available in the labor market in order to get employment.

- The National Alliance for Partnership in Equity has agreed to work individually with DE, supported by DOE and the Department of Career and Technical Education, to understand the root causes behind why do not access and matriculate through the labor market supported career pathways in the high schools at the same rate as students without disabilities and why students with disabilities, defined as students in high school, who graduate at age 18 and have either IEPs or 504 plans, do not experience the same rate of work-based learning experiences and are not included in all pathways. As a result, DE is now working with a 2nd cohort of 3 school districts (1 per county) specifically addressing school gaps and barriers. This project is not focused on students with disabilities who participate in HS after age 18.
- Support training for school to careers transition counselors to enable them to meet the unique needs of youth with disabilities.
- Support Pre-ETS through the provision of the five key services. Identify Pre-ETS that are offered by DVR Transition Counselors in the schools. Provide work-based experiences in the community through summer and academic year programs. Initiate Pre-ETS through Pre-ETS counselors to begin services in the eighth grade level at age 14.
- Work with the Department of Education and the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services to provide supported employment to common clients under the Early Start to Supported Employment program.
- Collaborate with the Delaware Technical & Community College (DTCC) to provide more training and educational opportunities for transition youth in this statewide, post-secondary educational organization. Use Supported Education to target youth with disabilities as clients who may benefit from the additional supports offered through the program in order to be successful in post-secondary education, basic education programs at DTCC. Include the provision of study skills training, tutoring and other intensive supports on campus to students enrolled in DTCC in the remedial program.

- Participate in the Department of Education in the Community of Practice (CoP) initiative to work collaboratively with parents, students, advocates, and other agencies and service providers in a coordinated and collaborative effort.
- Through the DVR Specialist for Transition, collaborate extensively with the Department of Education and local school district representatives including the implementation of a Student Success Plan (SSP) and the Career Cruising self-assessment/career planning tool for all students, including students with disabilities in the Delaware public school system. Students who are actively using these programs may offer access to the DVR transition counselors to use the programs as a plan-development tool.
- As part of the CoP, co-sponsor “The Annual Community of Practice Transition Conference: Shared Work; Shared Vision” as a collaborative effort by the Delaware Department of Education, the Division on Career Development and Transition and members of the CoP (i.e.: Parent Information Center of Delaware, school district representatives throughout the state, and the Student Leadership Team). The conference is well attended by students, parents, educators, DVR transition counselors, transition specialists from many high schools, as well as other stakeholders involved in assisting youth with disabilities transition to post-secondary life.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

DVR will continue the Project SEARCH and Start on Success models as the models implement business-based experience for transition youth. DVR anticipates expanding opportunities for business-based experiences through the implementation of pre-employment transition services.

Expansion of Project SEARCH has occurred with the initiation of a fourth site in Sussex County, Nanticoke Hospital.

DVR has expanded the goals of the Innovation and Expansion project to reflect the implementation of the Start on Success (SOS) program. Like Project SEARCH, SOS provides employer-based training opportunities for youth in transition.

C. OVERCOME IDENTIFIED BARRIERS RELATING TO EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM AND THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM.

All locations of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation are physically and programmatically accessible for all DVR consumers seeking services from both the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program. Each location has accessible parking designated for individuals with disabilities. DVR locations have accessible entrances and restrooms. If DVR identifies a barrier to providing services to a specific individual, the agency moves quickly to accommodate that individual’s need for physical or programmatic access. Examples of barrier removal may include changing the location of the meeting to accommodate transportation barriers, the format of the printed materials, or provision of interpreter services (sign or foreign language). DVR permits and encourages advocates, including parents and guardians, who, with the permission of the consumers, attend meetings with DVR in order to assist the individual with a developmental or intellectual disability to make decisions in their best interest.

DVR requires that its vendors also be physically and programmatically accessible and works with them to provide accommodations when barriers are identified.

p. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

1. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE VR PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE APPROVED VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS

In 2021, the participant satisfaction survey was sent to every individual who exited the vocational rehabilitation program after receiving a service, whether the individual was employed or not at exit. 97 surveys were returned, 65 from among the individuals who were employed at exit and 32 from among those not employed at exit.

The geographic distribution among respondents is Wilmington Office (29.47%), Newark Office (36.84%), Dover Office (18.94%), and Georgetown Office (14.73%). With each satisfaction measure, the ratings were positive overall and more positive among those who had exited with employment than among those who exited without employment.

The Overall Satisfaction rating was greater among individuals who were employed at closure with 92.30% indicating that they were very or somewhat satisfied and 4.61% indicating that they were somewhat or very dissatisfied. Among those not employed at closure, 61.29% indicated that they were very or somewhat satisfied while 19.35% indicated that they were somewhat or very dissatisfied. 8.33% of employed and unemployed were neutral.

At the February 2022 meeting of the SRC, the council participated in an evaluation of DVR services and was given the opportunity to provide feedback. The feedback and responses are documented in section a of the State Plan.

Consumer Satisfaction: The 2021 Consumer Satisfaction Survey was designed to seek out specific ways in which DVR services could improve. As such, the participants were asked to rate a service on a Likert scale from “Very Satisfied” to “Very Dissatisfied.”

- The majority of participants, both rehabilitated and not rehabilitated, rated overall satisfaction with DVR as very satisfied or satisfied with 92.30% and 61.29% respectively. The majority of individuals closed rehabilitated (88.33%) and closed not rehabilitated (53.13%) indicated that they were very satisfied.
- When asked about their satisfaction with the ability to choose goals and services, 92.3% of the individuals who were closed rehabilitated and 61.29% of those closed not-rehabilitated also indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied. The majority of individuals closed rehabilitated (80%) and the plurality of individuals closed not rehabilitated (48.39%) indicated that they were very satisfied.
- Among individuals who were closed rehabilitated, 90% were either very satisfied (75.86%) or satisfied (15.52%) with their jobs.
- Respondents were asked to indicate the likelihood that they would return to DVR if employment services were required in the future. Among individuals who were closed rehabilitated, 92.6% indicated that they would be very likely (87.30%) or somewhat likely (4.76%) to return while 68.75% of those who were closed not rehabilitated indicated that they would be very likely (59.38%) or somewhat likely (9.38%) to return.

Goals and Priorities

Participants in the Effectiveness evaluation were given the opportunity to review the previously approved goals and priorities. For each goal/priority, the participants were given some additional information related to that goal. DVR has been engaged with our WIOA partners with numerous projects including process mapping, focusing on improving the referral process between partners, and the development on Career Pathways for both youth and adults. The WIOA work-teams are focused on using labor market information to identify growth industries throughout Delaware and to identify industry-recognized, credential bearing training to promote the attainment of employment in the identified industries. Participant staff from DVR ensure that employment for individuals with disabilities remains a focus of the WIOA partners. Progress continues to be made in many of the identified work teams. Based on the information presented and subsequent discussion, the ratings of the goals and priorities was follows.

FY 2021 GOALS & PRIORITIES

GOAL 1. Provide quality employment outcome for people with disabilities. Performance Objectives and Measures

Performance Objectives and Ratings

- | | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| a. Builds Relationships with Business | 5.0/5.0 | |
| b. Employment Outcomes for Consumers with Significant Barriers to Employment | | 4.5/5.0 |
| c. Services support Financial Independence | 4.0/5.0 | |
| d. Access to Services is Non-Discriminatory | 5.0/5.0 | |

GOAL 2. Support training programs that reflect high demand opportunities in the labor market.

Performance Objectives and Ratings

- | | | |
|--|----------------|--|
| 1. Helps consumers to focus on their Career Pathways | 4.5/5.0 | |
| 2. Appropriate Training Opportunities leading to Business-Recognized Credentials | 5.0/5.0 | |
| 3. Coordination with WIOA Partners | 5.0/5.0 | |
| 4. Measurable Skill Gains | 5.0/5.0 | |
| 5. How DVR works with Vendor Partners | 5.0/5.0 | |

GOAL 3. Expand opportunities for students to transition from school to work.

Performance Objectives and Ratings

- | | | |
|--|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. Quality of Pre-Employment Transition Services | 4.66/5.0 | |
| 2. Quality of Transition Services | | 4.0/5.0 |
| 3. Coordination with Partners (e.g., DOE & DDDS) | 4.0/5.0 | |

At the February 2019 meeting of the SRC, the council participated in an evaluation of DVR services and was given the opportunity to provide feedback. The feedback and responses are documented in section a of the State Plan.

Consumer Satisfaction The 2019 Customer Satisfaction Survey was designed to seek out specific ways in which DVR services could improve. As such, the participants were asked to rate a service on a Likert scale from “Very Satisfied” to “Very Dissatisfied.”

- The majority of participants, both rehabilitated and not rehabilitated, rated overall satisfaction with DVR as very satisfied or satisfied with 91% and 65% respectively. The majority of individuals closed rehabilitated (80%) and closed not rehabilitated (50%) indicated that they were very satisfied.
- When asked about their satisfaction with the ability to choose goals and services, 90% of the individuals who were closed rehabilitated and 59% of those closed not-rehabilitated also indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied. The majority of individuals closed rehabilitated (83%) and the plurality of individuals closed not rehabilitated (50%) indicated that they were very satisfied.
- Among individuals who were closed rehabilitated, 90% were either very satisfied (79%) or satisfied (11%) with their jobs.
- Respondents were asked to indicate the likelihood that they would return to DVR if employment services were required in the future. Among individuals who were closed rehabilitated, 85% indicated that they would be very likely (80%) or somewhat likely (5%) to return while 65% of those who were closed not rehabilitated indicated that they would be very likely (50%) or somewhat likely (15%) to return.

Goals and Priorities

Participants in the Effectiveness evaluation were given the opportunity to review the previously approved goals and priorities. For each goal/priority, the participants were given some additional information related to that goal. DVR has been engaged with our WIOA partners with numerous projects including process mapping, focusing on improving the referral process between partners, and the development on Career Pathways for both youth and adults. The WIOA work-teams are focused on using labor market information to identify growth industries throughout Delaware and to identify industry-recognized, credential bearing training to promote the attainment of employment in the identified industries. Participant staff from DVR ensure that employment for individuals with disabilities remains a focus of the WIOA partners. Progress continues to be made in many of the identified work teams. Based on the information presented and subsequent discussion, the ratings of the goals and priorities was follows.

FY 2019 GOALS & PRIORITIES

GOAL 1. Provide quality employment outcome for people with disabilities. Performance Objectives and Measures

Performance Objectives and Ratings

- a. Builds Relationships with Business 4.625/5.0
- b. Employment Outcomes for Consumers with Significant Barriers to Employment 4.0/5.0
- c. Services support Financial Independence 4.25/5.0
- d. Access to Services is Non-Discriminatory 4.75/5.0

GOAL 2. Support training programs that reflect high demand opportunities in the labor market.
Performance Objectives and Ratings

- a. Helps consumers to focus on their Career Pathways 4.5/5.0
- b. Appropriate Training Opportunities leading to Business-Recognized Credentials 4.125/5.0
- c. Coordination with WIOA Partners 4.375/5.0

GOAL 3. Expand opportunities for students to transition from school to work.

Performance Objectives and Ratings

- a. Quality of Pre-Employment Transition Services 4.167/5.0
- b. Quality of Transition Services 4.167/5.0
- c. Coordination with Partners (e.g., DOE & DDDS) 3.86/5.0

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The current pandemic has impeded the achievement of some goals and priorities on the Supported Employment population. Many consumers were afraid to leave their homes and did not want to seek employment. Many employers have minimized in-person community base assessments, job shadowing that assist consumers with more complex disabilities with getting hired. The newest concern is centered around the nationwide labor market shortage. The providers are having a difficult time maintaining job coaches for job development and placement.

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

In 2021, there has been a consistent effort between DVR, our agency partners, Department Of Education and Delaware Division of Disabilities to meet on a consistent basis to explore transitional services for individuals in Early Start to Supported Employment (ESSE).

DVR has partnered with industry leader, Tilson & Diaz Solutions, Inc. to provide staff training in customized employment and business engagement. This three-day training program provided instruction for developing Positive Personal Profiles that highlight the attributes of job seekers and assists professionals with identifying potential job opportunities to match consumer attributes. In addition to customized employment, the sessions provided business engagement training that focused on the key principles of customized employment, discovery process strategies, and researching opportunities in the business community. Attendees also learned about informational interviews, employment proposals and techniques for infiltrating the hidden job market.

Many students in the Early Start to Supported Employment Program are in a vocationally focused in the 18–21 program. The ESSE collaboration has offered earlier engagement of students into the supported employment process. The early contact has increased the number of students who are getting connected to adult service providers and receiving community–based employment services prior to exiting high school. For the students who obtain employment prior to leaving high school, they can either hold a part time job along with completing high school or exiting high school prior to 21 as their goals for employment have been achieved.

For many adults with most–significant disabilities, DVR provides supported employment services for individuals who have developmental/cognitive disabilities. Adults with developmental/cognitive disabilities receive services from the same vendors as the youth participants. For adults with mental health disabilities, DVR found that the supported employment process formerly used was not successful or evidence-based. DVR currently uses direct placement with job coaching as needed to serve individuals with mental illness.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

In 2021 The pandemic of COVID 19 has impeded the achievement of goals and priorities. Many consumers were afraid to leave their homes and did not want to seek employment. Many employers have minimized in-person community base assessments, job shadowing that assist consumers with more complex disabilities with getting hired. The newest concern is centered around the nationwide labor market shortage. The providers are having a difficult time maintaining job coaches for job development and placement.

There are still many families and students with cognitive disabilities who do not believe community–based employment is a viable option and choose not to pursue those services. DVR and DDDS are educating the schools, students, and families about the benefits and requirements of section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act and the need for Pre-ETS and community-based, work-place evaluation of anyone for whom sheltered, sub-minimum wage employment is being considered.

3. THE VR PROGRAM’S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

In 2021 despite being in a pandemic of COVID-19 DVR continues to move forward with reporting on measures in section 116 of WIOA. The casework manual, AWARE system continues to be reviewed and updated.

DVR continues to move forward towards the ability to report on the measures in section 116 of WIOA. The casework management system, AWARE, has been updated to gather additional required data. DVR has formalized, through a Memorandum of Understanding, its relationship with the Division of Unemployment Insurance for the purpose of obtaining employment data in the second and fourth quarters following closure. DVR, along with the other Core WIOA Partners, will be using the SWIS system to gather employment information regarding participants who have obtained employment outside of Delaware.

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED

In 2021 DVR worked to develop partnerships and contracts with providers to enhance assessments, job coaching, training, employment outcomes and pre-ETS services. In addition, DVR made an effort to ensure that all contracted service providers offer their services statewide. DVR increased contracts with community rehabilitation programs to include two additional supported employment providers, statewide pre-ETS providers and supports for college-bound high school students with cognitive disabilities. DVR contracted industry leader, Tilson & Diaz Solutions, Inc. to provide staff training in customized employment and business engagement and partnered with the Department of Education, the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and local school districts to pilot a program designed to ensure the success of ALL students with disabilities in high school. Innovation and Expansion: Start of Success began in Delaware in the spring of 2014. Fourteen Students were selected from the Central School and Christiana High School and the partner business was the YMCA (Central and Western locations). Since that time, the program has expanded to three school districts in New Castle County. While this has not yet occurred, the long-term goal is to expand statewide, and discussions have begun to identify business and school partners in Kent and Sussex Counties. Project SEARCH continues to grow. Whereas the first site began in 2012 in New Castle County, there are now two additional sites in Kent County and one in Sussex County. The first two sites, Christiana Hospital and Bay health Medical Center, have been recognized both locally and nationally for the high rate of competitive, integrated employment achieved by participants following involvement in the program. Due to the success of the existing project locations, DVR is looking for additional, suitable locations to expand the availability of Project SEARCH.

q. QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

1. THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES

Section 1. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation administers the Supported Employment Program under Title VI, Part B of the Rehabilitation Act. Supported Employment occurs in an integrated setting where individuals with the most significant disabilities receive minimum wage or above for work. In the absence of the services available as part of supported employment, many of the participants would not obtain or retain employment.

The Division is focused on providing quality services through the use of the following strategies:

*Quality Assurance Reviews of all supported employment programs operated by rehabilitation providers. A representative from the administrative unit and representatives from Vocational Rehabilitation Services meet with staff from the Community Rehabilitation Programs on a quarterly basis to review progress and resolve programmatic issues.

*Oversight monitoring in partnership with long term funding agencies. At least quarterly, representatives from the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) meet with DVR program staff to address issues related to the smooth transition from DVR services to the extended services provided by the other divisions. In addition, DVR is represented on the Division of Developmental Disability Services (DDDS) Day Service Advisory Committee in which supported employment is routinely discussed.

*DVR coordinates the Customized Employment Bootcamp training that is provided by George Tilson, Ed. D, formerly with TransCen, Inc., to offer training on the discovery process, job development, business engagement and coaching to front line staff at the community rehabilitation programs (CRP), local education agencies (LEAs), DVR, families and businesses. The training program certifies staff providing services through the programs, a contractual requirement for both DVR and DDDS in regard to provider training. In 2019, the Customized Employment Bootcamp was offered 3 times due to increasing the capacity to 80–100 staff being trained per year. DVR works with the Department of Education and the

Division of Developmental Disabilities Services to fund and coordinate training to provide it at no cost to participants.

*The ongoing development of training programs to maintain and increase the expertise of all staff providing supported employment services. Staff from all of the State agencies, including DVR, participates in training programs to enhance their abilities to provide supported employment services. Training opportunities include online resources, in-person trainings and statewide symposiums with other SE stakeholders in order to provide a variety of methods for staff to access training.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is currently under Order of Selection which prioritizes services to individuals with the most significant disabilities. DVR has been able to serve all individuals with most significant disabilities. DVR uses all the Title VI fund for supported employment, using 50% for youth, and funds subsequent supported employment with Title I funds.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation provides supported employment services for individual considered to have the most significant disabilities and for whom long term funding has been secured for extended services or natural supports can be developed on the job. To qualify for extended support services for DVR, individuals must be a youth that requires supported employment services. Youth are eligible for extended supports through DVR for a maximum of four years or until the age of 25. Individuals who do not meet this requirement will receive assistance securing other potential sources of funding for extended services (DSAMH and DSAPD, PASS plans etc...)

The division uses needs assessments and strategic plans to identify and address the needs of unserved and/or underserved populations. The need for supported employment services is evident in the comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA). The CSNA also indicates the need for services for individuals with physical disabilities. Increased enrollment under the Medicaid Pathways waiver has provided additional resources to fund extended support services for individuals with physical disabilities.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation works with the DDDS and local education agencies to identify appropriate referrals for supported employment services. Primary indicators for supported employment are:

*Demonstrated inability to maintain employment utilizing traditional employment programs without extended follow-along services as the result of a most significant disability.

*Indication that, due to the significance of the disability, the individual is not likely to obtain and maintain employment in the absence of intensive services from DVR and extended services from DDDS or natural supports.

Individuals with the most significant disabilities who are identified as appropriate for supported employment services will have the following services available; Title I funds are used for the 1st and 2nd milestone payments and available Title VI funds are used once job placement has occurred:

1. Supported employment career profile/assessment to identify the individual's unique strengths, resources, interests, priorities, concerns, abilities and capabilities.
2. Development of a Job Placement Plan to identify a suitable vocational goal based off informed choice and career profile data.
3. Job placement in an integrated work environment based on the results of the job placement plan.
4. Intensive job coaching/training services on-site and/or off-site to enable the individual to become stabilized in his or her employment.
5. Upon stabilization, DVR and the agency identified to provide extended services commence the transition to extended services. DVR will be the lead service provider, facilitating communication

with the individual, the employer, and the extended service provider for a minimum of 90 days following stabilization.

*As indicated elsewhere, individuals with mental illness who are receiving services from the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health are primarily served with traditional DVR supports including job coaching and through the ACT teams. Individuals for whom more intensive supported employment needs, including individuals with dual diagnosis, may be served through the supported employment vendors described above.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES

Section 2. Supported employment services are available to clients once placement has occurred for no more than 24 months, with the exception to youth who may receive extended services up to 48 months following the 24 month period. When circumstances, documented in the client's IPE, indicate that an extension of services will be necessary to enable an individual to retain employment, exceptions may allow the services to extend beyond the 24-month time limit. Clients are determined ready for follow-along services when job stabilization is achieved. Although the program is flexible in order to provide for the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, stabilization is generally achieved when the individual requires job coaching supports only 20% of the time that they are working. The client, DVR Counselor, job coach, case manager, and employer must agree that work performance is satisfactory, and employment can be maintained with the level of Follow-Along Services available. When job stabilization is declared the DVR Counselor starts the ninety-day count for DVR closure.

The transition to extended services begins at job stabilization. In order to increase the availability of extended services and increase supported employment, most participants in supported employment are provided with extended services by a long-term funding agency that has contracted with the community rehabilitation program providing supported employment services. When funding for extended services is not available for youth by a long-term funding agency DVR will fund the extended services up to an additional 48 months. During this period, DVR looks for alternate funding or the development of natural supports for participant's extended services in order to maximize resources, given the elimination of supported employment funds.

During the transitional period, from job stabilization to closure, both DVR and the long-term funding agency work together to ensure the client will retain employment. Closure from DVR services occurs following at least 90 days of extended services but not more than 24 months post placement or an additional 48 month post placement for youth.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL) CERTIFICATIONS

1. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE,) IS AUTHORIZED TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (REHABILITATION ACT), AS AMENDED BY WIOA [14], AND ITS SUPPLEMENT UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT[15];

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE

Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (Delaware General VR Agency)

2. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES, THE (ENTER THE

NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY) [16] AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN [17] , THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[18] , POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER SECTION 111 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

3. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN [19] , THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[20] , POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER TITLE VI ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

Andrea Guest, DVR Director

ENTER THE TITLE OF THE AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Andrea Guest, DVR Director

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

Signatory information	Enter Signatory information in this column
Name of Signatory	Andrea Guest
Title of Signatory	Director
Date Signed	May 5, 2020

ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.	

2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.	
3. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to: Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan:	
3.a. The establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act	

The State Plan must include	Include
3.b. The establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable (A or B must be selected):	
3.b.(A) “is an independent State commission” (Yes/No)	No
3.b.(B) “has established a State Rehabilitation Council” (Yes/No)	Yes
3.c. Consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.d. The financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3)	
3.e. The local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds (Yes/No)	No
3.f. The shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs (Yes/No)	No
3.g. Statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? (Yes/No) See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan	No
3.h. The descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act	

3.i. All required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.j. The requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.k. The compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.l. The reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities	
3.m. The submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act	

The State Plan must include	Include
4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:	
4.a. Comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.b. Impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.c. Provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act? (Yes/No)	No
4.d. Determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.e. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.f. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.g. Provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act	

4.h. Comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.i. Meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs	
4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,	
4.j.i. Has developed and will implement,	
4.j.i.I. Strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and	
4.j.i.II. Strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and	
4.j.ii. Has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(25))	

The State Plan must include	Include
5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:	
5.a. The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act	
5.b. The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act	
5.c. The designated state unit will coordinate activities with any other State agency that is functioning as an employment network under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act	
6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program:	
6.a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act	

<p>6.b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act</p>	
<p>7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>7.a. The Designated State Agency Assures That it Will Provide Supported Employment Services as Defined in Section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act</p>	
<p>7.b. The designated State agency assures that:</p>	
<p>7.b.i. The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act</p>	
<p>7.b.ii. An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation</p>	

The State Plan must include	Include
Act	

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)				
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)				
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate				
Measurable Skill Gains				
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans modifications.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (BLIND)

a. INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

1. INPUT PROVIDED BY THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, INCLUDING INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATEPLAN, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPORT, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS PART OF THE COUNCIL'S FUNCTIONS.

The Delaware Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI) partnered with the University of Delaware Center for Disabilities Studies in the fall of 2021 to conduct a thorough CSNA. In addition, the Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council (VRAC), the DE-Blind Agency State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), and DVI hosted four town hall meetings to obtain input from the SRC and the public throughout the first two years of the state plan. The discussions focused on:

- Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) and eligibility
- Goals for successful closures
- Council resources
- The DVI plan of correction with RSA
- Randolph Sheppard – Business Enterprise Program (BEP)
- Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA)
- Transportation
- Assistive technology

After the CSNA was complete, the VRAC and DVI interactively discussed goals and priorities. Only four VRAC members are in their second term. The rest are new to their role on the Council, and many have never served in an advisory capacity. This synergy resulted in an invigorating discussion about goals and priorities.

Comments and Discussion:

- Create individualized plans for clients, which allow the client and/or parent to lead the person-centered plan.
- Increase accountability
- Ensure that the burden of responsibility for following up with a client is placed on a specific DVI provider.
- Increase communication across network of providers
- Increase communication among DVI employees, especially when multiple support providers are assisting one client.
- Create a coordinated communication channels for clients and families
- Continue to support a work culture that:
- Emphasizes empathy
- Excels staff and clients to meet the highest of standards and goals
- Refutes the status quo for clients
- System Wide Adjustments
- Streamline system operations with a goal to decrease response time to clients
- Reduce paperwork
- Address Human Resource Supply and Demand Challenges
- Hiring additional staff
- Strengthen relationship with business partners and CRPs
- Increase community support partnerships, which may also decrease referral response times.
- Increase networks of support for clients, e.g., advocacy groups
- Increase supports for staff with the goal of decreasing staff turnover, and retaining qualified staff

- Increased pay
- Decreased workload
- Provide training and continuing education for staff

Goals and Priorities:

Goal 1: Provide quality employment outcomes for individuals with visual impairments.

1.1 Performance Objective and Measure: Increase employment outcomes of total VR consumers, Supported Employment and transition students exiting high school by a minimum of 5% over previous year.

1.2 Performance Objective and Measure: Maintain an employment rate of 90% at second quarter and 80% at fourth quarter following exit from the VR program.

1.3 Performance Objective and Measure: Achieve median earnings of no less than \$16.00 per hour second quarter following exit from VR program.

Discussion: Several Council members commented that the median wage objective should be higher than minimum wage depending on where the individual is placed. Delaware's minimum wage is currently \$10.50 but will be gradually increased until it reaches \$15/hour in 2025. A Council member stated that if DVI will be using more supported employment for students right out of high school with little or no work experience will not earn as much as someone with a college degree or technical training.

Goal 2: Provide quality Pre-employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with visual impairments

2.1 Performance Objective and Measure: Increase partnerships with Community Rehabilitation Providers to five providers offering Pre-ETS services.

Discussion: A Council member suggested that DVI invite service providers to events being held for the transition students. The current practice for school age youth is for DVI to loan Assistive Technology equipment students (including transition) but it must be returned. The Council member suggested donating the equipment to the student it was loaned to. DVI explained that they were referring to the for the Department of Education program and the VR program was different. When students enter the VR program, their Individual Plan for Employment defines the assistive technology each person needs to achieve their vocational goals.

2.2 Performance Objective and Measure: Increase the number of students receiving Pre-ETS services by 10% over previous year.

Discussion: A Council member commented that the numbers for the education (transition) program have shifted and asked for the cause of this shift. DVI explained that the change in students served is due to better data collection over the past two years.

2.3 Performance Objective and Measure: Through internal and external service provision, ensure all transition students participate in at least one internship, paid/unpaid work experience and/or apprenticeship prior to exit from secondary education.

Discussion: A Council member stated that it will be tough to achieve this goal but DVI should go for it anyway. Another Council member stated that 100% is unrealistic. DVI responded by saying 100% is a tough goal to reach. It was agreed that the goal will remain at 100% so that DVI will offer these services to all students. A Council member suggested changing the wording from participate to offer in this goal so that all students would be offered one of these experiences.

Goal 3: Enhance employer and community partnerships that lead to competitive, integrated employment for individuals with visual impairments

3.1 Performance Objective and Measure: In collaboration with DVI's SRC and other community partners, develop and track formal/informal opportunities (i.e. individual and group employer outreach activities, collaboration activities with other disability groups, conferences, workshops, etc.) to engage and educate employers specifically around the employment of individuals with visual impairments.

Discussion: Through building partnerships with DVR DVI will be able to do more robust outreach.

3.2 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop at least five additional partnerships with Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP) related to training, supported employment and/or placement services.

Discussion: DVI released Requests for Proposals in 2020 and 2021 to obtain additional CRPs and expand opportunities for DVI consumers which resulted in partnerships with two CRPs. Because of the lack of response, DVI feels the goal of developing five new partnerships may be too ambitious.

3.3 Performance Objective and Measure: Support industry-specific training programs in high demand occupations based on Delaware labor market information, demonstrated by consumers earning industry recognized credentials aligned with acquired training and employment.

3.4 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a business database that tracks engagement and demonstrates authentic business partnerships that result in competitive, integrated employment opportunities for individuals with visual impairments.

Discussion: DVI needs to be able to track the time their business consultants engage with an employer and what was the outcome of that engagement.

Goal 4: Increase awareness and improve access to DVI services

4.1 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop system to track staff outreach events to ensure DVI participation.

4.2 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a plan for increasing outreach to underserved communities (i.e., Latino, Amish and Veterans) as well the medical community.

4.3 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a series of videos to post on DVI's website and social media accounts that showcase consumer stories, awareness of blindness and visual impairments and services offered by DVI.

4.4 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a plan to participate in community events hosted by state legislators to increase awareness and promote services.

Discussion: Outreach has slowed significantly because of COVID 19 restrictions. DVI needs to track outreach such as how many people participated, etc.

Goal 5: Provide quality entrepreneurial opportunities in the Business Enterprise Program

5.1 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a process and procedure to document the consumers have been informed of opportunities for participation in the BEP program.

5.2 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a Pre-ETS activity to expose students with visual impairments to work opportunities through the BEP program.

Discussion: A Council member who is a BEP business owner expressed that this is a good idea and she would like to see students in the program. Education and communication are the key to success in getting students in the BEP program. Develop a Pre-ETS activity to expose students with visual impairments to work through the BEP program. A Council member asked if there was a mentoring program to keep the students involved in the BEP program. A member of the Council stated he agrees with this process and suggests getting the other operators involved as mentors. A Council member suggests leveraging all available methods for employing the blind and visually impaired.

5.3 Performance Objective and Measure: Engage the Blind Vendors Committee and BEP Operators in the VR process for consumers who express an interest in the program (i.e. develop job shadow, internship and peer mentoring opportunities).

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

DVI would like to thank the SRC for the teamwork and enthusiasm throughout the CSNA and goal collaboration processes.

Goal 1: Provide quality employment outcomes for individuals with visual impairments. DVI accepts this recommendation as written.

1.1 Performance Objective and Measure: Increase employment outcomes of total VR consumers, Supported Employment and transition students exiting high school by a minimum of 5% over previous year.

1.2 Performance Objective and Measure: Maintain an employment rate of 90% at second quarter and 80% at fourth quarter following exit from the VR program.

1.3 Performance Objective and Measure: Achieve median earnings of no less than \$16.00 per hour second quarter following exit from VR program.

Goal 2: Provide quality Pre-employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with visual impairments. DVI accepts this recommendation with a modification to performance objective and measure number 2.1.

2.1 Performance Objective and Measure: Maintain current partnerships with Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP) providers offering Pre-ETS services.

2.2 Performance Objective and Measure: Increase the number of students receiving Pre-ETS services by 10% over previous year.

2.3 Performance Objective and Measure: Through internal and external service provision, ensure all transition students participate in at least one internship, paid/unpaid work experience and/or apprenticeship prior to exit from secondary education.

Goal 3: Enhance employer and community partnerships that lead to competitive, integrated employment for individuals with visual impairments. DVI accepts this recommendation with a modification to performance objective 3.2.

3.1 Performance Objective and Measure: In collaboration with DVI's SRC and other community partners, develop and track formal/informal opportunities (i.e., individual and group employer outreach activities, collaboration activities with other disability groups, conferences, workshops, etc.) to engage and educate employers specifically around the employment of individuals with visual impairments.

3.2 Performance Objective and Measure: Maintain current partnerships with Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP) related to training, supported employment and/or placement services.

3.3 Performance Objective and Measure: Support industry-specific training programs in high demand occupations based on Delaware labor market information, demonstrated by consumers earning industry recognized credentials aligned with acquired training and employment.

3.4 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a business database that tracks engagement and demonstrates authentic business partnerships that result in competitive, integrated employment opportunities for individuals with visual impairments.

Goal 4: Increase awareness and improve access to DVI services. DVI accepts this recommendation as written.

4.1 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop system to track staff outreach events to ensure DVI participation.

4.2 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a plan for increasing outreach to underserved communities (i.e., Latino, Amish and Veterans) as well the medical community.

4.3 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a series of videos to post on DVI's website and social media accounts that showcase consumer stories, awareness of blindness and visual impairments and services offered by DVI.

4.4 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a plan to participate in community events hosted by state legislators to increase awareness and promote services.

Goal 5: Provide quality entrepreneurial opportunities in the Business Enterprise Program. DVI accepts this recommendation as written.

5.1 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a process and procedure to document the consumers have been informed of opportunities for participation in the BEP program.

5.2 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a Pre-ETS activity to expose students with visual impairments to work opportunities through the BEP program.

5.3 Performance Objective and Measure: Engage the Blind Vendors Committee and BEP Operators in the VR process for consumers who express an interest in the program (i.e., develop job shadow, internship, and peer mentoring opportunities).

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

DVI agrees with all the goals but made modifications to two of the performance measures. Historically, DVI provided most services using internal staff and referred a very small number of participants to CRPs. DVI understood the importance of offering choice and using providers who specialize in placement services, so we began an initiative to use more providers and build new relationships. DVI released Requests for Proposals (RFP) in 2020 and 2021 which resulted in contracts with two (of approx. 15 statewide) CRPs who offer placement and Pre-ETS services. Also, nine vendors completed the 2021 CSNA survey and most expressed lack of referrals as the primary reason for not partnering with DVI for these services. And finally, the Covid-19 pandemic and labor market trends have had a dramatic impact on CRPs. Some have closed and other are unable to maintain staff. Due to the circumstances as outlined,

DVI modified objectives 2.1 and 3.2.

b. REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

1. A LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY WILL PROVIDE THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WAIVER REQUEST.

Delaware DVI is not requesting a waiver of statewideness.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

N/A

3. REQUIREMENTS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN WILL APPLY TO THE SERVICES APPROVED UNDER THE WAIVER.

N/A

c. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS.

DVI collaborates with a variety of public and private agencies and programs that are not performing activities through the statewide workforce development system to provide comprehensive rehabilitation services to individuals who are blind and visually impaired and solutions to employment barriers. While DVI is committed to working collaboratively with its WIOA partners, it recognizes the importance of maintaining other strong partnerships to provide exceptional customer service to businesses and individuals with disabilities. Cooperation with private and non-profit service agencies, related government agencies, and other professional organizations has long been a cornerstone of public VR services for the blind in Delaware. Such collaborations help to overcome the complex and multiple barriers that confront people with disabilities who want to work or stay independent in their communities.

DVI maintains strong relationships with public institutions of higher education including Delaware Technical & Community College, Delaware State University and the University of Delaware. DVI is actively involved in, or has ongoing relationships with, several councils whose missions are related to individuals with disabilities including the Employment First Oversight Commission and the State Council for Persons with Disabilities.

DVI has established partnerships to ensure the following services are available to consumers: government employment/internship opportunities; pre-employment transition service opportunities; daily living (home energy, housing, child care, etc.) assistance; financial coaching; peer counseling; access to Medicaid for supported employment transitions; public access & accessibility (streets, buses, etc.); accessible materials creation; access to vision related medical community; higher education; access to books and periodicals in multiple formats; and braille enrichment.

Partner agencies include: DE Division of Developmental Disabilities; DE Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance; DE Division of Public Health; DE Division of Substance Abuse & Mental Health; DE Department of Transportation; DE Department of Human Resources; DE Department of Corrections; DE Department of Services for Children, Youth and Families; New Castle County Government; City of Wilmington Government; BlindSight Delaware; Library of Congress; National Federation of the Blind; Delaware Association of Optometry; DE School for the Deaf; University of Delaware; Delaware State University; Delaware Technical & Community College; Wilmington University; Ability Network of Delaware (formerly the Delaware Association of Rehabilitation Facilities) and Community Rehabilitation Providers.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

DVI partners with the Assistive Technology Resource Center (ATRC). With locations in all Delaware counties, the ATRC has a vast inventory of equipment, software, communication devices and items that support people with all disabilities. As required by the Assistive Technology Act, DVI maintains representation on the Assistive Technology Loan Advisory Board. In addition to the ATRC, DVI operates statewide assistive technology training centers which are state-funded and dedicated solely to the needs of people who are blind or severely visually impaired.

The ATRC and DVI offer rehabilitation technology assessment and evaluation services for consumers across all stages of the VR process, one-to-one demonstrations and device borrowing program. Rehabilitation technology includes a range of services and devices that supplement and enhance individual functions, such as job redesign or worksite modifications that improve the work environment for individuals with visual impairments.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

The AgrAbility program through the United States Department of Agriculture was a resource for DVI if job seekers in rural parts of the state who were engaged in the agriculture labor sector and needed provider assistance. The Agrability grant was not renewed in Delaware; however, DVI would contact Purdue University to coordinate services with local vendors if assistive technology or other resources were needed.

4. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

DVI maintains and continues to establish relationships with workforce development agencies to utilize the out-of-school programs where DVI consumers are able to benefit. In addition, DVI is an active member of the WIOA partner leadership team who have been actively working on solutions for quick navigation and data sharing.

In addition to our WIOA partners, DVI provides vocational services to out-of-school youth with disabilities in collaboration with Community Rehabilitation Programs through cooperative relationships.

Partner agencies include: DE Department of Labor General Vocational Rehabilitation, Employment & Training, Unemployment Insurance, DE Health & Social Services, Division of Social Services, Division of State Service Centers, Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities, Office of Financial Empowerment (Stand by Me Financial Coaching), Department of State, Division of Libraries, DE Division of Social Services, DE State Housing Authority, Ticket to

Work - Full Circle Benefits Counseling, Office of Economic Development, Community Rehabilitation Service Providers.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

State use contracting in Delaware falls under the purview of the Commission for Statewide Contracts to Support Employment for Individuals with Disabilities (the Commission). The Commission is designed to encourage and assist individuals with visual impairments and other disabilities to achieve maximum personal independence by assuring an expanded and constant market for their products and services. They routinely work together to develop new set-aside opportunities and ensure existing contracts are operating within the established guidelines and regulations. DVI is appointed to the Commission as an Ex-Officio member and as such, is actively engaged in the state use set-aside process.

In order to effectively and fairly operate the set-aside contracts, the Commission utilizes one or more Central Nonprofit Agency (CNA) as primary contractors of set-aside opportunities. Using the state procurement process, a CNA Request for Proposal is published on a quarterly basis as a way to attract multiple types of contractors. Once contracts are secure, the CNA has the option of subcontracting or performing the job themselves. Regardless of the choice, the CNA is responsible for ensuring the contracts maintain the proper ratios of employees with and without disabilities and provide the goods/services as described in the contract.

Delaware has only one CNA; the Ability Network of Delaware (A.N.D.), who subcontracts the work to several community rehabilitation providers. The set-aside opportunities in Delaware are temporary staffing and janitorial. The DVI Vocational Rehabilitation unit works collaboratively with the A.N.D. and their subcontractors to help consumers secure positions, evaluate assistive technology needs, and offer other services to ensure success on the job.

d. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

1. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S PLANS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE- EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AS WELL AS PROCEDURES FOR THE TIMELY DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF INDIVIDUALIZED PLANS FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR THE STUDENTS

DVI is uniquely positioned to facilitate the transition of students with visual impairments from school to the receipt of VR services due to the comprehensive structure of the division and the agency's participation in statewide transition activities. DVI has both an Education Services Unit and a VR Unit, which allows the agency to begin working with children as soon as a visual impairment is identified. DVI's Education Services Unit employs Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI) who provide assessment, direct instruction, and consultation services to approximately 300 students with visual impairments annually through an itinerant model. The TVIs work with local education agencies (LEAs) and Charter Schools statewide to ensure all students with visual impairments can access educational programs equal to that of their peers. This relationship provides DVI's VR Unit with the opportunity for early identification of all students who may be potentially eligible for VR services, to educate and engage families early in the transition process and to assist the VR Transition Counselors and LEAs with coordinating and planning for transition services, including pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS).

DVI recognizes the need to get information to families as early as possible. As such, the VR Transition Counselors work with the TVIs to ensure updated information and forms related to Pre-ETS and VR

services is made available to share with families and schools prior to students beginning the transition process. Given the additional supports often required for students with visual impairments to participate in Pre-ETS, DVI encourages the application for VR services at the earliest age of 14. This allows the VR Transition Counselor to become an integral part of the student's IEP team and to assist with the coordination of several services to prepare the student for vocational success upon completion of high school. These services can include comprehensive vocational assessment, career exploration, work-based learning experiences, workplace readiness training, self-advocacy training, preparation for post-secondary education or training, assistive technology (AT) assessment and training, independent living (ILS)/low vision services, and orientation and mobility (O&M).

Referrals for VR services are received primarily from DVI's Education Services Unit; however, they are accepted from any source. DVI will be developing a more formal referral procedure that can be shared with LEAs and families to ensure all entities are aware of the availability of Pre-ETS services to students who are potentially eligible as well as the benefits of applying for services.

Over the past few years, DVI has developed several transition programs for students with visual impairments to participate in during breaks in the school year. All units within DVI collaborate to provide students with visual impairments opportunities to learn and practice a wide range of career and independent living skills. The programs provide the students and DVI team opportunities to build rapport and get to know each other, the students become familiar with the services DVI offers, and students spend time with and learn from peers from across the state. These programs include Transition Spring Break, Children's Beach House, Mission Transition, Summer Skills Academy and Camp Abilities. DVI coordinates these programs with community partners, such as Delaware State University, Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP), local businesses, the University of Delaware, etc. These programs incorporate the [Expanded Core Curriculum \(ECC\)](#), transition activities and Pre-ETS – all critical for students with visual impairments.

To further educate the community and transition stakeholders about agency services, DVI participates in several statewide transition activities along with other core partners. The Education Administrator, designated TVIs, VR Transition Counselors and the VR District Administrator participate in monthly Transition Cadre meetings, hosted by the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) and attended by Delaware's General VR agency (DVR), LEAs, Charter schools, community rehabilitation providers (CRPs), other state agencies and families. DVI is also involved in a state initiative, PIPELine to Career Success for Students with Disabilities, a pilot program developed to use data to build structured programming and interagency teams to facilitate authentic inclusion of students, including those with the most significant disabilities, in career and technical education (CTE) career pathways and work-based learning experiences while in high school. DVI will continue to work with DOE, DVR, and the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) to provide financial support and accessible materials for the annual Delaware Transition Conference.

Program Improvement: DVI plans to increase opportunities for students to participate in Pre-ETS and other transition activities.

1. In school year 2018-2019, DVI supported its first student to complete the Project SEARCH (PS) program. Although PS was developed by the general VR agency, all parties involved welcomed the participation of DVI's staff as part of the student's team. DVI will increase collaboration with the host school districts to identify any students with visual impairments as candidates for the program to ensure they are properly supported.
2. DVI currently partners with three organizations for Pre-ETS services. Community Integrated Services and ServiceSource provide community-based programming related to Work-based Learning Experiences and Workplace Readiness Training. Learning Ally provides college students with visual impairments support during their first and sometimes second year of higher education. All organizations are engaged with DVI regularly to provide continuous improvement and respond to the needs of students and ServiceSource represents CRPs on the DVI SRC.
3. The programs offered directly by DVI are separate and tend to have a specific focus (i.e. career prep, college prep, ILS skills, educational sports, etc.). The programs also occur in the summer to

accommodate the availability of students. However, this conflicts with the extended school year (ESY) and students often have to choose between the DVI programs and participating in the ESY. As such, starting in FY20, DVI planned to develop more comprehensive program, combining aspects of a few into one longer camp-style program. DVI also planned to work closer with LEAs to develop activities that could be considered part of the extended school year, so students did not need to choose between school or DVI. Efforts are also being made to alleviate transportation challenges that are often a barrier to students participating.

4. During the summer of 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic created unique challenges to summer programming plans. The 19-20 school year and ESY were mainly conducted using virtual platforms. DVI worked with Pre-ETS providers and our education program to create six weeks of virtual summer programming for youth. The program provided the opportunity for students to participate in Pre-ETS and included two paid internships for students high school juniors who wished to pursue careers as Teachers of the Visually Impaired. Although there were still pandemic limitations, DVI was able to offer more face-to-face Pre-ETS programming during the summer of 2021.
5. VR Transition Counselors provide input into the IEP goals. Additional training on understanding and using the IEP and how to enhance the sharing of data and information will be coordinated in order to maximize the benefit of the IEP and usefulness of information available to student's IEP teams.

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;

The MOU between DDOE and DVI outlines roles and responsibilities of the LEAs and DVI with regard to the consultation and technical assistance provided for the transition of students with visual impairments from school to post-school activities, including VR services. The MOU between DVI and all DDOE was fully executed by August 9, 2016.

The MOU includes the following:

DVI will:

1. conduct training activities with appropriate staff members concerning the MOU and its implementation.
2. coordinate training with DDOE and LEAs regarding specific procedures to be followed by DVI, DDOE and LEAs related to coordination of educational programs, placement, and appointment of educational surrogate parents for children and youth with visual impairments who are receiving cooperative services from those agencies.
3. provide visual impairment (VI) education and transition related consultant services to LEAs that employ a TVI or related staff providing VI support (consultant services such as programming, in-service training, ordering of equipment, program evaluation, and coordination of inclusive placements in the least restrictive environment).
4. provide in-house training for DVI education staff on best practices, at least annually.
5. provide information as requested to school personnel on access to "long term support" necessary to assist individuals to live independently in the community.

6. DVI's VR team participates in statewide transition activities with DOE and school personnel to allow for the exchange of information related to Pre-ETS activities, VR services and to continue collaboration with LEAs on a statewide level.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

DVI's VR Unit works collaboratively with LEAs and DVI program staff for the coordination of specific services to support students in the development and implementation of their Individualized Education Program (IEP). In 2020, DVI created a Pre-ETS coordinator position. This staff works closely with the students, families, VR counselor, and IEP team to ensure students who want to participate in Pre-ETS activities are provided proper coordination. VR staff will work with the student's IEP team and TVI to plan for more comprehensive secondary level programming and post school services.

The MOU outlines the roles and responsibilities related to DVI and the VR staff and includes the following:

1. Develop and plan Pre-ETS services for students with visual impairments no later than age fourteen.
2. Reserve funds in accordance with WIOA to provide Pre-ETS services to students who are potentially eligible or eligible for VR services.
3. Meet with students and their families to provide an overview of VR services, including Pre-ETS and other comprehensive VR services that require additional eligibility criteria.
4. For students who choose to apply for VR services, conduct intake, determine eligibility, provide vocational assessments, and establish the student's individualized plan for employment (IPE) no later than two years prior to the student's expected graduation date.
5. Maintain a regular schedule with students and LEAs for service provision.
6. Attend IEP meetings for students with visual impairments.
7. Coordinate with IEP team to determine who will assume responsibility for service provision for services that are considered special education and VR.
8. Coordinate with WIOA and community partners to develop work opportunities for students with visual impairments.
9. Attend person-centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under title XIX for the Social Security Act.
10. Enforce limits on the use of subminimum wage and maintain documentation according to standards.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES.

The MOU described previously, describes a comprehensive collaboration between the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), the Delaware Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI), Delaware Department of Education (DDOE), Exceptional Children Resources, and the Local Education Agencies (LEA) and Charter schools serving children with visual impairments.

In addition to vocational rehabilitation services, DVI provides Delaware students with visual impairments with itinerant teacher, consultant, orientation/mobility, family, child, and vocational counseling services to all children who meet the eligibility criteria as a visually impaired student. Actual services provided

are defined by the child's IEP/IFSP and may include Braille instruction, assistive technology instruction and provision, accommodation instruction and consultation, accessible materials provision, extended core curriculum supports and referral services.

The purpose of this Interagency Agreement is to ensure, through a cooperative effort, that a free, appropriate public education is provided to all children and youth with visual impairments who are served by the DVI, and the LEAs under the general supervision and direction of the DDOE. This agreement also ensures that students are offered and provided, when eligible, appropriate transition services leading to competitive employment outcomes under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, as well as Medicaid funded employment services funded through the 1915(i) Pathways program.

The agreement outlines DVI responsibilities for providing infant and toddler programs, as well as birth through secondary education and vocational rehabilitation programs for Delaware youth with visual impairments and blindness. The scope of educational and rehabilitation services offered by DVI is influenced by federal and state enactments, funding levels, and eligibility criteria. Services provided by DVI include, but are not limited to, assistive technology, consultant services, diagnostic and low vision examinations and aids, itinerant teacher services, orientation and mobility training, specialized equipment, and vocational services. DVI also coordinates regularly prescribed ophthalmologic, optometric assessments with children and their families. The DVI assures that to the best of its ability, services to children and youth with visual impairments shall be provided in accordance with appropriate state and federal regulations. DVI actively participates in the development and revision of IEPs and IFSPs for children and youth with visual impairments. DVI conducts assessments such as functional vision, learning media, orientation and mobility, and assistive technology as well as coordination of low vision assessments through coordination with LEA staff to meet the student's current curricular needs. The teacher for the visually impaired is responsible for conducting a functional vision and learning media assessment as part of the triennial assessment requirements. In addition, DVI provides data and specialized equipment, textbooks, software and materials for students.

The agreement identifies DVI as begin authorized to provide transition services to youth with disabilities, ages 14-21, in accordance with pre-employment transition services requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Program; Final Rule as specified further below. DVI, in collaboration with the local educational agencies involved, will provide, or arrange for the provision of, pre-employment transition services for all students with visual impairments who are eligible or potentially eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. DVI Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) provides pre-employment transition services for students with visual impairments, beginning no later than age fourteen (14). The agreement also provides a thorough overview of pre-employment transition services and authorized activities.

The agreement acknowledges that DVI is responsible for attending individualized education program meetings for students with visual impairments; working with the local workforce development boards, one-stop centers, and employers to develop work opportunities for students with visual impairments, including internships, summer employment and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year, and apprenticeships; working with schools, including those carrying out activities under section 614(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (207 U.S.C. 1414(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII)), to coordinate and ensure the provision of pre-employment transition services under this section; and attend person-centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 1396 et seq.).

In addition to the provision of pre-employment transition services a DVI vocational rehabilitation counselor works with the child's IEP Team and itinerant teacher to develop a transition plan for more comprehensive secondary level programming and post school services. The DVI vocational rehabilitation counselor meets with the student and their family in order to provide a comprehensive overview of the DVI vocational rehabilitation program which shall include information on pre-

employment transition services, as well as those more comprehensive VR services that may require additional eligibility criteria to be met prior to or following graduation from high school. The DVI vocational rehabilitation counselor conducts intake, vocational assessment, determine eligibility, and establish the student's individualized plan for employment (IPE) no later than two years prior to the student's expected graduation date for those students' requiring services beyond the scope of pre-employment transition services. DVI will assign a DVI VR counselor to all school programs serving students from grades 9-12 in an LEA or other public agency operating educational programs. DVI will assure that each counselor develops and maintains a regular schedule for their assigned high school programs.

The MOU affirms that DVI will reserve fifteen (15) percent of their annual VR allotment to provide pre-employment transition services to students with visual impairments who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services. The MOU outlines how and when services will be provided and who is responsible. The agreement also affirms DVI's responsibility to WIOA rules and regulations in relation to subminimum wages, services and documentation. The agreement also defines DVI's responsibility for professional development, technical assistance and policy collaboration. It also outlines DVI's responsibility for operational oversight and the use of state funding and a DOE sub-grant for educational services. The agreement also outlines how children receive educational services should DVI funding become interrupted or unavailable.

The MOU states that DDOE shall ensure that services for children and youth with visual impairments shall be provided in accordance with the IDEA and State regulations and coordinate services between the LEAs and DVI. DDOE will provide professional development and technical assistance and participate on the DVI State Rehabilitation Council (Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council for the blind as required and the Delaware Council on the Blind when requested. The DDOE will also collaborate on policy development and provide monitoring oversight of educational program.

The MOU outlines the responsibility of all Delaware LEAs. They are responsible for providing special education services to children and youth with visual impairments in compliance with the IDEA, State and Federal rules and regulations that apply in providing a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The LEAs are also required to coordinate with DVI to ensure students are afforded the opportunity to receive necessary DVI services and the IEP team has proper representation from each service (including Orientation & Mobility, Vocational Rehabilitation, Assistive Technology, and Teachers for the Visually Impaired). The LEAs are also required to ensure informed written consent for release of information is obtained from adult students or parents of minors prior to sharing information with the DVI staff. All sharing of student records will be in compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the IDEA and State law and regulations. After parent approval (e.g., signature of DVI VR application), verify, collect and provide information relevant to secondary transition to DVI VR Counselors. The LEAs agree to participate in professional development and technical assistance as well.

Finally, the agreement stipulates that the DDOE and DVI will jointly perform the following activities: 1) Request funding for jointly operated programs on an annual basis sufficient for the provision of a free appropriate public education for children and youth with visual impairments served in collaborative programs. 2) Seek federal funding to supplement services for children and youth with visual impairments including, but not limited to, America's Schools Act (ASA)-Title I (H), Carl Perkins Vocational Technical Education Act-Title II (CPVTEA) & IDEA-B. 3) Coordinate the development of policies and procedures necessary to ensure the provision of appropriate services and compliance with federal and State rules and regulations. 4) Coordinate legislative activities that impact children and youth with visual impairments; specifically, to propose amendments to the Delaware Code to further delineate responsibilities of DVI and DDOE and to propose improvements in funding and policy. 5) Review and revise certification requirements for teachers of children and youth with visual impairments. 6) Share responsibility for the planning and provision of transition services for students who will be moving between the educational system and DVI, other adult service providers, and the community. 7) Coordinate services with LEAs to maintain staff levels sufficient to meet student needs. 8) Cooperate in the development of new programs

and in the revisions of existing programs. 9) Reviewing assessment approaches to ensure that assessments are appropriate for age and the individual's disability, as well as that transition planning needs of youth with disabilities and the requirements of the participating agencies are met. If student goal is higher education, a discussion between agencies to determine what current assessment information is needed/required for successful student outcome.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

DVI's VR Unit will continue to work with the LEAs and DVI's Education Services Unit to identify and provide outreach to students with visual impairments who need transition services. Given the nature of DVI's education services, all students with visual impairments are identified and served by DVI. Although education eligibility criteria are broader than VR, DVI maintains a close working relationship with Delaware's general VR agency in order to refer any individual who does not meet the visual criteria for DVI's VR services. DVI will continue to participate in outreach events to promote vision rehabilitation services and engage community partners to collaborate on ensuring successful outcomes of students with disabilities who need transition services.

e. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Delaware is a small state with a close-knit community of private nonprofit VR service providers who generally serve two designated state agencies (Blind & General). Historically, DVI provided most services using internal staff and referred a very small number of participants to CRPs. DVI understood the importance of offering choice and using providers who specialize in placement services, so we began an initiative to use more providers and build new relationships. DVI released Requests for Proposals (RFP) in 2020 and 2021 which resulted in contracts with two (of approx. 15 statewide) CRPs who offer placement and Pre-ETS services. In addition, DVI routinely solicits cooperative agreements with providers that specialize or seek to specialize in services designed for people who are blind. DVI adheres to the state procurement process and shares solicitations through the State bid portal. In addition, DVI has entered into contractual agreements with organizations located outside of Delaware (with approval from the Office of Management and Budget) to secure services specific to visual impairments.

Regardless of the method by which cooperative agreements are formed, DVI offers service providers on-site training to introduce techniques and strategies to support people who are blind. Vendors are offered training sessions related to blind sensitivity, blind etiquette, assistive technology, and more. In addition, DVI-VR professionals often assist vocational training providers by evaluating common barriers faced by blind consumers and offering solutions. Examples of recommendations include updated assistive technology (software, screen readers, etc.) as well as low tech tools (bump dots, large-face devices, etc.).

f. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

In Delaware, eligible people with developmental disabilities have access to comprehensive services from the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS), VR services from DVI or the Department of Labor/Vocational Rehabilitation Division (DVR-General), and school-to-work transition services from the Department of Education.

General DVR: Since DVI is the agency for the blind and DVR is the general VR agency, it is extremely important that the agencies work collaboratively to ensure all qualified people with developmental disabilities receive VR services. As such, the general and blind agencies maintain a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which defines the relationship between the two VR agencies. This formal

interagency agreement defines responsibilities, dispute resolution procedures, financial responsibilities, and procedures to effectively coordinate among the agencies.

Division for Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS): DVI collaborates with DDDS for the provision of Supported Employment (SE) services to consumers with blindness and intellectual disabilities. If eligible, individuals may receive extended services from DDDS through one of three Medicaid HCBS waivers. Each waiver has defined criteria for eligibility, the services available are very similar. They include employment navigation, career exploration and assessment, individual & small group SE, Social Security benefits counseling, financial coaching, non-medical transportation, personal care (including a self-directed component), Orientation & Mobility, and assistive technology. The waiver is intended to compliment VR services by offering extended services, personal care and customized services for people who may have had unsuccessful employment experiences. In an effort to avoid gaps in services, interagency coordination begins before the consumer completes the SE process with DVI. Once DVI makes a referral, DDDS does an individualized review of eligibility, application status (if applicable), and existing resources. The goal is to have a streamlined process that assists in identifying all available programs and resources, expand and improve employment services to people with significant disabilities, and maximize the use of comparable benefits. DDDS currently uses three Medicaid waivers for the provision of SE extended services.

Early Start to Supported Employment Model (ESSE): For several years, DDDS, DVI, DVR, and DOE have collaboratively worked with eligible students, aged 14 and above, to ensure successful transitions from school into employment, training/education, or both. DVI-VR works closely with all agencies to encourage SE eligible students with visual impairments to participate in the ESSE model. ESSE was designed to minimize gaps between exiting school and beginning employment by encouraging students with intellectual disabilities to begin the SE process up to three years prior to exiting school. The goal is for students to experience the success and possible pitfalls of employment before their secondary education program ends.

g. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

1. VR SERVICES; AND

DVI-VR Business Services Structure

The Delaware business community plays a crucial role in the workforce system and the vocational success of DVI consumers. As such, it is critical for DVI to continually develop, cultivate and support employers throughout the state. Like our WIOA partners, DVI has embraced the dual-customer model and continues to build capacities of the Employment Service Specialists (ESS) who are tasked with employer outreach and engagement, as well as technical assistance to VR counselors and consumers. The ESS positions exist to assist the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRC) in obtaining employment for job seekers by building relationships with corporations that result in jobs and related opportunities. DVI has two ESS positions who are directly supervised and supported by the VR District Administrator who is responsible for VR daily operations and staff supervision. In addition, the entire VR unit is overseen by a Social Services Senior Administrator who is responsible for the VR program administrative duties such as: supervising and supporting the VR District Administrator; establishing and maintaining quality assurance and performance measures, ensuring VR regulations are met, updating policies and procedures, reviewing personnel training records, and providing technical assistance to VR staff. Although the business services continue to evolve, the established structure allows for statewide oversight, information sharing and a collaborative approach to employer engagement.

DVI-VR Business Services Activities

The DVI ESS team will continue to be responsible for the following efforts:

- Assist VR counselors by obtaining meaningful employment for job seekers.

- Develop work-based learning experiences (including internships, short—term employment, apprenticeships, and fellowships), and opportunities for pre-employment transition services.
- Join and actively network with professional organizations and groups such as the Rotary Clubs, Chambers of Commerce, etc.
- Recruit and prepare consumers in response to employer recruiting needs.
- Assist employers with their workforce needs through engagement and collaboration.
- Provide site surveys and solutions to help businesses identify physical barriers and safety needs.
- Coordinate blindness sensitivity training for business and their employees.
- Help advance the hiring of people with visual impairments in State government through the Agency Aide and Selective Placement program.
- Collaborate with schools, CRPs, community organizations by engaging in events designed to enhance workforce development (job fairs, transition conference/events, etc.)
- Promote awareness of blindness related obstacles to continued employment.

The Covid-19 pandemic severely restricted the ability to host events. In addition to the economic shut down and consumer anxiety, the business community showed less interest in participating in virtual or hybrid events because of challenges they faced trying to maintain operations especially during the first year. Virtual job fairs and virtual employment opportunities increased during the second year of the pandemic. As a result, employment outcomes are on the rise. During the pandemic, the ESS team has helped consumers to participate in a number of activities in person, virtually, and in hybrid manner. Activities include networking, resume development, paid internships, group activities, and job fairs. Assisting the consumers requires the ESS to help with job seekers to develop resumes, prepare for interviews, complete applications and connect with employers. Their goal is to offer a delicate balance of guidance and assistance designed to teach functional job search skills, foster independence, provide comprehensive support (as dictated by need), and obtain meaningful employment. Currently, the ESS provides direct support in the workplace and/or discreetly assists the consumer to self-advocate as they work through the process of securing workplace accommodations.

The ESS staff are responsible for promoting and marketing the employment of persons who are blind by using multiple outlets and techniques to reach employers. In addition to developing new business, ESS personnel are tasked with cultivating new opportunities from existing business partnerships. As business relationships are formed and nurtured, the ESS acts as a resource, offering a variety of services designed to minimize common workplace barriers to companies who wish to increase recruitment efforts or better support employees with severe visual impairments. In addition to acting as a conduit connecting job seekers with employers, the ESS provides consultative advice, technical assistance, linkages to community resources, or any other means by which to assist the company.

The DVI ESS team will provide consultation, technical assistance, and support to employers on workplace accommodations, assistive technology, and facilities and workplace access through collaboration with community partners and employers, across States and nationally, to enable the employers to recruit, job match, hire, and retain qualified individuals with disabilities who are recipients of vocational rehabilitation services or who are applicants for such services. DVI will assist employers with utilizing available financial support for hiring or accommodating individuals with disabilities, including but not limited to, a renewed agreement with the Division of Employment and Training regarding utilization of the Work Opportunities Tax Credit for individuals with visual impairments. The Division for the Visually Impaired will continue to develop relationships with employers to craft customized supported employment opportunities in integrated settings that is consistent with the individual's unique skills, abilities, interests, and informed choice.

The ESS will continue to provide the following services and coordination:

- Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRC) and Employment Services Specialists (ESS) will continue to enhance communication and collaboration with all DVI programs, community partners and business partners to provide more work-based learning and work-based readiness services for students. Some of the services provided to prepare students for competitive

integrated employment will be soft skills, internships, interviewing skills, networking skills, resume building, technology training and job shadowing.

- The ESS team created Business Partners tracking database in 2021. The database will continue to evolve so it meets the needs of business partners by tracking services used or needed to onboard new employees with visual impairments. It will also be used to track technical assistance to business partners, number of consumers hired and location of placements (county, city, etc.). ESS will also use the database to demonstrate successful outcome, develop work-based learning, and initiate paid and unpaid internships that allow students to explore different careers. The ESS will use the database to identify opportunities for job development and promote workplace inclusion. ESS will coordinate development efforts, contact new businesses, and increase networking through business-oriented organizations such as, Society of Human Resource Managers, Rotary Clubs, Chambers of Commerce, WIOA partners, state and local boards, and economic development offices. Collaborating with WIOA and economic development partners to leverage business contacts, share resources and expertise, and coordinate services that are beneficial to businesses and promote inclusive employment opportunities for individuals with visual impairments.
- The ESS will improve efforts to routinely cultivate new opportunities from existing business partnerships. Using facilitated planning targeting DVI and Business partner inputs, the ESS will identify opportunities to create more work-based learning experiences (including paid internships, short-term employment, apprenticeships, and job shadowing); developing new pre-employment transition strategies; and supporting businesses with recruiting qualified applicants with visual impairments. These efforts will provide increased probabilities for successful outcomes.
- ESS staff will support employer engagement by providing businesses access to all DVI employer services. The VR Program will continue with regular updates to marketing materials and training for consumers and businesses. Workplace inclusion services, such as vision-specific on-site training; Americans with Disability Act worksite training; information and resources related to federal contracting and Section 503; assistance with identifying workplace accommodations; access to the latest assistive technology; and workplace accessibility and access for the blind. DVI ESS will also provide technical assistance to businesses with the necessary paperwork to access hiring incentives (i.e., Federal tax credits, Delaware Disability Employment tax credit, and on-the-job training wages).
- The ESS will serve as points of contact for businesses needing guidance regarding support to remove disability-related obstacles to employment and the provision of reasonable accommodations for work-based learning experiences, onboarding, and retention of employees, including Assistive Technology and worksite assessments.

Labor Market Information

DVI reviewed the current labor market to identify gaps and opportunities related to jobs for people who are blind. At the end of 2019, Delaware's unemployment rate mirrored the national rate of 3.7%. Delaware had strong growth in (transportation & warehousing) and (arts, entertainment & recreation).[1] Unemployment rates for Blind & Visually Impaired remained around 65% and for those employed, they were employed across all job sectors.[2] [3] All PWD had 40% unemployment rate nationally.[4]

The market has since changed dramatically. For example, Delaware has seen a sharp decrease in (leisure & hospitality), retail and manufacturing. Transportation & warehousing growth continues. Job growth in Delaware is predicted to decrease by 2% (18,000 jobs). Unemployment rates in Delaware rose by over 200%. The unemployment rates for Blind & Visually Impaired increased to 70% and 82.1% for all people with disabilities in 2020 and half were over 65 years of age. BLS predicts that 80% of all PWD were not in the labor force or reported they were not looking for work.

Looking Ahead

Delaware expects to add 25,000 jobs by 2028. Financial, Health Care (especially Social Services) and

Leisure/Hospitality are identified as having the highest potential for growth; however, there are some key takeaways to consider when planning for the next two years. For example:

- 51% of small businesses reported that they are unable to fill positions.
- The rise in remote work will increase the need for technology and training
- the baby boomer generation are retiring at a rapid rate, taking years of knowledge with them but opening doors for restructuring of jobs.

- People with bachelor's degrees are still twice as likely to be employed as those without.

Strategies for 2022-2024:

- Increase training and education for youth and adults.
- Identify high demand career opportunities both locally and nationally.
- Develop small business engagements target chambers of commerce, Small Business Association, and VOCAL thru DOL.
- Work with CRPs to identify social service positions needed.
- Target remote and part time positions to enhance both employer and job seeker flexibility.
- Outreach, outreach, outreach – there is a greater need to educate employers (especially small business) about the benefits of hiring DVI consumers.
- Engage job seekers and employers with regular job fairs, meet & greets, mentoring, paid internships, job shadowing (take advantage of successfully closed consumers as networkers and mentors).

[1] [Delaware Department of Labor](#)

[2] [National Federation of the Blind](#)

[3] [American Foundation for the Blind](#)

[4] [U.S. Bureau of Labor Market Statistics](#)

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

DVI-VR Business Services Structure

The Business Services structure, activities, and strategies described in g.1 will be implemented to support students in transition. DVI recognizes the value of working as a team to cultivate and leverage existing employer relationships. Together with the VR counselor, the ESS team and the Pre-ETS Coordinator (as appropriate), develop opportunities for career exploration in authentic work experiences. Different experiences such as, internships, summer youth employment, apprenticeships, etc. not only helps consumers to explore various careers, but they also help DVI gain a better understanding of the labor market needs, employer sites, and an opportunity to learn first-hand the variety of ways DVI can support them in the employment of individuals with visual impairments.

DVI-VR Business Services Transition Activities

The Covid-19 pandemic severely restricted the ability to host events. In addition to the economic shut down and consumer anxiety, the business community showed less interest in participating in virtual or hybrid events because of challenges they faced trying to maintain operations especially during the first year. Virtual job fairs and virtual employment opportunities increased during the second year of the pandemic. As a result, employment outcomes are on the rise. During the pandemic, the ESS team helped students to participate in a number of activities in person, virtually, and in hybrid manner. Activities include networking, resume development, paid internships, group activities, and job fairs.

DVI will reestablish our summer youth program and utilize relationships with the City of Wilmington, New Castle County and employers in Kent and Sussex Counties to provide opportunities. Before the pandemic, each site reserved a number of positions specifically for students with visual impairments. This opportunity resulted in businesses being more informed and better prepared to understand the abilities and potential accommodation needs of individuals with visual impairments and provided students access to work experiences that align with their skills and abilities.

The RFP that DVI released in 2020 and 2021 resulted in contracts with two CRPs that offer group and individualized Pre-ETS transition services, including workplace readiness training and work-based learning experiences. The CRP staff can provide individualized Pre-ETS activities as well as work in collaboration with DVI on the various group programs offered to students during school breaks. Through the engagement of their employer partners, the CRPs have created opportunities for students to job shadow, participate in informational interviews and worksite tours and gain work experience through paid or unpaid internships.

DVI is also a core partner in the *PIPEline to Career Success for Students with Disabilities* program. This program works closely with LEAs, state agencies and Career and Technical Education (CTE) to identify opportunities to promote and support the inclusion of students with disabilities in CTE career pathways. Delaware DOE has made a great effort to assist LEAs with aligning their CTE offerings with the high growth fields in Delaware, specifically to the labor market needs in the various regions the LEAs are located. A major component of this program is ensuring all students have access to work-based learning experiences that are incorporated into the CTE pathways, utilizing an existing partnership with employers who provide the work and training opportunities. DVI will continue to regularly attend Cadre meetings to help identify gaps in educational pathways, develop best practices for skills needed after school to enter the workforce and to help educational staff with identified barriers to employment.

The DVI ESS team will provide consultation, technical assistance, and support to employers on workplace accommodations, assistive technology, and facilities and workplace access through collaboration with community partners and employers, across States and nationally, to enable the employers to recruit, job match, hire, and retain qualified individuals with disabilities who are recipients of vocational rehabilitation services or who are applicants for such services. DVI will assist employers with utilizing available financial support for hiring or accommodating individuals with disabilities, including but not limited to, a renewed agreement with the Division of Employment and Training regarding utilization of the Work Opportunities Tax Credit for individuals with visual impairments. The Division for the Visually Impaired will continue to develop relationships with employers to craft customized supported employment opportunities in integrated settings that is consistent with the individual's unique skills, abilities, interests, and informed choice.

h. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

1. THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

DVI has active relationships with state agencies that access employment services through Medicaid resources under Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

DVI collaborates with the Division for Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) while providing Supported Employment (SE) services to consumers with visual impairments and intellectual disabilities. Eligible individuals may receive extended employment services made possible through amendments of the DDDS Home and Community Based Waiver programs, HCBS 1915(i), HCBS 1915(c) and HCBS (b)(4).

DVI partners with the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) to coordinate the provision of evidence-based SE to eligible visually impaired consumers who have severe and persistent psychiatric needs. Employment services are made possible through the Section 1115 Medicaid

demonstration waiver as authorized by Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

In Delaware, eligible people with developmental disabilities have access to comprehensive services from the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS). DVI collaborates with DDDS for the provision of SE services to consumers with blindness and intellectual disabilities. If eligible, individuals may receive extended services from DDDS through one of three Medicaid HCBS waivers. Each waiver has defined criteria for eligibility, the services available are very similar. They include employment navigation, career exploration and assessment, individual & small group SE, Social Security benefits counseling, financial coaching, non-medical transportation, personal care (including a self-directed component), orientation & mobility, and assistive technology. The waiver is intended to complement VR services by offering extended services, personal care and customized services for people who may have had unsuccessful employment experiences. In an effort to avoid gaps in services, interagency coordination begins before the consumer completes the SE process with DVI. Once DVI makes a referral, DDDS does an individualized review of eligibility, application status (if applicable), and existing resources. The goal is to have a streamlined process that assists in identifying all available programs and resources, expand and improve employment services to people with significant disabilities, and maximize the use of comparable benefits.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

DVI and the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) collaborate to provide Evidence-based Supported Employment (SE) to eligible visually impaired consumers who have severe and persistent psychiatric needs. The DSAMH PROMISE program uses a team approach to integrate employment support services and comprehensive mental health services. Eligible participants can receive career exploration, on-the-job supports, transportation, personal care, orientation and mobility training, assistive technology, and other services to help them gain and maintain employment. The waiver is intended to complement VR services by offering extended services, personal care, and customized services for people who may have had unsuccessful employment experiences.

i. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT; DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

1. SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

A. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS

i. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL WHO ARE EMPLOYED BY THE STATE AGENCY IN THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES IN RELATION TO THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY.

Managers of each program within DVI are responsible for evaluating training needs for the staff in their unit. In regard to the provision of VR services, DVI has a Social Services Senior Administrator (SSSA) who oversees the VR unit, including personnel development. The SSSA determines training needs

through performance planning and evaluation, requests from or conversations with staff and through online surveys. Based on feedback, training is developed or coordinated to address the needs of staff. In addition, DVI supports VR Counselors with the cost to obtain and maintain the professional certification of a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) to ensure they have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to carry out their job duties.

DVI currently has the following staffing levels.

Job Title	Total Positions
Administrative Specialist	2
Employment Services Specialist	2
VR Placement Specialist	1
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor	4
VR District Administrator	1
BEP Director	1
BEP Business Services Supervisor	1
Social Service Senior Administrator	1

In addition to the staff providing direct VR services, the agency is responsible for comprehensive service provision to address a wide range of needs for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. These ancillary positions provide either technical, administrative, fiscal or support roles in support of VR service provision. These positions are state funded, and staff utilize a time tracking system (Timesheet Plus) as a means to determine time and effort towards the support of VR consumers.

Additional state-funded positions tracking time towards the provision of support to VR consumers include:

Job Title	Total Positions
Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialist	5.5
Vision Rehabilitation Therapist	4
Trainer/Educator	3
Fiscal	5

ii. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

Job Title	Current Vacancy
Administrative Specialist	1
Employment Services Specialist	1

Pre-ETS Coordinator	1
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor	0
VR District Administrator	0
BEP Director	0
BEP Business Service Supervisor	0
Social Services Senior Administrator	1

Additional positions (state funded) tracking time towards the provision of support to VR consumers include:

Job Title	Current Vacancy
Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialist	1
Vision Rehabilitation Therapist	1
Trainer/Educator	0
Fiscal	0

iii. PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY, WHO WILL BE NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES IN 5 YEARS BASED ON PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL EXPECTED TO RETIRE OR LEAVE THE FIELD, AND OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS.

Job Title	Projected Vacancies
Administrative Specialist	2
Pre-ETS Coordinator	1
Employment Services Specialist	1
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor	2
VR District Administrator	0
BEP Director	0
BEP Business Service Supervisor	0
Social Services Senior Administrator	1

Additional state-funded positions tracking time towards the provision of support to VR consumers include:

Job Title	Projected Vacancies
Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialist	2

Vision Rehabilitation Therapist	2
Trainer/Educators	1
Fiscal	1

B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

i. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM.

Delaware does not have an institution of higher education with a program to prepare Vocational Rehabilitation professionals. VR professionals are encouraged to pursue regional or online training programs.

ii. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKENDOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND

There are no Delaware institutions of higher education with programs to prepare Vocational Rehabilitation professionals. Currently, DVI has four counselors who hold a master’s degree. One counselor and the District Administer are Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRC) and the Pre-ETS Coordinator is enrolled in CRC courses.

iii. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED DURING THE PRIOR YEAR FROM EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS WITH CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, OR WITH THE CREDENTIALS FOR CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, BROKEN DOWN BY THE PERSONNEL CATEGORY FOR WHICH THEY HAVE RECEIVED, OR HAVE THE CREDENTIALS TO RECEIVE, CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE.

DVI does not have any recent graduates from a Rehabilitation program.

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

DVI has partnership agreements with the University of Delaware, Salus University, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, and Pennsylvania College of Optometry to provide internships for graduate students majoring in Rehabilitation Education and other closely related fields of study. These partnerships afford an intern the opportunity to participate in the work environment of VR Service delivery and the delivery of other services to support VR consumers during the VR process. Interns are assigned working mentors in the VR program, as well as, working in partnership with other field services to gain the broad scope of knowledge needed to become a successful rehabilitation professional. DVI utilizes the internship process as a way to expose college students to the vision rehabilitation field and assess their qualifications for employment should a vacancy exist.

Our agency has also developed a partnership with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). OMB operates a Selective Placement Registry for the State of Delaware. This Registry lists qualified persons with disabilities from various backgrounds who have been determined eligible to fill specific vacancies within state agencies. Agencies are free to select qualified individuals from this registry without going

through the normal state recruitment process, thereby streamlining the process for any qualified individual with a disability who may choose to apply for a position with DVI.

In addition, DVI shares vacancies with various advocacy group chairpersons and program chairs of Universities in the region that prepare professionals in rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility, assistive technology, and teachers of students with visual impairments. They are asked to encourage qualified members, specific to the vacant position, to apply when vacancies occur.

Recent challenges have made recruiting and retaining qualified personnel difficult. DVI had a large turnover in our VR program but were nearly fully staffed by January 2022. The DSA has developed new processes to address recruitment issues. For example, they streamlined the recruiting steps by assuming some of the process that is typically be done by hiring managers. The state has also allowed for workplace flexibility through the telecommuting policy. This policy makes telecommuting and flexible schedules available after the pandemic ends. DVI counselors are able to meet with consumers virtually and in-person making it possible for counselors to geographically expand and serve people in a larger area. This arrangement has significantly reduced travel time for consumers and staff and enhanced recruiting options.

3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR -RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND

Currently, all five Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors have master's degree in Rehabilitation or a related field. The agency follows recruitment practices established by the state to recruit, prepare, and retain qualified personnel. Although it is not a requirement of the State for VR Counselors to hold their CRC, DVI holds this as a professional standard for any practicing VR Counselor and as such, sets the expectation upon hire that a VR Counselor will pursue the CRC designation.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATIONACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

DVI uses the following standards as minimum qualifications for a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor:

- Possession of a master's degree or higher in Rehabilitation Counseling, Social or Behavioral Science or related field OR Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) designation;
- At least one-year experience in vocational rehabilitation;
- Six months experience in analyzing and interpreting medical, psychiatric, psychological, psycho-social, educational, and vocational reports from medical, psychological, and other experts to determine eligibility or an individual's vocational rehabilitation needs;
- Six months experience in case management which includes assessing, planning, developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating options and services to meet an individual's human service needs;
- Six months experience in health or human services work which includes applying theories, principles, laws and practices of health or human services programs and services that assist with and improve life for individuals, families, or communities such as financial support, employment, unemployment, housing, health care, disease prevention, substance abuse, child protective services, physical/mental health treatment and prevention or rehabilitation;

- Six months experience in interpreting vocational rehabilitation laws, rules, regulations, standards, policies, and procedures.

DVI partners with a variety of technical assistance centers, community partners and professional organizations to coordinate training with respect to visual impairments, the needs of individuals with disabilities, and the evolving labor force.

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

A. A SYSTEM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS WITHIN THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO ASSESSMENT, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING, JOB PLACEMENT, AND REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING TRAINING IMPLEMENTED IN COORDINATION WITH ENTITIES CARRYING OUTSTATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998; AND

DVI staff receive annual performance reviews based on expectations related to agency goals and the expectations of the position. The annual review, online surveys and regular meetings with staff provide opportunity to discuss staff training needs and outline plans for ensuring staff have access to training opportunities. DVI encourages professional development in areas such as best practices, assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology and utilizes distance learning, webinars, regional and national conferences in addition to training provided by the State of Delaware through the Delaware Learning Center (DLC).

DVI hired a Training and Communications Director who has prior experience working as a Training Administrator with the DE Dept. of Labor and more recently a manager in Training and Organizational Development at UCLA. Given her education and experience in organizational development, training and communications, she is well suited to assist DVI with developing an agency-wide training plan, as well as work with individual programs to address their specific needs. Although DVI is a relatively small division, having several programs with specific training needs creates challenges. However, having someone who is able to streamline training to meet program specific needs as well as incorporate them into the larger agency plan will assist us beyond just training; this will help to inform our recruitment and retention efforts and address succession planning. We have plenty of ongoing work to do with regard to this initiative, however our ability to achieve our goals and sustain the work is greater when we are thoughtful about our planning, solicit input from staff and stakeholders, and demonstrate our progress.

DVI also uses the DLC to assign and track professional development. Based on performance evaluations and needs assessments, the Social Services Senior Administrator for VR and other supervisors work with staff to provide them with the training needed to perform their job duties as efficiently and effectively as possible. DVI worked with the DSA training office to receive guidance on how to utilize more of the Delaware Learning Center for Division purposes. The Training and Communications Director recently completed the training necessary to expand use of the DLC.

And finally, the VR program acquired a Learning Management System (Yes LMS) to enhance staff development. This system has 65 courses available and offers the option to add personalized programmatic training. We have begun to utilize the system to assign and track training for new and current VR staff but given the role other DVI staff have with assisting individuals to prepare for and obtain employment, having this system will allow for anyone to be cross-trained and understand how they contribute to and best support their consumers throughout the VR process.

B. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS.

DVI supports multiple service units by employing staff who have specialized education, skills and expertise. Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI), Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialists (COMS), Vision Rehabilitation Therapists and VR Counselors all received specialized education and training related to their fields. In addition, three DVI employees participated in a course offered by an accredited university to remain current in the Assistive Technology (AT) industry and ensure the use of best practices in providing AT training and services to individuals who are blind and visually impaired. DVI coordinates in-house training seminars to allow for the staff to cross-train and seek support from one another. DVI values the interagency collaboration and sharing of knowledge so all staff have a more well-rounded understanding of the various needs of individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

In addition to the in-house expertise DVI can offer, access to the Delaware Department of Health & Social Services (DHSS) extensive training curriculum, the Department of Human Resources Statewide Training and Organizational Development programs, and a multitude of outside training opportunities, provide staff with a variety of ways to share and receive training. The agency considers support for membership to the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER), American Foundation for the Blind, National Federation of the Blind, and the National Rehabilitation Association (NRA) as other ways to pursue opportunities for professional growth.

5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

When an applicant for services requests an interpreter, DVI staff reviews and selects from a list of local professional interpreting services with whom the State of Delaware has contractual agreements. The state contracts offers hundreds of languages, sign language interpreters, and written transcription services. The multi-language and sign language services are available in person or virtually and all can be accessed on-demand. All written materials are disseminated in the appropriate media: Braille, large print, tape or electronic file, as well as Spanish for various forms/brochures.

6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

Every unit within DVI provides services to students with visual impairments. This includes VR, Education, ILS, Orientation & Mobility, and the AT Training Center. DVI administration and staff maintain a close working relationship with the DDOE administration as well as administrators and educators within each school district. DVI staff work with every district and charter school to support students with visual impairments to address their education needs, teach the expanded core curriculum, and coordinate participation in transition and Pre-ETS services.

The DVI Education Administrator participates in Special Education Leadership meetings and the VI Collaborative along with DDOE representatives, school districts, families, and other stakeholders. The Education and VR Administrators participate in the monthly transition cadre meetings along with VR Transition Counselors, TVIs, district transition personnel, DOE administrators, other state agencies, families, and community providers.

DVI is part of the Delaware Community of Practice on Transition and is a partner on various transition initiatives, including PIPEline to Career Success for Students with Disabilities and the Annual Transition Conference.

j. STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

1. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE REHABILITATION NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING WITHIN THE STATE, PARTICULARLY THE VR SERVICES NEEDS OF THOSE:

A. WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

During 2021, DVI and the Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council for the Blind, or DVI's SRC, conducted a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) to identify the rehabilitation needs, particularly the VR service needs, of individuals with visual impairments and those with significant disabilities. DVI partnered with the University of Delaware, Center for Disabilities Studies to conduct the CSNA. The instruments were designed to collect primary data from stakeholders including, consumers, community providers, interest groups, CRPs, business partners, DVI employees, and members of the public. Various tools and techniques were used to gather input such as a statewide public survey, face-to-face interviews, telephone surveys and focus groups.

The findings revealed the most frequently mentioned needs among consumers surveyed were employment/placement, access to services (including transportation), and assistive technology. Both consumers and staff identified the need to enhance employment/placement services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, including those who are eligible for supported employment. The survey indicated there are limited resources for providing comprehensive vocational and AT assessments, especially for individuals with multiple disabilities. The CRP findings indicated a lack of referrals and communication with DVI as barriers. In addition, CRPs reported service barriers such as independent living and on-the-job supports as barriers as well as DVI's history of not providing referrals. The business partners who responded indicated barriers were the need for additional supervision, lower production, and the perception that people with visual impairments lacked skills needed to perform essential functions.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES.

In the most recent CSNA report, the majority of people served were minorities. Additionally, DVI served nearly 5% more people served who are Hispanic in 2021 than in 2020. The need for improving information about and access to DVI services, especially for Spanish and other non-English speaking communities were identified. Feedback from the focus groups uncovered some fear in accessing services. More outreach, resources in alternate languages and formats, greater hours of operation, more staff and staff training are needed to properly serve all minorities.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

The CSNA identified individuals with visual impairments who have been unserved or underserved by VR include people with language barriers, those lacking transportation, those in rural areas, people seeking job advancement, and some without adequate support system. It was recommended that DVI perform more outreach, provide additional training, and improve on helping people to establish supports.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

Access, both physical and technological, is an ongoing need for individuals with visual impairments. As a core partner of the Statewide Workforce Development System, DVI provides AT to the Division of Employment and Training who is primarily responsible for operations at

the American Job Center in Delaware. This improves the physical accessibility of the center for individuals with visual impairments to utilize the resources available to the public. However, accessibility of the Delaware Job Link System remains a barrier to compatibility with certain types of software used by individuals with visual impairments. DVI is also aware that many partners are unsure of how to accommodate for a visual impairment, which reinforces the importance of DVI remaining actively engaged in activities with the other core partners.

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

Assistive Technology (AT) remains an important issue to consumers, especially youth with disabilities. Acquiring and being trained on AT was the most frequently cited difficulty in participating in education or training and with obtaining employment. Transition services were identified as needs for students with disabilities, with more communication and coordination between education and VR due to confusion among LEAs, providers, students, and families regarding the difference between the two separate VR agencies in Delaware – DVI and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). DVI and DVR have a memorandum of understanding to assist with the coordination of referrals and to identify how DVI and DVR will collaborate on cases when shared expertise is necessary and in the best interest of the consumer.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

Although the CSNA did not identify gaps for establishment, development, or improvement of community rehabilitation programs (CRP) within the state, it did identify the need to increase community partners. DVI recognizes the need to establish more relationships with CRPs and to provide training and technical assistance to further build their capacity with understanding the needs of individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

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

DVI serves 75 students per year with visual impairments through transition and Pre-ETS during 2021. The VR program transformed an Employment Specialist position into a Pre-ETS coordinator position. Having someone on staff to coordinate Pre-ETS has greatly enhanced the process and increased individualized and group services to students who are active in Pre-ETS activities. The relationship between the VR Counselors, Teachers of the Visually Impaired and Orientation & Mobility Specialists, all members of the IEP team, has improved tremendously over the past two years. This relationship was particularly valuable during the pandemic when all Pre-ETS switched to a virtual format. The teachers and VR staff worked tirelessly to create a six-week innovative summer program during 2020. These cohesive relationships are critical to coordinating services with schools as well, yet some DVR / DVI confusion remains for LEAs, students, and families. However, according to CSNA data, this was an area of weakness. Parents felt there was a lack of coordination between programs. The data also supports a need for greater outreach and explanation as there seemed to be a lack of understanding of services. And finally, parents expressed that they would like to ensure their children are equipped with and trained in

the latest technology, so they are able to properly transition to a career.

k. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES

The number of Delaware citizens that could potentially be eligible for DVI services is estimated in the table below.

Table-Number Eligible (estimated)

Year	2020	2021	2022
Population (18-64 years of age)	582,063	587,883	593,762
Number Visual Difficulties	11,248	11,472	11,689
Percent of DE Population	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%

Methodology: In order to arrive at accurate predictions, DVI reviewed population estimates from the Open Data Network [1] and the U.S. Census Bureau [2] as well as disability data from Cornell University Disability Statistics [3]. According to sources, the Delaware population increased 8.4% since the 2010 census (approximately 1% per year) and is predicted to see similar growth over the next few years. In addition, three previous years of survey information from Cornell University demonstrated that 2% (avg.) of the state’s 18 to 64-year-old population ~~that~~ they have severe visual difficulties. See table below for additional information.

Table-Cornell University Disability Statistics

Year	2017	2016	2015
Population (18-64 years of age)	576,300	574,300	574,500
Number Reported Visual Difficulties (ACS)	10,600	10,300	9100
Percent of DE Population (ACS)	1.9%	2%	1.9%

[1] DE Population Change- Open Data Network

[2]U.S. Census Bureau

[3] Erickson, W., Lee, C., von Schrader, S. (2017). Disability Statistics from the American Community Survey (ACS). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Yang-Tan Institute (YTI). Retrieved from Cornell University Disability Statistics website.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

The number of people who will receive VR services from DVI are estimated in the table below.

Table-Eligible Individuals who will Receive Services

Year	2019 (BL)	2020	2021	2022
Estimated people on registry	3474	3578	3685	3786
Average VR consumers on registry	6.3%	6.3%	6.3%	6.3%
Estimated VR consumers served (Title I)	194	200	206	212
Estimated VR consumers served (Title VI)	24	25	26	27
Estimated total VR consumers served	219	225	232	239
Adjusted 2022*	219	255	227	234

Methodology: In order to produce accurate predictions based on available data, DVI reviewed the DVI Registry for the Blind [1] and VR data. The DVI registry is a database of residents who have met the eligibility criteria of blind, legally blind, or severely visually impaired. DVI serves consumers across the lifespan, so the database includes ages from birth to 106 years of age; however, VR consumers represent 6.3% of the registry. In order to establish baselines (BL) needed to determine growth, DVI reviewed three years of registry data to reveal an average increase of 3%.

DVI researched further to determine why the average registry increase continues to be three times higher than the predicted population growth. According to the Center for Disease Control [2], the number of Americans diagnosed with age-related eye diseases in the past decade has rapidly increased. They expected the upward trend will continue for the next three decades because of the increasing epidemics of chronic diseases and a rapidly aging U.S. population. In addition, age-related eye diseases (i.e., Macular Degeneration, Glaucoma, Diabetic Retinopathy, etc.) often effect working age people (age 40+) and have little early warning signs. The registry annual increase (3%) also exceeds the estimated number of people (2%) who could be eligible for services in the previous section; however, the two figures are close enough to support our conclusion that the rate of disease onset is the primary reason the DVI registry growth.

[1] DE Population Change- Open Data Network

[1] U.S. Census Bureau

[1] Erickson, W., Lee, C., von Schrader, S. (2017). Disability Statistics from the American Community Survey (ACS). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Yang-Tan Institute (YTI). Retrieved from Cornell University Disability Statistics website.

[1] Welfare/Welfare Agencies/DE Commission for the Blind (1953): 31 Del. Code § 2108

[1] Center for Disease Control

Update 2022

The methodology and data for population and disability that DVI reported in the 2020 State Plan is consistent with the most recent available information found for 2022. The biggest change in projections were in the people served for FFY2021.

The Covid-19 pandemic had a major impact on enrollment and vocational rehabilitation outcomes. Early in the pandemic, DVI staff worked closely with consumers to promote program participation, share helpful resources, and ensure they do not feel alone or isolated. Once the economy reopened, staff prepared consumers for resuming their employment or encouraged reemployment activities. However, many consumers collected payments from unemployment insurance (UI). UI payments, combined with relief package income, SSA forgiveness, and fear of leaving home, resulted in less people seeking employment. The pandemic seemed to have an even greater impact on the SE community. As revealed in

the CSNA, employers were reluctant hire people with visual disabilities and were especially hesitant because of their perception that they would have to provide additional supervision and concerns over the lack of skills. Additionally, many people were afraid to leave their homes. In FFY2021, enrollment dropped by 2.2% less than initially projected and 11% less than FFY2020.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

The number of people who will receive Supported Employment (SE) services from DVI are estimated in the table below.

Table #1-Eligible Individuals who will receive SE services

Year	2019 (Baseline)	2020	2021	2022
Estimated VR consumers served (Title I)	194	200	206	229
Estimated VR consumers served (Title VI)	24	25	26	5
Estimated total VR consumers to receive services	219	225	232	239
Update 2022				234

Methodology: In order to produce accurate predictions, DVI reviewed three years of past VR data to determine the annual average SE consumer rate. DVI estimates that 11% of the total served each year will receive SE.

Update 2022

The pandemic seemed to have an even greater impact on the SE community. Many consumers were scared to leave their homes and did not want to seek employment. Also, as revealed in the CSNA, employers were reluctant hire people with visual disabilities and were especially hesitant because of their perception that they would have to provide additional supervision and concerns over the lack of skills. Additionally, many people were afraid to leave their homes.

The newest concern is centered around the nationwide labor market shortage. The providers are having a difficult time maintaining job coaches and placement professionals. The impact is being felt by DVI with the biggest challenge being available job coaches and significant placement delays. The DVI ESS team are working to fill the gap, but progress has been slowed because of other duties that need to be fulfilled. DVI continues to work with our vendors to work through these challenges.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION.

DVI is not operating under an order of selection.

3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

DVI is not operating under an order of selection and all eligible individuals are receiving services. DVI anticipates having sufficient resources to continue serving all eligible individual who apply for VR services.

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.

DVI is not under an order of selection. The table below represents the average estimated costs for services.

Table-Cost of Services

Year	2020	2021	2022
Estimated VR cost per person	\$10,130	\$10,121	\$10,122
Estimated SE cost per person	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500
Total Estimated Cost	\$2,213,596	\$2,280,004	\$2,355,438

I. STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

1. IDENTIFY IF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES WERE JOINTLY DEVELOPED AND AGREED TO BY THE STATE VR AGENCY AND THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, IF THE STATE HAS A COUNCIL, AND JOINTLY AGREED TO ANY REVISIONS

The SRC and the Delaware Division for the Visually Impaired jointly developed and agreed to the goals and priorities of Delaware Blind State VR Program.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Goal 1: Provide quality employment outcomes for individuals with visual impairments

1.1 Performance Objective and Measure: Increase employment outcomes of total VR consumers, Supported Employment and transition students exiting high school by a minimum of 5% over previous year.

1.2 Performance Objective and Measure: Maintain an employment rate of 90% at second quarter and 80% at fourth quarter following exit from the VR program.

1.3 Performance Objective and Measure: Achieve median earnings of no less than \$16.00 per hour second quarter following exit from VR program.

Goal 2: Provide quality Pre-employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with visual impairments

2.1 Performance Objective and Measure: Maintain current partnerships with Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP) providers offering Pre-ETS services.

2.2 Performance Objective and Measure: Increase the number of students receiving Pre-ETS services by 10% over previous year.

2.3 Performance Objective and Measure: Through internal and external service provision, ensure all transition students participate in at least one internship, paid/unpaid work experience and/or apprenticeship prior to exit from secondary education.

Goal 3: Enhance employer and community partnerships that lead to competitive, integrated employment for individuals with visual impairments

3.1 Performance Objective and Measure: In collaboration with DVI's SRC and other community partners, develop and track formal/informal opportunities (i.e. individual and group employer outreach activities, collaboration activities with other disability groups, conferences, workshops, etc.) to engage and educate employers specifically around the employment of individuals with visual impairments.

3.2 Performance Objective and Measure: Maintain current partnerships with Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP) related to training, supported employment and/or placement services.

3.3 Performance Objective and Measure: Support industry-specific training programs in high demand occupations based on Delaware labor market information, demonstrated by consumers earning industry recognized credentials aligned with acquired training and employment.

3.4 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a business database that tracks engagement and demonstrates authentic business partnerships that result in competitive, integrated employment opportunities for individuals with visual impairments.

Goal 4: Increase awareness and improve access to DVI services

4.1 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop system to track staff outreach events to ensure DVI participation.

4.2 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a plan for increasing outreach to underserved communities (i.e., Latino, Amish and Veterans) as well the medical community.

4.3 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a series of videos to post on DVI's website and social media accounts that showcase consumer stories, awareness of blindness and visual impairments and services offered by DVI.

4.4 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a plan to participate in community events hosted by state legislators to increase awareness and promote services.

Goal 5: Provide quality entrepreneurial opportunities in the Business Enterprise Program

5.1 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a process and procedure to document the consumers have been informed of opportunities for participation in the BEP program.

5.2 Performance Objective and Measure: Develop a Pre-ETS activity to expose students with visual impairments to work opportunities through the BEP program.

5.3 Performance Objective and Measure: Engage the Blind Vendors Committee and BEP Operators in the VR process for consumers who express an interest in the program (i.e., develop job shadow, internship, and peer mentoring opportunities).

3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

DVI conducted a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment 2021. The goals and priorities are based on the results from the most recent assessment and incorporated throughout this plan.

B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

The common measures in WIOA, Section 116 are represented throughout the DVI goals and priorities outlined above. The measures are written with the goals and include a focus on quality employment outcomes, employer engagement, wages, credential attainment and employment retention.

C. OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON THE OPERATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VR PROGRAM, INCLUDING ANY REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MONITORING ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED UNDER SECTION 107.

Since the 2020 plan was written, DVI was monitored by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). The RSA monitoring resulted in SRC, fiscal, policy, and data findings. As a result, DVI is working on a four-part plan of correction to improve the relationship with the SRC, correct multiple years of incorrect fiscal reporting, upgrade policies, procedures, and internal controls, and correct data collection issues. Since the corrective action plan was approved in February 2021, DVI continues to work closely with RSA, the DSA, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management (VRTAC-QM) to correct the issues. DVI reports to and meets with RSA quarterly to review progress.

m. ORDER OF SELECTION

1. WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

A. THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES

The Division for the Visually Impaired anticipates having sufficient resources and funding streams to serve all eligible individuals making application for VR services which will preclude DVI from implementing an order of selection wait list.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

The designated state unit does not foresee implementing an order of selection.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS

The designated state unit does not foresee implementing an order of selection.

D. TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER; AND

The agency is not operating under an order of selection.

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The agency is not operating under 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

N/A

n. GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS

1. SPECIFY THE STATE'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The Delaware Division for the Visually Impaired will provide quality supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities. In addition, DVI intends to increase the number of people served to ensure eligible people with visual impairments and those facing equitable disparities have a greater opportunity to achieve successful employment outcomes. In addition, DVI intends to identify those in need of reemployment due to the pandemic and address the needs of people experiencing social inequities. The following plan outlines the DVI strategy for distribution of Title VI funds and continual improvement.

DVI will successfully complete all tasks as outlined in the approved Corrective Action Plan to ensure fiscal policies, procedures and practices are fully aligned with Title VI regulations and fiscal controls are implemented.

DVI will ensure supported employment costs are allocated to the proper source of funds including:

- Fifty percent reserve of Title VI allotment for the provision of supported employment services, including extended services, for youth with the most significant disabilities.
- No less than a 10% of non-Federal expenditures are used as match toward the 50% allotment reserved for supported employment services, including extended services, for youth with the most significant disabilities; match must be met by September 30 of the FFY of appropriation in order to fully expend or carryover any unobligated portion of the reserved funds.
- Administrative costs for Title VI are not to exceed 2.5%.

DVI will provide staff with continual training, oversight and guidance regarding Title VI fiscal regulations in relation to purchased services and allowable costs. Ongoing training will include:

Supported Employment Title VI funds will be used for the provision of supported employment only after the client has a job. Allowable costs include:

- **Ongoing Support Services** are needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, in supported employment. Ongoing support services begin at the time of job placement and last until the transition to extended services. May include activities such as an assessment of employment stability and the provision or coordination of specific services at or away from the worksite that are needed to maintain stability. Other examples include the provision of skilled job trainers for the individual at the worksite, social skills training, follow-up services, facilitation of natural supports at the worksite. Title I funds may also be used for ongoing supports.
- **VR Extended Services** are only available to youth with the most significant disabilities. Youth may receive extended services for up to four years or until they reach the age of 25. Extended services are ongoing services needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, in supported employment and can be provided by a State agency, a private nonprofit organization, employer, or any other appropriate resources.
- **Post-Employment Services** are available if services are required to maintain or regain employment or advance in employment.
- (Basic VR) Title I funds are used for all services that are not allowable Title VI funds but necessary for supported employment eligible consumers to achieve their employment outcomes. Examples include:
 - job placement
 - situational assessments
 - skills training
 - interview clothing
 - assistive technology

2. DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED, WITH FUNDS RESERVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 603(D), FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING:

A. THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 4 YEARS; AND

The Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI) works in collaboration with the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services to leverage funds for extended supports for youth with visual impairments and intellectual/developmental disabilities (ID/DD) who receive supported employment services. DVI also works with the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health in order to connect youth with mental health disabilities to necessary services and extended supports for employment. When a youth is not eligible for extended services from some other entity, DVI will support extended services for a period not to exceed four years, until the youth reach age 25, in order to develop natural supports and/or explore other sources of extended services.

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.

As required by section 603(d), DVI will reserve 50% of its supported employment allocation on youth with the most significant disabilities. DVI will utilize the long-standing collaborative relationship with the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, Local Education Agencies, students, families, employers, and Community Rehabilitation Providers to begin the supported employment process early and ensure youth with disabilities are connected to employment services prior to exiting high school. This provides opportunities for sharing information, exposing youth to careers, and helping them learn about and apply for community services that were historically offered only once a youth turned 18.

o. STATE'S STRATEGIES

1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Since the 2020 plan was written, DVI was monitored by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). The RSA monitoring resulted in SRC, fiscal, policy, and data findings. As a result, DVI is working on a four-part plan of correction to improve the relationship with the SRC, correct multiple years of incorrect fiscal reporting, upgrade policies, procedures, and internal controls, and correct data collection issues. Since the corrective action plan was approved in February 2021, DVI continues to work closely with RSA, the DSA, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management (VRTAC-QM) to correct the issues. DVI reports to and meets with RSA quarterly to review progress.

During the past year, DVI completed strategic planning and are in the third quarter of goal implementation. Through the planning process, we aligned our goals with DHSS and developed actions to address the social detriments of health and inequalities of people with visual impairments. Additionally, several members of leadership are currently attending a workshop to learn how to evaluate programs using logic models and outcomes management techniques. These valuable tools will help DVI to measure program effectiveness, identify operational enhancements, and further improve data collection practices. Properly completing the corrective action plan and adopting a strategic management model will have a positive, long-term impact on program quality, outcomes, and sustainability.

In addition to corrective actions noted above, DVI will continue to leverage opportunities to engage with stakeholders. This includes educational programs, community organizations, the medical community, several councils, service providers, employers, other state agencies, families and consumers. DVI will continue to be an active partner with the other WIOA core partners which provides many regular opportunities for information sharing, planning and an overall effort to streamline services. During the monthly partner meetings, DVI shares information about vocational rehabilitation and learn what is available from other partners. DVI will also continue to participate in the Early Start to Supported Employment initiative, transition Community of Practice, and DE-General VR. Listening and being responsive to the needs of the community, engaging with multiple partners, and sharing information will assist DVI with improving services and helping the community better understand vision services and the abilities and needs of the individuals we serve. Engaging stakeholders and community partners will also assist DVI with the goals of expanding Pre-employment Transition Services and increasing quality employment outcomes. Additional Pre-ETS programs for transition students have been developed, and the process of refining and expanding the business focused opportunities will continue.

DVI is committed to using the identified strategies to improve services and help the visually impaired community, especially those facing social inequities and reemployment needs, with their career needs.

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 (AT) services and devices are integral to the success of individuals with visual impairments. As such, assessment, demonstration, and training related to the needs of individuals with visual impairments is provided to nearly all individuals served by the VR Unit at DVI. To facilitate informed choice, the DVI AT Unit offers a variety of services and rehabilitation technology devices so consumers can use and identify devices that maximize their capacity to engage in vocational training, educational training, and/or a work environment. Assessment and training are provided by DVI Technology Trainers at each stage of the rehabilitation process to the extent that training or technical assistance is necessary for an individual with a disability to achieve an employment outcome. Depending on the individual's needs, they are given the choice of coming into one of two locations, have technology brought to their preferred location or, in some cases, virtual training is available. These options are provided in order to decrease scheduling and transportation barriers that can impact the timeliness of services. DVI also collaborates with other AT resources available in the community in order to connect VR Consumers to a variety of rehabilitation technology options that may be needed due to a disability beyond a visual impairment.

DVI has adopted the SETT (Student, Environment, Tasks, and Tools) framework as a validated process for assessing client's assistive technology needs. This model emphasizes the consumer/student, Environment, Tasks, and Tools as equally valid components in determining the AT needs of an individual with a visual impairment. While this was originally developed for transition-aged youth, the agency has broadened its applicability to all consumers served by the agency in order to consistently and effectively meet their AT needs. In addition, three DVI employees participated in a course offered by an accredited university to remain current in the Assistive Technology (AT) industry and ensure the use of best practices in providing AT training and services to individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

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

Typically, DVI performs outreach in a variety of ways. Under normal circumstances, DVI hosts several events and workshops each year that are open to the public. In addition, the agency frequently exhibits at community events and health fairs; many of which are designed to attract minorities, unserved and underserved such as the Delaware Hispanic Festival, the Diabetes Expo and the 55Plus Resource Fair. DVI will continue to partner with community organizations and other DHSS Divisions for virtual and face-to-face outreach events. Table events in rural and inner-city regions of the state provide greater exposure to minorities and non-English speaking people with visual impairments.

During the pandemic, virtual platforms became the new normal for providing services (as appropriate), and for outreach. DVI hosted or co-hosted several virtual workshops and events. Since virtual platforms eliminated the barriers associated with public transportation, DVI workshop and event attendance increased by 67%.

DVI uses social media to connect with people who may need services and more people turned to these networks to connect with people outside of their germ circles. In 2021 the DVI Facebook page increased followers by 17%. More important is the number of vision related inquiries directly through the social networking site also grew by 22% during the same time period. Ultimately, the DVI Facebook page was created to reach underserved populations and the public at large. The uptick in followers, increase in service-related inquiries, and innovative use of the site features prove this will continue to develop into a valuable outreach tool.

Vision-related healthcare professionals are often the number one referral resource for people with severe vision loss. DVI will continue to be a member of the Delaware Optometric Association (DOA) and exhibit at their annual conference. This affords the opportunity to speak with approximately fifty medical professionals in one location. In addition, the DOA forwards a list of all conference attendees and their contact information. The DOA conference was virtual during 2020 and 2021 but will be face to face in 2022. DVI staff are members of several large community resource sharing organizations. Each group offers organized time to learn about services and all are very well-attended. And each group pivoted to Collectively the groups have nearly 800 members throughout the state. Meetings average anywhere from 15-40% membership attendance and group facilitators will distribute all information such as events and newsletters. The group environments have afforded DVI the opportunity to educate nearly 300 potential referral sources about DVI services annually.

DVI maintains a registry of over 3,300 people who meet the division eligibility requirements. The agency regularly communicates with those who wish to be contacted. The quickest and most effective way to reach the registry is by automated call. DVI uses a text to voice system to inform consumers about upcoming events, public announcements, program related information, and other helpful resources. Information is routinely sent in various formats, according to consumers' desired media preferences. This includes electronic, automated phone calls, Braille and the large print. DVI utilizes an electronic marketing system, to create accessible newsletters, announcements, invitations and other relevant information.

4. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES)

Although DVI has historically provided services to transition students, it was more recently that the agency developed a transition program with dedicated staff to provide services to students in secondary education. DVI experimented with designated transition counselors but ultimately decided it was impractical due to the limited number of people served. In order to improve and expand VR services to students, DVI created a position that is dedicated to providing instruction, training and technical assistance to students, families and LEAs regarding AT needs of students with visual impairments. This position assists students in secondary education while also supporting the transition to post-secondary life by serving as the liaison between education and VR services, providing assessment and recommendations and assisting in the identification of required AT for supporting the student's post-secondary goals related to employment. In addition, DVI developed a Pre-ETS coordinator position. The coordinator develops robust programming by enhancing activities provided by internal staff and increasing the opportunities available through contracted service providers, including internships, paid/unpaid work experience and apprenticeships. Although both positions are still fairly new, the coordination has become much more seamless. DVI will continue to perfect the model to enhance and improve services.

To improve and expand VR services to students with visual impairments, DVI will continue to participate in statewide transition activities that provide opportunities to work with transition teams from LEAs and other transition stakeholders in order to share information and jointly plan the transition of students from school to post-secondary life. Some of these activities include Monthly Transition Cadre meetings, the Annual Transition Conference, and the *PIPEline to Career Success for Students with Disabilities* initiative.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE

Delaware is a small state with a close-knit community of private nonprofit VR service providers who generally serve two designated state agencies (Blind & General). DVI understood the importance of offering choice and using providers who specialize in placement services, so we began an initiative to use more providers and build new relationships. DVI released Requests for Proposals (RFP) in 2020 and 2021 which resulted in contracts with two CRPs who offer placement and Pre-ETS services. In addition, DVI routinely solicits cooperative agreements with providers that specialize or seek to specialize in services designed for people who are blind. DVI will continue to seek partnerships with organizations located outside of Delaware (with approval from the DE Office of Management and Budget) to secure services specific to visual impairments.

DVI staff often reported CRPs staff lacked knowledge and experience with vision loss and assistive technology to properly support DVI consumers with placement, supported employment, training programs or other related services. As a result, DVI rarely referred consumers to CRPs often leading to contracts not being renewed or contracts being underutilized. DVI continues to be committed to eliminating barriers to training and employment and has reestablished relationships with CRPs. DVI will continue to increase use of CRPs to provide vocational rehabilitation services to consumers.

DVI will continue to offer service providers on-site training to introduce techniques and strategies to support people who are blind. Vendors are offered training sessions related to blind sensitivity, blind etiquette, assistive technology, and more. Training includes workshops related to eye conditions, sighted guide, and accommodations. This training will be done in collaboration with the CRPs in order to address their needs and preference to better prepare them to support individuals with visual impairments. In addition, DVI-VR professionals will continue to assist vocational training providers by evaluating common barriers faced by blind consumers and offering solutions. Examples of recommendations include updated assistive technology (software, screen readers, etc.) as well as low tech tools (bump dots, large-face devices, etc.).

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

Performance accountability data collection has been a huge challenge for DVI and was cited as an area needing correction during the 2020 RSA monitoring process. DVI is currently under a plan of correction that includes strategies to improve data collection and reporting. These strategies include updated policies and procedures and staff training.

Although DVI showed significant improvement to reporting since the 2020 state plan, there are still significant gaps in data reported and manually tracked data. The biggest issue seems to be with properly recording measurable skills gain (MSG). To improve the performance of DVI's VR program with respect to the accountability measures under Section 116 of WIOA, DVI has been and will continue to work with the Information Resource Management Team assigned to DVI in order to update the case management system and ensure compliance with reporting requirements. In addition, DVI will update the VR casework manual and policies to reflect updates and ensure staff are properly trained.

DVI is in the process of reestablished MOUs with the Division of Employment and Training and the Division of Unemployment Insurance in order to share information related to the common performance accountability measures under Title I, section 116 of WIOA.

DVI will continue working with Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management (VRTAC-QM) and the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTAC) for technical assistance in areas related to Pre-ETS and the reserve, business engagement, Integrated Resource Teams, and performance measures. DVI will continue to review data dashboards to monitor progress, identify errors and make data-driven decisions. In addition, DVI will successfully complete the RSA plan of correction which includes fiscal reports, program policies and procedures, and data integrity. DVI will continue to work with the VRTAC-QM to review and accept recommendations regarding policies and procedures to ensure alignment with program requirements and counselor practices and to develop training for new and existing staff, resulting in improved service provision that leads to measurable skills gains, credential attainment and higher quality employment outcomes.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

DVI is actively engaged in the WIOA Leadership meetings, has representation on the work groups and assists with the planning of the Annual Statewide Convening, which is an effort to bring all partners, including leaders and direct service staff, together to share information and be more familiar with the collaborative efforts taking place across the state. Due to the unique and specialist nature of our work, the fact that DVI is a relatively small agency in comparison to most other partners, and because DVI is not housed within the Department of Labor where the American Job Center is located, we recognize the importance of staying engaged as a partner. DVI benefits by ensuring individuals with visual impairments are considered when developing programs and services, but also to serve as a liaison to partners who may not have the experience or knowledge for how to work effectively with an individual.

DVI has taken steps to develop and offer sensitivity and awareness trainings for private non-profit VR service providers with whom we hold contracts, but this is extended to any community or state partner. The internal units at DVI, including VR, Independent Living Services, AT Center, Education Services and Orientation and Mobility collaborate to provide comprehensive activities designed to teach techniques and strategies that promote skill development. These trainings demonstrate the capability of persons with severe vision loss, educate on various eye diseases, and teach skills to safely and effectively assist someone with a visual impairment.

DVI has also entered into an agreement with DVR to ensure consumers are referred to the appropriate agency and receive a “warm handoff” if they are found not eligible due to their visual acuity. In addition, the agreement addresses cases when shared expertise may be necessary due to multiple disabilities and provides the opportunity for DVI and DVR to coordinate services in order to better service the individual.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

The findings of the 2021 CSNA revealed the most frequently mentioned needs among consumers surveyed were employment/placement, access to services, transportation, and assistive technology. Both consumers and staff identified the need to enhance employment/placement services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, including those who are eligible for supported employment. The survey indicated there are limited resources for providing comprehensive vocational and AT assessments, especially for individuals with multiple disabilities. The CRP findings indicated a lack of referrals and

communication with DVI as barriers. In addition, CRPs reported service barriers such as independent living and on-the-job supports as barriers as well as DVI's history of not providing referrals. The business partners who responded indicated barriers were the need for additional supervision, lower production, and the perception that people with visual impairments lacked skills needed to perform essential functions. The CSNA identified individuals with visual impairments who have been unserved or underserved by VR include people with language barriers, those lacking transportation, those in rural areas, people seeking job advancement, and some without adequate support system. It was recommended that DVI perform more outreach, provide additional training, and improve on helping people to establish supports.

The strategies as described in sections 0.1 – 0.7 are designed to achieve goals while addressing the gaps identified in the CSNA. DVI intends to strengthen stakeholder and community partner relationships, while working with WIOA partners, to expand and improve services to unmet populations. DVI is dedicated to enhancing outreach to assist unserved populations with visual impairments with their VR needs. The strategies outline several means by which DVI performs outreach and ways in which these methods are measured.

In order to address communication issues with transition students, DVI and DVR will continue to coordinate referrals and identify consumers that will benefit from shared expertise and resources from both agencies, as defined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU also includes a clause to ensure consumers are referred to the appropriate agency if they are found not eligible due to their visual acuity.

Assistive Technology (AT) remains an important issue to consumers, especially youth with disabilities. Acquiring and being trained on AT was the most frequently cited difficulty in participating in education or training and with obtaining employment. The strategies include ways to enhance current services and seek additional resources to connect all DVI consumers to a variety of rehabilitation technology options. In addition, DVI enhanced all services, including AT, for youth with visual impairments by developing two new positions. One position is dedicated to the assistive technology (AT) needs of transition students. This position provides AT instruction, training and technical assistance to students, families and LEAs. The second position assists students in secondary education while also supporting the transition to post-secondary life by serving as the liaison between education and VR Pre-ETS services, providing assessment and recommendations and assisting in the identification of required AT for supporting the student's post-secondary goals related to employment.

DVI has not historically relied on or partnered with community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) to provide services to consumers. DVI staff often report CRP staff lack the knowledge and experience with vision loss and assistive technology to properly support DVI consumers with placement, supported employment, training programs or other related services. The strategies include a commitment to eliminating barriers to training and employment by reestablishing relationships with CRPs.

DVI recognizes the importance of staying engaged with WIOA partners so that the needs of people with visual impairments are efficiently addressed. The strategies outline the ways in which DVI will maintain relationships with WIOA partners and ensuring people with visual impairments are considered when developing programs and services.

DVI realizes the importance of improving performance accountability measures and includes several strategies in the plan to assure continual improvement in the areas of performance and data collection. DVI will reestablish MOUs with the Division of Employment and Training and the Division of Unemployment Insurance in order to share information related to the common performance accountability measures under Title I, section 116 of WIOA. In addition, DVI will continue to work with the state Information Resource Management team to update the case management system and ensure compliance with reporting requirements. And finally, DVI will continue to work with the technical

assistance centers to receive technical assistance in areas related to Pre-ETS and the reserve, business engagement, Integrated Resource Teams, policies and procedures, and performance measures.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

DVI and the Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council (DVI's SRC) will jointly develop a work plan that identifies key priorities and activities to be carried out in the upcoming year. DVI will identify funding to support the council's efforts consistent with the agreed upon work plan and will collaborate with the council to assist in the achievement of the priorities. Innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, including transition services for students and youth with disabilities and pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities, consistent with the findings of the comprehensive statewide assessment.

C. OVERCOME IDENTIFIED BARRIERS RELATING TO EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM AND THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM.

During the past year, DVI completed strategic planning and are in the third quarter of goal implementation. Through the planning process, we aligned our goals with DHSS and developed actions to address the social detriments of health and inequalities of people with visual impairments. Social inequities in the labor market have plagued the Black and Hispanic population for years and people of color with visual impairments have even more difficulties competing for jobs. The pandemic, subsequent economic recession, and current labor shortages have forced businesses to do less with more and this includes employees. This makes employment and reemployment efforts extremely challenging when people are faced with everyday barriers such as lack of transportation, education attainment, or employment experience. The strategies described in o.1 – o.8 will be used to improve employment efforts for people accessing services from DVI.

DVI expanded office locations from two to four sites in order to provide more access throughout the state. Cooperating with another state agency to share their vacant space, DVI was also able to decrease facility charges allowing the agency to reserve more funding for services to consumers. In conjunction with the Department of Health and Social Services, the Department of Transportation and the Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities (DSAAPS), DVI is assessing all four locations to identify issues related to transportation, safe community travel and accessibility. All agencies are committed to developing a plan to improve access of state locations, especially those serving individuals with disabilities. In the meantime, DVI continues to work individually with consumers to assist with the transition to the new locations and to address any barriers that are identified.

DVI continues to work with WIOA core partners, state agencies and other stakeholders to provide technical assistance, training, and recommendations to support the employment of individuals with severe vision loss and to improve accessibility to services.

p. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

1. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE VR PROGRAM GOALS

**DESCRIBED IN THE APPROVED VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR
COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM YEAR
WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:**

**A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE
GOALS**

2020 Goals and Priorities

Achieved pending appointment of applicant filling last vacant seat. Application was submitted to the Office of Boards and Commissions in January 2022.

I. Constitute a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) in compliance with regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 361.17

1. Identify members whose appointments are not in compliance.
2. Consult with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services, State Attorney General, Office of Boards and Commissions and the Office of the Governor to discuss members who were:
 3. Actively serving on the SRC when not appointed.
 4. Operating out of compliance with federal term limitations.
 5. Work with the SRC chair to request members submit appointment documentation so DVI can cross-reference to validate their service to the SRC.
 6. Request resignation or request Governor's office remove SRC members who are out of compliance with term limits
1. Determine the number of vacancies and positions in need of new candidates.
2. Work with remaining and past SRC members to assist with recruiting suggestions.
3. Work with national partners and other state blind agencies to identify creative and effective recruitment strategies.
4. Conduct outreach to the DVI blind registry, other state agencies, business community and other stakeholders (Community Rehabilitation Providers, WIOA partners, SILC, Business Partners, Client Registry) to identify individuals who meet the requirements and who are interested in acting in an advisory role to DVI's VR program.
5. Submit list of membership recommendations: Coordinate with the Office of Boards and Commissions regarding federal requirements in 34 C.F.R. § 361.17 and assure members are appointed in a timely manner and on a staggered basis.
6. Install new SRC members.
 1. Conduct member orientation.
 2. Review information in the orientation and training manual.

C. Develop comprehensive policy and procedures for coordination with SRC in accordance with federal regulations in 34 C.F.R. § 361.17(h) by April 1, 2021.

1. Policy to include: DVI and SRC partnership, SRC composition, recruitment, member orientation & training, member tracking, SRC activities, reporting, and resources.
2. Review policy with SRC and obtain input.
3. Post policy for public comment.

D. Ensure SRC members and DVI staff are properly trained on roles and responsibilities as described in) by September 30, 2021.

1. Develop an SRC member orientation and training manual.
 1. Create an orientation and training checklist to ensure consistency among members.
 2. Coordinate with NCSRC and George Washington University.

3. Coordinate with the Delaware Deputy Attorney General's office.
4. Provide all members with the *State Rehabilitation Council Vocational Rehabilitation Partnership – Under WIOA* publication (most recent edition).
5. Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) training.
6. Work with the SRC to develop a plan for ongoing training to ensure all members participate according to federal regulations in 34 C.F.R. § 361.17(h) as an entire entity.
7. Create a system to track new member orientation and ongoing training events.
8. Review and revise the DVI Training policy to include training developed for the SRC for VR employees and new hires.

E. Develop a record-keeping and monitoring system to track SRC appointments and ensure compliance with federal regulations in 34 C.F.R. § 361.17 by December 30, 2020.

1. Identify a DVI point of contact to work with the SRC chair and office of boards and commissions:
 1. Create a system to track appointments, expirations and SRC participation.
 2. Coordinate appointments to the SRC.
 3. Perform semi-annual reviews of SRC participation.
 4. Request semi-annual appointment lists to compare against appointment letters.

Achieved

II. Conduct the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) with the SRC as described in 34 C.F.R. § 361.

1. Work with the SRC to develop a plan for CSNA design and implementation by February 15, 2021.
2. Explore conducting the CSNA with the Delaware general VR (DVR) and the general SRC.
 1. Consider contracting with the University of Delaware Center for Disabilities Studies to conduct the CSNA.
 2. Utilize the [*Developing a Model Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment With Corresponding Training Materials For State VR Agency Staff and SRC Members: The VR Needs Assessment Guide*](#) (the Guide).
3. Develop a timeline of CSNA for each of the following steps from the Guide.
 1. Defining and Establishing CSNA Goals with the SRC.
 1. Review existing data and most recent CSNA.
 2. Define a list of goals utilizing examples of data sources from the Guide.
 2. Develop CSNA Plan for information and dissemination
 1. Create a workplan, timeline and resource estimate.
 2. Design a plan specifically for dissemination
 3. Gathering the Information
 1. Obtain secondary data
 2. Survey VR counselors
 3. Survey VR consumers
 4. Focus groups
 5. Key informant interviews
 6. Community hearings
4. Develop an implementation team with the SRC.
 1. Points of contact from all involved entities
 2. Develop expectations for the implementation team including communication, coordination and responsibilities.

Achieved by December 2021

III. Review findings derived from the CSNA with the SRC by September 15, 2021.

1. Analyze results and develop findings
 1. Review and analyze survey data, relevant literature and state reports, focus groups, hearings, stakeholder comments, etc.
2. Develop conclusions and action strategies.
 1. Review results
 2. Develop recommended goals and priorities.

Achieved

IV. Conduct sessions with the SRC to jointly develop goals and priorities by December 1, 2021.

1. Work with the SRC to utilize CSNA recommendations to create comprehensive state plan, goals, priorities and strategies.
2. Publish plan for public comment.
3. Disseminate the CSNA findings to all DVI stakeholders.
4. to include training developed for the SRC for VR employees and new hires.

Achieved

V. Submit modified description 1 of the DVI VR portion of the Delaware WIOA State Plan March 1, 2022.

1. Revise section 1.1 to describe that the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by DVI and the SRC.
2. Update section 1.2 with goals and priorities derived from the CSNA in conjunction with the SRC.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

There were some challenges while working on the goals related to the reconstituting the SRC. For example:

- The last application for the Council was sent to the Office of Boards and Commissions in January 2022. Once the Governor reviews and appoints, the Council will be full. This position will be a parent of a person in the DVI Supported Employment program.
- It was very challenging to ensure the blind to sighted ratio was properly maintained by while filling Council seats.
- Although the Council was scheduled to meet monthly in 2021, attendance was poor and there were several months with no quorum until new members were appointed.

Although DVI achieved the goals and priorities as identified in the 2020 state plan, the agency faced significant challenges related to the pandemic. Career services for people with visual impairments was significantly impacted. Many people were afraid to leave their homes and businesses were struggling to recover from the economic recession which limited opportunities for employment. Currently, VR providers are facing significant challenges with recruiting and retaining professional staff to provide community-based assessments, job development, and job coaching.

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

DVI utilized the same goals for Supported Employment as listed above (p.1).

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Although DVI achieved the goals and priorities as identified in the 2020 state plan (listed in p.1), the agency faced significant challenges related to the pandemic. Supported Employment services for people with visual impairments was significantly impacted. Many people were afraid to leave their homes and didn't want to pursue employment. In addition, businesses were struggling to recover from the economic recession which limited opportunities for employment, community-based assessments, and work-based learning opportunities especially for people with the most significant disabilities. Currently, VR providers are facing significant challenges with recruiting and retaining professional staff to provide community-based assessments, job development, and job coaching.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

DVI continues to move forward towards the ability to report on the measures in section 116 of WIOA. Our casework management system (VICR) has limitation but has been updated to include WIOA measures so we can gather the required data. As per the RSA Corrective Action Plan, DVI developed policies and procedures related to WIOA performance measures and is in the process of properly training staff.

DVI is reestablishing a relationship with the Division of Unemployment Insurance for the purpose of obtaining employment data for the second and fourth quarters. In addition, DVI began using SWIS system to gather employment information for people employed outside the state. In order to ensure reliable and complete data is being tracked and reported, DVI is meeting with the Information Resource Management team monthly to review VICR updates and prioritize the work. These meetings will continue as reporting requirements change and as the system is tested for errors. Additionally, as DVI transitions to new agency and VR leadership, tracking mechanisms are being put in place and staff training is being developed. This will ensure staff understand the importance of accurate and consistent data collection, they will learn the process for tracking and reporting data manually as well as in VICR once updates are complete, and information will be available for all staff to review to identify possible errors and to decrease the potential for information being lost in the event of staff turnover.

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED

DVI increased contracts with community rehabilitation programs to include two additional supported employment providers, statewide pre-ETS providers and supports for college-bound high school students with cognitive disabilities. DVI contracted industry leader, Tilson & Diaz Solutions, Inc. to provide staff

training in customized employment and business engagement and partnered with the Department of Education, the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, National Alliance on Partnership in Equity and local school districts to pilot a program designed to ensure the success of ALL students with disabilities in high school career and technical education (CTE) pathways. DVI created innovative programming by partnering with vendors who specialize in informed choice, service navigation, and Pre-ETS group services.

q. QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

1. THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES

DVI will continue to provide Supported Employment services to individuals with visual impairments and co-occurring disabilities including, developmental disabilities, traumatic brain injury, physical impairments and disabilities due to mental health, that make long-term supports necessary for the individual's success in maintaining integrated and competitive employment.

DVI will evaluate reemployment needs and workforce inequities. We will develop creative ways to work with CRPs as they overcome workforce challenges.

DVI will continue to assure that all opportunities meet the requirements of competitive integrated employment, earn minimum wage or higher, and have access to the same workplace benefits available to all employees.

DVI will continue to focus on the provision of quality services by assessing the level of employment integration and competitiveness. DVI will continue to assess workplace access and accessibility meets the needs of people with visual impairments. Additionally, all contracted vendors shall maintain a program of professional development for those employees within its organization who provide job placement services by participating in training opportunities for on-site trainers, employment specialists and SE managers.

Supported employment services begin at job placement; however, vocational rehabilitation funds can be used to provide necessary VR services prior to job placement. The scope and extent of contracted supported employment services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities shall include:

1. Assessment services to assist consumers to select an appropriate vocational goal consistent with their unique strengths, resources, interests, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities and informed choice.
2. Job development and job placement in Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) based on the assessment results.
3. Comprehensive onsite or offsite job coaching to enable the individual to become stabilized in their employment.
4. Upon stabilization, DVI will coordinate extended services with the identified agency/entity/resource. After successful transition to extended services, DVI will continue to facilitate supports and services to address any issues that may potentially impact job retention until 90 days after the successful transition to extended services.
5. VR may provide extended services as necessary to employed youth or up to 48 months or until they reach the age of 25 if external extended resources are not available.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES

Supported employment is a collaborative process that centers around the consumer. Community Rehabilitation Providers work in collaboration with the agency VR team throughout the process. DVI will provide ongoing services until the person reaches stabilization on the job and transitions to external sources of extended supports for a period that may last 24 months. Exceptions to the 24-month time limit may be made if documented circumstances indicate services will be necessary to retain employment. The transition to extended services begins when the VR counselor has sufficient information from the consumer, employer and IPE team to determine that the consumer has reached stabilization.

DVI will continue to work in collaboration with the Division of Developmental Disability Services to leverage funds for extended services for consumers with intellectual/developmental disabilities who receive supported employment services. We will also continue to work with the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health in order to connect supported employment consumers to necessary services and long-term employment support. These agencies work with the individuals and their social support systems to develop a plan for ongoing supports, which can be used for a variety of purposes, one of which are long term employment supports. In addition to coordinating with public entities, DVI will continue to work with employers and other natural supports to identify resources for long-term support services. When a youth is not eligible for extended services from some other entity, DVI will support extended services for a period not to exceed four years in order to develop natural supports and/or explore other sources of extended services. DVI will continue to work with employers and other natural supports to identify resources for long-term support services.

Post-employment services are available if services are required to maintain or regain employment or advance in employment.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (BLIND) CERTIFICATIONS

1. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE,) IS AUTHORIZED TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (REHABILITATION ACT), AS AMENDED BY WIOA [14], AND ITS SUPPLEMENT UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT [15]; ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE

Delaware Department of Health and Social Services

2. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES, THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY) [16] AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN [17], THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS [18], POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER SECTION 111 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

Division for the Visually Impaired

3. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO RECEIVE, HOLD, AND DISBURSE FEDERAL FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Deborah Talley

4. THE (ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND THE SUPPLEMENT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Division Director

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

Signatory information	Enter Signatory information in this column
Name of Signatory	Deborah Talley
Title of Signatory	Division Director
Date Signed	02/16/2022

ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.	
2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.	

3. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to: Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan:	
3.a. The establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.b. The establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable (A or B must be selected):	
3.b.(A) “is an independent State commission” (Yes/No)	No
3.b.(B) “has established a State Rehabilitation Council” (Yes/No)	Yes
3.c. Consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.d. The financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3)	
3.e. The local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds (Yes/No)	No
3.f. The shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs (Yes/No)	No
3.g. Statewide and waivers of statewide requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewide for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? (Yes/No) See Section 2 of this	No
The State Plan must include	Include
VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan	
3.h. The descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.i. All required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.j. The requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act	

3.k. The compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.l. The reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities	
3.m. The submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:	
4.a. Comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.b. Impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.c. Provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act? (Yes/No)	Yes
4.d. Determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.e. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.f. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.g. Provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the	
The State Plan must include	Include
Rehabilitation Act	
4.h. Comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act	

4.i. Meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs	
4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,	
4.j.i. Has developed and will implement,	
4.j.i.I. Strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and	
4.j.i.II. Strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and	
4.j.ii. Has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(25))	
5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:	
5.a. The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act	
5.b. The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act	
5.c. The designated state unit will coordinate activities with any other State agency that is functioning as an employment network under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act	
6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program:	
6.a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act	
6.b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to	

The State Plan must include	Include
individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act	
7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:	Yes
7.a. The Designated State Agency Assures That it Will Provide Supported Employment Services as Defined in Section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act	
7.b. The designated State agency assures that:	
7.b.i. The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act	
7.b.ii. An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act	

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	50%		60%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	40%		50%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	16.0		16.0	
Credential Attainment Rate	20%		25.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	30%		35.0%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED UNDER THE CARL D. PERKINS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ACT OF 2006, AS AMENDED BY THE STRENGTHENING CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT (PERKINS V) (TITLE 20, UNITED STATES CODE (20 U.S.C. 2301 ET SEQ.))

a. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTATION

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTIONS

a. Plan Development and Consultation

1. Describe how the State plan was developed in consultation with the stakeholders and in accordance with the procedures in section 122(c)(2) of Perkins V. See Text Box 1 for the statutory requirements for State plan consultation under section 122(c)(1) of Perkins V.

The Delaware State Plan under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education (CTE) for the 21st Century Act, public law 115-224 (Perkins V), was developed as part of the Delaware Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act Combined State Plan, public law 113-128. The Delaware State Board of Education (the Eligible Agency) in coordination with the Delaware Workforce Development Board and the Delaware Department of Education worked in accordance with the procedures in section 122(c)(2) and 112(c)(1) of the Act.

Per section 112(c)(2), the Eligible Agency developed effective activities and procedures to allow for individuals and entities to participate in state and local decisions related to the development of the Delaware Perkins State Plan. All activities and procedures as well as the information needed to use such procedures can be found here.

Per section 112(c)(1), the Eligible Agency developed the Delaware Perkins State Plan in consultation with members of those representative stakeholder groups defined in the Act. Through action of the Eligible Agency in its December 2018 meeting, see here, the State Board of Education formed a Career and Technical Education (CTE) subcommittee to develop both the Transition Plan and Delaware Perkins State Plan under the Act. The CTE Subcommittee, whose membership can be found here, includes members of all representative stakeholder groups and institutions defined in the Act. Further, the CTE Subcommittee members led additional stakeholder coordination with the community during the state plan development. The CTE Subcommittee met from August 2019 to December 2019 to engage in state plan development.

During that time members of the CTE Subcommittee also conducted external stakeholder meetings to seek additional input and consultation.

The Eligible Agency posted the Delaware Perkins State Plan for formal public comment from December 2019 to February 2020. All meetings conducted by the Eligible Agency and the CTE Subcommittee were public meetings, from which notices, meeting agenda, meeting minutes, and other informational materials can be found here. In total, more than 630 stakeholders were directly engaged and more than 1,500 individuals were invited to participate in the state plan development.

2. Consistent with section 122(e)(1) of Perkins V, each eligible agency must develop the portion of the State plan relating to the amount and uses of any funds proposed to be reserved for adult career and technical education, postsecondary career and technical education, and secondary career and technical education after consultation with the State agencies identified in section 122(e)(1)(A)-(C) of the Act. If a State agency, other than the eligible agency, finds a portion of the final State plan objectionable, the

eligible agency must provide a copy of such objections and a description of its response in the final plan submitted to the Secretary. (Section 122(e)(2) of Perkins V)

Per section 112(e)(1), the Eligible Agency in consultation with the appropriate state agencies, developed the portion of the Delaware Perkins State Plan relating to the amount and uses of funds proposed to be reserved for adult career and technical education, postsecondary career and technical education, and secondary career and technical education. No objections were received from those State Agencies.

3. Describe opportunities for the public to comment in person and in writing on the State plan. (Section 122(d)(14) of Perkins V)

Per section 112(d)(14), the Eligible Agency provided opportunities for the public to comment in person and in writing during the state plan development. Opportunities to comment in person were provided as part of the CTE Subcommittee on August 14, 2019; September 11, 2019; October 9, 2019; October 23, 2019; and December 4, 2019. Opportunities to comment in writing were provided from September 2019 to December 2019 through an open public survey, found here. Further, the opportunity to provide in person public comment was provided at the December 19, 2019 State Board of Education meeting when the Delaware Perkins State Plan was discussed and at three (3) subsequent monthly meetings of the State Board of Education that were hosted in rotating locations across the state. An open public comment period was also provided through action of the Eligible Agency from December 23, 2019 to February 21, 2020, the link to which can be found here.

Public meetings were also held to provide in person and in writing public comments on the Delaware Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act Combined State Plan, which includes the Delaware Perkins State Plan. Public meetings occurred on February 4, 2020, in New Castle County; on January 30, 2020 in Kent County; and on February 12, 2020 in Sussex County. Public meeting notices, meeting agenda, and other informational materials can be found here.

All opportunities to provide in person and in writing public comments were posted on the State Board of Education website, found here, the Delaware Workforce Development Board website, found here, and the Delaware Department of Education website, found here. All notices and public meetings were published in accordance with state public meeting laws and requirements.

b. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Program Administration and Implementation

1. State's Vision for Education and Workforce Development

a. Provide a summary of State-supported workforce development activities (including education and training) in the State, including the degree to which the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study are aligned with and address the education and skill needs of the employers in the State identified by the State workforce development board. (Section 122(d)(1) of Perkins V)

The Delaware Perkins State Plan was developed as part of the Delaware Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act Combined State Plan, public law 113-128. Delaware envisions an aligned education and workforce system that aids youth and adult learners to progress in their careers and supports employers to recruit and train a skilled workforce. Underpinning this effort is an aligned career pathways system that spans the administration of federal and state education and workforce development activities.

Per section 112(d)(1), Delaware's career pathways system spans the administration of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V), the Workforce

Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). As such, Delaware's career pathway system represents the alignment of education and training programs to in-demand occupations and occupational clusters to help youth and adult learners to advance through higher levels of education and employment. The identification of occupational characteristics, such as middle- and high-skill occupations, high-demand occupations, and high-wage occupations, is coordinated across state agencies and related federal programs to systematically identify critical workforce needs and guide the administration of CTE as part of a statewide career pathways system that is responsive to labor market needs and occupational trends.

Career pathway programs connect skill development activities and support services for youth and adult learners, beginning in the public education system through the development and implementation of CTE programs of study, and continuing through adult education, postsecondary education, and other occupational training programs. CTE programs of study provide a structured approach for delivering academic and technical education through an aligned sequence of courses that build through secondary and postsecondary instruction.

Students who complete a CTE program of study attain a secondary school diploma or its equivalent and an industry recognized credential, certificate, or license which holds value at the professional and postsecondary level, leads to a registered apprenticeship program, and/or leads to an Associate and Baccalaureate degree program.

b. Describe the State's strategic vision and set of goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including special populations) and for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers, including in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations as identified by the State, and how the State's career and technical education programs will help to meet these goals. (Section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V)

Per section 112(d)(2), Delaware seeks to ensure that 65% of our workforce will earn a college degree or professional certificate by 2025, matching the percentage of occupations requiring such skill; and that all students will graduate from high school prepared for continuing education and a career. Presently, 57% of Delawareans are prepared to enter middle- and high-skill occupations, and 65% of all high school graduates have met college and career readiness benchmarks through the state accountability model under ESSA.

The success of this vision will be measured by the impact on youth and adult learners as students graduate high school and enter into postsecondary education and the workforce. Students, educators, employers, and community-based organizations will provide feedback to continuously improve the delivery model and ensure Delaware's education and workforce system has the greatest impact on its residents. To accomplish this vision, Delaware has developed the following goals. These goals seek to further coordinate activities across state agencies and partnering organizations as well as to help accelerate work, engage additional partners, and ensure success.

1. Build a comprehensive system of career preparation that aligns with the state and regional economies.

To ensure that youth and adult learners have an opportunity to pursue a great career, we will scale the statewide career pathways system and provide support to educators and employers to effectively serve youth and adults.

2. Scale and sustain meaningful work-based learning experiences for students in grades 5-14.

To ensure that learning occurs both in the classroom and in the workplace, we will establish a statewide workforce intermediary to place students into meaningful work experiences and support employers to

recruit and onboard student talent.

3. Integrate our education and workforce development efforts and data systems.

To establish a direct link between education and training programs and changes in state and regional labor markets, we will create a connected service model for students with disabilities, students from low-income communities, and students with other barriers to employment; and implement a workforce data quality campaign.

4. Coordinate financial support for Delaware's education and workforce system.

To address pervasive issues in our education and workforce system that might otherwise prohibit youth and adult learners from moving directly into continuing education and employment, we will establish a diversified funding model that includes public, private, and philanthropic support.

5. Engage employers, educators, and community organizations.

To ensure that the path to a meaningful career is accessible for every youth and adult learner, and that the state's economy remains strong, we will develop a robust communication and partnership strategy to coordinate the delivery of support services and skill development activities across the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

Per section 112(d)(2), CTE programs of study are an integral component of Delaware's career pathways system and help to prepare an educated and skilled workforce. CTE programs of study include opportunities for secondary and postsecondary students to participate in career counseling and work-based learning experiences. In addition, CTE programs of study help to align supports and services for learners who are at-risk in high school, youth and adults who have been incarcerated, and youth and adults who have barriers to continuing education and employment. This includes braided resources across Perkins V, WIOA, and ESSA for individuals with disabilities, individuals from low-income communities, and other at-risk populations defined under WIOA, ESSA, and Perkins V. These activities help every youth and adult learner to achieve their education and career goals as well as enter and advance in a career. This work is guided by the belief that CTE programs of study:

1. Prepare students for success in a career and postsecondary education.

The terms "career ready" and "college ready" are synonymous. In order to earn a livable wage in today's economy, Delawareans must possess a credential beyond a high school diploma and be prepared to continue their education in the form of two- and four-year college or university, certification programs, registered apprenticeship, formal job training, and/or military service. CTE programs of study align academic and technical knowledge at the secondary and postsecondary levels by creating multiple entry and exit points for students to pursue a career and continue their education. Students who complete a CTE program of study have the opportunity to develop professional skills, earn an industry recognized credential, and continue their education while simultaneously engaging with employers to familiarize themselves with the culture of work.

2. Align education and workforce needs in partnership with relevant stakeholders.

A dynamic workforce development system begins in the K-12 setting and involves established relationships with state agencies, service providers, business representatives, community-based organizations, and institutions of higher education. These partners play a vital role in aligning education and training programs to ensure that all youth and adult learners can move efficiently into employment. Partnership with employers, industry associations and chambers, and institutions of higher education is essential to continuously improve Delaware's career pathway system and to guide the development and implementation of CTE programs of study that are responsive to the changing workforce needs. CTE programs of study establish a direct link between the public education system, postsecondary education, and changes in regional and state labor markets.

3. Improve youth and adult learner outcomes by connecting academic and career ~~success~~ measures.

Programs of study measure student achievement in academic and technical areas and promote employability skills. These opportunities produce higher levels of student achievement by defining a rigorous technical and academic course sequence at the secondary and postsecondary levels that relates to a student's career aspirations. Further, CTE programs of study provide a context for students to apply knowledge and career ready practices through project and problem-based learning that is authentic and reflects real-world application. An aligned accountability model across Perkins V, WIOA, and ESSA is applied to collect and review data to drive a process of continuous improvement, including making decisions regarding the viability of existing programs and the development of supports and infrastructure for youth and adult learners with barriers to employment and continuing education. These data serve as a means to benchmark state and local performance, direct resources to support student equity, close achievement gaps, and ensure every learner is on a path to continuing education and gainful employment.

c. Describe the State's strategy for any joint planning, alignment, coordination, and leveraging of funds between the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study with the State's workforce development system, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V, including the core programs defined in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102) and the elements related to system alignment under section 102(b)(2)(B) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 3112(b)(2)(B)); and for programs carried out under this title with other Federal programs, which may include programs funded under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the Higher Education Act of 1965. (Section 122(d)(3) of Perkins V)

Per section 122(d)(3), the Delaware Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act Combined State Plan includes those core programs described in section 3 of that Act and is aligned to the vision and goals described in the Delaware Perkins State Plan (see section B.1.b). The Combined Plan also defines strategies for joint planning, alignment, coordination, and leveraging of resources across state agencies to better support youth and adult learners across the statewide career pathways system. The intersection of these services with the Delaware Perkins State Plan, includes coordination to support:

- WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth: in-school youth services, supports, and the accountability model under WIOA are aligned with the Delaware Perkins State Plan to expand career pathway programs and services for youth from low-income communities, as well as to support at-risk students to graduate high school. Further, in-school youth services are coordinated for youth who are at-risk of dropping out of high school to enroll in and complete CTE programs of study. Out-of-school youth and adult services and supports under WIOA are aligned with the state career pathway system to ensure at-risk youth and adult learners have the opportunity to engage in education and training programs that lead to the attainment of meaningful postsecondary credentials, direct employment, and students are able to continue their education through aligned postsecondary CTE programs. This includes coordination with the state one-stop system to deliver and coordinate workforce development activities and job placement services.
- WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy: adult services and supports under WIOA are aligned to the Delaware Perkins State Plan and with the state career pathway system to ensure adult learners have the opportunity to engage in education and training programs that lead to the attainment of meaningful postsecondary credentials, direct employment, and students are able to continue their education through aligned postsecondary CTE programs. This includes coordination with the state one-stop system to deliver and coordinate workforce development activities and job placement services.

- WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser: youth and adult supports to engage with both the physical and online system of employment services offices under WIOA is aligned with the Delaware Perkins State Plan for learners who are exiting secondary and postsecondary CTE programs of study to seek employment. This includes coordinated services for job interviews, resume development, and other customized training to help the learner transition into employment. Employer supports are also coordinated to support employer registration within the system and to provide employer services to post active job openings and recruit qualified talent.
- WIOA Title IV Vocation Rehabilitation: pre-employment and employment transition services under WIOA are coordinated with the Delaware Perkins State Plan for youth and adults with disabilities to maximize employment, independence, and integration into society. This includes specific programming for youth with disabilities enrolled in secondary CTE programs in coordination with WIOA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and other federal programs. Secondary CTE coordination supports the pursuit of competitive integrated employment and emphasizes services to youth with disabilities to receive education and training services and work-based learning supports while still in high school.

Per section 122(d)(3), the Delaware Perkins State Plan, includes coordination across the:

- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): the Delaware ESSA State Plan requires that students be taught in a manner that prepares them for success in college and careers. Further, the Delaware ESSA State Plan puts in place new expectations for state, district/charter, and school accountability that includes indicators under the school quality and student success portion of the accountability model that align to those secondary core indicators of performance under the Act.
- Higher Education Act (HEA): the alignment of federal financial aid processes with state scholarship administration supports youth and adult learners to pursue postsecondary CTE programs and to lower the cost of postsecondary education.

d. Describe how the eligible agency will use State leadership funds made available under section 112(a)(2) of Perkins V for each of the purposes under section 124(a) of the Act. See Text Box 2 for the required uses of State leadership funds under section 124(a) of Perkins V. (Section 122(d)(7) of Perkins V)

Per section 122(d)(7), the Eligible Agency works in conjunction with the Delaware Department of Education to use state leadership funds for those purposes that are defined under section 124 of the Act. This includes conducting state leadership activities that improve CTE and allow for the reporting on the effectiveness of such funds in achieving the vision and goals described in the Delaware Perkins State Plan (see section B.1.b). The use of state leadership funds will be based on the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the statewide career pathways system and through on-going needs assessments conducted by the Delaware Department of Education to improve CTE programs of study. Reporting on the effectiveness of funds will be coordinated within the budget allocation process to associate state leadership funds to a budget account code and program code and to draw correlations between funded activities and related system outcomes.

2. Implementing Career and Technical Education Programs and Programs of Study

a. Describe the career and technical education programs or programs of study that will be supported, developed, or improved at the State level, including descriptions of the programs of study to be developed at the State level and made available for adoption by eligible recipients. (Section

122(d)(4)(A) of Perkins V)

Per section 122(d)(4)(A), Delaware has implemented a model of career preparation that includes the development of both state- and locally- developed CTE programs of study for demand-driven occupations and occupational groupings. All CTE programs of study are required to align academic and technical instruction, span the secondary and postsecondary education systems, and meet the prerequisite expectations of employers to ensure that youth and adult learners have the opportunity to continue their education and seek gainful employment. Further, all state- and locally-developed CTE programs of study define labor market alignment and employer partnerships, outline educator licensure requirements, define value-added opportunities, as well as career & technical student organizations (CTSOs).

Delaware supports the following CTOS: Business Professional of America (BPA), DECA, FCCLA, Educators Rising, FFA, HOSA, SkillsUSA, and TSA.

At the secondary level, CTE programs of study are planned and approved according to the Delaware administrative code governing CTE (see 14 DE Admin. Code 525) and must align with Delaware administrative code requiring each student to complete a career pathway prior to high school graduation (see 14 DE Admin. Code 505). Local education agencies (LEAs) seeking approval for a CTE program of study will submit an application using the process outlined in the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures.

The list of all state-model CTE programs of study for secondary recipients and postsecondary institutions is available here. Accompanying each state-model CTE program of study application is a labor market assessment and memorandums of understanding that define articulated and dual enrollment coursework at the secondary program level. When a local education agency (LEA) successfully applies for and adopts a state-model CTE program of study, all program requirements must be adhered to without modification; however, LEAs and postsecondary institutions are encouraged to continuously improve the instructional model and identify best practices to meet the unique needs of the local community and students that are served. A timeline for program of study adoption or transition, implementation, and continuous improvement is outlined in the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures.

Each state-model CTE program of study is mapped to a demand driven occupation or occupational grouping and includes a defined course sequence and instructional outline, as well as opportunities for students to earn college credit and industry recognized credential(s), and participate in work-based learning experiences. Support for school administrators and counselors is provided, along with course specific professional learning opportunities for teachers through the Delaware Department of Education. Further, the defined course sequence includes knowledge and skill statements or learning competencies for each course within the program that include academic and technical skills and the inclusion of employability skills. All Delaware state-model CTE programs of study are developed in conjunction with representatives from business and industry, secondary and postsecondary educators, and community stakeholders. State-model CTE programs of study are made available across secondary and postsecondary institutions, the juvenile justice system, and in institutions that serve individuals with disabilities and correctional institutions.

2. b. Describe the process and criteria to be used for approving locally developed programs of study or career pathways (see Text Box 3 for the statutory definition of career pathways under section 3(8) of Perkins V), including how such programs address State workforce development and education needs and the criteria to assess the extent to which the local application under section 132[1] will

- i. promote continuous improvement in academic achievement and technical skill attainment;
- ii. expand access to career and technical education for special populations; and
- iii. support the inclusion of employability skills in programs of study and career pathways. (Section 122(d)(4)(B) of Perkins V)

Per section 122(d)(4)(B), a LEA may choose to develop a local CTE program of study for an occupation or occupational cluster where there is not already an existing state-model program or where an alternative skill training model is required. The process to develop a local CTE program of study is a collaborative practice that mirrors the state-model CTE program of study application process. This includes the review of labor market information and in-demand occupations defined under WIOA, resulting in the submission of a Delaware CTE Program of Study Application for approval through the Delaware Department of Education. The program application requires the LEA to include knowledge and skill statements or learning competencies for each course within the program, relevant academic and technical skills for each course, and the inclusion of employability skills. The process to develop, implement, and improve local CTE programs of study can be found in the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures.

The Delaware Department of Education oversees the CTE program of study approval process, evaluates the on-going viability of CTE programs, reviews academic and technical skill competencies and related standards alignment across secondary and postsecondary coursework, and works to ensure alignment of program instruction, evaluation, and teacher certification criteria. Program evaluation is conducted through a continuous improvement cycle at the state and local levels, which includes the local needs assessment and local plan, as well as local and state performance management routines. This includes the design and administration of an evaluation plan to collect and review relevant data and student outcomes. Data are disaggregated and analyzed at the postsecondary institution level and at the school district or charter level, which are further disaggregated into the specific campus or high school and at the specific program level for all student subgroups such as gender, race/ethnicity, and special population status to inform programmatic decisions. Each CTE program of study is monitored on a five-year cycle to ensure continuous program improvement and student access to high-quality CTE programs of study.

Middle grade CTE programs are developed to serve youth in grades five (5), six (6), seven (7), and eight (8) based on the LEA configuration of schools and the needs of the LEA as documented within the local needs assessment and local plan. Attention is provided to student on-boarding and/or outreach activities occurring as youth transition from elementary grades into middle grades and also for youth transitioning between grades eight (8) and nine (9) or into high schools. Middle grade CTE programs prepare youth to enter high school and include structural support for academic and technical coursework that aligns to continuing education and in-demand careers. Middle grade CTE programs also focus on social and emotional learning, which can include college and career advisement, counseling and social supports, strength identification and development, as well as targeted partnerships between the LEA and out-of-school education providers or informal education and training providers. These services may expand beyond the typical school day or school year to provide youth with year-round education and training as well as expand access to CTE for special populations. The process for middle grade CTE program development and approval is documented in the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures.

At the middle grades and high school levels, student advisement and remediation programs are part of a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for youth that are offered in conjunction with state- and locally-developed CTE programs of study. These programs are supported through federal and state funding streams and staffing models as part of a comprehensive local system of CTE for all youth to

demonstrate academic and technical readiness prior to high school graduation and successful transition into/across the postsecondary education system and the workforce.

Student advisement programs must align with the student success planning requirement under Delaware administrative code (see 14 DE Admin. Code 507) and the K-12 school counseling requirement under Delaware administrative code (see 14 DE Admin. Code 545). Remedial education programs are offered at the high school level and must provide targeted interventions to youth who are below academic grade level proficiency, are not on-track to graduate high school, or who require targeted intervention prior to transition into postsecondary education and the workforce. The process for student advisement and remedial program development and approval is documented in the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures.

Postsecondary CTE programs are developed based on the prerequisite expectations of business and industry and align technical and academic skills and knowledge. Further, postsecondary CTE programs provide students with opportunities to engage employers, participate in work-based learning experiences, and apply academic and technical knowledge. In Delaware, postsecondary CTE programs span short- and long-term credential programs, the registered apprenticeship system, and two-year degree programs to create a system of stackable credentials and connected degree programs.

Postsecondary CTE programs link to local education agencies as well as to the adult basic education system and the prison education system. These designed points of entry and transition create opportunities for youth and adult learners to build skills to enter and progress through education and training systems and placement into employment. Further, this work expands access to CTE programs for special populations and reflects Delaware's career pathway system and shared education and workforce goal to increase the number of youth and adult learners with valued industry credentials and degrees. Collaboration amongst these system providers is organized through state leadership activities and financial support.

Credential programs are required to meet the shared expectations of the Eligible Agency and the Delaware Workforce Development Board. Approval of short- and long-term credential programs is documented in the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures. This effort seeks to align administrative processes for education and training providers operating postsecondary CTE programs under the Act and adult programs operating under WIOA. The following guidelines help those institutions of higher education and postsecondary vocational institutions that are listed in the Delaware Perkins State Plan (see section C.7.a) to ensure alignment of postsecondary CTE programs to the statewide career pathway system. As such, short-term credential programs must:

1. Provide not less than one hundred and forty-four (144) clock hours and not more than six hundred (600) clock hours of instructional time, and may:
 - a. include integrated education and training, not to exceed more than fifty percent (50%) of the minimum clock hours required for training; and
 - b. measure the prior proficiency (e.g. through credit for prior learning or pre-assessment of skill/proficiency) of the student and award related clock hours as a means to accelerate that student to complete the program, not to exceed more than fifty percent (50%) of the minimum clock hours required for training.
2. Ensure training is aligned with those middle- and high-skill occupations or in-demand occupations in the State as determined by the Delaware Workforce Development Board, see [here](#);
3. Provide to students, upon completion of the program, a recognized postsecondary credential that meets the hiring requirements of potential employers;
4. Provide to students, upon completion of the program, a recognized postsecondary credential that satisfies any applicable educational prerequisite requirement(s) for professional licensure or certification, so that students who complete the program and seek employment

qualify to take any licensure and certification examination needed to practice or find employment in the State of Delaware or in an occupation that the program prepares students to enter; and

5. Provide to students, upon completion of the program and/or attainment of the credential, with the equivalent academic credit of such credential that may be applied to subsequent credit-bearing certificate or degree programs upon enrollment in such program at any eligible postsecondary institution defined in the Delaware Perkins State Plan (see section C.7) and at such two- and four-year degree institutions.

Any postsecondary institution may request an exemption to the minimum clock hour requirement for short-term credential programs, provided the program meets all other criteria and the institution has historical record of student achievement in attaining a valued postsecondary credential and documentation of past student placement into the workforce and/or higher levels of education. The exemption process is documented in the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures.

Long-term credential programs shall follow those guidelines for Pell eligibility as defined under the Higher Education Act. In addition, long-term credential programs must:

6. Provide not less than six hundred (600) clock hours of instructional time, and may:
 1. include integrated education and training, not to exceed more than fifty percent (50%) of the minimum clock hours required for training; and
 2. measure the prior proficiency (e.g. through credit for prior learning or pre-assessment of skill/proficiency) of the student and award related clock hours as a means to accelerate that student to complete the program, not to exceed more than fifty percent (50%) of the minimum clock hours required for training.
7. Ensure training is aligned with those middle- and high-skill occupations or in-demand occupations in the State as determined by the Delaware Workforce Development Board, see here;
8. Provide to students, upon completion of the program, a recognized postsecondary credential that meets the hiring requirements of potential employers;
9. Provide to students, upon completion of the program, a recognized postsecondary credential that satisfies any applicable educational prerequisite requirement(s) for professional licensure or certification, so that students who complete the program and seek employment qualify to take any licensure and certification examination needed to practice or find employment in the State of Delaware or in an occupation that the program prepares students to enter; and
10. Provide to students, upon completion of the program and/or attainment of the credential, with the equivalent academic credit of such credential that may be applied to subsequent credit-bearing certificate or degree programs upon enrollment in such program at any eligible postsecondary institution defined in the Delaware Perkins State Plan (see section C.7) and at such two- and four-year degree institutions.

State Registered Apprenticeship programs are required to follow the training requirements under Delaware administrative code (see 19 DE Admin. Code 1101). Two-year degree programs are approved by the Board of Trustees at the Delaware Technical Community College. Documentation of all postsecondary course catalogues, staffing models, instructional facilities, promotional activities, student recruitment materials, and other institutional policy that may be required under related WIOA programs is documented as part of the local needs assessment and local application under the Act.

3. c. Describe how the eligible agency will—

1. make information on approved programs of study and career pathways (including career exploration, work-based learning opportunities, early college high schools, and dual or concurrent enrollment program opportunities) and guidance and advisement resources, available to students (and parents, as appropriate), representatives of secondary and postsecondary education, and special populations, and to the extent practicable, provide that information and those resources in a language students, parents, and educators can understand;

Per section 122(d)(4)(C)(i), the Delaware Department of Education makes information available to the public on approved state- and local- CTE programs of study, work-based learning programs, early college opportunities, and student guidance/advisement. These resources are also made available to the public through secondary recipients and postsecondary institutions via websites, course catalogs, school counseling and advisement materials, credential and degree publications, and other community facing engagement tools. Outreach is established at the secondary and postsecondary levels to engage employers to form CTE advisory councils which engage students, parents, educators, employers, and other interested parties to develop or improve programs under the Act. Information is also made available through various websites and online resources supported by community partners. This includes the state one-stop system, online directories, marketing materials, and public facing data tools. All documentation is made accessible to teachers, guidance counselors, advisory committee members, parents, students, and other interested parties in either online or in print format.

Targeted labor market information is provided for community stakeholders through websites and relevant publications. This includes in-demand occupations defined under WIOA and high-growth industries that are identified using a shared data model across the Departments of Education and Labor, and the Delaware Workforce Development Board. The labor market data model is based on occupational characteristics reported through the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Delaware Department of Labor and include the required level of education, on-the-job training, residency requirements, and years of experience for all reported occupations. These characteristics are vetted against an agreed upon taxonomy to classify low-, middle-, and high- skill occupations as well as other economic terminology such as high-wage and high-demand. Occupations and the related level of skill are then aggregated using the career clusters framework and North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) with cross-walks to related standard occupation codes and CTE program of study course codes.

2. facilitate collaboration among eligible recipients in the development and coordination of career and technical education programs and programs of study and career pathways that include multiple entry and exit points;

Per section 122(d)(4)(C)(ii), state- and local- CTE programs of study map to a given set of occupations or occupational groups and are required by the Eligible Agency to link across learning levels at related secondary and postsecondary institutions. This design creates opportunities for youth and adult learners to have multiple entry and exit points that facilitate entrance into the workforce and/or seek additional postsecondary education. Delaware will continue to expand the statewide career pathway system to align both CTE programs of study and other education and training programs within an aligned framework focused on in-demand occupational growth and student needs.

3. use State, regional, or local labor market data to determine alignment of eligible recipients' programs of study to the needs of the State, regional, or local economy, including in-demand industry sectors and occupations identified by the State board, and to align career and technical education with such needs, as appropriate;

Per section 122(d)(4)(C)(iii), the Delaware Department of Education requires the use of labor market information to develop state- and local- CTE programs of study, see here. This information is captured

within the local application and as part of the local needs assessment. Labor market information is used for program implementation and evaluation as well as aligning CTE programs of study to current and emerging occupations that are middle- and high-skill, are high-wage, and are high-demand. Operational definitions of these terms are included in the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures.

Further, the Delaware Department of Education partners with the Department of Labor to publish traditional labor market information via the Economic Development and Employer Planning System (EDEPS) website, see here, which provides labor market projections aligned to the state's instructional model for CTE programs of study. The website also includes supply and demand characteristics, pulling information from state and national data sources such as iPEDs, the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, and the Occupational Handbook. These data help LEAs and postsecondary staff, youth and adult learners, and community stakeholders to understand Delaware's labor market and aspects of an occupation or the industry including preferred educational levels and skill expectations. Further, the Delaware Department of Education and the Delaware Workforce Development Board partner to publish a list of in-demand occupations under WIOA that align to key industry sectors for which the state is focused on economic development and growth.

4. ensure equal access to approved career and technical education programs of study and activities assisted under this Act for special populations;

Per section 122(d)(4)(C)(iv), equal access and services for special populations defined under the Act are monitored as part of the local needs assessment, the local application process, and through on-going performance routines conducted by the Delaware Department of Education. The local needs assessment and local application process ensure that students in special populations are provided with appropriate services to access CTE programs and that student outcomes in college and career readiness programs are equitable. On-going performance monitoring routines are conducted every three (3) to five (5) years based on a risk analysis of the LEA or postsecondary institution. The performance routine includes discussion of student access and equity to CTE programs and services under the Act. This includes a review of student access to and matriculation through CTE programs as well as student outcomes by indicator type and by defined sub-populations under the Act. Findings associated with the performance routine are documented for the LEA or postsecondary institution to address. Additional support is then made available through a tiered engagement model.

5. coordinate with the State board to support the local development of career pathways and articulate processes by which career pathways will be developed by local workforce development boards, as appropriate;

Per section 122(d)(4)(C)(v), the Eligible Agency coordinates with the Delaware Workforce Development Board to support and develop career pathways. Further, the Delaware Department of Education, through action of the Eligible Agency, publishes regulations as well as policy and procedures that guide the development of state- and local- career pathways and CTE programs of study. Coordination is also provided by the Eligible Agency and the Delaware Workforce Development Board to govern the statewide career pathway system and to map future programmatic growth, strategic direction, and alignment.

6. support effective and meaningful collaboration between secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers to provide students with experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry, which may include work-based learning such as internships, mentorships, simulated work environments, and other hands-on or inquiry-based learning activities; and

Per section 122(d)(4)(C)(vi), the Delaware Department of Education supports state- and locally-

developed CTE programs of study that are industry based and align with nationally recognized standards to provide an understanding of and experience in, all aspects of an industry. Work-based learning experiences are required components of state-approved CTE programs of study and occur at various levels in program implementation and with a variety of educator and employer partners. Specifically, work-based learning programs and related activities are organized as part of a continuum of experiences for youth and adult learners, occurring in grades five (5) through postsecondary education, e.g., career awareness— exploration—and immersion. This learning progression mirrors educational growth, knowledge development, and skill acquisition as the learner progresses through the CTE program of study to create an aligned sequence of experiential learning opportunities that provide youth and adult learners with a full understanding of an industry. Operational definitions of these terms and related expectations are included in the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures.

7. improve outcomes and reduce performance gaps for CTE concentrators, including those who are members of special populations. (Section 122(d)(4)(C) of Perkins V)

Per section 122(d)(4)(C)(vii), the Delaware Department of Education supports secondary recipients and postsecondary institutions to promote youth and adult learner outcomes and the reduction of performance gaps for those defined sub-populations under the Act. Performance of secondary recipients and postsecondary institutions is monitored annually as part of the local funding application process through the eGrants platform and through on-going performance routines. The local application process ensures that all students are provided with appropriate services and targeted intervention to support their academic and technical skill development within a CTE program of study. On-going performance monitoring routines are conducted every three (3) to five (5) years based on a risk analysis. The performance routine includes discussion of student equity and student outcomes in the aggregate, by high school or postsecondary institution campus, and for CTE programs of study aggregated by career cluster. This includes a review of student academic and technical skill development by indicator type and by defined sub-populations under the Act. Findings associated with the performance routine are documented for the LEA or postsecondary institution to address. Additional support is then made available through a tiered engagement model.

d. Describe how the eligible agency, if it opts to do so, will include the opportunity for secondary school students to participate in dual or concurrent enrollment programs, early college high school, or competency-based education. (Section 122(d)(4)(D) of Perkins V)

Per section 122(d)(4)(D), the Delaware Department of Education requires all secondary programs under the Act to include early postsecondary opportunities as part of the CTE program of study. This information is approved as part of the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures. This can include articulated college credit, dual enrollment, concurrent enrollment, pre-apprenticeship, and/or early college high school programs. Opportunities for articulated college credit and dual enrollment are included across all state-model CTE programs of study and all approved local-CTE programs of study. Locally developed CTE programs of study may include an early postsecondary model as appropriate to the LEA and the partnering postsecondary institution and may be specific to an occupation or occupational grouping.

Competency based education models are also supported by the Delaware Department of Education where specific knowledge and skills are documented within a learning progression. The progression of knowledge and skill can occur inside or outside of the classroom and must carry value for the learner that the LEA or postsecondary institution awards, e.g., demonstration of credit for prior learning and the award of instructional clock hours or academic credit to support the educational progression of the

learner.

e. Describe how the eligible agency will involve parents, academic and career and technical education teachers, administrators, faculty, career guidance and academic counselors, local business (including small businesses), labor organizations, and representatives of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, as appropriate, in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of its career and technical education programs. (Section 122(d)(12) of Perkins V)

Per section 122(d)(12), the Delaware Department of Education works with those stakeholders defined in the Act and through quarterly meetings with the Eligible Agency and with the Delaware Workforce Development Board to discuss development, implementation, and evaluation of CTE programs. Annual evaluation and reporting occur to both the Eligible Agency and Delaware Workforce Development Board, through published materials, semi-annual progress reports, and a formal outcomes report. All materials, reports, and resources can be found here. Further, monthly meetings occur under the direction of the Eligible Agency and the Delaware Workforce Development Board to continuously improve the statewide career pathways system. These meetings involve a dedicated group of stakeholders, see here, focused on achieving the vision of the Delaware Perkins State Plan and related goals under the Act.

f. Include a copy of the local application template that the eligible agency will require eligible recipients to submit pursuant to section 134(b) of Perkins V. See Text Box 4 for the statutory requirements for local applications under section 134(b) of Perkins V.

g. Include a copy of the comprehensive local needs assessment template and/or guidelines that the eligible agency will require of eligible recipients to meet the requirements of section 134(c) of Perkins V. See Text Box 5 for the requirements for the comprehensive local needs assessment under section 134(c) of Perkins V.

Per section 134(b) and section 134(c), the local needs assessment and local application template is provided below. Local education agencies (LEA) and postsecondary institutions will submit the local needs assessment, the local application, and annual application for funds issued under the Act through the Delaware eGrants platform. The process to review the local needs assessment, approve the local application, and award funds under the Act is defined in the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures.

Any LEA or postsecondary institution desiring financial assistance under the Act will submit a local application to the Eligible Agency that will be approved by the Delaware Department of Education. A copy of the completed local needs assessment will be submitted as part of the local application. The local needs assessment will be updated and resubmitted at least once every two (2) years. Per section 134(d), both the local application and needs assessment will be completed in consultation with a diverse stakeholder body consisting, at a minimum, of those representatives defined under the Act. Per section 135(e), continued consultation will be sought from those representatives defined under the Act. The continued consultation will include, but not be limited to, updating qualitative and quantitative data in the local needs assessment, to ensure the local system of CTE is responsive to the defined needs of students and the labor market and to ensure human and fiscal resources are applied to improve student outcomes, including work-based learning opportunities.

The overarching performance management routine, which includes the local needs assessment, the local application, and related local and state monitoring routines, is designed as a fluid process to meaningfully connect those documented system needs to the allocation of human and fiscal resources to improve youth and adult learner outcomes. As such, the local needs assessment is defined as a self-evaluation conducted by secondary and postsecondary institutions to improve student access, achievement, and equity in CTE programs, as well as the implementation of high-quality CTE

programs of study and improvement of the local education and workforce system (to be completed once every two years). The local application is defined as an operational plan developed by LEAs and postsecondary institutions to implement high-quality CTE programs of study, establish performance targets for those core indicators of performance defined under the Act, improve student outcomes, and expand innovative practices (to be completed once every four years and updated as needed). The application for funds is defined as a financial request for resources made available under the Act, to reflect findings from the local needs assessment and be issued in alignment with the local application (to be completed annually). As such, the local needs assessment and the local application template are organized across five (5) core priority areas, which are:

1. Quality Improvement (sections 1a and 1b below): addresses sections 134(b)(1) and 134(b)(2)(A) of the Act and connects the local needs assessment, local application, and local and state monitoring routines to those identified strengths and opportunities that exist to improve the local system of CTE;
2. Program Quality (sections 2a and 2b below): addresses sections 134(b)(2)(B), 134(b)(2)(C), 134(b)(5), 134(c)(2)(B), 134(c)(2)(C), and 134(c)(2)(E) of the Act and focuses on the evolution of the local system of CTE, as well as supports for all students to access and be successful in a CTE program of study that lead to in-demand industry sectors and occupations that provide a living wage through a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for all learners;
3. Student Readiness and Equity (sections 3a and 3b below): addresses sections 134(b)(4), 134(b)(7), 134(b)(9), and 134(c)(2)(A) of the Act and connects academic and technical skill preparation to early postsecondary credit opportunities, as well as the identification of what disparities or gaps exist across youth or adult performance indicators and how the LEA or postsecondary institution will address such disparities or gaps through a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for all learners;
4. Talent Development (sections 4a and 4b below): addresses sections 134(b)(8) and 134(c)(2)(D) to focus on the recruitment and initial licensure of diverse CTE educators and related faculty, the professional learning supports for secondary and postsecondary CTE educators, as well as the relationship between the Eligible Agency, Delaware Department of Education, LEAs, and postsecondary institutions to provide such support; and
5. Systems Alignment (sections 5a and 5b below): addresses sections 134(b)(3), 134(b)(6), 134(d), and 134(e) of the Act and the connection between employer partners, community stakeholders, and local/state workforce partners to support career exploration and development, career and college advisement, and how these partners are engaged within the local system of CTE to scale work-based learning opportunities for youth and adults.

#	Core Priority Title and Description of Purpose	Needs Assessment Framework and Reference under the Act	Local Application Framework and Reference under the Act
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1 a	<p>Priority Title: Quality Improvement</p> <p>Purpose: To develop an overarching vision for the local system of CTE that connects responses across the local needs</p>	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will provide a description of the results from the local needs assessment to develop a vision for the local system of CTE and where strengths and opportunities exist across the five (5) core priority areas.</p> <p>Reference: Section 134(b)(1)</p>	<p>Information to be carried over from the local needs assessment.</p> <p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will provide a description of the results from the local needs assessment to develop a vision for the local system of CTE and where strengths and opportunities exist across the five (5) core priority areas.</p>
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	assessment, the local application, and related local and state monitoring routines.		<p>Reference: Section 134(b)(1)</p>

1 b	<p>Priority Title: Quality Improvement</p> <p>Purpose: To develop a plan of action based on data and information collected from the local needs assessment that is defined within the local application and is reinforced through local and state monitoring routines as well as resource allocation (human and fiscal) across the five (5) core priority areas.</p>	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will review information from the local needs assessment to determine one (1) goal statement for each core priority area and will develop a plan of action that includes measures of success, actions to be taken, alignment of human and fiscal resources, and the process of local performance management.</p> <p>Reference: Sections 134(b)(1) and 134(b)(2)(A)</p>	<p>Information to be carried over from the local needs assessment.</p> <p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will review information from the local needs assessment to determine one (1) goal statement for each core priority area and will develop a plan of action that includes measures of success, actions to be taken, alignment of human and fiscal resources, and the process of local performance management.</p> <p>Reference: Sections 134(b)(1) and 134(b)(2)(A)</p>
2 a	<p>Priority Title: Program Quality</p> <p>Purpose: Provide a framework to measure the local system of CTE and improvements in CTE program</p>	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will capture and review quantitative data to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define the local development and review cycle for CTE programs of study and the continuous improvement model; Analyze CTE programs of study that align with in- 	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to describe the local system of CTE, the process of CTE program of study development and continuous improvement, and how information about CTE program is shared with members of the community (i.e. communication to students, parents, community stakeholders, and employers).</p>
#	Core Priority Title and Description of Purpose	Needs Assessment Framework and Reference under the Act	Local Application Framework and Reference under the Act

<p>quality, which includes alignment to the labor market, federal/state accountability system, communication routines, as well as procedures for program and system improvement.</p>	<p>demand, middle- and high-skill occupations, and high-growth industries;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze CTE programs of study that integrate industry-recognized credentials, certificates, or licenses; Analyze CTE programs of study that offer aligned and immersive WBL experiences; and Analyze CTE programs that offer articulated, advanced standing, and/or dual enrollment credit with postsecondary credential programs, registered apprenticeship programs, two-year degree programs, and four-year degree programs. <p>Reference:</p> <p>Sections 134(c)(2)(B) and 134(c)(2)(C)</p>	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to summarize those strengths and opportunities to improve the quality of CTE programs of study, including the on-going alignment of CTE programs of study to the labor market as well as the expansion of industry-recognized credentials, work-based learning opportunities, and articulated postsecondary credit opportunities.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <p>Section 134(b)(2)(B) and 134(b)(2)(C)</p>
<p>2 b</p> <p>Priority Title: Program Quality Purpose: Support student matriculation</p>	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will capture and review quantitative data to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze CTE participation using a comparable student 	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to describe how youth and adult learners are supported to enter into a CTE program of study and matriculate through the CTE program on a path to high school graduation or postsecondary completion and placement into higher levels of postsecondary</p>

#	Core Priority Title and Description of Purpose	Needs Assessment Framework and Reference under the Act	Local Application Framework and Reference under the Act
	<p>through high-quality CTE programs of study with a focus on student equity and a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for all learners. This includes student access, matriculation patterns, graduation or completion rates, and postsecondary or workforce placement.</p>	<p>population group;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze CTE concentration/completion using a comparable student population group; • Analyze non-traditional gender CTE concentrators; • Analyze CTE concentrators who graduate in the four (4) year cohort or complete postsecondary programs; and • Analyze CTE concentrators transition into higher levels of education and/or employment. <p>Reference:</p> <p>Section 134(c)(2)(E)</p>	<p>education and/or the workforce. This includes support for special populations to access CTE programs of study, discrimination policy, and preparation of youth and adult learners for non-traditional gender occupations/occupational groupings.</p> <p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to identify how a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) is provided for youth and adults to demonstrate success at various points within a CTE program of study and how targeted services and supports are provided for special populations to pursue middle- and high-skill occupations and in-demand industry sectors that leads to competitive integrated employment.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <p>Section 134(b)(5)</p>
3 a	<p>Priority Title:</p> <p>Student Readiness and Equity</p> <p>Purpose:</p> <p>Provide a framework for academic readiness</p>	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will capture and review quantitative data to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze CTE concentrators readiness in English language arts, mathematics, and science (secondary only) subject areas, which includes student readiness 	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to define the multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for youth and adult learners in academic subject areas and describe the tiered (e.g. tier 1) instructional model that leads to academic readiness in English language arts, mathematics, and science (secondary only) proficiency.</p>

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#	Core Title and Description of Purpose	Priority and Reference under the Act	Needs Assessment Framework and Reference under the Act	Local Application Framework and Reference under the Act
	of academic and technical instruction within a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for all learners.	and remediation. Reference: Section 134(c)(2)(A)	The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to define the multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for youth and adult learners whose academic proficiency requires targeted intervention and how tiered supports (e.g., tier two and three) are provided to youth and adult learners to demonstrate academic readiness in English language arts, mathematics, and science (secondary only). Reference: Section 134(b)(4) and 134(b)(9)	

3 b	<p>Priority Title: Student Readiness and Equity</p> <p>Purpose: Provide a framework for technical readiness and the alignment of academic and technical instruction within a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for all learners.</p>	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will capture and review quantitative data to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze CTE concentrators attainment rates of state-approved industry recognized credentials, licensures, or certificates; Analyze CTE concentrators attainment of early postsecondary credit or advanced standing; and Analyze CTE concentrators successful completion of immersive WBL experiences. 	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to define the multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for youth and adult learners in technical subject areas and describe the tiered (e.g. tier 1) instructional model that leads to technical readiness on the ESSA, Perkins, and WIOA accountability models.</p> <p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to define the multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for youth and adult learners whose technical proficiency requires targeted intervention and how tiered supports (e.g. tier two and three) are provided to youth and adult learners to demonstrate technical readiness on the ESSA,</p>
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#	Core Title and Description of Purpose	Priority and Reference under the Act	Needs Assessment Framework and Reference under the Act
		<p>Reference: Section 134(c)(2)(A)</p>	<p>Local Application Framework and Reference under the Act</p> <p>Perkins, and WIOA accountability models.</p> <p>Reference: Section 134(b)(4), 134(b)(7), and 134(b)(9)</p>

4 a	<p>Priority Title: Talent Development</p> <p>Purpose: Discuss recruitment methods for CTE educators and related faculty, processes to support licensure and certification, and equity within the human resources process.</p>	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will capture and review quantitative data to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze CTE educator and related faculty who have an active teaching license or meet postsecondary eligibility requirements; Analyze CTE educator and related faculty postings in the last three (3) years; and Analyze CTE educator and related faculty eligible to retire in the next five (5) years. <p>Reference: Section 134(c)(2)(D)</p>	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to describe the process and methods used to recruit qualified and diverse CTE educators and related faculty.</p> <p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to discuss the types of supports that are provided for CTE educators and related faculty to seek initial teacher licensure or meet other professional standards or meet postsecondary employment standards.</p> <p>Reference: Section 134(b)(8)</p>
4 b	<p>Priority Title: Talent Development</p>	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will capture and review quantitative data to:</p>	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to describe how new CTE educators and related faculty are supported to be effective in the</p>

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<p>Purpose:</p> <p>Discuss on-going supports for CTE educators and related faculty, which includes on-going talent development, professional learning routines, and customized support to ensure effective instructional practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Categorize the tenure of CTE educators and related faculty based on years of experience in education; • Categorize the level of skill across CTE educators and related faculty based on advanced credentials and/or measured experience in their field of study; and • Define the types and quantity of professional learning opportunities available to CTE educators and related faculty. <p>Reference:</p> <p>Section 134(c)(2)(D)</p>	<p>classroom and the types of professional learning opportunities that are provided for educators and related faculty based on years of experience and/or professional practice.</p> <p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to describe how experienced CTE educators and related faculty are supported to acquire advanced certificates, degrees, or other types of professional learning that deepens their subject matter expertise and/or professional practice.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <p>Section 134(b)(8)</p>
<p>5 a</p> <p>Priority Title: Systems</p> <p>Alignment</p> <p>Purpose:</p> <p>Model employer and community engagement, involvement in the local needs assessment and local application development, and</p>	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will capture and review quantitative data to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the stakeholder engagement model used to complete the local needs assessment, local application, and annual budget; • Define the model of stakeholder engagement to 	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to describe how employers and community partners are integrated into the local system of CTE to complete the local needs assessment and local application as well as in determining performance targets to improve the local system of CTE.</p> <p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to describe how employer and</p>

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	the shared focus on guiding the local system of CTE.	<p>support and improve CTE programs of study; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Categorize the depth of stakeholder engagement across CTE programs of study <p>Reference:</p> <p>Section 134(d) and 134(e)</p>	<p>community partners are integrated into the implementation of CTE program of study and to provide career information and employment opportunities that focus on middle- and high-skill occupations (e.g. curriculum development/implementation, system innovation, support for youth and teachers, as well as the expansion of student advisement and work-based learning experiences).</p> <p>Reference:</p> <p>Section 134(b)(3)(B), 134(d), and 134(e)</p>
5 b	<p>Priority Title: Systems</p> <p>Alignment</p> <p>Purpose: Define the model of student advisement and career awareness and exploration activities in partnership with employers, community partners, and LEA or postsecondary educators and related faculty.</p>	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will capture and review quantitative data to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze the number of middle and high school youth or postsecondary students participating in career awareness and exploration activities and related outcomes; and • Analyze the number of middle and high school youth or postsecondary students participating in college and career advisement models and related outcomes. 	<p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to describe the system for offering career awareness, career exploration, and career immersion activities as part of a comprehensive work-based learning continuum at the middle and high school grade levels or postsecondary levels and how employers and community partners support this effort.</p> <p>The LEA or postsecondary institution will enter qualitative data to describe the system for offering student advisement at the middle and high school grade levels or postsecondary level and how employers and community partners support this effort.</p>

#	Core Title and Description of Purpose	Priority and Reference under the Act	Needs Assessment Framework and Reference under the Act	
		Reference: Section 134(b)(3)(A), 134(b)(3)(C), and 134(b)(6)	Reference: Section 134(b)(3)(A), 134(b)(3)(C), and 134(b)(6)	

h. Provide the eligible agency’s definition for “size, scope, and quality” that will be used to make funds available to eligible recipients pursuant to section 135(b) of Perkins V.

Per section 135(b), the Delaware Department of Education requires CTE programs of study to meet the criteria of sufficient size, scope, and quality to be effective and seek funding under the Act. Size is defined as providing sufficient opportunity for youth and adult learners to enter and matriculate through secondary and postsecondary CTE program levels. Scope is defined as including rigorous academic and technical standards, as well as employability skills, and by providing youth and adult learners with opportunities to earn industry-recognized credentials, participate in work-based learning experiences, and connect secondary to postsecondary coursework. Quality is defined as providing sufficient opportunity to meet or exceed performance targets under the Act, provide support for special populations enrolled in the CTE program of study, and procedures that continuously improve all aspects of those programs offered under the Act. This policy is documented within the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures.

3. Meeting the Needs of Special Populations

a. Describe the eligible agency’s program strategies for special populations, including a description of how individuals who are members of special populations—

1. will be provided with equal access to activities assisted under this Act;

Per section 121(d)(9)(A), the Delaware Department of Education coordinates services for student access and equity for those special populations under the Act across state agencies, community stakeholders, and eligible recipients and institutions that support special populations. This includes coordination of various workgroups across the Delaware Department of Education, including the CTE & STEM workgroup, the Higher Education workgroup, the Exceptional Children workgroup, and the Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development workgroup to:

- Align supports and services for students with disabilities, English Learners (EL), foster and homeless youth, and other special populations under the Act;
- Provide and coordinate professional learning opportunities for academic educators, CTE educators, special education staff, school counselors, and EL staff in secondary school programs;
- Promote academic instruction and targeted interventions that reduce the need for remedial education at the postsecondary level; and

- Develop process tools and data models to identify effective programs, coaching, and supports to serve special populations under the Act.

This also includes coordination of various state agencies, including the Delaware Department of Labor—Vocational Rehabilitation Division and the Employment and Training Division as well as the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services—Division of Developmental Disabilities Services and the Division for the Visually Impaired to:

- Align in-school youth programs under WIOA to college and career preparation programs, school counseling programs, and CTE programs of study at the secondary level;
- Align out-of-school youth programs under WIOA to community-based supports, transition supports and services, and CTE programs of study at the postsecondary level;
- Coordinate supports for youth with disabilities across federal and state programs to support pre-employment transition services and supports into postsecondary education and employment; and
- Coordinate employer engagement and outreach to align work-based learning programs, develop complementary on-boarding services, and discuss labor market research to target in-demand occupations and occupational groupings.

Implementation of these services is monitored as part of the local needs assessment and local application process through the eGrants platform and through on-going performance routines. The local needs assessment and local application process ensures that students in special populations are provided with access to CTE programs and appropriate services and supports. On-going performance monitoring routines are conducted every three (3) to five (5) years based on a risk analysis of LEAs and postsecondary institutions. The performance routine includes discussion of student equity and student access to CTE programs and services under the Act. This includes a review of student access to and matriculation through CTE programs as well as student outcomes by indicator type and by defined sub-populations under the Act.

Findings associated with the performance routine are documented for the LEA or postsecondary institution to address. Additional support is then made available through an tiered engagement model.

2. will not be discriminated against on the basis of status as a member of a special population;

Per section 121(d)(9)(B), Delaware prohibits discrimination against students, including students enrolled in career and technical education programs. All programs operate in accordance with IDEA, the Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and subsequent federal legislation. Further, the Delaware Department of Education requires all Delaware students to complete a career pathway as part of the high school graduation requirements. A career pathway is defined as three (3) credits, beyond those courses otherwise required for high school graduation, in a specific area of focus (see 14 DE Admin. Code 505).

Any student may choose a CTE program of study at the secondary level to complete this requirement. Any student may also choose to attend a high school or LEA that offers a CTE program of study that is of interest to the student that is not within the student's traditional geographic school district. Further, schools and LEAs may choose to offer state-model or locally developed CTE programs of study at the secondary level, creating greater access for youth.

Opportunities to offer a high-quality CTE program of study are available to any high school and LEA

interested in offering such program and across postsecondary CTE institutions. All postsecondary CTE institutions are open admission institutions that provide programs and services under the Act to youth and adult learners.

3. will be provided with programs designed to enable individuals who are members of special populations to meet or exceed State determined levels of performance described in section 113, and prepare special populations for further learning and for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations;

Per section 121(d)(9)(C), the Delaware Department of Education requires secondary recipients and postsecondary institutions to coordinate program development and implementation with employer advisory committees. These committees serve as the foundation to establish state and local levels of performance by indicator and coordinate supports for youth from special populations. Engagement between employer groups and eligible recipients under the Act is monitored through the local application process and as part of the Delaware Department of Education performance routine.

4. will be provided with appropriate accommodations; and

Per section 121(d)(9)(D), the Delaware Department of Education requires all students to complete a student success plan prior to high school graduation (see 14 DE Admin. Code 507). The student success plan encompasses a minimum of six (6) years (grades 8 through 12 and one-year beyond high school) to provide all students with the opportunity to set education and career goals based on their academic and career interests. During the establishment and annual review of the student success plan, students engage their parents/guardians, school counselors, teachers, mentors, and other individuals in the process of developing an individual learning plan. The individualized learning plan includes student supports, accommodations, and other resources garnered on behalf of the student. To assist in the implementation of the student success plan, the State of Delaware has made available career software at no cost to LEAs. The software allows the plan to be completed online while providing career exploration tools to youth.

Individual student accommodations are coordinated across Perkins V, WIOA, and ESSA. Additionally, Delaware recognizes the need for quality education programs for youth and adult learners who have not been successful within the regular school program. Often, in an instructional setting, more appropriate to an individual's needs or based upon an individual's circumstance, the learner can be highly successful in education and training programs that directly connect to the labor market. This includes programs that support special populations defined under the Act, which include but are not limited to programs operating within a correctional institution, serving individuals with disabilities, or serving English Learners as well as those programs that provide specialized services in partnership with employers. Policies, programs, and best practices established under the Act are used to work with education and training providers that serve incarcerated youth and adults as well as institutions that serve individuals with disabilities, to more effectively promote academic instruction, technical skill development, and employability skills. Further, alignment to in-demand occupations and the acquisition of industry credentials that are valued by postsecondary institutions and employers are used as tools to assist the learner with transition into continuing education and employment.

5. will be provided instruction and work-based learning opportunities in integrated settings that support competitive, integrated employment. (Section 122(d)(9) of Perkins V)

Per section 122(d)(9)(E), the Delaware Department of Education requires secondary recipients and postsecondary institutions to include high quality work-based learning experiences as part of an approved state- or locally-developed CTE program of study. Documentation of work-based learning experiences is included within the Delaware CTE Program of Study Application. Operational definitions of work-based learning activities and instructional outcomes are included in the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures.

Opportunities for youth and adults with disabilities to participate in work-based learning opportunities that include integrated and competitive employment are defined within the individual learning plan for the student. For youth this includes the student success plan (see 14 DE Admin. Code 507) and/or an individual education plan (see 14 DE Admin. Code 922 to 929). For adult learners these opportunities are coordinated with those student support services available at the eligible postsecondary institutions.

Additional supports are coordinated between the Delaware Department of Education, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Health & Social Services to provide pre-employment and employment transition services under WIOA Title IV that maximize employment, independence, and integration into society. This includes specific programming for youth with disabilities enrolled in secondary CTE programs in coordination with WIOA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and other federal programs. Secondary and postsecondary CTE coordination supports the pursuit of competitive integrated employment and emphasizes services to youth and adults with disabilities to receive education and training services and work-based learning supports.

4. Preparing Teachers and Faculty

a. Describe how the eligible agency will support the recruitment and preparation of teachers, including special education teachers, faculty, school principals, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals to provide career and technical education instruction, leadership, and support, including professional development that provides the knowledge and skills needed to work with and improve instruction for special populations. (Section 122(d)(6) of Perkins V)

Per section 122(d)(6), the Delaware Department of Education supports the recruitment and preparation of teachers, faculty, school principals, administrators, specialized personnel, and paraprofessionals to provide high-quality instruction, college and career counseling services, and support to youth and adult learners. The Delaware Department of Education also supports shared leadership activities and skill development that is on-going and reflective of the evolving needs of the state career pathways system.

Specific supports are provided to teacher candidates who seek licensure and certification through the Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification program, see here. Supports are also provided to institutions of higher education to engage with teacher candidates who enter the field of education having been previously employed in the workforce through Delaware administrative code for Skilled and Technical Sciences (see 14 DE Admin. Code 1559). State leadership activities and funds as well as staff time are applied to increase programs and opportunities for industry professionals to enter and become successful educators. Feedback from various stakeholders is collected and analyzed to refine programmatic investments, supportive programs, and to offer technical assistance.

On-going professional learning opportunities are provided to educators to develop academic and technical skills as well as practice the meaningful facilitation of instruction. Support for administrators and institutional leadership is provided throughout the academic year to improve the operational efficiency of secondary and postsecondary institutions under the Act as well as developed shared educational policy and practices managed by the Delaware Department of Education.

c. FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

C. Fiscal Responsibility

1. Describe the criteria and process for how the eligible agency will approve eligible recipients for funds under this Act, including how—
 - a. each eligible recipient will promote academic achievement;
 - b. each eligible recipient will promote skill attainment, including skill attainment that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential; and
 - c. each eligible recipient will ensure the local needs assessment under section 134 takes into consideration local economic and education needs, including, where appropriate, in-demand industry sectors and occupations. (Section 122(d)(5) of Perkins V)

Per section 122(d)(5), the Eligible Agency will work with the Delaware Department of Education to award funds to eligible recipients under the Act. The process to review and award funds is defined in the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures. Secondary LEAs and postsecondary institutions submit annual applications for funding through the Delaware eGrants platform. Required uses of funds include continuous program improvement, academic achievement of CTE students, and increased levels of technical skill proficiency, including the attainment of industry recognized credentials that are of value at the postsecondary level and to employers.

At the local level, the allocation of funds under the Act is tied to data captured during the local needs assessment and strategic planning process used to develop the local application. Both secondary LEAs and postsecondary institutions follow a similar process in terms of resource allocation to ensure human and fiscal resources reflect student and system needs, as well as strategic priorities. Both the local needs assessment and local application include the use of labor market information for program implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement of the local system of CTE. Labor market information is also used when developing or implementing CTE programs of study for current and emerging occupations that are middle- and high-skill, are high-wage, and are high-demand occupations. Operational definitions of these terms are included in the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures.

Further, the Delaware Department of Education partners with the Department of Labor to establish the EDEPS website, see here, which provides labor market projections aligned to the state's instructional model for CTE programs of study. These data help secondary LEAs, postsecondary staff, and students to understand Delaware's labor market and the alignment of education and training programs to in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

1. Describe how funds received by the eligible agency through the allotment made under section 111 of the Act will be distributed—
 - a. among career and technical education at the secondary level, or career and technical education at the postsecondary and adult level, or both, including how such distribution will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace; and
 - b. among any consortia that may be formed among secondary schools and eligible institutions, and how funds will be distributed among the members of the consortia, including the rationale for such distribution and how it will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace. (Section 122(d)(8) of

Perkins V)

Per section 122(d)(8), funds under the Act will be issued per the following distribution model:

1. 5% of the total grant amount will be retained by Delaware Department of Education for administrative purposes.
2. 10% of the total grant amount will be retained at Delaware Department of Education for leadership activities.
3. Of the remaining 85%:
 - a. The Delaware Department of Education will retain no more than 15% for Reserve Funds to be issued competitively and/or through a performance based financial model to eligible secondary and postsecondary recipients. These Reserve Funds will be divided between eligible recipients at the secondary level (10%) and postsecondary institutions (5%) to be used as follows:
 - i. Secondary LEAs will use these funds to: 1. Support the expansion of state-model CTE programs of study and middle school college and career readiness coursework; 2. Focus on student equity and achievement for college and careers; and to 3. Develop innovative student supports for college and careers, which can include work-based learning, social- emotional learning, as well as student advisement and counseling services; and
 - ii. Postsecondary institutions will use these funds to: 1. Support student credential and degree attainment as well as matriculation into advanced education and training programs and the workforce; and to 2. Develop innovative practices that focus on student equity and achievement.
 - b. The remaining 70% of these funds will be divided between eligible recipients at the secondary level (80%) and postsecondary institutions (20%).

The distribution of funds is based on the current percentage of youth and adult learners served across the secondary and postsecondary system (e.g., the current number of CTE participants equals 40,244 students or 30,296 students at the secondary level, i.e. 75% and 9,948 students at the postsecondary level, i.e. 25%) with an additional percentage of funds (5%) designated for student growth at the secondary level to support middle grade expansion. The distribution of funds to eligible secondary (80%) and postsecondary recipients (20%) was determined through meetings with those stakeholder groups defined in the Act and is a result of public comments that prioritized high-quality CTE opportunities for all youth and adult learners.

Any secondary LEA or postsecondary institution receiving an allocation that is not sufficient to conduct a program under the Act is encouraged to form a consortium. Each consortium represents a new, separate LEA or postsecondary institution. The individual members of the consortium will contribute their separate allocations, which will then be pooled and reallocated based on the agreed upon criteria of the consortium. Funds allocated to a consortium shall be used for purposes and programs that are mutually beneficial to all members of the consortium and are an authorized use of funds under the Act.

Each consortium will have one fiscal agent and the fiscal agent will submit one application through the eGrants platform on behalf of all consortium members. Secondary LEAs or postsecondary institutions participating in a consortium will notify the Delaware Department of Education via email or letter indicating their intent to enter into a consortium during each fiscal year the consortium is in operation. The email or letter notification must include the names of all participating secondary LEAs or postsecondary institutions. Members of a consortium will be required to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which will include the signatures of all LEAs or postsecondary institutions

within the consortia and the amount of funds allocated to each eligible recipient within the Consortia. The MOU will be submitted when the consortia is formed, and the local application is submitted on behalf of the consortia. The local application must follow all grant submission requirements, procedures, and application review dates and timelines.

3. For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations for each eligible recipient made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs and programs of study under section 131(a)-(e) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to local educational agencies, areas career and technical education schools and educational service agencies within the State. (Section 131(g) of Perkins V)

In total, \$3,621,610 will be made available in FY20 to secondary eligible recipients under the Act. Of that, \$3,155,279 will be made available through section 131 of the Act and \$466,331 will be made available through the Reserve Fund or section 112(c) of the Act.

Secondary LEAs will submit applications for funding under the Act through the eGrants platform to demonstrate how they will use grant funds to develop high-quality CTE programs of study, continuously improve CTE programs of study, improve academic achievement and technical skill development of CTE students, and develop or implement student supports to facilitate transition into continuing education and high skill, high-wage, and high-demand occupations. Applications for funding are evaluated by the Delaware Department of Education, Career & Technical Education and STEM Initiatives workgroup as a part of the consolidated application program managers committee. In FY20, it is anticipated that twenty-eight (28) eligible recipients will be supported under the Act per the anticipated funding schedule (not that \$20,000 is held for charter school enrollment adjustments):

Local Education Agency Name:	Estimated FY20 Perkins Amount, based on federal funding formula in section 131(a):
Caesar Rodney School District	\$183,778
Capital School District	\$220,748
Lake Forest School District	\$125,294
Laurel School District	\$70,477
Cape Henlopen School District	\$114,760
Milford School District	\$123,306
Seaford School District	\$109,283
Smyrna School District	\$106,081
Appoquinimink School District	\$142,282
Brandywine School District	\$244,574
Red Clay School District	\$408,449
Christina School District	\$431,541
Colonial School District	\$271,015
Woodbridge School District	\$88,412

Indian River School District	\$240,315
Delmar School District	\$24,125
New Castle County Vocational- Technical School District	\$88,635
POLYTECH School District	\$19,686
Sussex Technical School District	\$18,954
Campus Community Charter School	\$11,090
Sussex Academy Charter School	\$8,831
Delaware Military Academy	\$5,552
Odyssey Charter School	\$23,978
MOT Charter School	\$12,109
Newark Charter School	\$25,530
Early College High School at Delaware State University Charter School	\$9,237
First State Military Charter School	\$7,848

Local Education Agency Name:	Estimated FY20 Perkins Amount, based on federal funding formula in section 131(a):
Great Oaks Charter School	\$16,397

4. For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations for each eligible recipient made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs and programs of study under section 132(a) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to eligible institutions and consortia of eligible institutions within the State.

In total, \$1,018,506 will be made available in FY20 to postsecondary eligible institutions under the Act. Of that, \$788,820 will be made available through section 131 of the Act and \$229,686 will be made available through the Reserve Fund or section 112(c) of the Act.

These funds are issued to provide all Delawareans with access to high-quality CTE programs of study and to streamline support services as part of Delaware’s one-stop environment under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Postsecondary eligible institutions will submit through the eGrants platform to demonstrate how they will use grant funds to develop high-quality CTE programs of study, continuously improve CTE programs of study, improve academic achievement and technical skill development of CTE students, and develop and implement of student supports to facilitate transition into continuing education and high skill, high-wage, and high-demand occupations. In FY20, it is anticipated that four (4) eligible institutions will be supported under the Act per the anticipated funding schedule:

Postsecondary Institution Name:	Estimated FY20 Perkins Amount, based on alternate funding formula described in section 132(b):
Delaware Technical Community College	\$433,206
New Castle County Vocational Technical School District, Adult Education Division	\$126,828
POLYTECH School District, Adult Education Division	\$118,174
Sussex Technical School District, Adult Education Division	\$110,611

5. Describe how the eligible agency will adjust the data used to make the allocations to reflect any changes in school district boundaries that may have occurred since the population and/or enrollment data was collected, and include local education agencies without geographical boundaries, such as charter schools and secondary schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Education. (Section 131(a)(3) of Perkins V)

Per section 131(a)(3), the Eligible Agency will work with the Delaware Department of Education to oversee the financial distribution of funds under the Act and to calculate adjustments for shifts in school district boundaries and for LEAs without geographic boundaries. This includes an estimation and redistribution of U.S. census population and poverty counts of the residential/geographical districts based on direct certification of youth and school enrollment patterns through school choice in traditional geographic, vocational, and charter school districts. Revised amounts will follow

students based on school choice patterns and the school district of enrollment. As a result, a secondary LEA's allocation under the Act may increase or decrease from year to year due to reduced student enrollment, reduced census poverty, or both.

6. If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the secondary allocation formula described in section 131(a)—
 1. include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and
 2. describe how the waiver demonstrates that a proposed alternative formula more effectively targets funds on the basis of poverty (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) to local educational agencies with the State. (Section 131(b) of Perkins V)

Also indicate if this is a waiver request for which you received approval under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).

Not applicable.

7. If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the postsecondary allocation formula described in section 132(a)—
 - i. include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and
 - ii. describe how the formula does not result in a distribution of funds to the eligible institutions or consortia with the State that have the highest numbers of economically disadvantaged individuals and that an alternative formula will result in such a distribution. (Section 132(b) of Perkins V)

Also indicate if this is a waiver request for which you received approval under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).

Delaware previously received a waiver for an alternate postsecondary formula that was approved under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).

Per section 132(b), awarding funds to eligible institutions for the purpose of operating postsecondary and adult CTE programs based solely on the formula in section 132(a)(2) does not result in a distribution of funds to eligible institutions within Delaware that have the highest numbers of economically disadvantaged individuals. The formula in section 132(a) of the Act excludes eligible area career and technical educational institutions providing postsecondary education and limits the types of postsecondary credential programs that are supported by institutions of higher education under the Act. Specifically, section 132(a) does not encompass short-term credential programs, registered apprenticeship programs, and institutions that provide CTE programs through adult education. A high percentage of postsecondary CTE participants in these institutions and programs are economically disadvantaged students that do not receive assistance from Pell Grants. Despite the fact that these students are eligible for such assistance, the delivery system for Pell does not represent service to the greatest number of students who are economically disadvantaged, nor does it support the pursuit of all types of high-quality postsecondary credentials.

Delaware is proposing an alternative postsecondary formula that will result in a distribution of funds to

those eligible institutions or consortia within the State that have the highest numbers of economically disadvantaged individuals. At a minimum, those eligible postsecondary institutions under the Delaware Perkins State Plan include:

1. One institution of higher education, Delaware Technical Community College, which offers short- and long-term credential programs as well as Pell Eligible credential and degree programs; and
2. Three (3) area career and technical educational institutions providing postsecondary education: 1. New Castle Vocational-Technical School District, 2. POLYTECH School District, and 3. Sussex County Technical School District, which offer short- and long-term credential programs as well as registered apprenticeship programs.

These eligible institutions are open enrollment institutions of higher education that serve large percentages of economically disadvantaged students and support the instructional alignment of education and training programs across a statewide career pathways system. These institutions offer CTE programs of study that meaningfully intersect with LEAs and connect adult learners to high-quality education and training programs in demand-driven occupations leading to advanced education and training, as well as employment. Postsecondary CTE programs integrate academic and CTE coursework through coherent sequences of courses resulting in students who are prepared to enter the workforce and allow for the equitable participation of special populations in such programs consistent with the assurance and requirements of the Act. Further, these institutions are of such size, scope, and quality as to be effective and meet the minimum grant amount issued under the Delaware Perkins State Plan; that is no institution or consortia within the State shall receive an allocation under this section in an amount that is less than \$100,000.

The proposed alternative funding formula will issue funds to each eligible institution or consortia within the state in an amount that includes the minimum allocation under this section plus the sum of the amount that bears the same relationship to the portion of funds made available in the Delaware Perkins State Plan (see section C.2 and C.4) for postsecondary institutions in any fiscal year. The additional sum will be an amount that reflects the number of postsecondary concentrators who are designated as economically disadvantaged and who are enrolled in such programs, offered by such eligible institutions or consortia within the State, meeting the requirements of the Delaware Perkins State Plan (see section 2.B), in the preceding fiscal year to the sum of the number of such recipients enrolled in such programs within the State for such year. Individuals who are designated as economically disadvantaged will be the number of unique individuals who receive any of the following assistance or who reside in the designated communities:

1. Federal Pell Grant recipients;
2. Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients;
3. Federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients;
4. Federal Medicaid recipients; and
5. Delaware Promise Communities residents.

Delaware's Promise Communities are those geographic areas, designed under federal WIOA Title I guidance, using www.factfinder.census.gov, that have high concentrations of low-income families and high-poverty. Further, these communities have additional barriers, e.g. inadequate transportation, inter-generational poverty, lack of affordable housing, and limited local employment opportunities.

- City of Wilmington (zip codes 19801, 19802, and 19805);
- South Bridge and Route 9 Corridor, New Castle County (zip code 19720);
- Southwest Bear and Route 40, New Castle County (zip codes 19701 and 19702);

- City of Dover and Felton (zip codes 19901, 19904, 19977, 19934, 19943, and 19952);
- City of Seaford, Bridgeville, and Laurel (zip codes 19933, 19956, and 19973); and
- City of Georgetown (zip codes 19947 and 19966).

The Eligible Agency will work with the Delaware Department of Education to oversee the financial distribution of funds under the Act based on the proposed alternate funding formula. The Department of Education will calculate enrollments in such programs that are offered by such eligible institutions or consortia within the State to determine the number of recipients enrolled in such programs on an annual basis. Funds will be made available in an amount that bears the same relationship as the sum of the number of postsecondary concentrators who are designated as economically disadvantaged who are enrolled in such programs and offered by such eligible institutions or consortium of eligible institutions in the preceding fiscal year.

The on-going viability of postsecondary CTE programs will be measured annually based on concentrator performance in one or more of the designated indicators under the Act. Those postsecondary CTE programs that are not sufficiently supporting CTE concentrators to acquire recognized postsecondary credentials and/or degrees as well as placement may be deemed ineligible to receive future funds under the Act. As a result, the postsecondary allocation under the Act may increase or decrease from year to year due to shifts in eligible postsecondary programs and student enrollments.

8. If the eligible agency will award reserve funds to eligible recipients under section 112(c) of Perkins V, describe the process and criteria for awarding those funds.

Per section 112(c), the eligible agency will exercise the Reserve Fund option under the Act. Reserve Funds will be issued competitively and/or through a performance based allocation model to support secondary LEAs and postsecondary recipients. Competitive funds will be issued to secondary LEAs and postsecondary recipients using a Request for Application (RFA) process and performance based allocations will be issued pursuant to state law, regulations, and policies. The criteria for awarding Reserve Funds include:

1. Up to 15% of the allocation under section 131 of the Act will be held in reserve to be issued to secondary LEAs (10%) and postsecondary institutions (5%).
2. To be eligible for funds through the Reserve Fund, LEAs and postsecondary institutions must meet one of the following criteria:
 - Rural areas;
 - Areas with high percentages of CTE concentrators or participants;
 - Areas with high numbers of CTE concentrators or participants; and
 - Areas with disparities or gaps in performance under the Act.
3. The actual amount of Reserve Funds to be issued in a fiscal year may vary. If the total amount is not used in the anticipated fiscal year, the remaining amount will be returned to the Eligible Agency to be issued in future Reserve Fund allocations. Alternatively, if the total amount is not used in the anticipated fiscal year, the remaining amount may be returned to the Eligible Agency to be redistributed per section 133(b) of the Act.

9. Provide the State’s fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures for the State, that will establish the baseline for the Secretary’s annual determination on whether the State has maintained its fiscal effort and indicate whether the baseline is a continuing level or new level. If the baseline is new, please provide the fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures for the State, for the preceding fiscal year. (Section 211(b)(1)(D) of Perkins V)

Per section 211(b)(1)(D), Delaware will establish a new baseline for the purpose of the annual determination of maintenance of effort under the Act. In FY19, the actual amount in the aggregate of \$69,424,814 was spent to support CTE activities in the State of Delaware.

Delaware will exercise the 5% baseline reduction as permitted under section 211(b)(1)(D) of the Act, noting the new level of fiscal effort in FY20 will equal an anticipated amount of \$65,953,574.

d. ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESULTS

D. Accountability for Results

1. Identify and include at least one (1) of the following indicators of career and technical education program quality—
 - a.
 - i. the percentage of CTE concentrators (see Text Box 6 for the statutory definition of a CTE concentrator under section 3(12) of Perkins V) graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential;
 - ii. the percentage of CTE concentrators graduating high school having attained postsecondary credits in relevant career and technical education programs and programs of study earned through a dual or concurrent enrollment program or another credit transfer agreement; and/or
 - iii. the percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(I) of Perkins V)

Include any other measure(s) of student success in career and technical education that are statewide, valid, and reliable, and comparable across the State. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(II) of Perkins V) Please note that inclusion of “other” program quality measure(s) is optional for States.

Provide the eligible agency’s measurement definition with a numerator and denominator for each of the quality indicator(s) the eligible agency selects to use.

Per section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv), Delaware will include three (3) indicators of program quality in the secondary accountability model. Delaware will also include one (1) optional measure of program quality. The optional measure will be introduced in future academic years. The Eligible Agency’s measurement definition is below, which includes a numerator and denominator for each of the three (3) quality indicators. A framework is provided for the one (1) optional measure.

- Program Quality Metric 1 (5S1): Percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential;

Numerator:

Number/percent of CTE concentrators who attained a recognized postsecondary credential as part of the ESSA school accountability model.

Denominator:

Number/percent of CTE concentrators who exited secondary education as part of the state's ESSA computation of four-year graduation rate.

- Program Quality Metric 2 (5S2): Percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having attained postsecondary credits in the relevant CTE program of study earned through a dual or concurrent enrollment or another credit transfer agreement; and

Numerator:

Number/percent of CTE concentrators who attained postsecondary credits in an academic or technical subject area as part of the ESSA school accountability model.

Denominator:

Number/percent of CTE concentrators who exited secondary education as part of the state's ESSA computation of four-year graduation rate.

- Program Quality Metric 3 (5S3): Percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having successfully participated in work-based learning.

Numerator:

Number/percent of CTE concentrators who successfully completed a work-based learning course as part of the ESSA school accountability model.

Denominator:

Number/percent of CTE concentrators who exited secondary education as part of the state's ESSA computation of four-year graduation rate.

- Optional Program Quality Metric 4 (5S4): Percentage of middle school youth successfully participating in middle grades CTE coursework and student advisement programs.

Numerator and denominator definitions to be developed in the future state plan along with the state performance trajectory.

2. Provide on the form in Section V.B, for each year covered by the State plan beginning in FY 2020, State determined performance levels for each of the secondary and postsecondary core indicators, with the levels of performance being the same for all CTE concentrators in the State. (Section 113(b)(3)(A)(i)(I) of Perkins V)
3. Describe the procedure the eligible agency adopted for determining State determined levels of performance described in section 113 of Perkins V, which at a minimum shall include—
 1. a description of the process for public comment under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V as part of the development of the State determined levels of performance (see Text Box 7 for the statutory requirements for consultation on State determined performance levels under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V);

2. an explanation for the State determined levels of performance that meet each of the statutory requirements in Text Box 8; and
3. a description of how the State determined levels of performance set by the eligible agency align with the levels, goals and objectives other Federal and State laws, (Section 122(d)(10) of Perkins V).

As part of the procedures for determining State determined levels of performance, describe the process that will be used to establish a baseline for those levels.

Per section 113(b)(1), the Eligible Agency, with input from eligible recipients and those additional stakeholders defined in the Act, established state determined levels of performance consistent with those core indicators of performance defined in section 133(b)(2) of the Act. Per section 113(b)(3)(B), the Eligible Agency sought stakeholder input and formal public comments from eligible recipients and those additional stakeholders defined in the Act to determine these levels of performance. Specifically, the Eligible Agency convened the CTE Subcommittee, whose memberships consists of those representative stakeholder groups defined in the Act, on October 23, 2019, and December 4, 2019 to discuss the indicators of performance and determine state levels of performance. Further, an open public comment period was provided through action of the Eligible Agency from December 23, 2019, to February 21, 2020, the link to which can be found here.

Public meetings were also held to provide in person and in writing public comments on the Delaware Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act Combined State Plan, which includes the Delaware Perkins State Plan accountability model, indicators of performance, and state determined levels of performance. Public meetings occurred in February 2020 in New Castle County; in January 2020 in Kent County; and in February 2020 in Sussex County. Public meeting notices, meeting agenda, and other informational materials can be found here.

Feedback from those public meetings and formal public comment process was shared with the CTE Subcommittee in February 2020 for inclusion in the Delaware Perkins State Plan.

Per section 113(b)(2)(C), the core indicators of performance and levels of performance align to substantially similar information in both the Delaware ESSA State Plan, specifically measures within the school accountability model for school quality and student success, as well as the Delaware Combined WIOA State Plan, specifically those performance measures related to in-school youth and adult programs. Per section 122(d)(10), the state determined levels of performance were set by the Eligible Agency to align with the levels, goals, and objectives of the above state plans and related laws. Further, the state determined levels of performance were based on the past performance of LEAs and postsecondary institutions to establish a baseline for each core indicator of performance. Specifically, baseline measures for each core indicator of performance were established using a comparable student cohort or specific student cohort. A comparable student cohort (all high school students) was used to develop baseline measures for those academic readiness indicators (i.e. English language arts, mathematics, and science) and graduation rate as these measures apply to all high school youth. A specific student cohort (all CTE concentrators) was used to develop baseline measures for those program quality indicators (i.e., credential attainment, postsecondary credit attainment, and work-based learning) as well as postsecondary placement and non-traditional concentration as these measures apply only to CTE youth and adult learners. Further, a growth methodology was applied to determine growth targets and annual performance goals under the Act. A similar methodology is associated with the ESSA state plan, which can be found here. The growth methodology is also described in the Career & Technical Education Policies and Procedures.

Per section 113(b)(3)(A)(i), the measurement of each core indicator of performance is captured in both percentage and numerical form to be objective, quantifiable, and measurable. The state expects to make

meaningful progress toward improving the performance of all CTE students, including those designated subgroups of students. Adjustments may be made under the Act that will:

- a. Take into account how the levels of performance involved compare with the state levels of performance established for other States;
 - b. Consider factors including the characteristics of actual CTE concentrators and the services or instruction to be provided;
 - c. Be higher than the average actual performance of the two (2) most recently completed program years, except in the case of unanticipated circumstances that require revisions in accordance with the Act; and
 - d. Take into account the extent to which the state determined levels of performance advance the Eligible Agency's goals as set forth in the Delaware Perkins State Plan.
4. Provide a written response to the comments regarding State determined performance levels received during the public comment period pursuant to section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V. (Section 113(b)(3)(B)(iii) of Perkins V).

As part of the written response, include a description of any the changes made to the State determined performance levels as a result of stakeholder feedback.

Per section 113(b)(3)(B)(iii), an open public comment period was established occurring from December 23, 2019 to February 21, 2020 via action of the Eligible Agency, the link to which can be found here. A copy of all public comments and recommended actions can be found here. No public comments were received regarding state determined performance levels.

5. Describe how the eligible agency will address disparities or gaps in performance as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II) of Perkins V in each of the plan years, and if no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, a description of the additional actions the eligible agency will take to eliminate these disparities or gaps. (Section 122(d)(11) of Perkins V)

As part of the written response, and pursuant to the Report of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP), [1] the eligible agency could indicate that it will analyze data on the core indicators of performance to identify gaps in performance, explain how they will use evidence-based research to develop a plan to provide support and technical assistance to **eligible** recipients to address and close such gaps, and how they will implement this plan. The eligible agency is not required to submit a new State plan prior to the third program year in order to address this requirement.

Per section 122(d)(11), the Eligible Agency will address disparities or gaps in performance for those core indicators under the Act in each of the plan years. If no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, additional action will be taken to eliminate those disparities or gaps. Specifically, the Eligible Agency will work through the Delaware Department of Education to monitor performance for each core indicator under the Act and will work to address disparities through a performance management routine. The Delaware Department of Education will set benchmarks for student performance at each LEA and postsecondary institution through the local needs assessment and local application process to begin the performance routine. The local needs assessment and local application process ensures that all students are provided with appropriate services and access to CTE

programs.

Per section 123(b)(2), the Department of Education will review LEA and postsecondary institution performance annually. Those LEAs or postsecondary institutions that do not meet at least ninety percent (90%) of an agreed upon local level of performance for any core indicator of performance will be required to develop and implement an improvement plan. The improvement plan is required to be approved by the Delaware Department of Education as part of the annual application for funds under the Act before financial resources are allocated to that LEA or postsecondary institution in the given fiscal year. The improvement plan must include an analysis of performance disparities or gaps and those actions to be taken to address those disparities or gaps.

Per section 123(b)(3) and pursuant to the Report of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP), if no meaningful progress has been achieved by the LEA or postsecondary institution prior to the third program year, additional action will be taken by the Delaware Department of Education to eliminate those disparities or gaps. Specifically, the Department of Education will work with the LEA or postsecondary institution to provide or participate in technical assistance models to improve targeted outcomes. Technical assistance models may include support from the Delaware Department of Education to analyze data on the core indicators of performance to identify gaps in performance as well as provide support to LEAs and postsecondary institutions to define, acquire, and use evidence-based research to develop a plan to provide support, or through on-going support to address and close such gaps.

Per section 123(b)(4), subsequent action taken by the Delaware Department of Education may result in the, after notice and opportunity for a hearing, required use of all or a portion of, the LEA or postsecondary institutions allotment under the Act to improve targeted outcomes.

Additionally, subsequent action may result in the, after notice and opportunity for a hearing, withholding of all or a portion of, the LEA or postsecondary institutions allotment under the Act. Per section 123(b)(4)(B), the LEA or postsecondary institution may apply for a waiver for exceptional circumstances under the Act.

The Delaware Department of Education will also conduct on-going performance monitoring routines every three (3) to five (5) years based on a risk analysis of LEA and postsecondary institution performance. This performance routine builds from the local needs assessment, local application, and use of funds under the Act. Findings associated with this performance routine are documented for the LEA or postsecondary institution to address. Additional support will be made available through a tiered engagement model.

TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA)

Yes

JOBS FOR VETERANS' STATE GRANTS

a. HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES TO VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS UNDER THE JVSG

The State of Delaware is designated as a single State local area. As such, the Division operates four (4) comprehensive One-Stop Centers. The centers are strategically located throughout the State and provide the full-range of USDOL/ETA-funded workforce development program services, including Wagner-Peyser services; WIOA Dislocated Worker, Adult, and Youth Program services; TAA program services; Work Opportunity Tax Credit determinations; and State-funded Blue Collar Training Program opportunities. Partner services provided by the Division of Unemployment Insurance, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Older Worker Program, and the Department of Education are also available through the One-Stop Centers.

In order to facilitate the provision of services effectively and efficiently to eligible veterans and eligible persons with significant barriers to employment, a full-time DVOP is assigned to each Delaware One-Stop Center (Wilmington, Newark, Dover, and Georgetown).

Upon intake at any Delaware One-Stop, veterans who have significant barriers to employment, eligible persons, or any additional groups designated by the Secretary as eligible for services will be referred to a DVOP staff for direct assistance and case management. These groups may self-declare their status through the One-Stop Client Intake Form, which lists, for their convenience, Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) as a category. Veterans with SBEs and eligible persons who elect not to see a DVOP may receive services from any One-Stop staff member. The One-Stop staff have been trained to provide direct assistance to any veteran and eligible person. Upon request, however, a veteran with SBEs and eligible persons may be referred to a DVOP at any time for services by a One-Stop staff member as well.

DVOP specialists will continue to provide employment services to veterans enrolled in or who have completed training or education under the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Program and, upon referral, will also be encouraged to engage with DVOP specialists whenever their circumstances or barriers impede their success in gaining employment.

DVOP specialists are fully integrated into the One-Stop service delivery system, and their clients have complete access, on a priority basis, to all core, intensive, and training services. DVOP specialists are cross-trained in all programs and services available at the One-Stop and through their case management efforts facilitate the provision of services to eligible veterans and eligible persons as they move from core services to intensive services to career training services.

Outreach

Inside -Out -The Transitional Assistance Program (TAP)-Delaware DET developed a partnership with the TAP program in 2021 to engage veterans as they are transitioning from the military to civilian life. A DVOP presents monthly to the TAP class at the Dover Airforce Base to meet veterans and tell them about the array of employment services that are available at the American Job Centers. This is an industry best practice, and we are pleased to have the opportunity to assist veterans with employment considerations as they prepare to leave military service.

Employers-To increase outreach to employers Delaware added two (2) additional LVERS to its Vets

staffing. One (1) position was added to serve Southern New Castle County and one (1) was added to serve Sussex County.

The LVER helps to provide employment, training, and job placement services for veterans. The LVER helps to bring awareness of DOL services, educate employers, create opportunities in partnership with Employment Services Specialists in our Labor Exchange and Training Unit on how to provide services to veterans as well as related internal and community-based initiatives and incentives as available for veterans.

The SWA plans to hire a Veteran Program Manager to support the Veteran team and Administrator. Our goal is to have this position on board no later than April 2022.

b. THE DUTIES ASSIGNED TO DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF BY THE STATE; SPECIFICALLY IMPLEMENTING DVOP AND LVER DUTIES OR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS OUTLINED IN 38 U.S.C. § 4103A AND 4104. THESE DUTIES MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT GUIDANCE

DVOP specialists, in accordance with 38 U.S.C. 4103A use a case management approach, as taught by the National Veterans' Training Institute. DVOP specialists will focus staff-assisted intensive services to meet the needs of veterans with Significant Barrier to Employment (SBEs). Individuals in these categories are considered to have an SBE.

Delaware DVOP specialists provide intensive services and facilitate placements to meet the employment needs of eligible veterans and eligible persons, prioritizing service to special disabled veterans, other disabled veterans, and other categories of veterans in accordance with priorities determined by the Secretary of Labor (Secretary).

Delaware DVOP specialists also review all open case files of current participants with an SBE or in a priority category and perform case management duties as referred or as requested by the veteran.

In addition, DVOP specialists conduct relationship building, outreach, and recruitment activities with other service providers in the One-Stop and community to enroll SBE and priority category veterans in State One-Stop employment services and track their progress as they move from career services to training services.

Delaware LVERs, in accordance with 38 U.S.C. 4104(b):

1. Conduct outreach to employers in the area to assist veterans in gaining employment, including conducting workshops with the Business Service Representatives for employers and, in conjunction with employers, conduct job search workshops and establishing job clubs.
2. Facilitate employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans in Delaware through Delaware JobLink in the One-Stops.
3. Are members of the Business Services Representative group.
4. Plan and participate in job and career fairs.
5. Coordinate with unions, organizations, and apprenticeship programs, and are members of the State's local Chambers of Commerce as advocates for veteran employment,
6. Inform Federal contractors of the process to recruit qualified veterans.
7. Coordinate and actively participates in other business outreach efforts, e.g., Delaware Joining Forces and the Commission on Veterans Affairs.
8. Meet with veteran job seekers recommended by other One-Stop staff for referral to

specific employment opportunities.

c. THE MANNER IN WHICH DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF ARE INTEGRATED INTO THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM OR AMERICAN JOB CENTER;

DVOP specialists and LVERs are fully housed at local One-Stops. Each One-Stop has a minimum of one DVOP and each county has a LVER assigned to it. DVOP specialists and LVERs report directly to the Area Operations Manager who is responsible for the operations of the local One- Stop. Being co-located in the One-Stops with core and partner programs allows DVOP specialists and LVERs to fully-integrate their services with the services provided by the partners, which helps to increase the options of and opportunities for the veterans and those with barriers to employment, who are their primary clients.

Through their outreach efforts to employers, LVER staff seek to secure hiring opportunities for veterans by making employers aware of LVER services as well as promoting the benefits of hiring and retaining veterans. As Delaware continues to improve its web-based, talent/job bank, Delaware JobLink (DJL), LVERs continue to play a key role in recruiting employers to utilize the JobLink system. Core partners and workforce development staff coordinate these outreach activities with LVER staff in order to target their efforts to Federal contractors and subcontractors. The goal of LVER staff is to increase their employer contacts by 25% annually.

Subsequently, LVER staff enter their employer contacts into the Delaware JobLink job order system. These efforts are expected to result in more viable job orders, increased employment placement of veterans, and possible certification opportunities for veterans and placement of veterans in apprenticeships. In coordination with the One-Stop Area Operations Manager, LVER staff will also monitor the provision of services to veterans through the center and assist in the preparation of the quarterly Managers Report on Services to Veterans.

The Apprenticeship and Training Unit works closely with the LVER staff to develop and promote credentialing and licensing opportunities for veterans.

d. THE INCENTIVE AWARD PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED USING THE 1% GRANT ALLOCATION SET ASIDE FOR THIS PURPOSE, AS APPLICABLE;

The State is not requesting the 1% funding for Performance Incentive Awards, as the awards are not consistent with established State of Delaware employee recognition policy.

e. THE POPULATIONS OF ELIGIBLE VETERANS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING ANY ADDITIONAL POPULATIONS DESIGNATED BY THE SECRETARY AS ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES, AND ANY ADDITIONAL POPULATIONS SPECIFICALLY TARGETED BY THE STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY FOR SERVICES FROM ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM PARTNERS (E.G., NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS; VETERANS IN REMOTE RURAL COUNTIES OR PARISHES);

Delaware provides services to eligible veterans, eligible persons with significant barriers to employment, and any additional populations specifically designated by the Secretary as eligible for services, in addition to populations targeted for services as identified by our system partners.

f. HOW THE STATE IMPLEMENTS AND MONITORS THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRIORITY OF SERVICE TO COVERED PERSONS;

Information and assistance regarding veterans' Priority of Service will continue to be provided by DOL-DET One-Stop staff and DVOP specialists and LVERs co-located in the One-Stops. The Delaware JobLink registration process determines veterans' eligibility, and an American Flag identifies veterans' resumes listed on JobLink for employers. Veterans are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities and services available at the One-Stops by declaring their veteran status. Priority of Service signs are prominently displayed in all State One-Stops and on Delaware's Mobile One-Stop when in use. One-Stop staff are available to explain mandatory program eligibility and veterans' priority requirements.

DOL-DET has developed and implemented the applicable Employment Services (Labor Exchange) Service Delivery Process Policy – LE Policy # 10 Veterans Priority of Service to govern agency processes and procedures. All employment services staff, including management, have been trained on this policy. These policies have been catalogued on the DOL-DET virtual data warehouse drive. All DOL-DET policies are reviewed and updated annually and/or as required. A copy of the referenced policy number 10 is included as Appendix O. Additional staff development by the DET Director and Administrator will continue to be conducted during planned quarterly meetings and as needed with impacted service delivery staff to include DVOP specialists and LVERs.

The Administrator for the Jobs for Veterans State Grant shall perform periodic DJL monthly monitoring reviews related to Veterans Services administered at the Delaware One-Stops (Dover, Pencader, Fox Valley, and Georgetown) to monitor Priority of Service to veterans as well as JVSG compliance and performance. To further support compliance, refresher training is provided to all One-Stop staff on an ongoing basis and also includes DVOP specialists, LVERs, and Business Service Representatives on the use of Priority of Service for veterans to maintain system integrity and sustainability. Delaware will examine and use monthly monitoring report results for continuous system improvement.

g. HOW THE STATE PROVIDES OR INTENDS TO PROVIDE AND MEASURE, THROUGH BOTH THE DVOP AND AMERICAN JOB CENTER STAFF:

1. JOB AND JOB TRAINING INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES

Per Grant Officer Memorandum 01-20, a response to this section is not required.

2. EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT SERVICES, AND

Per Grant Officer Memorandum 01-20, a response to this section is not required."

3. JOB-DRIVEN TRAINING AND SUBSEQUENT PLACEMENT SERVICES

PROGRAM FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS;

Per Grant Officer Memorandum 01-20, a response to this section is not required."

h. THE HIRE DATE ALONG WITH MANDATORY TRAINING COMPLETION DATES FOR ALL DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF; AND

Veteran Staffing Chart

Employee Name	Hire Date	Training Completion Date
Program Manager position	VACANT	TBD
LVER	VACANT	TBD
Todd Hilliker - LVER	1/21/19	12/2019
Melissa Hughes-LVER	01/07/2020	3/2020
Allen Jones - DVOP	8/26/08	07/01/2012
Freddy Rodriguez - DVOP	01/17/19	01/ 27/2020
Danny Mosby - DVOP	07/08/19	9/2019
Gail Gartner DVOP	10/12/14	11/20/2015
Sylvia Seymour-LVER	12/9/2020	2/2021

i. SUCH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AS THE SECRETARY MAY REQUIRE

Per Grant Officer Memorandum 01-20, a response to this section is not required.

**PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
APPENDIX ALL WIOA CORE
PROGRAMS**

All WIOA Core Programs

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹ *“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.*

ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

Additional Indicators of Performance
NA

OTHER APPENDICES

To access appendices, go to <https://wib.delawareworks.com/wioa.php>

- Delaware Demand Driven Workforce Development Plan Public Comment Draft
- Appendix A - 2020 Demand Occupation List
- Appendix B - ITA Manual
- Appendix D - Board Roster
- Appendix E - New Executive Order
- Appendix F - Funding Guidelines
- Appendix G - Youth RFP
- Appendix H - Adult RFP
- Appendix I - DWDB org chart
- Appendix J - CDC Violence Report
- Appendix K - Wilmington Youth Initiative
- Appendix L - Pattern MOU
- Appendix M - Example ISY RFP
- Appendix N - Example OSY
- Appendix O - Priority Of Service
- Appendix P - Delaware Annual Economic Report 2020
- Appendix Q - 2026 Industry Projections
- Appendix R - Executive Order # 27: Creating The State Of Delaware Correctional Reentry Commission
- Appendix S - DCRC MOU
- Appendix T - Telamon MOU
- Appendix U - COVID MSFW advisory
- Appendix V - ITA Process Flowchart
- Appendix W - Subsequent Renewal Flowchart
- Appendix X - Appeal Process Flowchart
- Appendix Y - AJL Users Guide
- Appendix Z - PY 2018 Annual Report
- Appendix AA - WIOA Partner MOU and Infrastructure Funding Agreement 2018-2020.pdf