IOWA PYS 2022-2023 (MOD)

CONTENTS

Iowa PYs 2022-2023 (Mod) 1
I. WIOA State Plan Type and Executive Summary 3
a. WIOA State Plan Type 3
II. Strategic Elements 3
a. Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis 3
b. State Strategic Vision and Goals 73
c. State Strategy 76
III. Operational Planning Elements 83
a. State Strategy Implementation 83
b. State Operating Systems and Policies 113
IV. Coordination with State Plan Programs 159
V. Common Assurances (For All Core Programs) 160
VI. Program-Specific Requirements for Core Programs 162
Program-specific Requirements for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I-B 162
Program-Specific Requirements for Wagner-Peyser Program (Employment Services) 191
Program-specific Requirements for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs 214
Program-Specific Requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation (Combined or General) 235
Program-Specific Requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation (Blind) 306
VII. Program-Specific Requirements for Combined State Plan Partner Programs 359
Performance Indicator Appendix 359
All WIOA Core Programs 359
Additional Indicators of Performance 359
Other Appendices 360

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

This is a unified plan

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

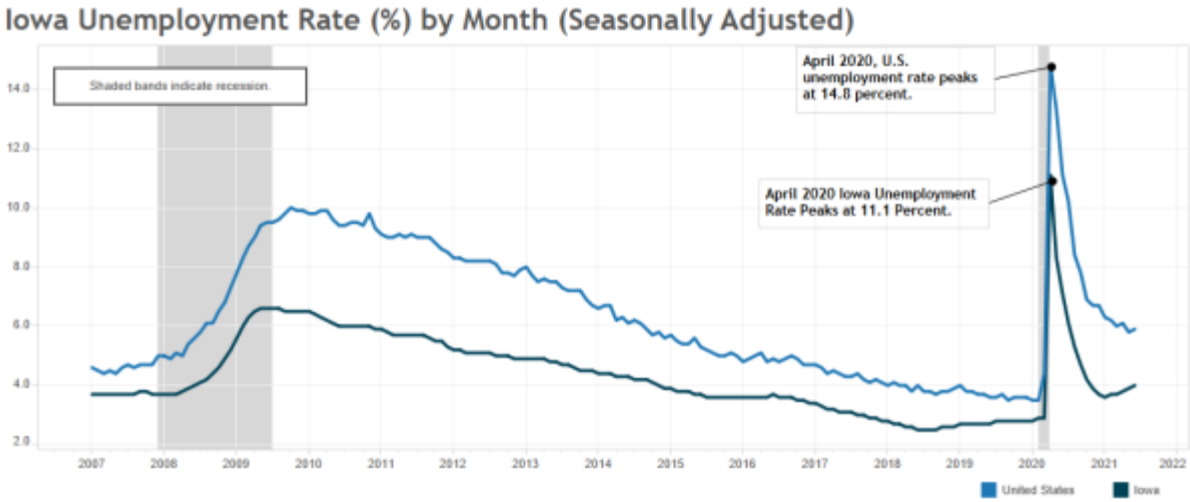
i. EXISTING Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

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

The effects of COVID-19 brought about unprecedented changes throughout the world that could not have been foreseen and are still impacting the current economy today. Although self-imposed closures of businesses and restrictions on social gatherings no doubt stopped some of the spread of the COVID-19 virus and saved lives, but understandably, the economy slowed. Some industries bounced back quickly; some may take years to return to pre-pandemic levels. These measures brought about a definitive end to an historic run of expansion within the U.S. that stretched back to June 2009 – a total of 128 months (NBER, National Bureau of Economic Research, 2020). Unlike recessions and expansion dates of the past, this recession beginning was expected and easily predicted. Furthermore, the NBER ended this recession in just two months, officially marking it the shortest recession on record[1].

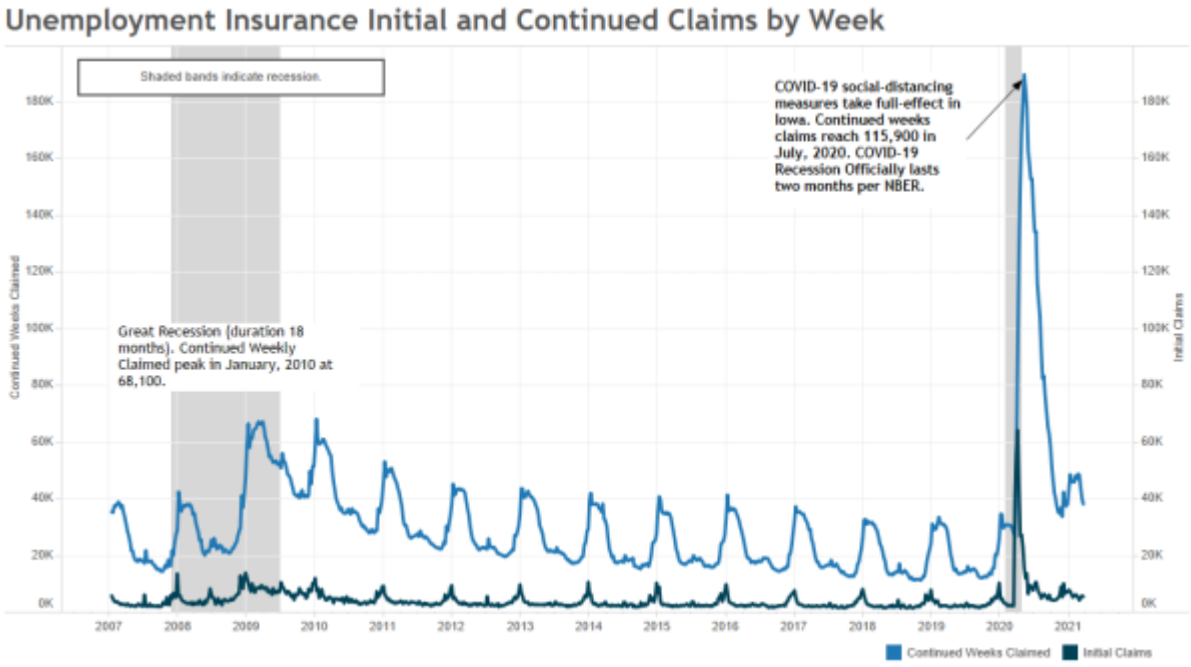
Indicators Immediately Show Sharp Impacts from COVID

As the pandemic began, the most talked about and highlighted statistic would have been the unemployment rate. This data was quickly referenced during the social-distancing efforts which began in March and April of 2020 and expectedly increased by a margin not seen in the U.S. since the 1930s (see figure #1).

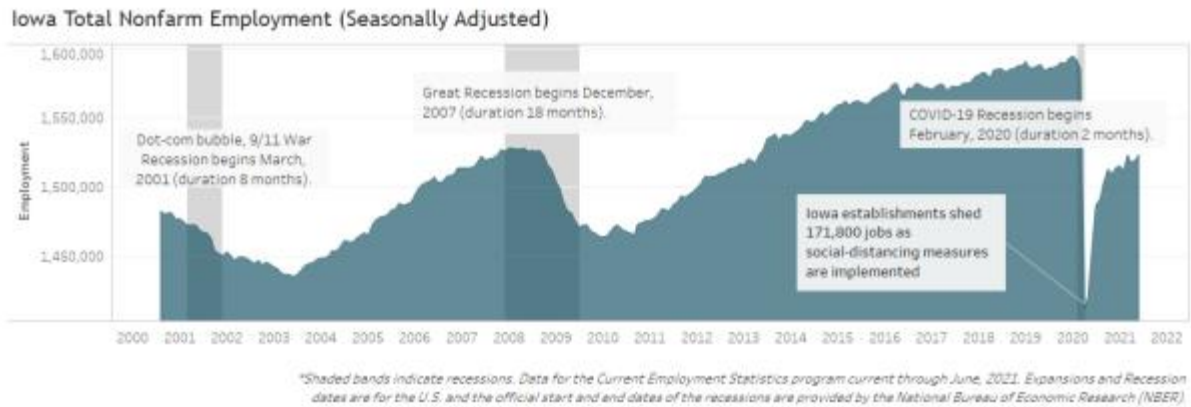


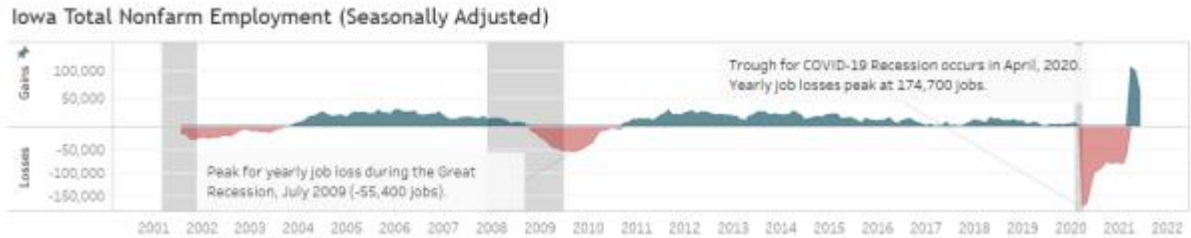
A sharp rise in the unemployment rate was easily predicted as non-essential businesses were closed. Most estimations saw the increase in the double-digits in April with non-essential businesses temporarily closing.

Understandably, unemployment claims skyrocketed as individuals were released from their positions. The corresponding rise in both unemployment insurance claims and weeks paid easily outshined that of the Great Recession (see figure #2).

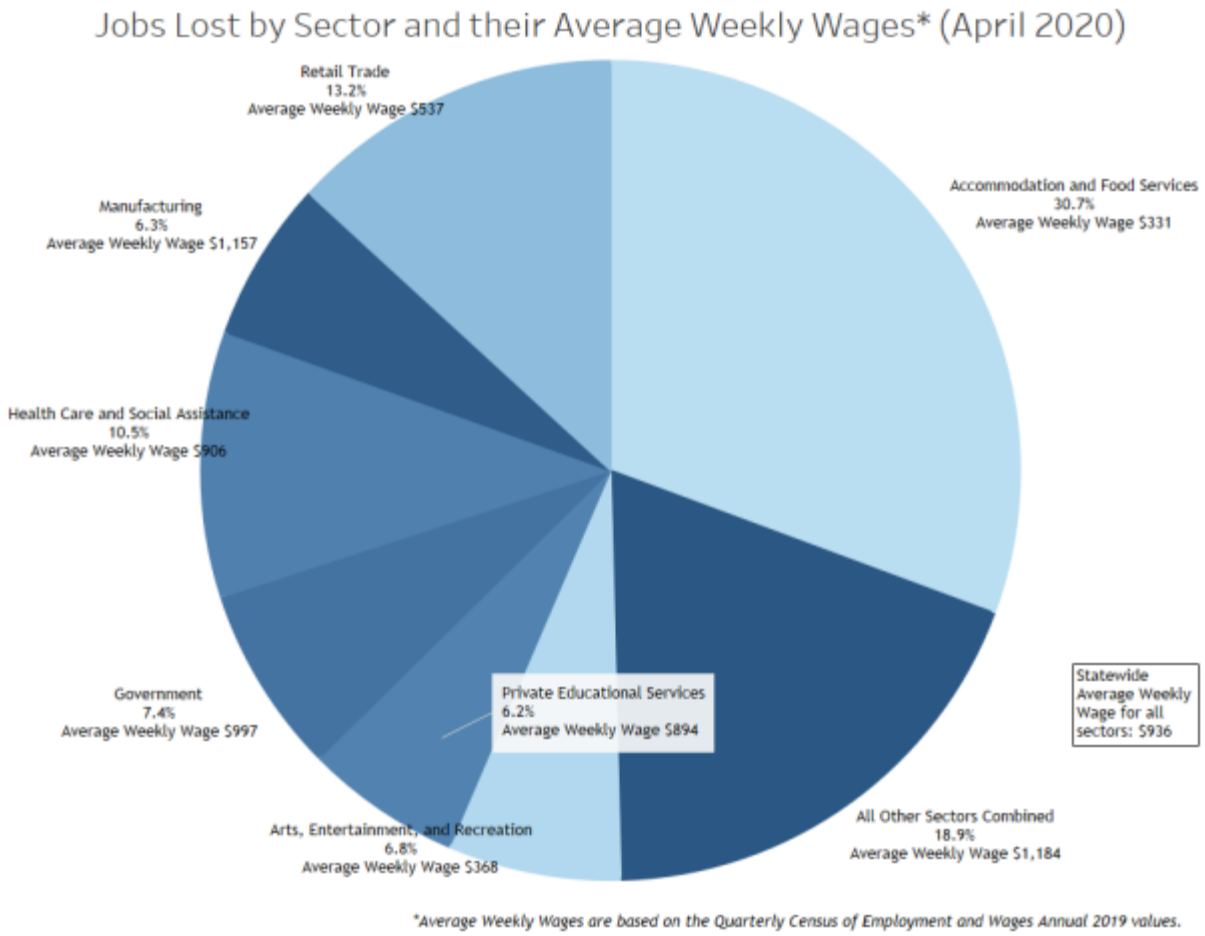


Losses in total nonfarm employment were equally dramatic, even eclipsing those rapids declines witnessed during the great recession in 2007. The February-to-April peak to trough equated to 11.2 percent of all payroll jobs lost in the state. (see chart below)





Impacts of the COVID-19 Virus on the Economy Felt Disproportionately



During 2020, sector losses related to COVID-19 were disproportionately affected in lower-wage industries. Those most affected:

- Leisure and hospitality workers were unquestionably most affected among all groups as social-distancing measures were implemented. Leisure and hospitality shed 63,600 jobs in April, accounting for 37.5 percent of all jobs lost and almost half of all payroll jobs in this sector (44.9 percent).
    - The average weekly wage of these workers was $336—35.9 percent of the Statewide average weekly wage of $936. This was unsurprising as bars and restaurants were among the first businesses to have restrictions implemented. Additionally, entertainment and recreational industries trended down as many parts of the country asked residents to avoid non-essential trips.
- Retail trade was the second-most affected industry with 13.3 percent of the total jobs shed (23,300 jobs).
    - Non-essential businesses were either temporarily shuttered or forced to switch to an on-line only shopping model. These workers also represent a lower-wage industry with the average weekly wage of $537 per week—57.4 percent of the statewide average.
- Combined, leisure and hospitality and retail trade represented slightly over half of all jobs shed as the quarantine measures began (86,900 jobs or 51.2 percent) and represent an average weekly wage of $446 per week, just 47.6 percent of the statewide average weekly wage.

- Health care and social assistance was lost 18,100 jobs (9.2 percent) of jobs shed as non-essential services were temporarily halted and social assistance efforts were reduced to either remote only services or postponed until pandemic conditions improved.

- Government and private education went hand-in-hand, as schools were limited to on-line only classes for most areas. The combined loss of government and private education was 22,500 jobs or 7.4 percent. Private education was especially impacted, as 23.8 percent of all their sector payroll employment was let go.

- All other sectors combined for just 18.9 percent of jobs pared when social-distancing measures began in April of 2020. These industries included outdoor activities, such as construction or utilities, or those that generally do not deal heavily with large groups and may be performed remotely, such as real estate, finance, and administrative support and waste management Given that many of these firms are technical in nature the average weekly wages of these firms are much higher at $1,184 per week or 24.5 percent higher than the statewide average.

Recovery through April 2022 – Ranking the Lingering Effects of the Pandemic

Two years after the pandemic shocked the labor market most sectors have shown some recovery, although the rate of restaffing has varied by industry. The following two charts illustrate how the sectors fared in the immediate wake of social distancing measures through April 2022.

	Employment Change versus February 2020																								
INDUSTRY TITLE	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22
Total Nonfarm	-169.8	-161.7	-120.7	-97.4	-91.5	-78.4	-63.9	-68.8	-63.5	-58.5	-60	-52.5	-54.3	-53.6	-53	-42.4	-44.4	-43.8	-43.8	-40.4	-30.4	-27.3	-18.5	-21.3	-18
Mining and Logging	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.3	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	0	0	0.1	0.1	0	0
Construction	-4.2	-2.6	-3.1	-3.6	-3.5	-5.2	-2.8	-2.6	-1.4	-1.7	-3.8	-1.6	-0.8	-1.6	-1.9	-0.8	-1.1	-0.9	-1.7	-0.7	0.5	0.6	0.8	1.2	2.1
Manufacturing	-11.3	-12.4	-12.3	-11.1	-10.8	-9.3	-9.2	-8.7	-6.8	-7	-7.1	-7	-7.1	-7	-7.1	-5.5	-5.6	-5.8	-5.2	-10.5	-4.5	-2.3	-1.1	-0.9	0.2
Wholesale Trade	-1.9	-2.4	-2.4	-2.1	-2.2	-1.9	-1.7	-2	-1.5	-1.5	-1.7	-1.8	-1.9	-1.9	-1.8	-1.7	-1.6	-2.1	-2.2	-2.2	-2.3	-1.7	-1.1	-0.9	-1.4
Retail Trade	-23.3	-16.1	-8.3	-7.2	-6.9	-4.5	-3	-5	-1.9	-0.8	-1.1	0.1	-1.3	-1.6	-1.7	-1.4	-1.7	-1.8	-0.9	-0.5	0.8	1.3	4	3.8	3.1
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	-2.3	-2.2	-1.8	-1.6	-1.2	-0.8	0.1	0.5	0.8	1.1	1.2	1.3	0.9	1	1	1.5	1.8	1.8	2.4	3.3	3	3	2.3	2.6	2.7
Information	-1.8	-2.2	-2	-1.9	-1.9	-1.9	-2	-2	-1.9	-2	-1.9	-1.9	-1.9	-1.8	-1.9	-1.5	-1.5	-1.6	-1.4	-1.8	-1.4	-1.5	-1.2	-1.3	-1.2
Finance and Insurance	-0.6	-0.8	-0.7	-0.7	-0.5	0	0	-0.2	-0.6	-0.3	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.6	-0.8	-0.6	-0.8	-1.4	-1.8	-1.9	-1.9	-1.6	-1.7	-2.1	-1.4
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	-1.4	-1.4	-1.2	-1	-1	-0.8	-0.7	-0.8	-0.8	-0.6	-0.7	-0.6	-0.6	-0.5	-0.7	-0.5	-0.5	-0.6	-0.5	-0.4	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2	-0.3	-0.3
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	-2.4	-2	-1.9	-1.8	-2.3	-1.8	-1.4	-1.3	-1	-0.8	-1.1	-0.7	-0.6	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.3	-0.6	-0.9	-0.8	-0.6	-0.7	-0.3	-0.2	-0.8
Management of Companies and Enterprises	-0.9	-0.8	-0.7	-0.4	-0.3	-0.1	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.9	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.8	1.5	1.4
Administrative & Support Services	-6.6	-6.3	-6.1	-5.1	-4.8	-4.3	-2.1	-1.9	0	0.4	0.4	0.6	-0.1	-0.3	-0.4	-0.5	-0.8	-1.1	-1.5	-0.7	0.3	-2.6	-0.8	-0.7	-1.2
Educational Services	-9.3	-10.3	-6	-4.8	-4.7	-5	-1.3	-1.4	-2.5	-1.1	-1.3	-0.8	-2.5	-3.1	-2.1	-2.3	-1.8	-2.1	-2.4	-2.2	-2	-0.9	-1.4	-1.3	-0.7
Health Care and Social Assistance	-18.1	-16	-12.2	-9.9	-9.4	-8.3	-7.3	-7.9	-7.3	-7.3	-7.5	-7.3	-7.2	-7.9	-8.6	-7.6	-8.7	-10.1	-9.9	-9.6	-10.1	-10	-9.3	-10.2	-9.9
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	-11.5	-11.5	-8	-6.4	-5.7	-5.2	-4.8	-4.8	-4.7	-4.5	-4.4	-4.1	-3.9	-3.7	-3.8	-3	-2.8	-2.7	-2.9	-1.3	-2.7	-1.7	-1.2	-1.7	-1.8
Accommodation and Food Services	-52.1	-41.8	-25.7	-19.1	-19.3	-17.4	-14.7	-16.4	-17.9	-16.2	-15	-13.9	-12.9	-12.2	-10.9	-7.6	-7.9	-7.5	-6.5	-4.6	-4	-2.1	-0.8	-2.7	-2.6
Other Services	-10.2	-7.1	-5.4	-4.7	-4.3	-3.8	-3.5	-4.1	-4.1	-4.2	-4.2	-4.4	-4	-4.1	-4.2	-3.8	-3.8	-3.8	-3.1	-2.8	-2	-2.8	-3.2	-3.1	-3.1
Government	-13.2	-26.4	-24.2	-17.7	-14	-9.5	-10.9	-11.8	-13.5	-13.7	-12.9	-11.8	-10.9	-10.1	-10.1	-9.3	-9.7	-8.2	-8	-7	-7.2	-7.1	-6.5	-6.5	-6.3

	Percent Change versus February 2020																								
INDUSTRY TITLE	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22
Total Nonfarm	-10.7%	-10.2%	-7.6%	-6.2%	-5.8%	-5.0%	-4.0%	-4.3%	-4.0%	-3.7%	-3.8%	-3.3%	-3.4%	-3.4%	-3.3%	-2.7%	-2.8%	-2.8%	-2.8%	-2.6%	-1.9%	-1.7%	-1.2%	-1.3%	-1.1%
Mining and Logging	-8.3%	-8.3%	-8.3%	-8.3%	-8.3%	-4.2%	-4.2%	-4.2%	-4.2%	-4.2%	-12.5%	-4.2%	-4.2%	-4.2%	-4.2%	-4.2%	-8.3%	-4.2%	-4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Construction	-5.3%	-3.3%	-3.9%	-4.6%	-4.4%	-6.6%	-3.5%	-3.5%	-1.8%	-2.2%	-4.8%	-2.0%	-1.0%	-2.0%	-2.0%	-1.0%	-1.4%	-1.1%	-2.2%	-0.9%	0.6%	0.8%	1.0%	1.3%	2.7%
Manufacturing	-5.0%	-5.5%	-5.5%	-4.9%	-4.8%	-4.1%	-4.1%	-3.9%	-3.0%	-3.1%	-3.2%	-3.1%	-3.2%	-3.1%	-3.2%	-2.5%	-2.5%	-2.6%	-2.3%	-4.7%	-2.0%	-1.0%	0.5%	-0.4%	0.1%
Wholesale Trade	-2.9%	-3.6%	-3.6%	-3.2%	-3.3%	-2.9%	-2.6%	-3.0%	-2.3%	-2.3%	-2.6%	-2.7%	-2.9%	-2.9%	-2.7%	-2.6%	-2.4%	-3.2%	-3.3%	-3.3%	-1.4%	-2.6%	-1.7%	-1.4%	-2.1%
Retail Trade	-13.3%	-9.2%	-4.8%	-4.1%	-4.0%	-2.6%	-1.7%	-2.9%	-1.1%	-0.5%	-0.6%	0.1%	-0.7%	-0.9%	-1.0%	-0.8%	-1.0%	-1.0%	-0.5%	-0.3%	0.5%	0.7%	2.3%	2.2%	1.8%
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	-3.4%	-3.2%	-2.6%	-2.3%	-1.7%	-1.2%	0.1%	0.1%	1.2%	1.6%	1.7%	1.9%	1.3%	1.5%	1.5%	2.2%	2.3%	2.6%	3.5%	4.8%	4.4%	4.4%	3.4%	3.8%	3.9%
Information	-9.7%	-10.7%	-9.7%	-9.2%	-9.2%	-9.2%	-9.7%	-9.7%	-9.2%	-9.7%	-9.2%	-9.2%	-9.2%	-8.7%	-9.2%	-7.3%	-7.3%	-7.8%	-6.8%	-8.7%	-6.8%	-7.3%	-5.8%	-6.3%	-5.8%
Finance and Insurance	-0.0%	-0.0%	-0.7%	-0.7%	-0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.2%	-0.6%	-0.3%	-0.4%	-0.4%	-0.4%	-0.6%	-0.8%	-0.6%	-0.6%	-1.5%	-1.9%	-2.0%	-2.0%	-1.7%	-1.8%	-2.2%	-1.5%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	-9.3%	-8.3%	-7.9%	-6.6%	-6.6%	-5.3%	-4.6%	-5.3%	-5.3%	-4.0%	-4.6%	-4.0%	-4.0%	-3.3%	-4.6%	-3.3%	-3.3%	-4.0%	-3.3%	-2.6%	-2.0%	-1.3%	-1.3%	-2.0%	-2.0%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	-4.5%	-3.7%	-3.5%	-3.0%	-4.3%	-3.4%	-2.6%	-2.4%	-1.9%	-1.5%	-2.0%	-1.3%	-1.1%	0.2%	-0.4%	0.2%	0.6%	-1.1%	-1.7%	-0.7%	-1.5%	-1.3%	0.6%	-0.4%	1.7%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	-4.2%	-3.8%	-3.3%	-1.9%	-1.4%	-0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	0.9%	1.4%	1.9%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	4.2%	5.2%	6.1%	6.1%	6.6%	6.1%	6.6%	7.5%	7.0%	6.6%
Administrative & Support Services	-10.2%	-10.7%	-9.4%	-7.9%	-7.4%	-6.7%	-3.3%	-2.9%	0.0%	0.6%	0.6%	0.9%	-0.2%	-0.5%	-0.6%	-0.8%	-0.9%	-1.7%	-2.3%	-1.1%	0.5%	-4.0%	-1.2%	-1.1%	-1.9%
Educational Services	-23.8%	-28.4%	-15.4%	-11.8%	-12.1%	-12.8%	-3.3%	-3.6%	-6.4%	-2.8%	-3.3%	-2.1%	-6.0%	-7.9%	-5.4%	-5.9%	-4.6%	-5.4%	-6.2%	-5.6%	-5.1%	-2.3%	-3.6%	-3.3%	-1.8%
Health Care and Social Assistance	-9.2%	-8.1%	-6.2%	-5.0%	-4.8%	-4.2%	-3.7%	-4.0%	-3.7%	-3.7%	-3.8%	-3.7%	-3.7%	-4.0%	-4.4%	-3.9%	-4.4%	-5.1%	-5.0%	-4.9%	-5.1%	-5.1%	-4.7%	-5.2%	-5.0%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	-53.5%	-53.5%	-37.2%	-29.8%	-26.5%	-24.2%	-22.3%	-21.4%	-21.9%	-20.9%	-20.5%	-19.1%	-18.1%	-17.2%	-17.7%	-14.0%	-13.0%	-12.6%	-13.5%	-6.0%	-12.6%	-7.9%	-5.6%	-7.9%	-8.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	-43.3%	-34.4%	-21.4%	-15.9%	-16.1%	-14.5%	-12.2%	-13.6%	-14.9%	-13.5%	-12.5%	-11.6%	-10.7%	-10.1%	-9.1%	-6.3%	-6.6%	-6.2%	-5.4%	-3.8%	-3.3%	-1.7%	-0.7%	-2.2%	-2.2%
Other Services	-17.5%	-12.5%	-9.2%	-8.0%	-7.4%	-6.5%	-6.0%	-7.0%	-7.0%	-7.2%	-7.2%	-7.5%	-6.8%	-7.0%	-7.2%	-6.5%	-6.5%	-6.5%	-5.3%	-4.8%	-3.4%	-4.8%	-5.5%	-5.3%	-5.3%
Government	-5.0%	-10.0%	-9.2%	-6.7%	-5.3%	-3.6%	-4.1%	-4.4%	-5.1%	-5.2%	-4.9%	-4.5%	-4.1%	-3.8%	-3.8%	-3.5%	-3.7%	-2.9%	-3.0%	-2.7%	-2.7%	-2.7%	-2.5%	-2.5%	-2.4%

Graphically, the above two charts illustrate just how dramatic the pandemic was on the different sectors along with illustrating longitudinally how these sectors have recovered over the past two years. Those sectors most negatively impacted were those associated with leisure and hospitality or education; those faring better were those involved in goods production (manufacturing and construction) along with financial activities. No sector was spared.

Sectors showing the most growth as of April 2022:

1. Retail Trade (+3,100 jobs): This sector initially shed the most jobs by percentage excluding leisure and hospitality and education industries but recovered strongly as firms adjusted to shifting consumer preferences. This sector eventually surpassed pre-pandemic levels beginning in 2022 and rests up 3,100 jobs above the February 2020 mark. Many of these gains were within general merchandise stores.

2. Transportation, warehousing, and utilities (+2,700 jobs): Transportation and warehousing has been the fuel within this sector grouping with arrival of a large distribution center in 2021. This sector should continue to expand as consumers continue to abandon brick-and-mortar establishments in favor of online shopping.
3. Construction (+2,100 jobs): Construction experienced moderate losses as the pandemic began with 5.3 percent of all jobs being pared in April 2020. The sector rebounded steadily throughout 2021 as demand for new projects increase and this sector now rests 2,100 jobs higher than pre-pandemic levels.

Sectors with the least growth as of April 2022:

1. Health care and social assistance (-9,900 jobs): This sector displayed an abundance of caution as the pandemic began with the halting of all non-essential procedures, telehealth visits, reducing visitation for family members in hospitals, and other practices to stop the spread of the virus. The increase and hours worked, and safety procedures took a toll on workers within NAICS 623, Nursing and Residential Care Facilities, which has been responsible for more than half of all the jobs lost in health care and social assistance industries. This sector trails by 5.0 percent versus pre-pandemic levels.
2. Other services (-3,100 jobs): This sector shed 17.5 percent of all jobs as of April 2020, since then there has been some slow recovery through much of 2021, although firms have started show increasing reluctance to hire in 2022. Employment has shown little overall trend from September 2021 through April 2022.
3. Accommodations and foods services (-2,600 jobs): Establishments in this sector have made a substantial comeback from April 2020 when 43.3 percent of all jobs were pared. This sector is continuing to trend back up, although there are reasons for this sector to show apprehension about hiring, namely: relatively high wages being paid to workers, lowered demand from customers in the wake of the recession, continuing fears of COVID, etc... Despite these factors, this sector trails February 2020 by just 2,600 jobs.

[1] For official start and end dates used in the publication refer to the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) website (*https://www.nber.org/research/data/us-business-cycle-expansions-and-contractions*)

ii. Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

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

Industry Employment in Iowa is projected to add 198,915 non-farm jobs in the next 10 years: 2020-2030. The industry employment will increase to 1,854,185; that is a 12 percent from current 1,655,270 base. Nationally, the U.S. is expected to add 11.9 million jobs in the same decade; the employment will grow 7.7 percent and increase to 165.4 million jobs by 2030, According to the U.S. Bureau of labor statistics (BLS) 2020-2030 industry projections.

Because of the impact of COVID-19 (low base effect), the 2020-2030 projections growth rate is 3.7-percentage points higher than the previous industry projections for Iowa, and the National

industry Projections growth rate is 2.7-percentage points higher than the previous projections period.

The employment in the healthcare and related industry is projected to add the most jobs in the next ten years driven by increase in the number of aging populations. Adaptation of new technologies and demand for continuous change will support solid jobs gains in professional and business services. The ongoing adaptation of e-commerce will continue to support growth in transportation and warehousing. Educational services will benefit from growing need for workers upskilling and reskilling, and from greater digital economy. Meanwhile, administrative, support and waste management, and Leisure and hospitality sector will continue to recover from the virus-induced recession of 2020.

Figure 1 provides industry summary for the major sectors, for complete sector-by-sector industry projections click on the following link INDUSTRY PROJECTIONS.

Figure 1: Projected Employment Change by major Sectors, 2020-2030

Source: Labor Force and Occupational Analysis Bureau, Iowa Workforce Development

Employment level

As shows in figure 2, the average nominal number of people employed in Iowa peaked at 1.7 million in 2019. In comparison, the average nominal annual employment stood at 1.6 in 2021; that is 98,900 below the pre-pandemic level. Nationwide, employment is still down 3.8 million, from 158.6 million to 154 million for the same timeframe.

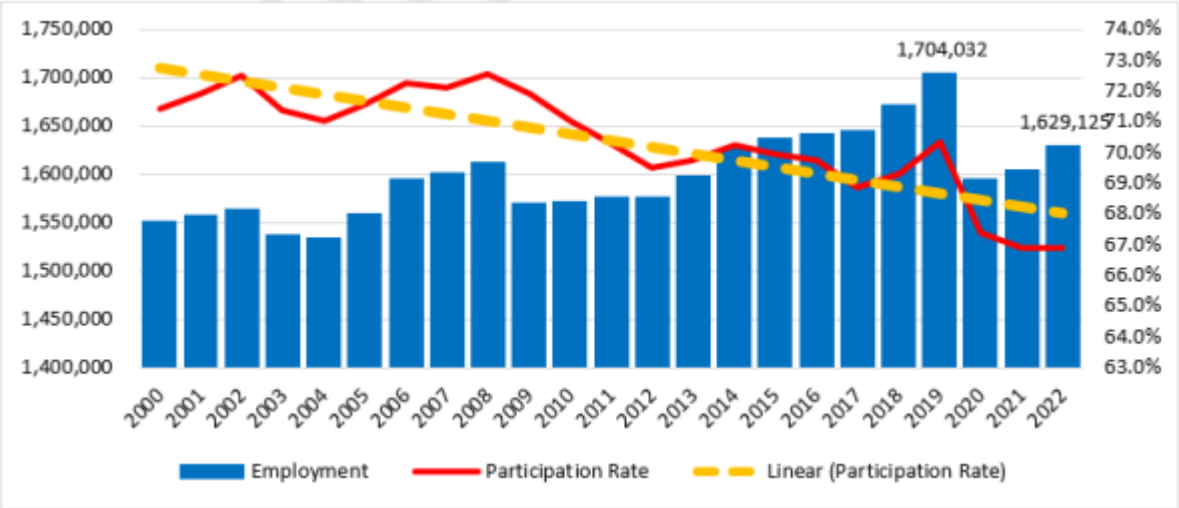
The labor force participation rate, "which is defined as percentage of non-institutionalized people, aged 16 and over, who have jobs or are available for work, or seeking jobs", was still down 3.4 point in 2021 from high 70.3 in 2019 for Iowa. Nationally, the participation rate was still down 0.8 points from the same timeframe.

, Iowa's labor force participation rate displayed a clear downward linear trend. For example, it was at 72.5 percent in 2002; the participation rate has trended steadily downward and rebounded to 70.3 percent before the impact of COVID-19. Iowa generally ranks in the top of the nation in term of the labor force participation rate. For instance, the U.S. labor force participation rate hit all-time high in 2000 at 67.1 percent; Iowa was much higher at 71.2 Percent in the same timeframe.

As of March 2022, the labor force participation rate is still below pre-pandemic: down 67.2 percent from 70.1 percent for Iowa, it is down to 61.4 percent from 63.1 percent nationally.

The declines in the labor force participation rates is much larger than the unemployment numbers, which suggests that some people are not actively looking for work: some workers dropped out of the labor force.

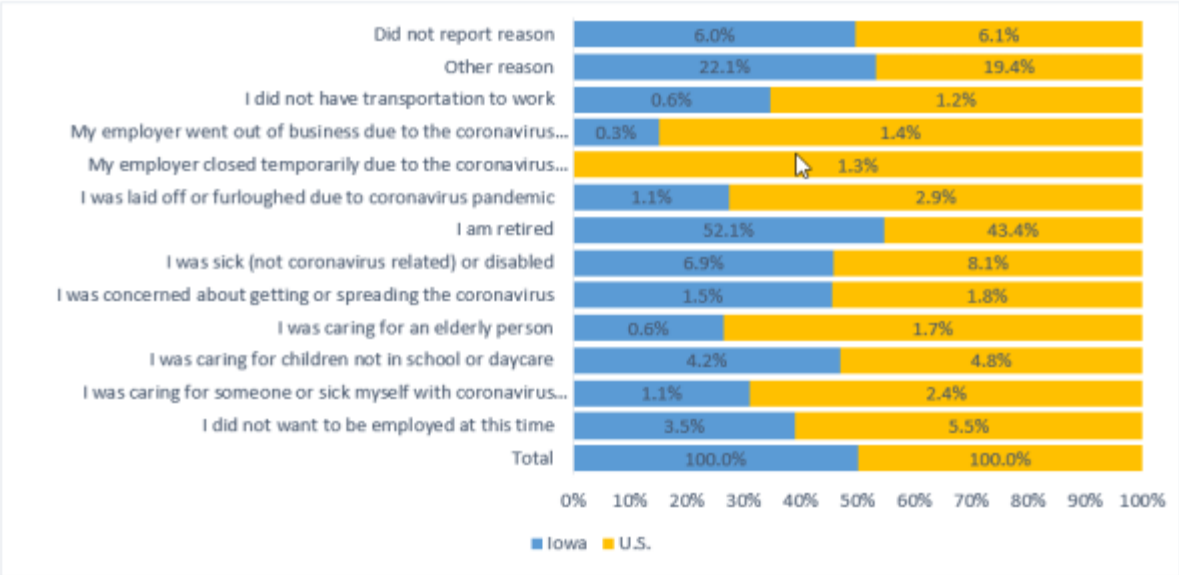
Figure 2: Iowa Employment and Participation Rate



Source: Labor Force and Occupational Analysis Bureau, Iowa Workforce Development

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, labor force participation rate was expected to decline 0.3 percentage points annually due to the underlining aging population, but the onset of COVID-19 seems to have accelerated that trend. The declines in labor force participation rate is attributed to demographic change, i.e., baby boomers leaving the labor force for retirement. According to the Census Household Pulse Survey result from March 30 to April 11, 2022. Majority, 52 percent of respondents in Iowa were retired, it is 43.4 percent nationally. Next, 22.1 percent of the respondents in Iowa gave other reason for not working, while others gave being sick or disabled, and caring for children as some of the reasons. Figure 3 provides summary for reasons for not working for Iowa and the U.S.

Figure 3: Reasons for not working

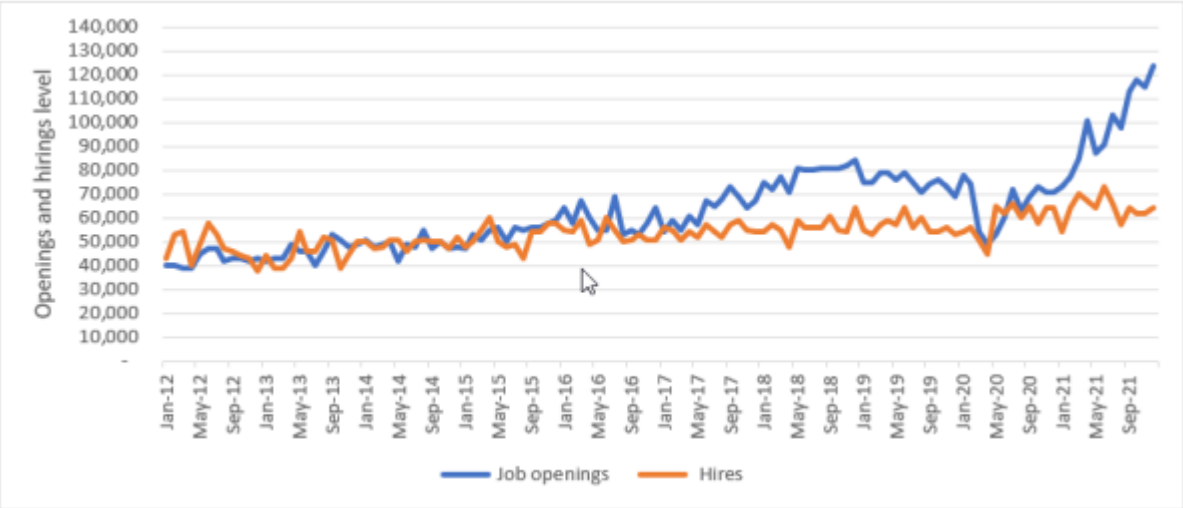


Household Pulse Survey, Week 44.

Labor Demand in Iowa

The Bureau of Labor Statistics Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) estimates show that Labor demand is strong in Iowa. As the figure 4 shows, many businesses in Iowa are struggling to fill openings due to lack of qualified workers at all skill levels. The graph shows job openings and hiring level for Iowa since 2012, showing higher number of job openings compared with hiring level. A higher number of job openings is signal of unmet labor demand, which indicates that employer need an additional employee, while a higher hires level indicates that enough employees are available and willing to work.

Figure 4: Job Openings and hirings level, seasonally adjusted.

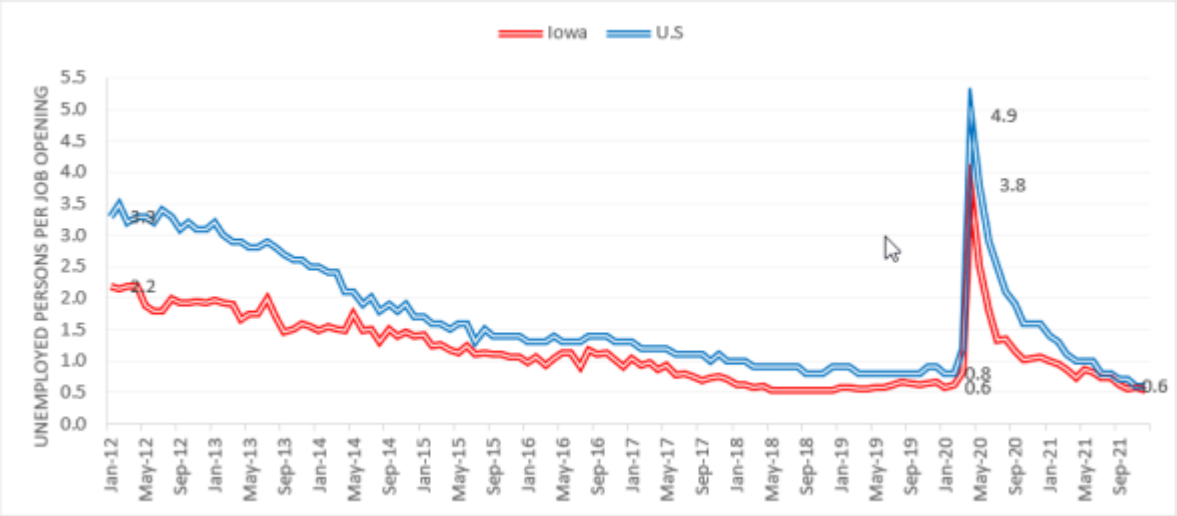


Source: Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

The best way to assess the labor market dynamics is to look at the number of job openings per unemployed persons. The number of unemployed persons per job opening capture the dynamics of the labor condition: the job openings level captures the Labor demand, while the number of unemployed persons captures the supply side of the equation. A ratio of 1.0 suggest that job is available for each unemployed person, and a lower ratio indicates a tight labor market. Higher ratio indicates that there are more unemployed persons looking for work.

Figure 5 is a graph of monthly ratio of job openings per unemployed persons since 2012. The plot shows that the ratio of unemployed per Job opening for Iowa stood at 2.2 in January 2012, indicating that more people were looking for job than the employer can offer. The ratio of unemployment per job opening start to declines shortly after that, and trended downward to 0.6 by January of 2020, showing that since 2016 Iowa experienced a tight labor market. Nationally, the ratio of unemployed per job opening trended downward to 0.8 from 3.3 in January 2012. During the peak of the virus-induced recession of 2020, the ratio of unemployed per job openings spiked to 3.8 and 4.9 for the Iowa and U.S. respectively, showing the impact of lockdowns caused by the pandemic. The monthly ratio of unemployed per job opening hovered near 0.6 since February of 2022, indicating that Iowa continues to endure a tight labor market.

Figure 5: Number of unemployed persons per job opening ratio, seasonally adjusted.



Bureau, and *Labor Force and Occupational Analysis Bureau, Iowa Workforce Development*

Conclusions

The pandemic has intensified the already tight labor market in Iowa. The COVID-19 health concerns have accelerated retirement for the baby boomers, this means that labor market tightness will continues and persist for a while. High level of labor demand means job seekers have more opportunities for better pay and better benefits.we expect the employment to improve marginally as fear of contacting COVID-19 fade away and the virus shift to endemic phase, and workers choose to reenter in the labor market. Adaptive work environment and greater flexibility in the work arrangement, and better wages will encourage some workers back in the labor market. In the long-run however, Iowa will not see a substantial gain in the labor force participation rate without major structural changes, particularly given the growing rates of the aging population. Iowa would benefit more by growing its population to maintain its labor force participation rate and grow its economy.

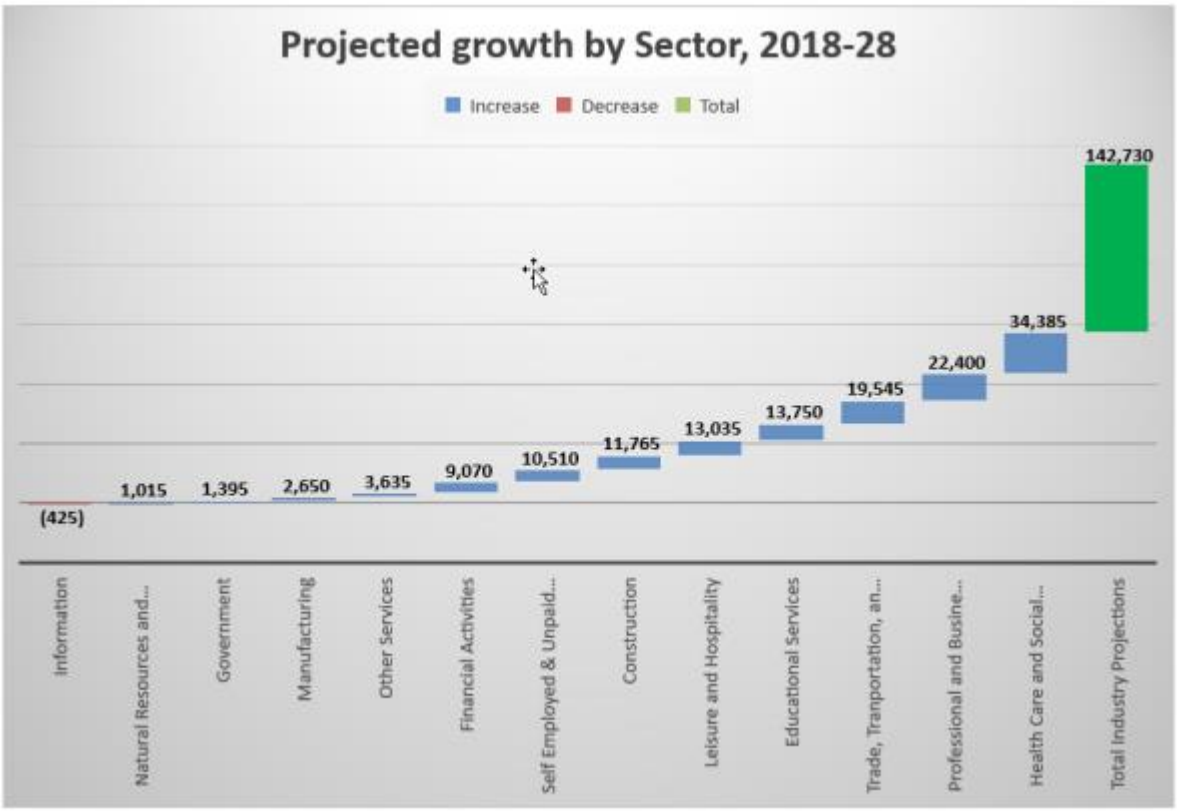
Iowa Long-Term Industry projections, 2018-2028

Overview

Industry Employment in Iowa is projected to add 142,730 nonfarm jobs in the next 10 years: 2018-28. The industry employment will increase to 1,872,455; that is 8.3 percent from current 1,729,725 base. The U.S. is expected to add 8.4 million jobs in the same decade; the employment will grow by 5.2 percent and increase to 169.4 million jobs by 2028, According to U.S. Bureau of labor statistics (BLS) 2018-28 industry projections.

Employment in the healthcare and related industries are expected to add the most jobs in the next ten years driven by increase in the number of aging population. Solid jobs gains are expected from Professional and Business Services, Transportation and Warehousing, and Educational Services. Because of structural changes and demographic shifts: slow birth rate and aging population, Iowa's labor force participation rate is expected to decline.

Figure 1: Projected growth by Sector, 2018-2028



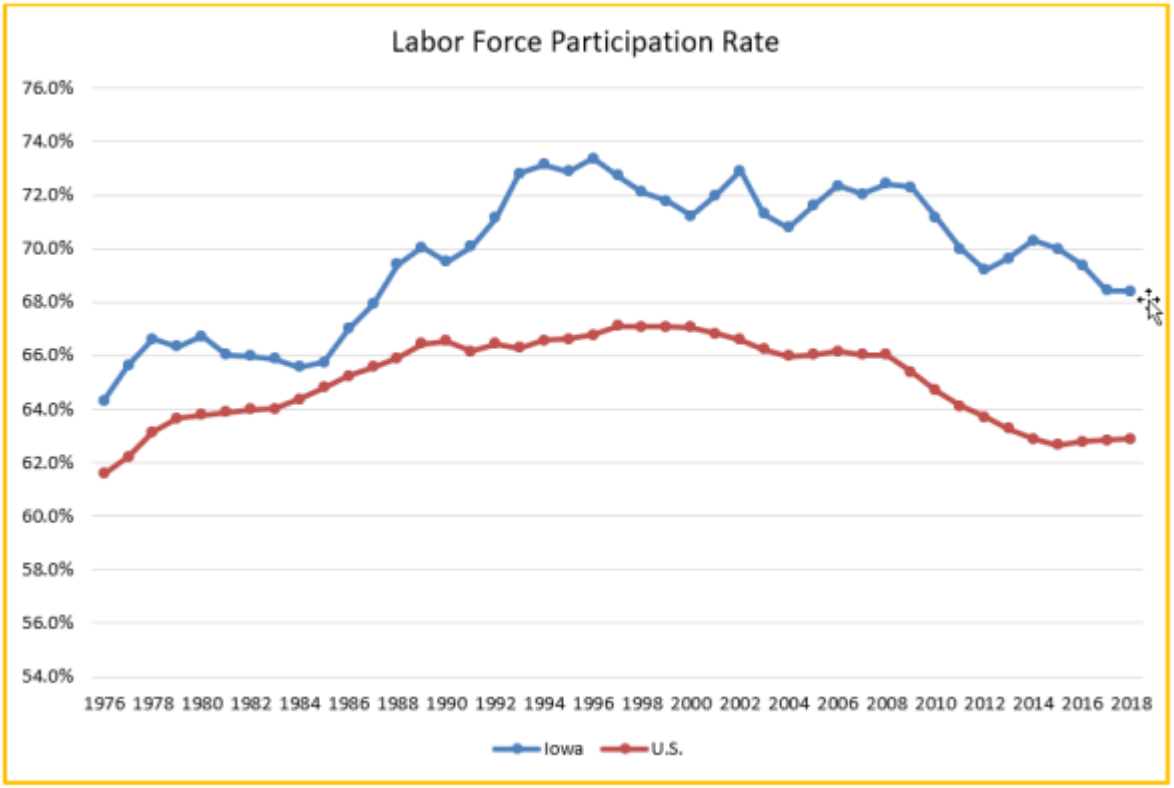
Source: Labor Force and Occupational Analysis Bureau, Iowa Workforce Development

2.1 Iowa Labor force participation rate

Labor demand is strong in Iowa: unemployment rate averaged 2.6 percent in 2018, it averaged 3.6 percent nationally in the same time period. Many businesses in Iowa are struggling to fill openings due to lack of workers at all skill levels, especially for work that required high-skilled level.

The Iowa labor force participation rate, which is defined as percentage of non-institutionalized people, aged 16 and over, who have jobs or are available for work, or seeking jobs, peaked in 1996 at 73.4 percent. Iowa generally ranks in the top of the nation in term of the labor force participation rate. For instance, the U.S. labor force participation rate hit all-time high in 2000 at 67.1 percent, Iowa was much higher at 71.2 Percent in the same time period.

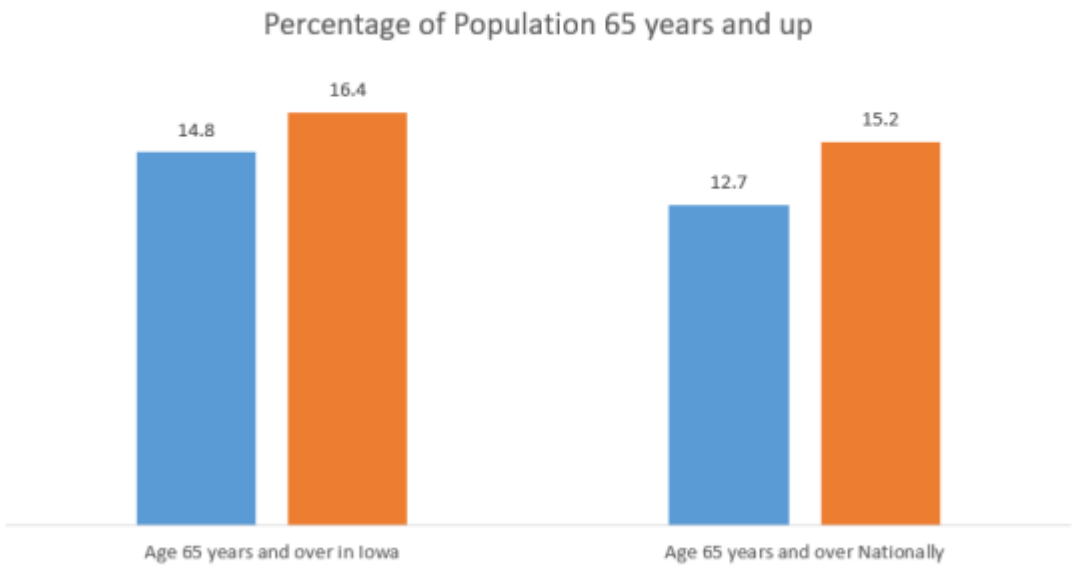
Figure 2: Labor Force Participation Rate



Source: Labor Force and Occupational Analysis Bureau, Iowa Workforce Development

The share of prime working population, ages 25 to 54, is expected to decline, meanwhile the share of older population, ages 65 and up, is projected to increase. Furthermore, growing cohort of elderly population relative to working-age population is expected to continues to rise for the next ten years as baby boomers continues to retire. In addition, the participation rate among the school ages population is projected to decrease given the increased time spend in school: as school enrollment increase and students invest more time on obtaining and furthering their education, the participation rate for ages 16 to 24 is expected to decrease.

Figure 3: Change in estimate percentage in 65 years and over between 2010 and 2018

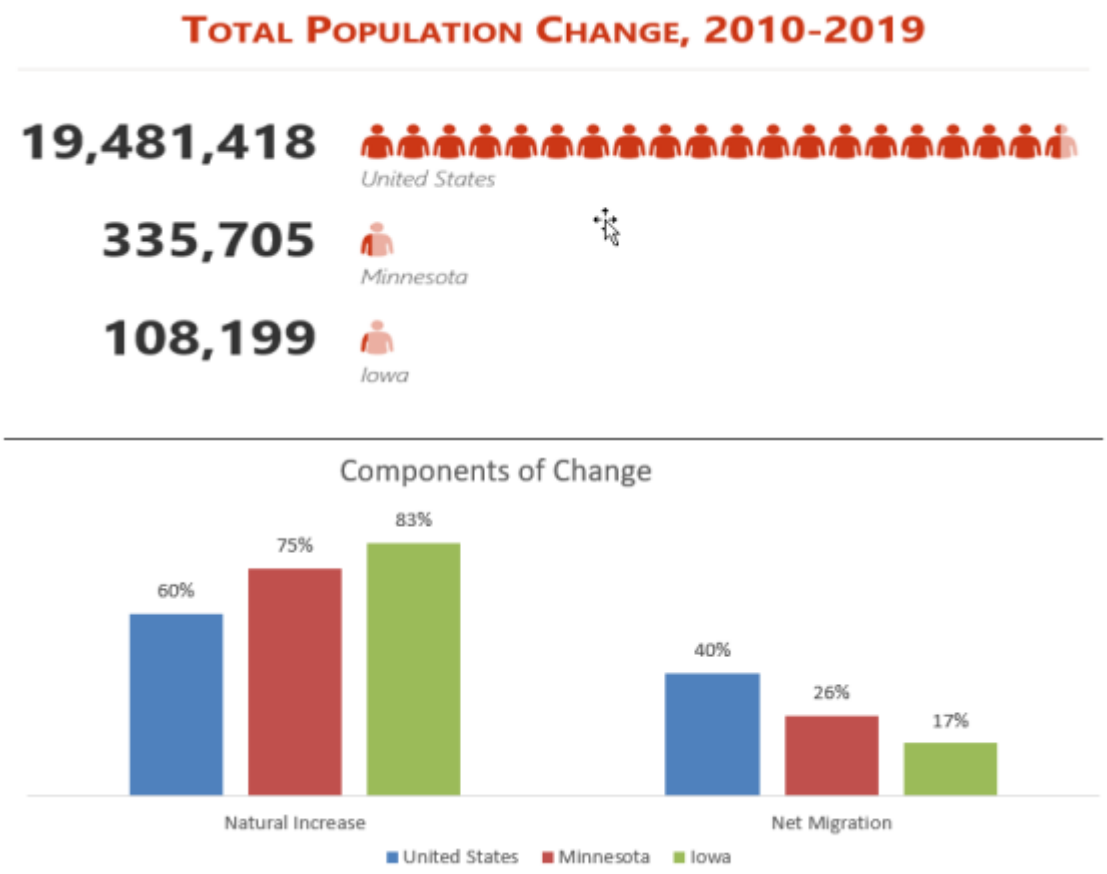


Source: American Community Survey, 2010 and 2018

3.1 Iowa Population

According to the national Census Bureau, from 2010 to 2019, Iowa population is estimated to have increased by 109,199 people or 3.6 percent since 2010 census. The net natural change, which is defined as births minus deaths accounted for the 83 percent of the growth, while the net migration, which is defined as difference between people that moved out and people that moved into Iowa accounted for 17 percent of the growth. Iowa population growth has been below the national average. The national population increased by 19.48 million people or 6.3 percent; 60 percent of the growth is attributed to natural increase and 40 percent attributed to net immigration. For instance, from 2010-2019, Iowa population growth rate ranked 29th among the States. In comparison, Minnesota population growth ranks 25th. Minnesota population grew by 335,705 or 6.3 percent; 74 percent of its growth is attributed to natural increase and 26 percent of its accounted for the net migration.

Figure 4: Estimates of population change, April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019



Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Estimates of the Population for the U.S. and States

4.1 Implications

Demographic shift impact labor force participation rate. Growing cohort of elderly population relative to working-age population put a burden on Social Security and other social services. As the share of people in their 60s and beyond become larger share of the whole population, the

labor force participation rate will decrease. Low labor force participation rate reduces tax revenues since it means that fewer people are working.

The labor force participation rate for Iowa in 2018 was 68.4 percent. This suggest that Iowa will not see a substantial gain in the labor force participation rate without major structural changes; particularly given the aging of the population. This means that structural reforms are highly needed.

The labor force participation rate is a derivative of the population; therefore, Iowa need to grows its population to increase its labor force participation rate and to provide economic support for retired and those in the education population.

To improve workforce growth, Iowa need to facilitate child care program that can support working families and transportation system that give mobility to families that need transportation to get to work. This would draw more people into the workforce and incentivize marginally attached workers to stay in the workforce. For the long-term, workforce growth will require strategies that increase birth rate and net migration. In addition, Iowa need to enhance its human capital formation by improving early-childhood literacy and educational achievement that increases capabilities for the digital economy.

5.1Conclusions

Sustainable economic growth is driven by growing workforce population and increase in productivity per a worker, and the best way to ensure sustainable increase productivity is to have educated workforce. Persistent low unemployment constraints potential economic growth. To generate dynamic growth, Iowa need to expand its workforce and enhance human capital formation. Iowa need to increase its birth rate and net migration to expand its population that will support sustainable economic growth.

iii. Employers' Employment Needs

With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in (A)(i) and (ii), provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

2018-2028 Occupational Projections Summary

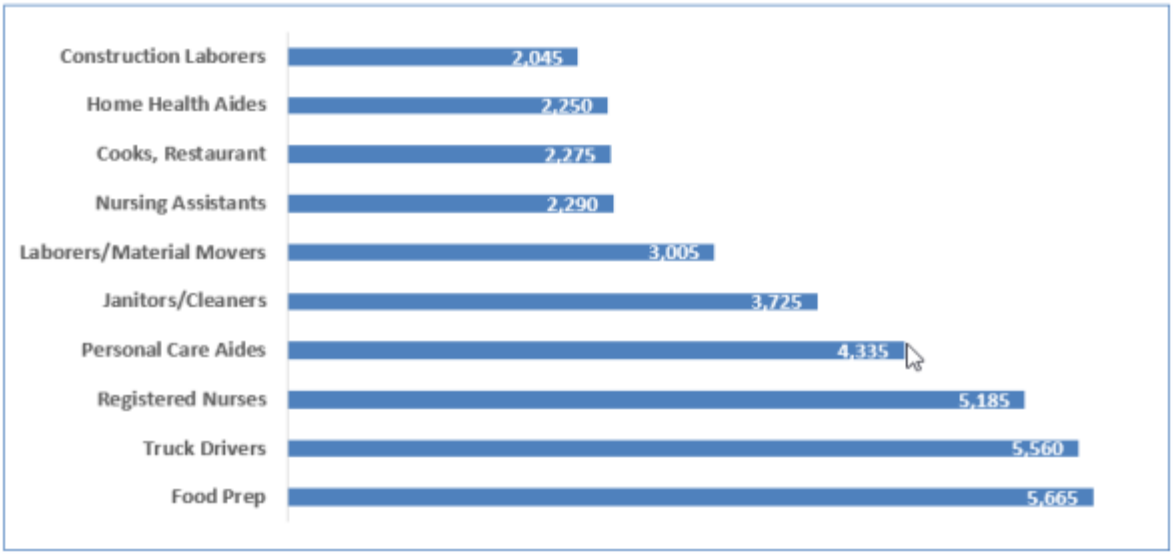
Iowa's occupational employment is expected to increase by 7% from 2018 to 2028 (or .7% annually). Job growth will vary across major occupational groups depending on the industry. Service-providing occupations are generally expected to outperform goods-producing occupations. This is reflected in both employment change and growth rates.

Major occupational groups expected to grow at or faster than the state annual average (.7%) are Business/Financial (1.0%); Computer/Mathematical (1.4%); Architecture/Engineering (.8%); Life, Physical, and Social Science (1.0%); Community and Social Service (1.6%); Legal (.8%); Education (.8%); Healthcare Practitioner (1.4%); Healthcare Support (1.6%); Food Prep (.9%); Building/Grounds Maintenance (1.2%); Personal Care (1.6%); Construction (1.3%); Installation, Maintenance, and Repair (.9%); and Transportation/Material Moving (.9%). Growing less than the state average include Management (.5%); Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media (.6%); Protective Service (.6%); Sales (.5%); Office/Administrative (.1%); Farming, Fishing, and Forestry (-.4%); and Production (0%) major occupational groups. Several major 2018-2028 occupational trends follow in this report.

Iowa's Occupations with the Largest Projected Job Growth, 2018-2028

Iowa's top 10 occupations expected to have the largest employment growth for 2018-2028 will account for 36,335 (or 27%) of the projected 132,570 new jobs. The major occupational groups

of Transportation/Material Moving; Food Prep; Healthcare; and Personal Care will account for most of the new jobs as shown below.



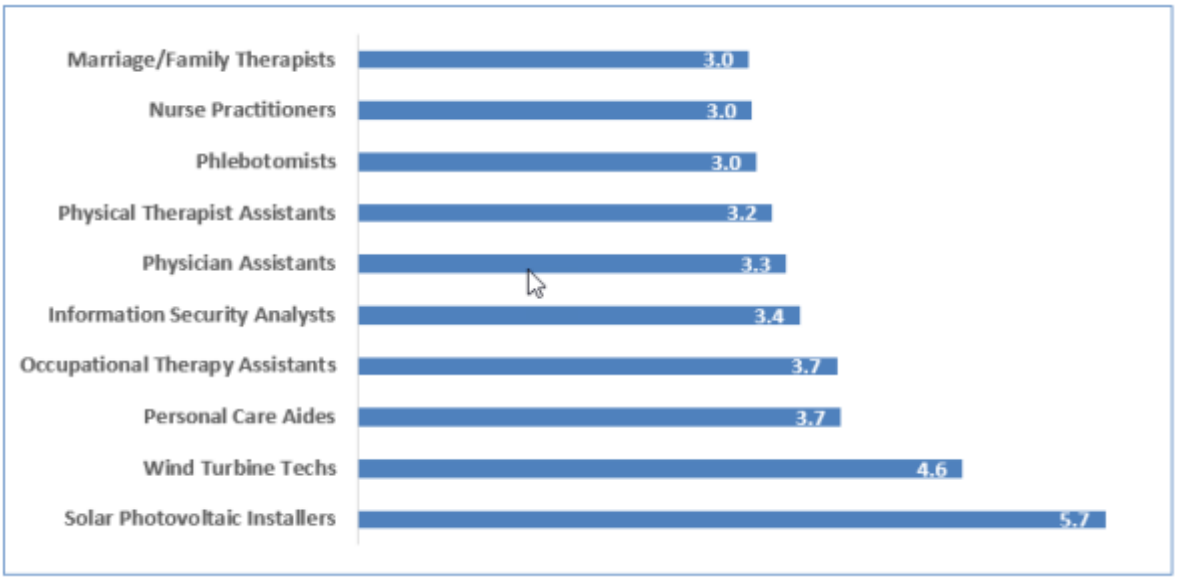
Iowa's Occupations with the Largest Projected Job Decline, 2018-2028

Iowa's top 10 occupations expected to have the largest employment decline for 2018-2028 will account for 9,675 (or 59%) of the projected 16,490 lost jobs. The Office/Administrative and Production occupational groups will make up the bulk of these jobs as shown below.

Occupation	Number of Jobs
Misc. Assemblers & Fabricators	-2,290
Executive Secretaries & Executive Admin. Assistants	-1,685
Secretaries & Admin. Assistants, Ex Legal/Medical/Executive	-1,425
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, & Weighers	-830
Tellers	-740
Farmers, Ranchers, & Other Agricultural Mgrs	-630
Cooks, Fast Food	-590
Bookkeeping, Accounting, & Audit Clerks	-565
Ag Workers, All Other	-470
Telemarketers	-450

Iowa's Fast Growing Occupations, 2018-2028

Iowa's top 10 occupations expected to have the largest percentage of employment growth for 2018-2028 are primarily in the Construction; Installation/Maintenance/Repair; Personal; Computer/Mathematical; Community/Social; and Healthcare major occupational groups with Solar Photovoltaic Installers leading the way. In conjunction with strong growth, occupational employment levels are to be reviewed in determining the largest number of job openings.



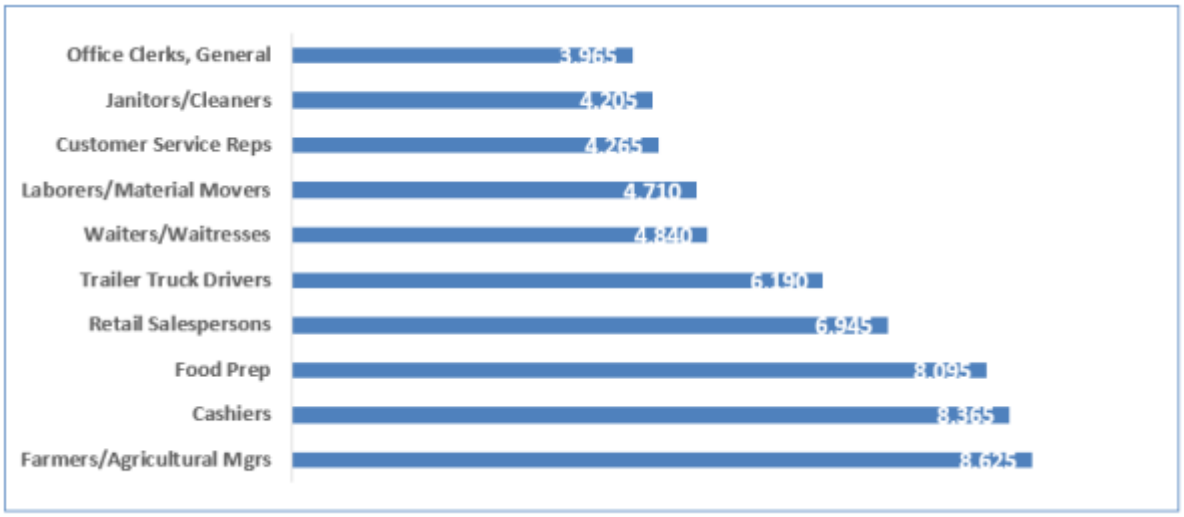
Iowa's Fast Declining Occupations, 2018-2028

Iowa expects occupations in the Office/Administrative; Postal Service; and Production major occupational groups to have the largest percentage of employment decline for 2018-2028 as shown below. Employment costs, competition, technological change and other economic factors may contribute to deteriorating industry employment. While such occupations may be considered a source for employment, careful thought should be given to training time and costs.

Occupation	Percent Change
Word Processors & Typists	-3.0
Computer Operators	-2.3
Pressers/Textile/Garment	-2.2
Data Entry Keyers	-2.0
Legal Secretaries	-1.9
Postmasters & Mail Superintendents	-1.8
Switchboard Operators	-.17
Milling/Planing Machine Operators	-1.7
Executive Secretaries/Admin. Assistants	-1.7
Photographic Process/Mach Operators	-1.6
Prepress Techs and Wkrs	-1.6

Iowa's Occupations with the Most Annual Openings, 2018-2028

Iowa's top 10 occupations expected to have the most annual openings for 2018-2028 will account for 60,205 (or 26%) of the projected 229,860 total openings. The major occupational groups of Sales; Food Prep; Management; Office/Administrative; and Transportation/Material Moving will account for the most openings as shown below.



Source: Labor Market Information Division, Iowa Workforce Development

2020-2022 Occupational Projections Summary

Iowa's occupational employment is expected to increase by 3.8% from 2020 to 2022. Job growth will vary across major occupational groups depending on the industry. Service-providing occupations are generally expected to outperform goods-producing occupations. This is reflected in both employment change and growth rates.

Major occupational groups expected to grow at or faster than the state's 3.8% annual growth rate are: Community and Social Service (4.8%); Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media (5.1%); Protective Service (6.4%); Food Preparation & Serving (17.2%); Building & Grounds Maintenance (8.5%); Personal Care and Service (12.9%); and Sales (3.8%).

Iowa's Occupations with the Largest Projected Job Growth, 2020-2022

Iowa's top 10 occupations expected to have the largest employment growth for 2020-2022 account for 44,890 (or 35%) of the projected 130,120 new jobs. The major occupational groups of Food Preparation and Serving; Building and Grounds, Cleaning and Maintenance; Sales; Personal Care and Service; and Transportation and Material Moving account for the new jobs as shown below.

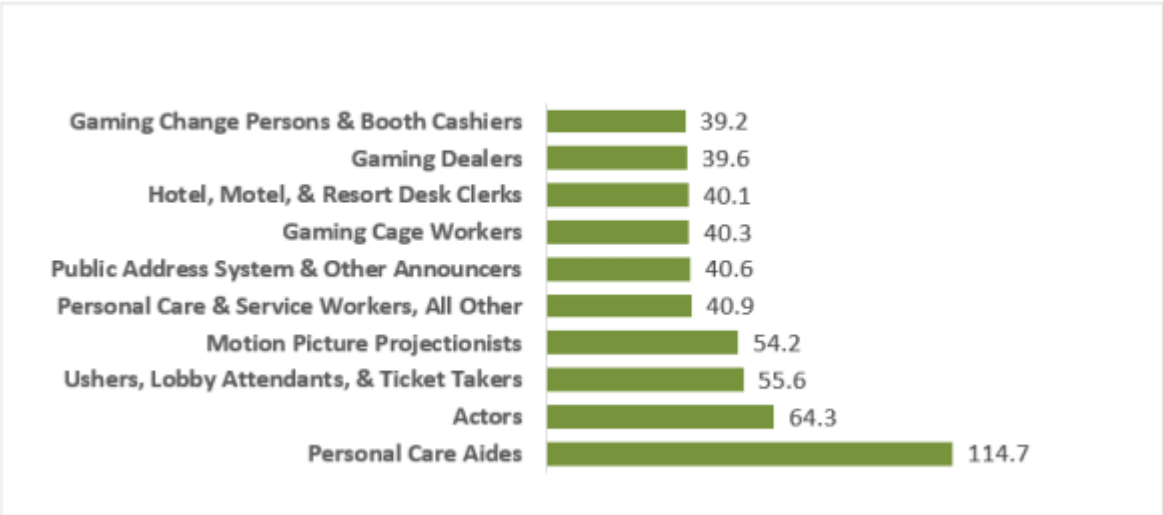
Iowa's Occupations with the Largest Projected Job Decline, 2020-2022

Iowa's top 10 occupations expected to have the largest employment decline for 2020-2022 will account for 410 (or 90%) of the projected 455 lost jobs. Most jobs are found in the occupational group of Office and Administrative Support; the others are spread equally among Production; Management; Healthcare Support; and Sales.

Occupation	Number of Jobs
Executive Secretaries & Executive Admin. Assistants	-110
Postal Service Mail Carriers	-70
Postal Service Mail Sorters/Processors/Processing Mach. Operators	-45
Tellers	-40
Door-to-Door Sales, News & Street Vendors & Related Workers	-35
Medical Transcriptionists	-30
Legal Secretaries	-30
Postmasters & Mail Superintendents	-20
Postal Service Clerks	-15
Paper Goods Machine Setters, Operators, & Tenders	-15

Iowa's Fast-Growing Occupations, 2020-2022

Iowa's top 10 occupations expected to have the largest percentage of employment growth for 2020-2022 are primarily found in Personal Care and Service; Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media; Office & Administrative Support; and Sales major occupational groups. Personal Care Aides lead the occupations with nearly double to three times the growth of the other occupations. In conjunction with strong growth, occupational employment levels are to be reviewed in determining the largest number of job openings.



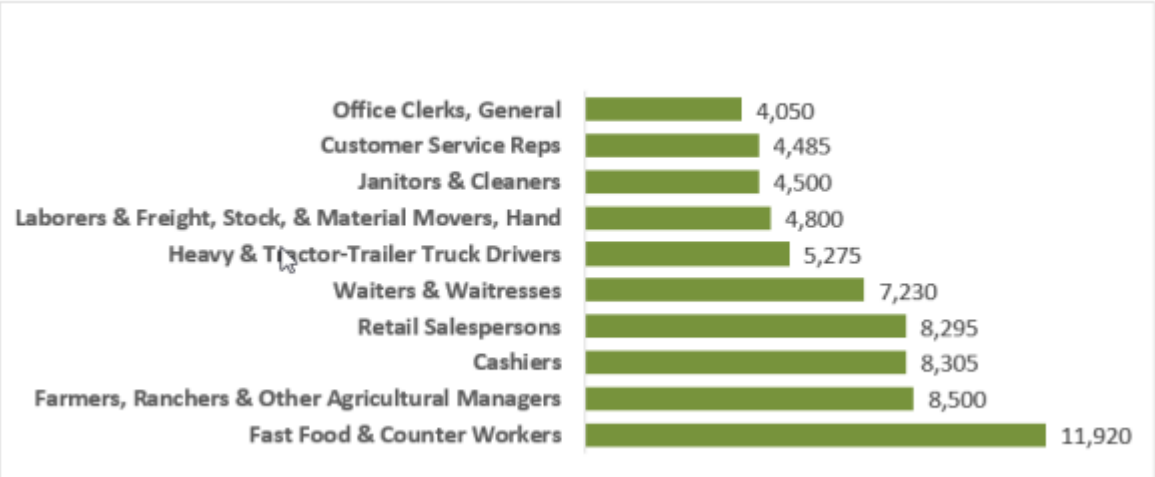
Iowa's Fast Declining Occupations, 2020-2022

Iowa expects occupations in the of Office and Administrative Support will have five out of the 10 fastest declining occupations. Production; Sales; and Healthcare Support make up the remaining major occupational groups to have the largest percentage of employment decline for 2020-2022 as shown below. Employment costs, subcontracting, technological advancements, and other economic factors may contribute to deteriorating employment. While such occupations may be considered a source for employment, careful thought should be given to training time and costs.

Occupation	Percent Change
Postmasters & Mail Superintendents	-2.2
Postal Service Mail Sorters/Processors/Process Mach. Operators	-1.4
Postal Service Clerks	-1.1
Medical Transcriptionists	-1.0
Door-to-Door Sales, News & Street Vendors & Related Workers	-1.0
Postal Service Mail Carriers	-0.9
Legal Secretaries	-0.8
Extruding & Drawing Machine Operators, Metal & Plastic	-0.8
Lathe & Tuning Machine Tool Operators, Metal & Plastic	-0.6
Executive Secretaries & Executive Admin. Assistants	-0.6

Iowa's Occupations with the Most Annual Openings, 2020-2022

Iowa's top 10 occupations expected to have the most annual openings for 2020-2022 will account for 67,360 (or 28%) of the projected 243,635 total openings. The major occupational groups of Sales; Food Preparation; Transportation and Material Moving; Office and Administrative Support; Building, Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance; and Management account for the openings as shown below.



Source: Labor Market Information Division, Iowa Workforce Development

i. Employment and Unemployment

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

Employment steadily increased from 2010 to 2019. In 2020, Iowa saw a 4.7 percent drop in employment and a 98 percent increase in unemployment (when compared to 2010) due to COVID-19. Between 2018 and 2020 the nation saw a 5.1 percent drop in employment and a 105 percent increase in unemployment. Both Iowa and the United States saw their annual average unemployment rate double from 2018 to 2020. Even with all the lockdowns in 2020 due to the pandemic, Iowa's number of unemployed was 14 percent lower than 2010. Both Iowa and the Nation saw their unemployment rates decrease in 2020 compared to 2010. The labor force participation rate was at a high of 71.5 percent in 2010. Since then, the labor force participation rate has been around 69 to 70 percent until COVID hit in 2020. The labor force participation rate dropped to 65.3 by the end of 2020. Iowa's recovery stalled in 2021. The labor force participation rate started the year at 66.5 percent. It gradually increased to 67.2 percent at the beginning of summer and then ended the year at 66.7 percent. From federal FY20 to FY 21, only 14 counties experienced growth in their labor force.

In 2020, the unemployment rate for veterans jumped to 7.6 percent. There was an improvement in 2021 when the rate dropped to 5.0 percent. This is still above the 2019 rate of 3.9 percent. The Black labor force is the only race to have fully recovered from the pandemic. Their numbers dropped from 64,400 in 2019 to 57,000 in 2020 and then climbed to 66,100 in 2021. Men and women age 35 to 44 increased their labor force numbers by 7,000 from 2019 to 2020 and then increased again by 19,500 in 2021.

Iowa's Labor Force Participation Rates peaked from April - September 1996 at 73.5% and remained above 70% through December 2011. From December 2011 through May 2020, the rate stayed consistent around 69-70%. Iowa's lowest Labor Force Participation Rate in over 40 years occurred in August 2020, when the rate hit a low of 65.9%. Since then, Iowa's rate has slowly recovered to a rate of 67.2% in March 2022 and showed gains in the first three months of 2022. Overall, the labor force level fell by 67,300 from 2019 to 2020, based on annual averages. Iowa's labor force has recovered 61,100 of those that left the labor force, just 6,200 workers short of the highest labor force levels in history, seen in 1976.

When looking at who Iowa lost from the labor force during the pandemic based on demographic data, the pandemic was especially hard on women and older workers. There are an estimated 3,000 more women in the labor force than 2017, but still have a loss of 44,000 from 2019. Labor force levels are down 10,000 from 2017 and 40,000 from 2019. Workers age 20 to 24 have recovered from losses in 2020 and have added 8,000 individuals since 2019. Those age 35 to 44 bucked the other age groups adding 9,000 individuals from 2019 to 2020 and is up 28,000 from 2019. However, the gains made by those two cohorts are dwarfed by large losses in 45 to 54 (-41,0000), 55 to 64 (-31,000), and 25 to 34 (-30,000). The labor force levels of those 25 to 34, 55 to 64, and 45 to 54 continued to decrease from 2020 to 2021. The largest losses from 2019 came from 25 to 34 years old (-25,000). Older women had the largest labor force losses from 2019: 45 to 54 (-27,000) and 55 to 64 (-15,000) from 2019 continued to decrease from 2020 to 2021 (-3,000 & -9,000).

Women are further from recovery than men are when compared to 2017 and 2019. There was an estimated 5,000 more men unemployed when compared to 2019 while there was an estimated 9,000 more women when comparing the same time period. The pandemic impacted females in the labor market more than men. There were 19,000 more unemployed men in 2020 than in 2019 while there was 22,000 more unemployed women from 2019 to 2020. In 2019 women made up 40.8% of the unemployed which jumped to 46.7% in 2021. Generally women

had a higher concentration of employment in industries and occupations impacted by the pandemic (accommodations & food services, education, healthcare, personal care..)

ii. Labor Market Trends

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

The following analysis is based upon statewide Laborshed data collected in 2019, 2020, and 2021.

The percentage of respondents (6,000 sample) who identified themselves as employed in 2019 (80.0%) decreased to 78.6% in 2020. However, it bumped back up to 82.7% in 2021. The percentage which identified themselves as unemployed fluctuated similarly over those survey years (9.3% in 2019 to 10.8% in 2020 to 9.4% in 2021). *Note, the percentage of unemployed in this survey is much different than the percentage reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (which applies a strict definition) as the Laborshed survey is simply self-identified.*

The largest industry of employed (as a percentage of the employed) in 2019 was the wholesale and retail trade industry at 15.6%. In 2020, this percentage fell to 14.0% (which was the greatest percentage reduction among all industries); however, this industry rebounded somewhat in 2021 when it represented 14.9% of the employed. Conversely, the manufacturing industry which represented 12.0% of the employed increased to 13.2% in 2020 and 13.3% in 2021.

At the occupation-level, those employed within job titles related to transportation and management saw the largest reduction in percentage of the employed at -1.2% and -1.1%, respectively. However, from 2019 to 2021, the largest reduction was in occupations related to education which fell from 7.2% of the employed in 2019 to 5.1% in 2021 (-2.1%). Largest growth during the same time-period (2019 to 2021) was in construction and extraction related jobs (+1.8%).

Among those who identified themselves as both unemployed and likely to accept employment, the top reasons for being unemployed showed a large increase in the 'employer layoff' reason. In 2019, 17.4% reported this as a top reason while in 2020 32.4% reported it as a top reason. Likewise, 'terminated by employer' grew during the same time period from 9.4% to 11.1%. In 2019, COVID-19 was not a reason provided (as, obviously, the pandemic had not begun in the United States at this point. However, in 2020, 2.5% of respondents who were unemployed and likely to accept employment identified COVID-19 related reasons as a reason for unemployment while in 2021, 20.2% reported this reason.

Across all industries, the percentage of those employed and likely to change employment increased the most in the healthcare industry. In 2019, of all respondents who identified themselves as employed and likely to change employment, 13.4% currently worked in the healthcare industry. In 2020, this increased to 16.2%, and then fell slightly, in 2021, to 15.9%. During this same year (2021) the healthcare industry represented the second highest percentage of those employed and likely to change employment; with the wholesale and retail industry being the highest at 18.7%.

If you look *within* each industry and analyze each based upon those who are employed and likely to change employment versus unlikely to change you will notice that between 2019 and 2020 the healthcare industry experienced the largest increase in the proportion of those employed who are likely to change employment. In 2019, 25.3% of those employed in the healthcare industry were likely to change employment. However, this increased to 29.1% in 2020 and then to 34.2% in 2021. This was the second largest portion of employed in an industry who were likely to change employment. The

wholesale and retail trade industry contained the highest proportion of employed likely to change at 37.2%.

Employment Status					
	2019	2020	2021		
Employed	80.0%	78.6%	82.7%		
Unemployed	9.3%	10.8%	9.4%		
Homemakers	4.7%	3.2%	2.5%		
Retired	6.0%	7.4%	5.4%		
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%		
Industry of Employment					
	2019	2020	2021	2019-2020	2019-2021
Wholesale & Retail Trade	15.6%	14.0%	14.9%	1.6%	0.7%
Healthcare	14.5%	14.7%	13.8%	-0.2%	0.7%
Manufacturing	12.0%	13.2%	13.3%	-1.2%	-1.3%
Education	11.1%	10.8%	9.3%	0.3%	1.8%
Finance	7.8%	9.5%	8.8%	-1.7%	-1.0%
Professional Services	8.7%	8.8%	8.4%	-0.1%	0.3%
Transportation	6.8%	7.0%	7.8%	-0.2%	-1.0%
Construction	7.2%	6.5%	7.7%	0.7%	-0.5%
Government	6.6%	6.4%	7.3%	0.2%	-0.7%
Personal Services	4.3%	4.5%	4.6%	-0.2%	-0.3%
Agriculture	4.6%	3.6%	3.6%	1.0%	1.0%
Entertainment & Rec	0.8%	1.0%	0.5%	-0.2%	0.3%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%		

Occupation of Employment					
	2019	2020	2021	2019-2020	2019-2021
Management	19.2%	18.1%	18.0%	1.1%	1.2%
Office & Administrative Support	11.0%	14.1%	12.3%	-3.1%	-1.3%
Education, Training, & Library	7.2%	6.4%	5.1%	0.8%	2.1%
Production	6.8%	6.6%	6.5%	0.2%	0.3%
Sales & Related	6.7%	6.5%	5.8%	0.2%	0.9%
Business & Financial Operations	6.5%	7.5%	7.0%	-1.0%	-0.5%
Healthcare Practitioner & Technical	6.5%	6.9%	6.3%	-0.4%	0.2%
Transportation & Material Moving	5.3%	4.1%	6.0%	1.2%	-0.7%
Construction & Extraction	3.9%	3.4%	5.7%	0.5%	-1.8%
Installation, Maintenance, & Repair	3.7%	3.6%	4.9%	0.1%	-1.2%
Computer & Mathematical Science	3.0%	3.3%	3.0%	-0.3%	0.0%
Food Preparation & Serving Related	3.0%	2.2%	2.2%	0.8%	0.8%
Personal Care & Services	2.8%	2.0%	1.6%	0.8%	1.2%
Architecture & Engineering	2.7%	2.6%	2.6%	0.1%	0.1%
Healthcare Support	2.0%	2.1%	2.4%	-0.1%	-0.4%
Community & Social Services	1.8%	2.2%	2.6%	-0.4%	-0.8%
Life, Physical & Social Science	1.7%	2.0%	1.7%	-0.3%	0.0%
Building/Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, &	1.5%	1.4%	1.3%	0.1%	0.2%
Protective Services	1.4%	1.2%	1.3%	0.2%	0.1%
Legal	0.9%	1.3%	1.1%	-0.4%	-0.2%
Farming, Fishing, & Forestry	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Military Specific	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	-0.1%	-0.2%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%		

Among the Unemployed and Likely to Accept Employment: Top Reasons for Being Unemployed					
Select all that apply					
	2019	2020	2021		
Health/Disability Reasons	24.8%	20.4%	27.6%		
Employer Layoff/Downsizing/Relocation/C	17.4%	32.4%	16.6%		
Continue/Further Education	16.5%	9.0%	4.9%		
Terminated by Employer	9.4%	11.1%	7.2%		
Family Reasons	8.6%	6.2%	4.6%		
Lack of Employment Opportunities	8.6%	19.4%	6.9%		
Temporary/Seasonal Employment	7.7%	5.9%	5.6%		
Quit Previous Employment	6.8%	6.8%	6.1%		
Personality Conflicts with Coworkers/Emp	5.6%	4.9%	5.9%		
Contract Concluded	4.4%	2.5%	1.8%		
Moved out of Area	3.4%	5.6%	3.6%		
Transportation Issues	2.4%	2.2%	1.3%		
Lack of Education/Training	1.2%	3.1%	2.0%		
Prefer not to Work	-	3.1%	1.0%		
COVID-19 Related Reasons	-	2.5%	20.2%		

Likliness to Change Across Industries					
	2019	2020	2021	2019-2020	2019-2021
1.00 Agriculture/Forestry/Mining	2.3	1.6	2.0	0.7	0.3
2.00 Construction	5.4	3.8	5.8	1.6	-0.4
3.00 Manufacturing	13.3	16.0	15.0	-2.7	-1.7
4.00 Transportation, Communications, & Public Utilities	7.1	6.7	7.9	0.4	-0.8
5.00 Wholesale & Retail Trade	20.4	18.8	18.7	1.6	1.7
6.00 Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	6.5	8.3	7.1	-1.8	-0.6
7.00 Healthcare & Social Services	13.4	16.2	15.9	-2.8	-2.5
8.00 Personal Services	3.3	2.9	3.1	0.4	0.2
9.00 Entertainment & Recreation	0.9	1.0	0.6	-0.1	0.3
10.00 Professional Services	9.3	8.2	8.3	1.1	1.0
11.00 Public Administration, Government	6.1	5.2	6.0	0.9	0.1
12.00 Education	12.0	11.2	9.5	0.8	2.5
13.00 Active Duty Military	-	0.1	-		
14.00 Other	-	-	0.1		
Total	100	100	100		

Likliness to Change Across Occupational Categories					
	2019	2020	2021	2019-2020	2019-2021
1 Managerial/Admin Occupations	13.4	11.6	12.0	1.8	1.4
2 Professional/Paraprof/technical	30.6	33.2	30.8	-2.6	-0.2
3 Sales & related occup	6.8	7.6	6.2	-0.8	0.6
4 Clerical & Admin Supp Services	12.1	13.4	13.0	-1.3	-0.9
5 Service Occupations	13.8	12.6	11.6	1.2	2.2
6 Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing	1.3	0.9	1.3	0.4	0.0
7 Production/Construnction/Operating	22.0	20.7	25.1	1.3	-3.1
Total	100	100	100		

Likeliness to Change Employment Within Each Industry					
	2019	2020	2021	2019-2020	2019-2021
1.00 Agriculture/Forestry/Mining	13.9%	11.5%	16.3%	2.4%	-2.4%
2.00 Construction	21.0%	15.6%	22.2%	5.4%	-1.2%
3.00 Manufacturing	30.5%	32.0%	33.4%	-1.5%	-2.9%
4.00 Transportation, Communications, & Public Utilities	28.5%	25.4%	29.9%	3.1%	-1.4%
5.00 Wholesale & Retail Trade	35.9%	35.7%	37.2%	0.2%	-1.3%
6.00 Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	23.1%	23.3%	23.8%	-0.2%	-0.7%
7.00 Healthcare & Social Services	25.3%	29.1%	34.2%	-3.8%	-8.9%
8.00 Personal Services	21.2%	17.5%	20.3%	3.7%	0.9%
9.00 Entertainment & Recreation	30.8%	28.6%	26.7%	2.2%	4.1%
10.00 Professional Services	29.2%	24.5%	29.1%	4.7%	0.1%
11.00 Public Administration, Government	25.2%	21.4%	24.5%	3.8%	0.7%
12.00 Education	29.6%	27.5%	30.2%	2.1%	-0.6%

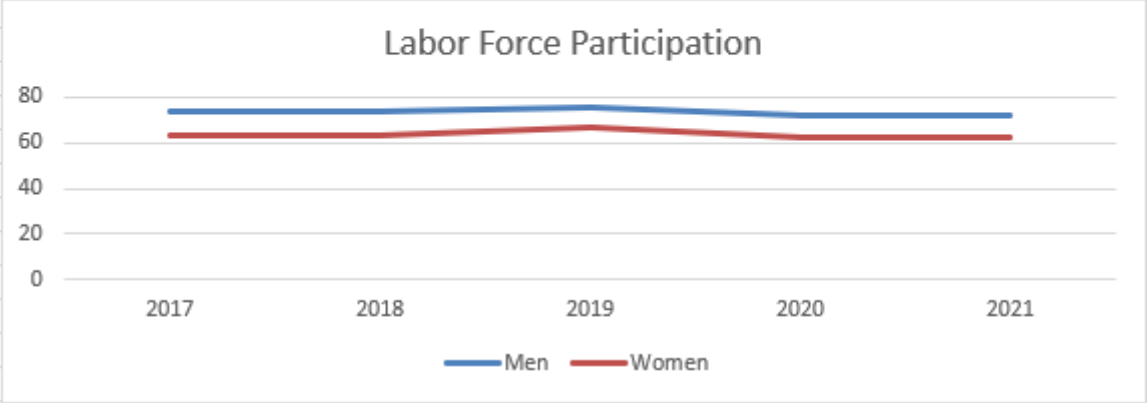
Likeliness to Change Employment Within Each Occupational Category			
	2019	2020	2021
1 Managerial/Admin Occupations	21.8%	18.7%	22.1%
2 Professional/Paraprof/technical	26.6%	26.4%	28.9%
3 Sales & related occup	28.1%	30.8%	30.4%
4 Clerical & Admin Supp Services	30.5%	25.2%	30.6%
5 Service Occupations	35.3%	36.9%	38.9%
6 Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing	11.6%	10.9%	12.1%
7 Production/Construnction/Operating	30.9%	31.1%	31.4%

Former Industry of the Unemployed and Likeliness to Accept Employment			
	2019	2020	2021
1.00 Agriculture/Forestry/Mining	3.6%	2.8%	1.8%
2.00 Construction	10.0%	6.7%	8.9%
3.00 Manufacturing	12.4%	16.1%	12.5%
4.00 Transportation, Communications, & Public Utilities	6.9%	6.4%	5.4%
5.00 Wholesale & Retail Trade	26.3%	25.0%	27.6%
6.00 Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	5.1%	4.4%	3.6%
7.00 Healthcare & Social Services	10.9%	11.4%	15.6%
8.00 Personal Services	3.6%	5.3%	5.1%
9.00 Entertainment & Recreation	0.6%	4.2%	2.0%
10.00 Professional Services	11.8%	9.2%	8.9%
11.00 Public Administration, Government	3.9%	2.8%	3.8%
12.00 Education	4.8%	5.0%	4.8%
13.00 Active Duty Military		0.8%	
Total	99.9%	100.1%	100.0%

Former Occupational Category of the Unemployed and Likeliness to Accept Employment			
	2019	2020	2021
1 Managerial/Admin Occupations	8.7%	10.3%	9.7%
2 Professional/Paraprof/technical	16.8%	23.7%	15.4%
3 Sales & related occup	10.9%	11.7%	9.7%
4 Clerical & Admin Supp Services	13.7%	10.9%	10.8%
5 Service Occupations	21.1%	18.9%	20.5%
6 Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing	2.2%	0.8%	1.6%
7 Production/Construnction/Operating	26.7%	23.7%	32.2%
	100.1%	100.0%	99.9%

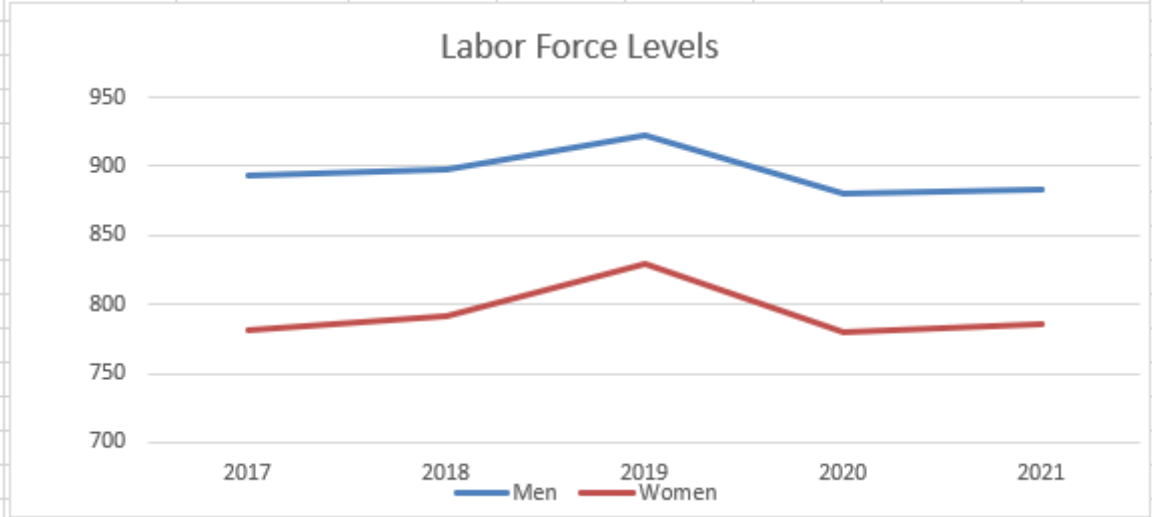
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION BY SEX

Labor Force Particpation Rate by Sex							
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Men	73.8	73.8	75.6	71.8	71.9	-1.9	-3.7
Women	62.9	63.4	66.4	62.2	62.5	-0.4	-3.9



The labor force participation rate for men is 1.9% lower than it was in 2017, but 3.7 % lower than 2019. Women are about half of a percent lower than 2017, but lagging almost 4% (3.9%) behind 2019. Overall men participate at a rate of 10% higher than women.

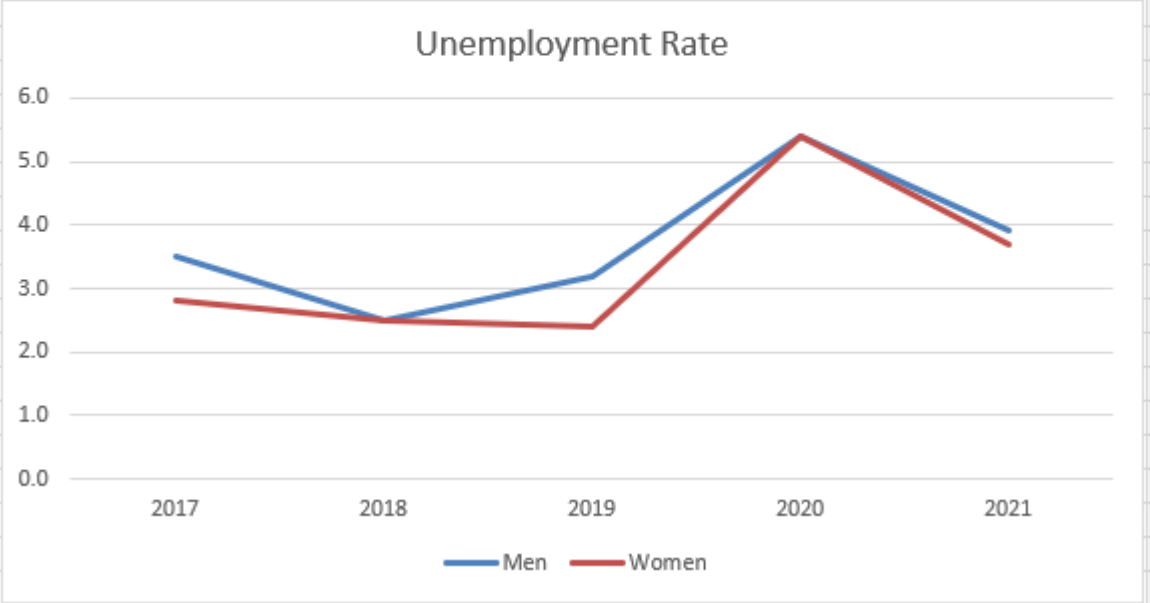
Labor Force Levels							
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Men	893	898	923	880	883	-10	-40.0
Women	782	791	829	780	785	3	-44.0



There are an estimated 3,000 more women in the labor force than 2017, but still have a loss of 44,000 from 2019. Labor force levels are down 10,000 from 2017 and 40,000 from 2019.

Unemployment Rate

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Men	3.5	2.5	3.2	5.4	3.9	0.4	0.7
Women	2.8	2.5	2.4	5.4	3.7	0.9	1.3

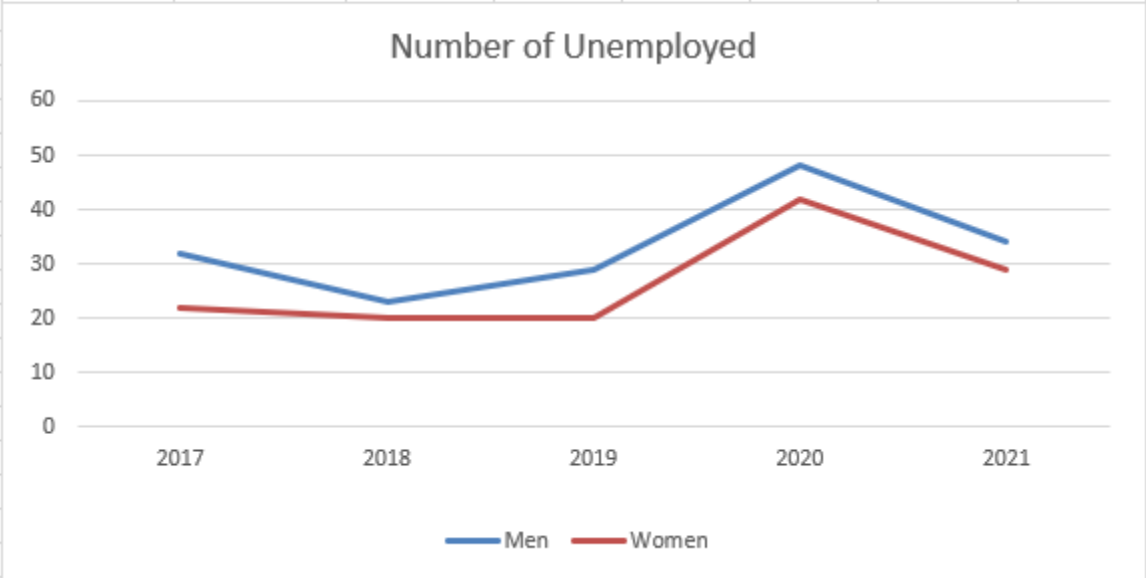


The unemployment rates for both men and women are unemployment rates are on the decline in 2021. The unemployment rate for men is slightly higher (0.4%) than 2017 and 0.7% from 2019. The unemployment rate for women is nearly a percentage point (0.9%) higher than 2017 and 1.3% higher than 2019.

We are seeing the overall rate drop in the first months of 2022.

Unemployed

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Men	32	23	29	48	34	2	5
Women	22	20	20	42	29	7	9



Women are further from recovery than men are when compared to 2017 and 2019. There was an estimated 5,000 more men unemployed when compared to 2019 while there was an estimated 9,000 more women when comparing the same time period.

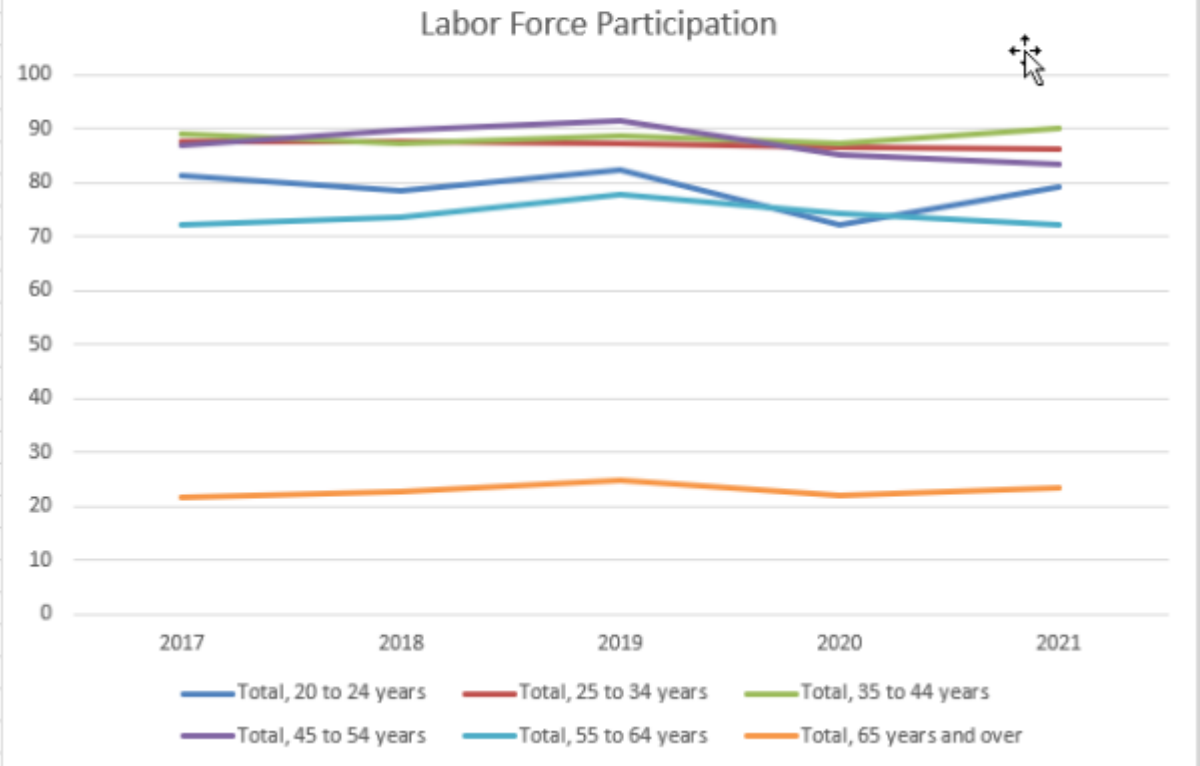
The pandemic impacted females in the labor market more than men. There were 19,000 more unemployed men in 2020 than in 2019 while there was 22,000 more unemployed women from 2019 to 2020. In 2019 women made up 40.8% of the unemployed which jumped to 46.7% in 2021.

Generally women had a higher concentration of employment in industries and occupations impacted by the pandemice (accommodations & food services, education, healthcare, personal care..)

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION BY AGE

Labor Force Particpation Rate by Age

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Total, 20 to 24 years	81.5	78.5	82.5	72.2	79.2	-2.3	-3.3
Total, 25 to 34 years	87.7	87.8	87.2	86.7	86.4	-1.3	-0.8
Total, 35 to 44 years	89.1	87.4	88.9	87.5	90.2	1.1	1.3
Total, 45 to 54 years	87.1	89.7	91.4	85.1	83.6	-3.5	-7.8
Total, 55 to 64 years	72.3	73.7	78.0	74.3	72.2	-0.1	-5.8
Total, 65 years and over	21.7	22.7	24.9	22.1	23.3	1.6	-1.6

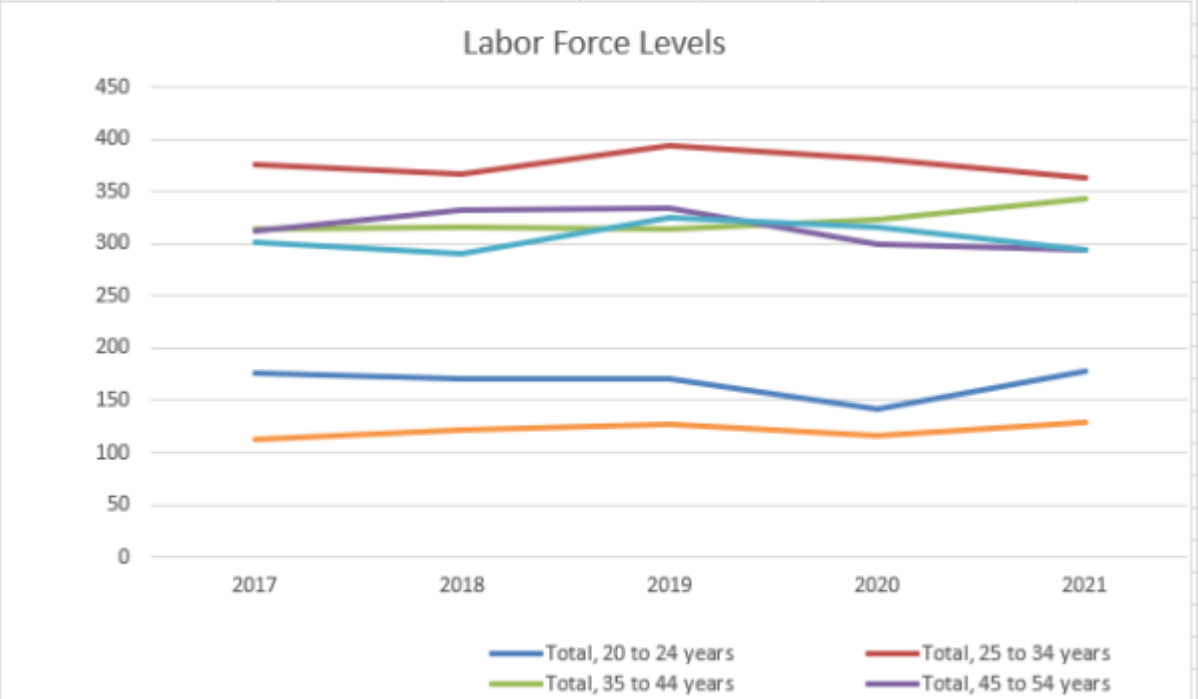


Overall the largest decrease in labor force participation from 2019 to 2021 came from individuals 45 to 54 years old (-7.8%) followed by individuals 55 to 64 (-5.8%), and 20 to 24 (-3.3).

The 20 to 24 year old group saw the largest drop (-10.3%) from 2019 to 2020. Again this is probably due to the industry concentration of employment for this younger age group. They have since rebounded by 7% from 2020 to 2021.

The participation of those 65 years and older was low prior to the pandemic and declined just slightly after a small bump in 2021.

Labor Force Levels (In Thousands)							
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Total, 20 to 24 years	176	170	170	142	178	2	8.0
Total, 25 to 34 years	376	367	394	382	364	-12	-30.0
Total, 35 to 44 years	315	316	315	324	343	28	28.0
Total, 45 to 54 years	313	333	335	299	294	-19	-41.0
Total, 55 to 64 years	301	291	326	317	295	-6	-31.0
Total, 65 years and over	113	121	128	117	129	16	1.0

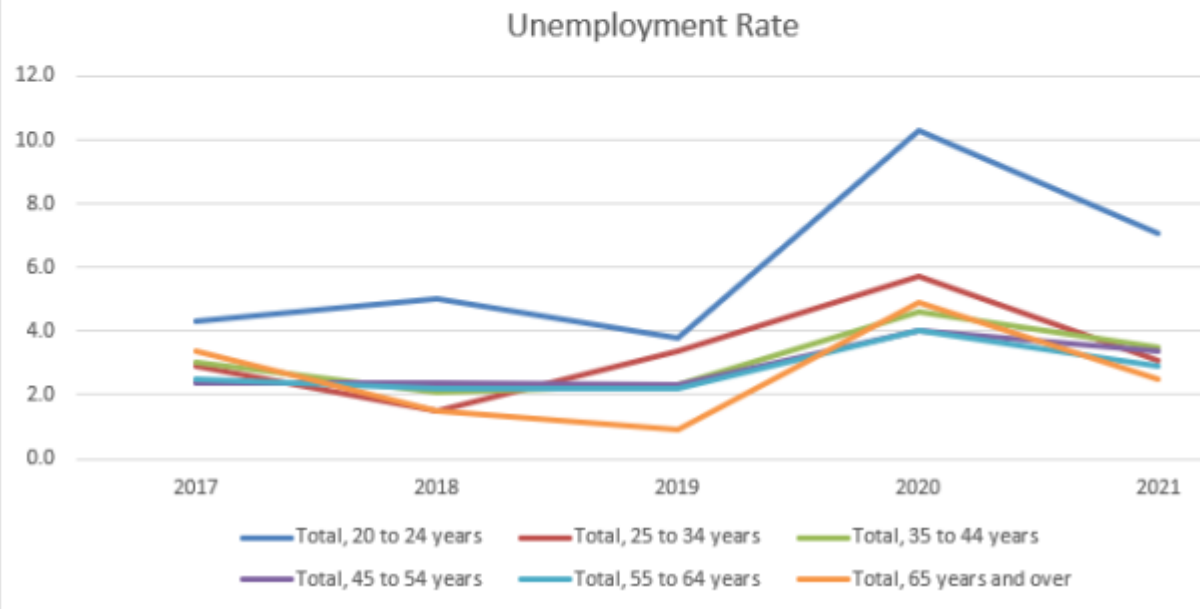


20 to 24 age group has recovered from losses in 2020 and added 8,000 individuals since 2019. Those 35 to 44 bucked the other age groups adding 9,000 individuals from 2019 to 2020 and is up 28,000 from 2019.

Gains made by those two cohorts are dwarfed by large losses in 45 to 54 (-41,0000), 55 to 64 (-31,000), and 25 to 34 (-30,000).

The labor force levels of those 25 to 34, 55 to 64, and 45 to 54 continued to decrease from 2020 to 2021.

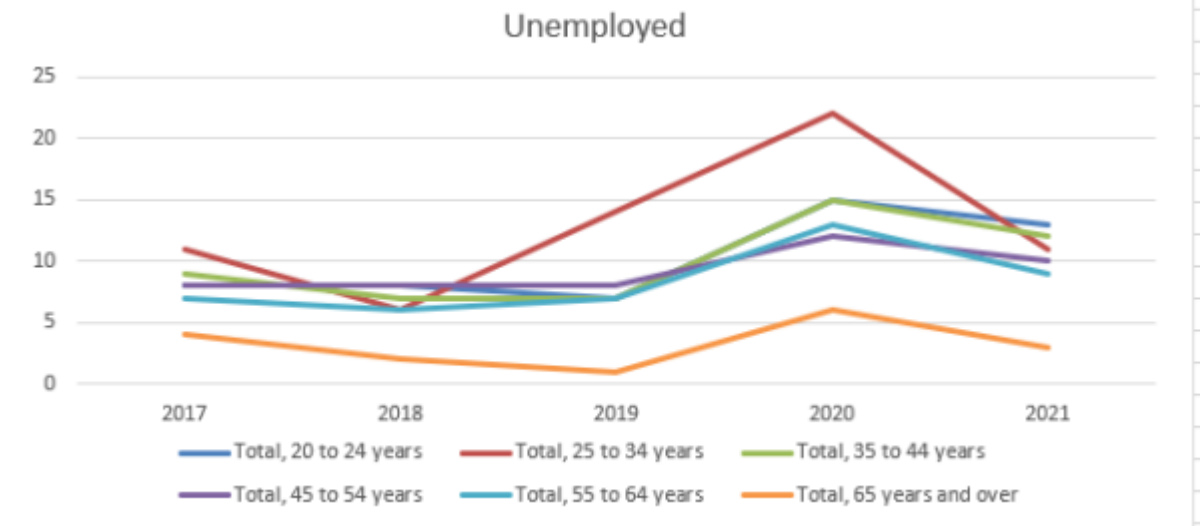
Unemployment Rate							
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Total, 20 to 24 years	4.3	5.0	3.8	10.3	7.1	2.8	3.3
Total, 25 to 34 years	2.9	1.5	3.4	5.7	3.1	0.2	-0.3
Total, 35 to 44 years	3.0	2.1	2.3	4.6	3.5	0.5	1.2
Total, 45 to 54 years	2.4	2.4	2.3	4	3.4	1	1.1
Total, 55 to 64 years	2.5	2.2	2.2	4	2.9	0.4	0.7
Total, 65 years and over	3.4	1.5	0.9	4.9	2.5	-0.9	1.6



The unemployment rate for those 20 to 24 remains 3.3% higher than 2019. This group had their unemployment increase at a higher rate from 2019 to 2020 and has not recovered as quickly as the other age groups.

The 25 to 34 year olds have a lower unemployment rate than they did in 2019. All other age groups are about 1% to 1.5% higher than 2019, but are declining from 2020.

Unemployed	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Total, 20 to 24 years	8	8	7	15	13	5	6
Total, 25 to 34 years	11	6	14	22	11	0	-3
Total, 35 to 44 years	9	7	7	15	12	3	5
Total, 45 to 54 years	8	8	8	12	10	2	2
Total, 55 to 64 years	7	6	7	13	9	2	2
Total, 65 years and over	4	2	1	6	3	-1	2



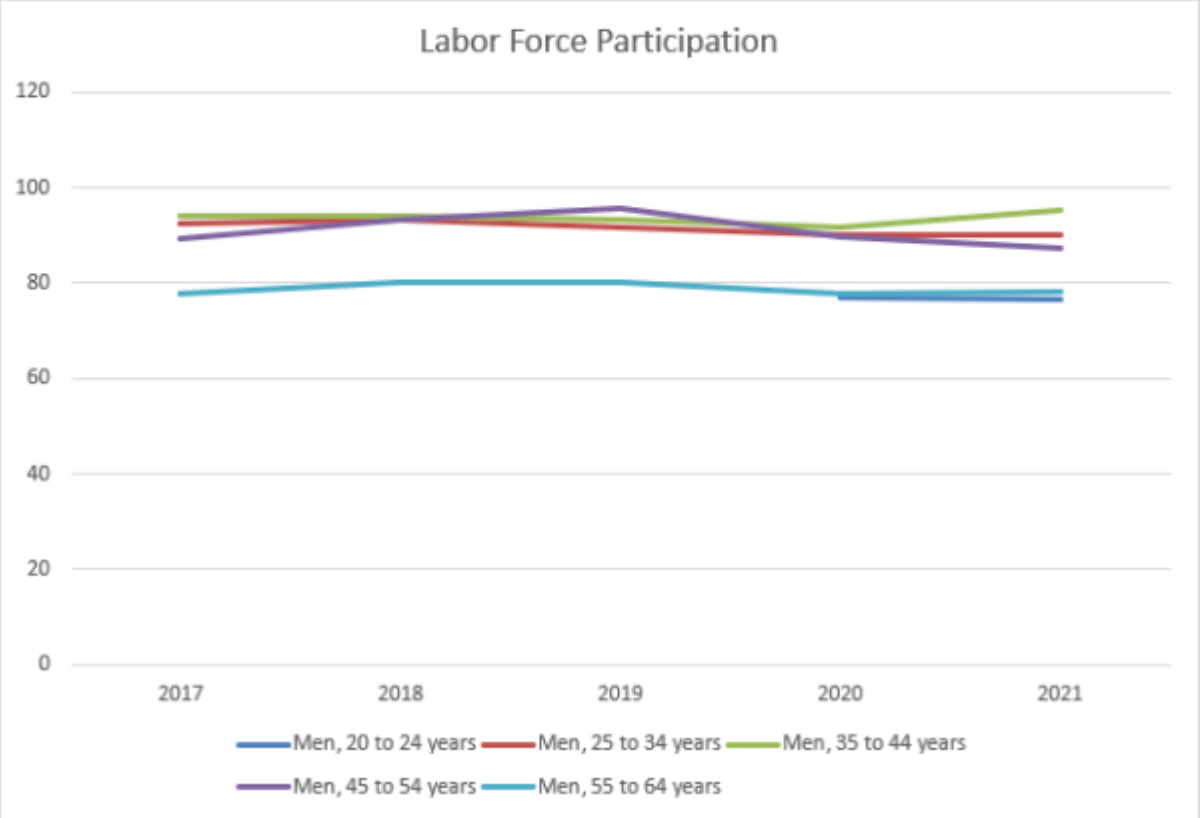
Again individuals 20 to 24 are lagging the most of the age groups with 6,000 more unemployed individuals that 2019, followed by 35 to 44 year olds (+5,000).

The 25 to 34 years old age group has 3,000 less unemployed than they did in 2019.

The unemployed 65 and older increased by 500%, 20 to 24 by 114% and 35 to 44 by 114% in 2019 to 2020. All are groups are decreasing with those 25 to 34 at a higher rate than the other groups.

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE, MEN BY AGE

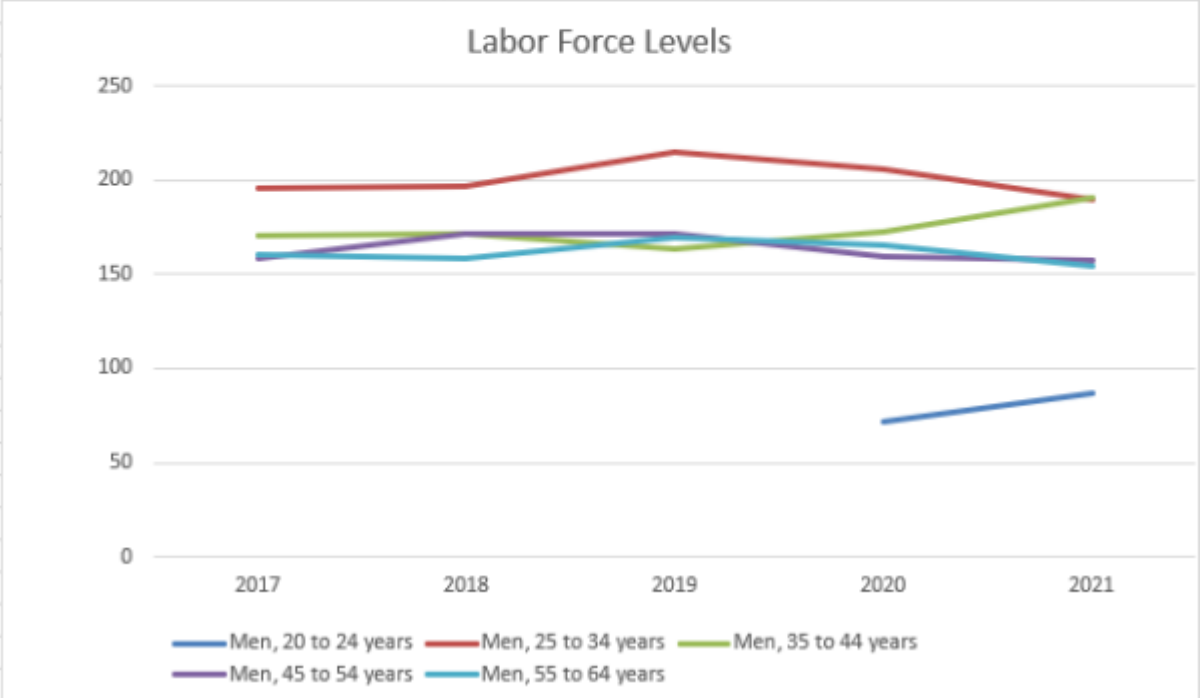
Labor Force Particpation Rate by Sex							
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Men, 20 to 24 years				77.1	76.9		
Men, 25 to 34 years	92.5	93.2	91.9	90.0	90.3	-2.2	-1.6
Men, 35 to 44 years	94.2	94.1	93.5	91.8	95.3	1.1	1.8
Men, 45 to 54 years	89.4	93.4	95.6	89.9	87.3	-2.1	-8.3
Men, 55 to 64 years	77.8	80.1	80.0	78.0	78.2	0.4	-1.8



Of men, those 45 to 54 lag the furthest from 2019 levels behind by 8.3%. This group continues to decrease from 2020 to 2021 while other age groups are increasing.

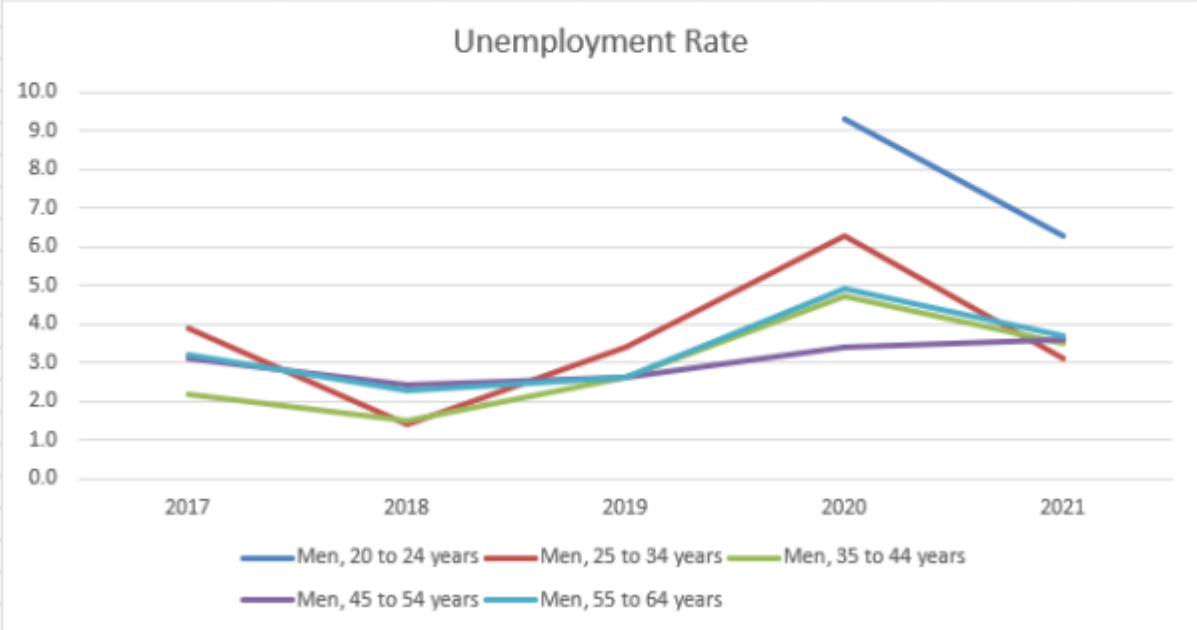
Labor Force Levels (In Thousands)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Men, 20 to 24 years				72	87	-	-
Men, 25 to 34 years	196	197	215	206	190	-6	-25.0
Men, 35 to 44 years	171	172	164	173	191	20	27.0
Men, 45 to 54 years	158	172	172	160	157	-1	-15.0
Men, 55 to 64 years	161	159	170	166	154	-7	-16.0



All age categories for men are lagging their 2019 pre-pandemic levels with the exception of men 35 to 44 (+27,000). Men 25 to 34 are still missing 25,000 individuals from 2019 and continue to decline along with those 55 to 64 (-16,000) and 45 to 54 (-15,000).

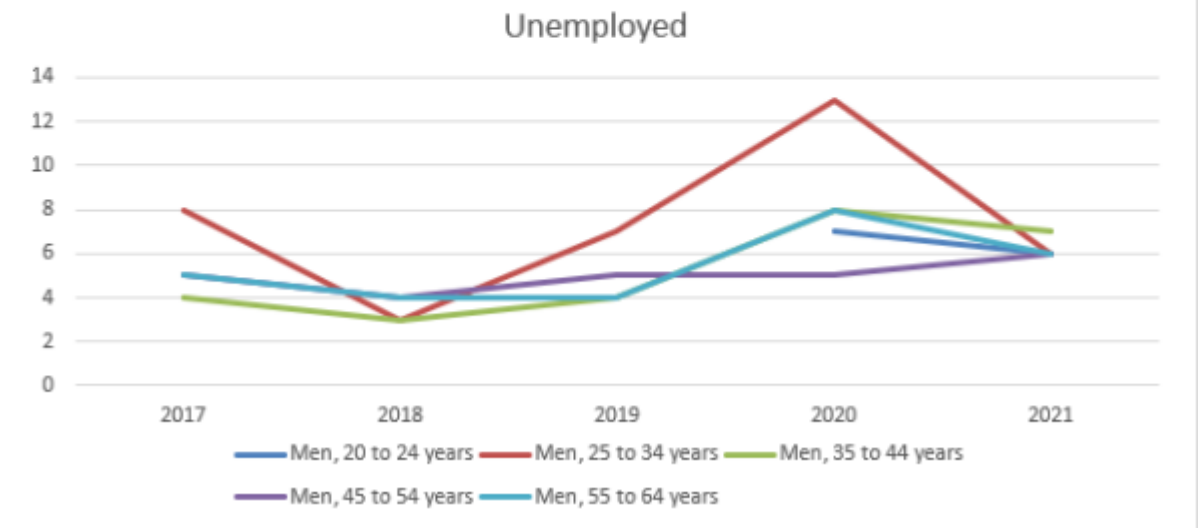
Unemployment Rate							
✚	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Men, 20 to 24 years				9.3	6.3		
Men, 25 to 34 years	3.9	1.4	3.4	6.3	3.1	-0.8	-0.3
Men, 35 to 44 years	2.2	1.5	2.6	4.7	3.5	1.3	0.9
Men, 45 to 54 years	3.1	2.4	2.6	3.4	3.6	0.5	1.0
Men, 55 to 64 years	3.2	2.3	2.6	4.9	3.7	0.5	1.1



Men 20 to 24 had the highest unemployment rate in 2021. Older age groups continue to lag from 2019 to 2021. All around 1% higher.

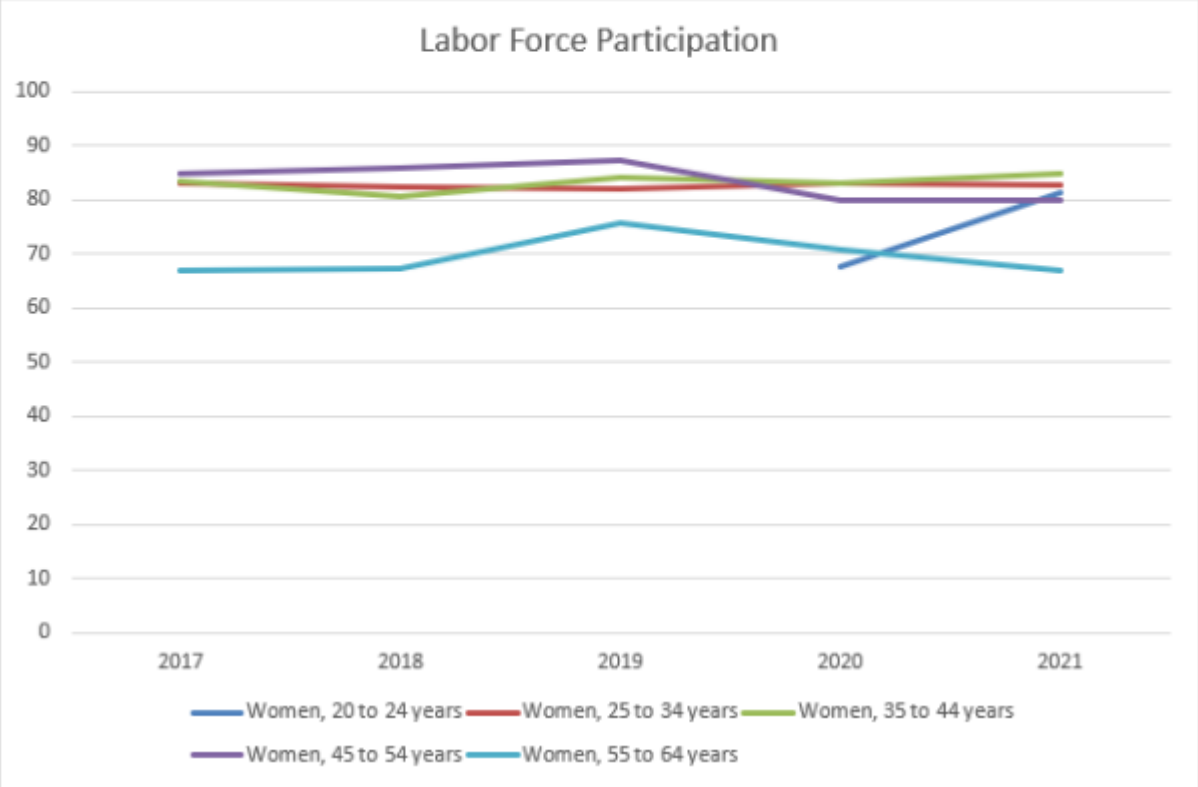
Men, 45 to 54 saw increase in unemployment from 2019 to 2020 and a slight increase from 2020 to 2021. All other age groups declined from 2020 to 2021.

Unemployed							
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Men, 20 to 24 years				7	6		
Men, 25 to 34 years	8	3	7	13	6	-2	-1
Men, 35 to 44 years	4	3	4	8	7	3	3
Men, 45 to 54 years	5	4	5	5	6	1	1
Men, 55 to 64 years	5	4	4	8	6	1	2



LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES, WOMEN BY AGE

Labor Force Particpation Rate by Sex	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Women, 20 to 24 years				67.8	81.4		
Women, 25 to 34 years	83.0	82.4	82.2	83.1	82.6	-0.4	0.4
Women, 35 to 44 years	83.6	80.5	84.3	83.2	84.7	1.1	0.4
Women, 45 to 54 years	84.9	86.1	87.4	80.1	79.8	-5.1	-7.6
Women, 55 to 64 years	66.9	67.2	75.9	70.7	66.8	-0.1	-9.1

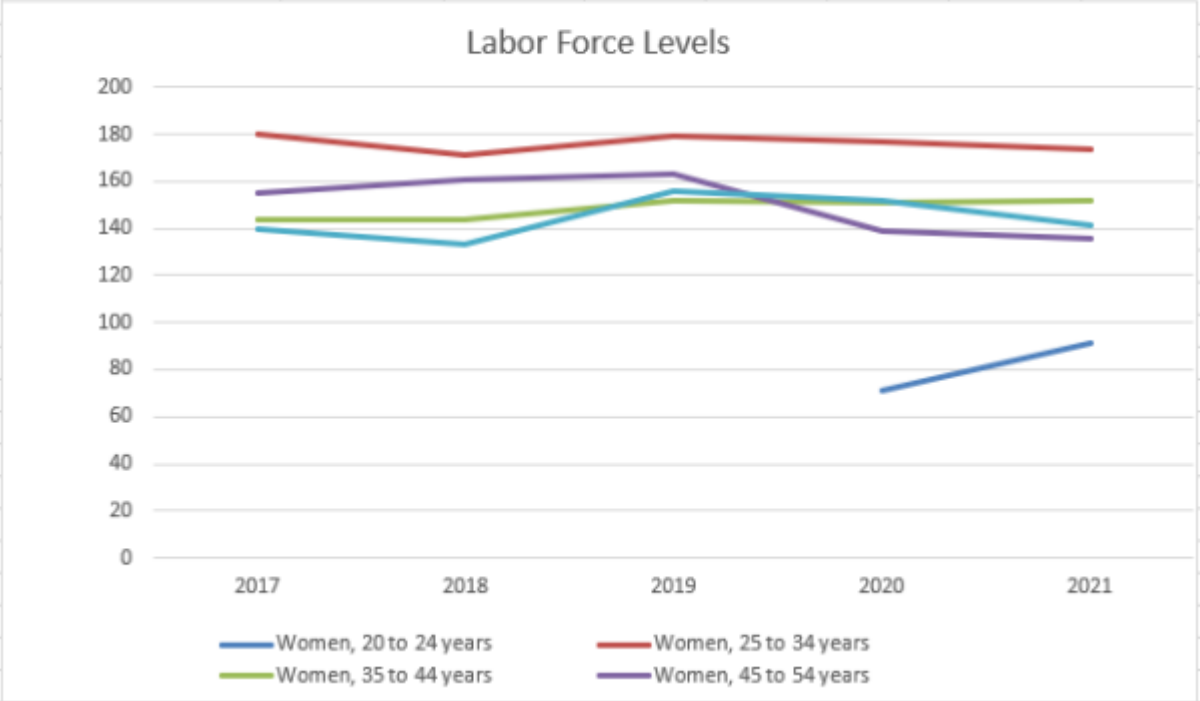


The older age groups among women have seen the sharpest drop off in labor force participation from 2019: 45 to 54 (-7.6%) and 55 to 64 (-9.1%).

The youngest age group saw an increase of 13.6% from 2020 to 2021. Again this is probably due to the industries and occupations impacted by the pandemic. The 25 to 34 and 35 to 44 year old age groups have been relatively steady. Women 55 to 64 are still lagging 3.9%.

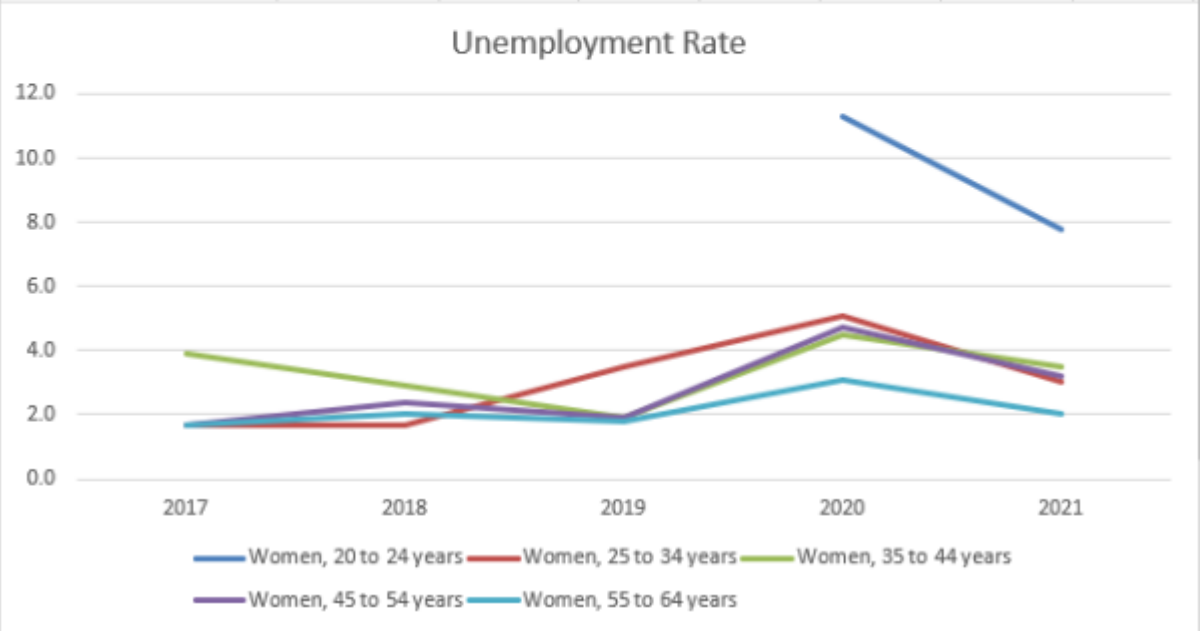
Labor Force Levels

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Women, 20 to 24 years				71	91	-	-
Women, 25 to 34 years	180	171	179	177	174	-6	-5.0
Women, 35 to 44 years	144	144	152	151	152	8	0.0
Women, 45 to 54 years	155	161	163	139	136	-19	-27.0
Women, 55 to 64 years	140	133	156	152	141	1	-15.0



Again, the largest decreases in labor force levels for women fall into the two older categories 45 to 54 (-27,000) and 55 to 64 (-15,000) from 2019 continued to decrease from 2020 to 2021 (-3,000 & -9,000).

Unemployment Rate	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Women, 20 to 24 years				11.3	7.8		
Women, 25 to 34 years	1.7	1.7	3.5	5.1	3.0	1.3	-0.5
Women, 35 to 44 years	3.9	2.9	1.9	4.5	3.5	-0.4	1.6
Women, 45 to 54 years	1.7	2.4	1.9	4.7	3.2	1.5	1.3
Women, 55 to 64 years	1.7	2.0	1.8	3.1	2.0	0.3	0.2

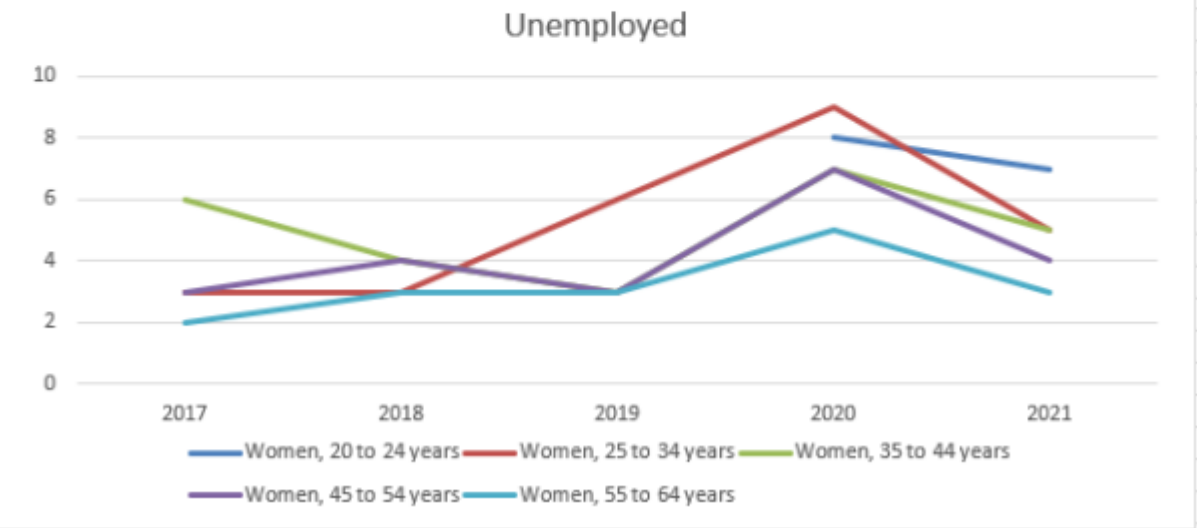


Women 20 to 24 have the highest unemployment rate than the other age groups, more than double. The unemployment rate for females 25 to 34 has recovered to 2019 levels a half of a percent lower than 2019 while other age groups are higher than 2019 (0.2%-1.6%).

All age groups decreased from 2020 to 2021.

Women 20 to 24 added 20,000 to the labor force.

Unemployed (In Thousands)							
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change from 2017	Change from 2019
Women, 20 to 24 years				8	7		
Women, 25 to 34 years	3	3	6	9	5	2	-1
Women, 35 to 44 years	6	4	3	7	5	-1	2
Women, 45 to 54 years	3	4	3	7	4	1	1
Women, 55 to 64 years	2	3	3	5	3	1	0



All unemployed levels for the age groups among women that have reportable data are near 2019 levels. Women 25 to 34 have a 1,000 less women unemployed while those 25 to 34 had 2,000 more unemployed.

iii. Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

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

2021 Statewide Laborshed Study: Employed Iowans Education & Training

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Slightly over four-fifths (80.6%) of the employed respondents within the State have some level of education/training beyond high school. **Figure 5**, to the right, breaks down these respondents' education/training by degree level. Slightly over two-fifths (40.7%) have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Figure 6, below, provides an overview of the educational fields of study of those who are currently employed living in the State of Iowa.

Figure 5
Education Level

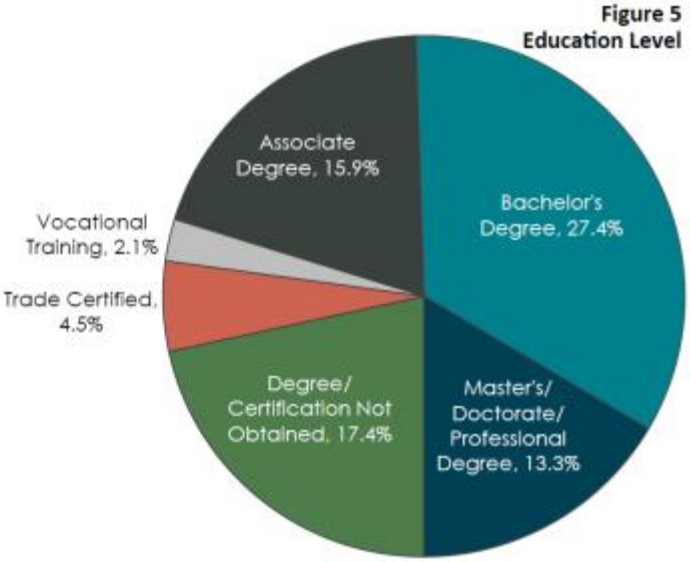
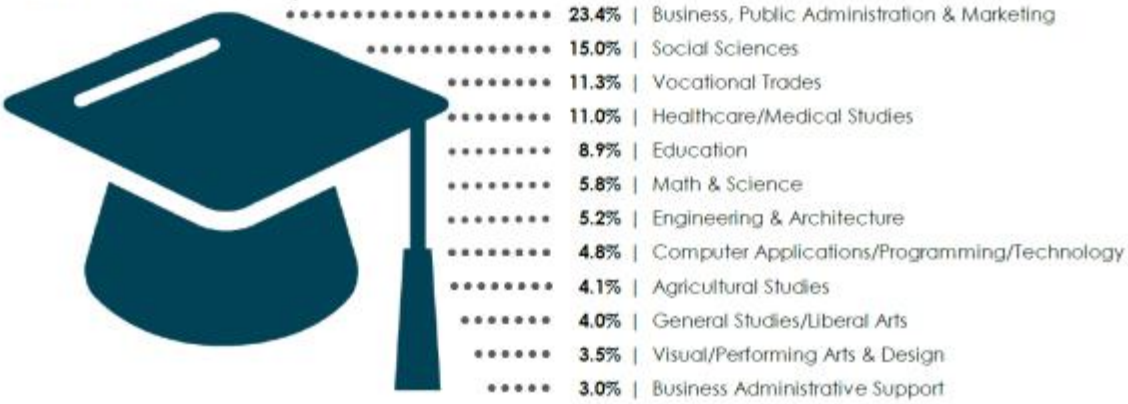


Figure 6

Figure 6
Educational Fields of Study



Employed Likely to Change Employment

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Survey results show that 81.3 percent of the respondents likely to change employment have some level of education/training beyond high school. **Figure 16**, below, breaks down these respondents' education/training by degree level. As with other segments of this study, education levels vary by industrial and occupational categories, gender and age groups.

Figure 16
Education Level of Employed Likely to Change

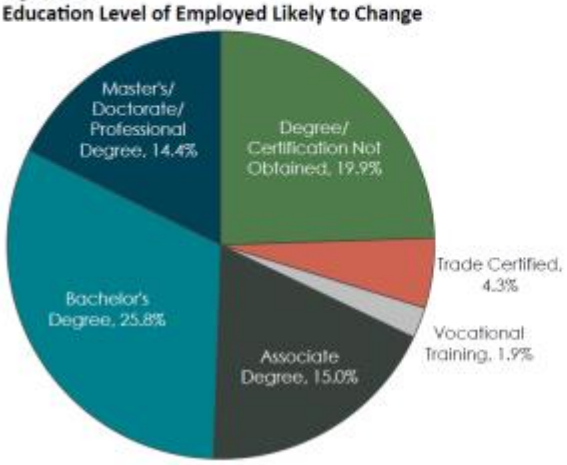
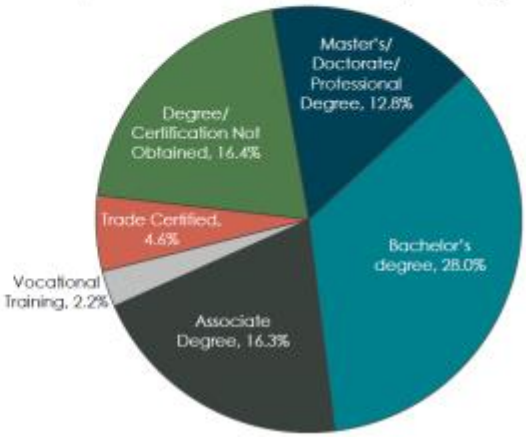


Figure 17
Education Level of Employed Unlikely to Change



Nearly one-fifth (17.3%) of those who are employed and likely to change employment are currently receiving training or education to be promoted in their job or to obtain a higher paying job.

Over two-fifths (41.2%) of the employed likely to change employment realize that to make a successful transition to new employment or be promoted within their current organization, they will need additional education/training.

Nearly three-fifths (57.8%) reported that they are likely to seek additional training/education within the next year.

The primary obstacles preventing respondents from meeting their educational/training needs are listed in **Figure 19**, below. The most highly reported obstacle is lack of time (36.3%).

Figure 18
Educational Fields of Study

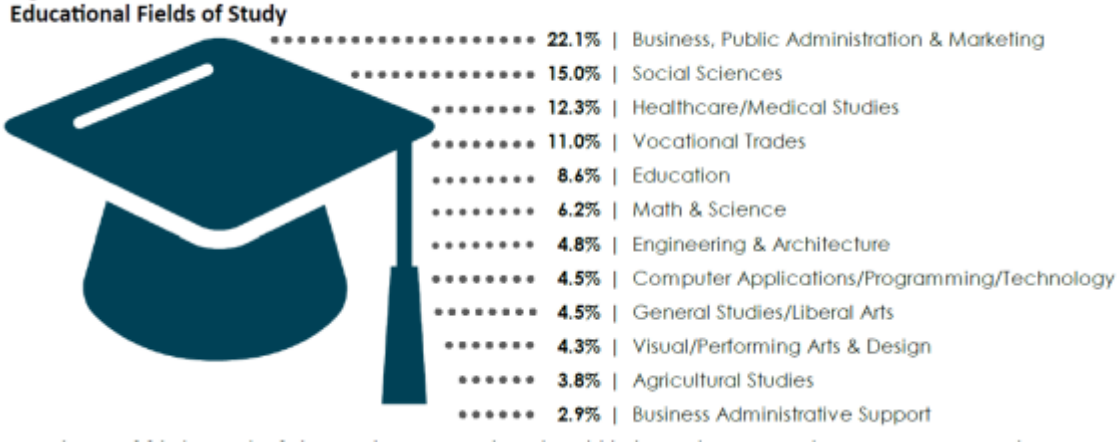
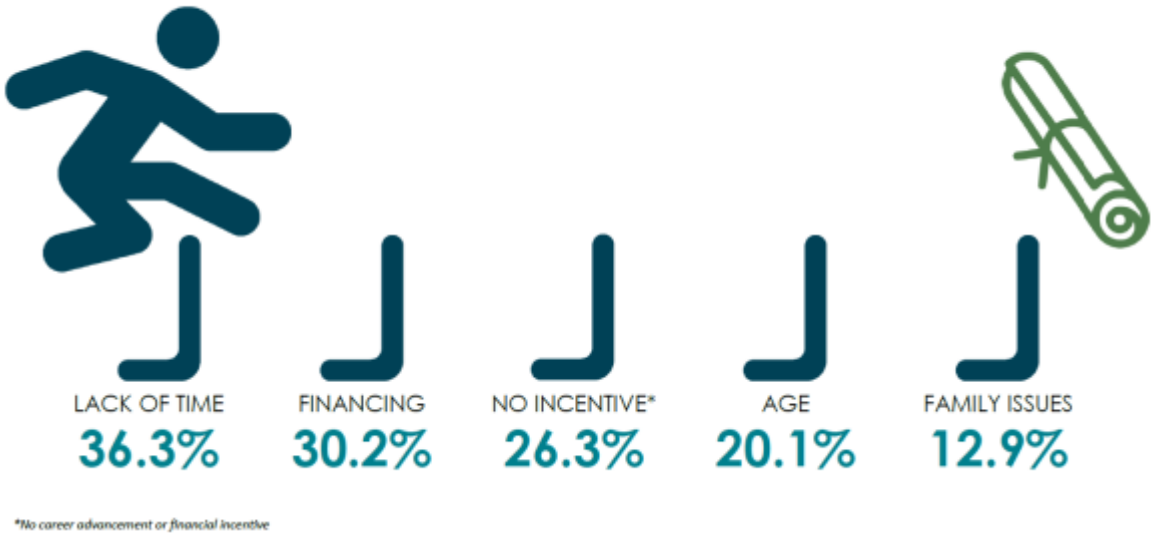


Figure 19
Obstacles to Training and Education



Unemployed, Likely to Accept Employment

Figure 33
Reasons for Being Unemployed

	% of Unemployed
Health/Disability Reasons	27.6%
Covid-19/Pandemic	20.2%
Employer Layoff, Downsizing, Relocation or Closing	16.6%
Terminated by Employer	7.2%
Lack of Employment Opportunities	6.9%
Quit Previous Employment	6.1%
Personality Conflicts with Employer/Co-workers	5.9%
Temporary/Seasonal Employment	5.6%
Continue/Further Education	4.9%
Family Reasons	4.6%
Moved Out of Area	3.6%
Lack of Education/Training	2.0%
Contract Concluded	1.8%
Transportation Issues	1.3%
Prefer not to Work	1.0%

Responses equating to less than one percent are not reported.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Nearly two-thirds (64.4%) of the respondents who are unemployed and likely to accept employment have some post high school education. **Figure 31** breaks down these respondents' education/training by degree level.

Nearly one-fifth (17.0%) of those who are unemployed and likely to accept employment are currently receiving training/education to improve/increase their skills and hire-ability.

Over one-fourth (27.9%) of the unemployed likely to accept employment realize that to make a successful transition to new employment they will need additional education/training.

Nearly two-thirds (66.1%) reported that they are likely to seek additional training/education within the next year.

The primary obstacles preventing respondents from meeting their educational/training needs are listed in **Figure 32**, on the next page. The most highly reported obstacle is health/disability issues (43.1%).

Figure 31
Education Level

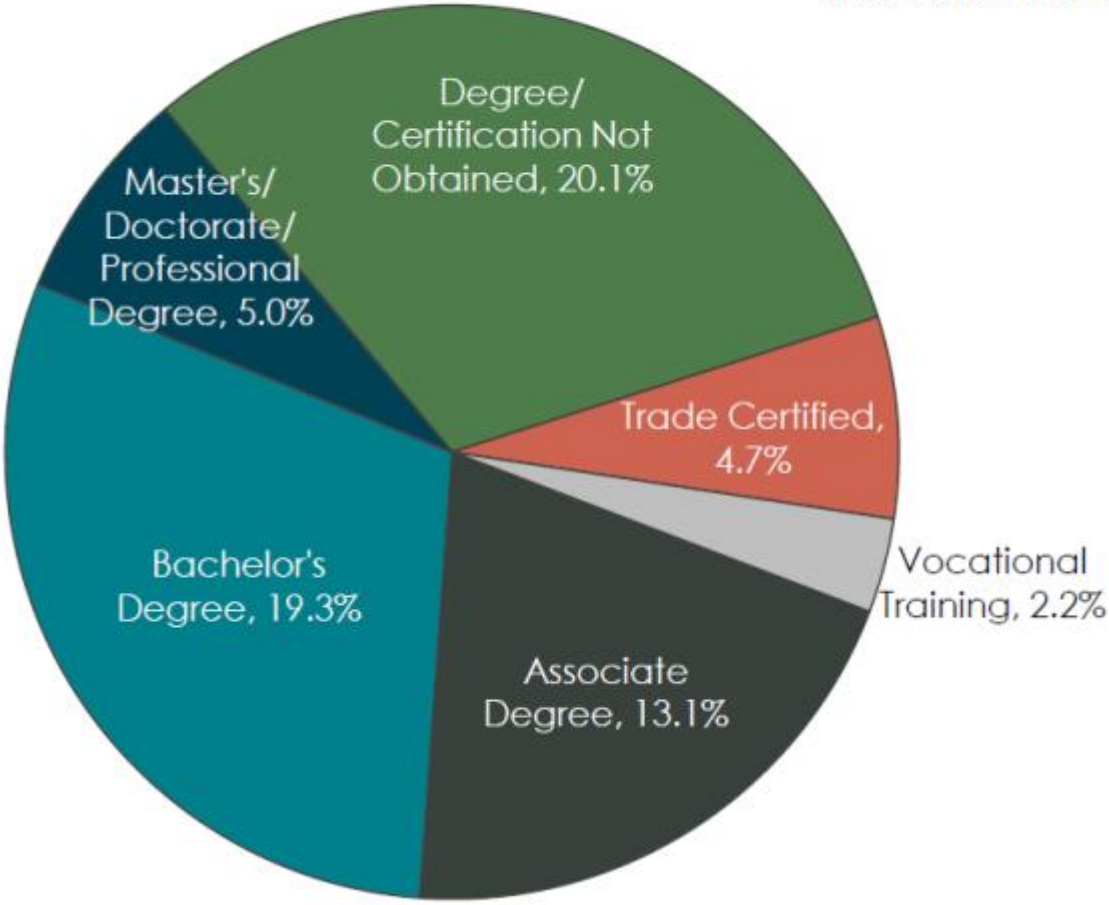
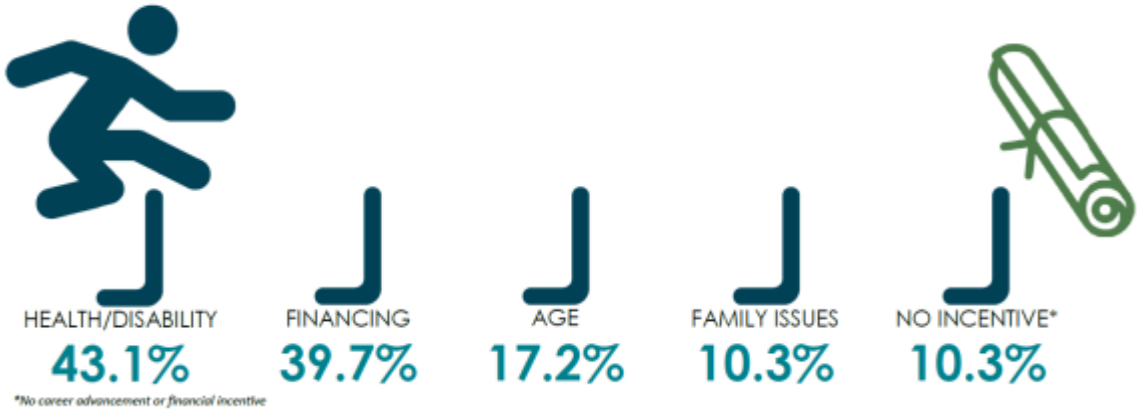


Figure 32
Obstacles to Training and Education



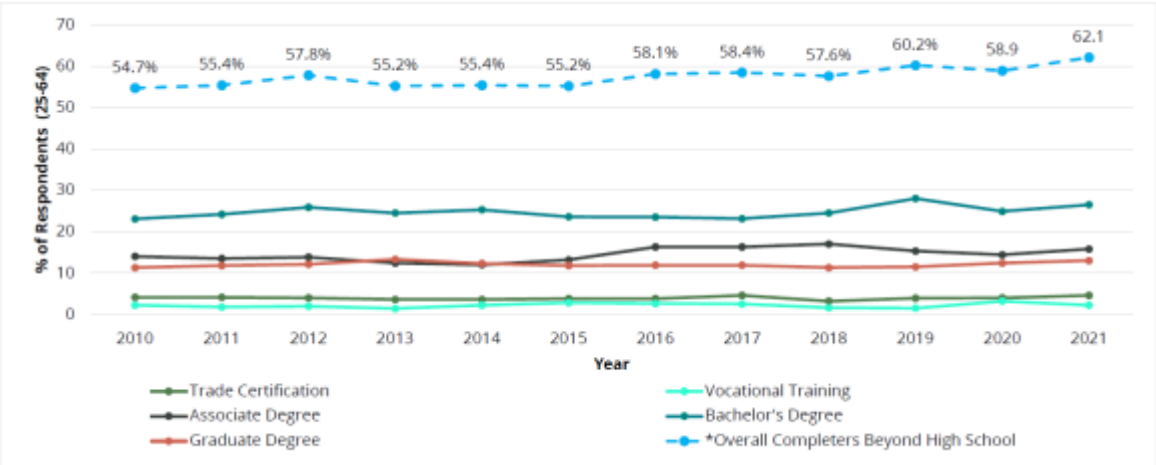
Education Trends

Upward trends in Associate Degrees and Post Graduate Degrees, Other levels of education and training have been relatively steady, but overall post-secondary completion has been increasing over the last five to eight years.

Laborshed Survey Educational Attainment - Iowa

% Highest Education Level Attained, Iowa Statewide Laborshed Survey (Ages 25 to 64)														
Educational Attainment	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Less than High School	4.1	4.0	2.6	2.5	2.2	2.5	2.4	3.3	2.5	2.3	2.4	1.9	2.1	2.4
High School, GED/HiSED	30.5	28.0	26.4	25.4	24.5	25.4	25.7	26.6	22.1	22.4	23.4	20.2	18.9	17.8
Some Education Beyond HS, No Award or Certification	17.0	17.9	16.4	16.9	15.3	16.9	16.5	14.9	17.3	16.9	16.6	17.7	20.1	17.7
Trade Certification	3.9	4.7	4.1	4.1	4.0	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.8	4.6	3.2	3.9	4.0	4.6
Vocational Training	2.3	3.4	2.2	1.8	2.0	1.4	2.2	2.8	2.6	2.5	1.6	1.5	3.2	2.2
Associate Degree	13.6	12.6	14.0	13.5	13.8	12.4	12.0	13.2	16.3	16.3	17.0	15.3	14.4	15.8
Bachelor's Degree	18.6	20.4	23.1	24.2	25.9	24.5	25.3	23.6	23.5	23.1	24.5	28.0	24.9	26.5
Graduate Degree	9.9	8.9	11.3	11.8	12.1	13.3	12.3	11.8	11.9	11.9	11.3	11.5	12.4	13.0
*Overall Completers Beyond High School	**48.3**	**50.0**	**54.7**	**55.4**	**57.8**	**55.2**	**55.4**	**55.2**	**58.1**	**58.4**	**57.6**	**60.2**	**58.9**	**62.1**

*Overall Completers Beyond High School is the aggregate of those who have completed a trade certification, vocational training, associate degree, Bachelor's degree, or post-graduate (Master's/PhD/professional) degree.

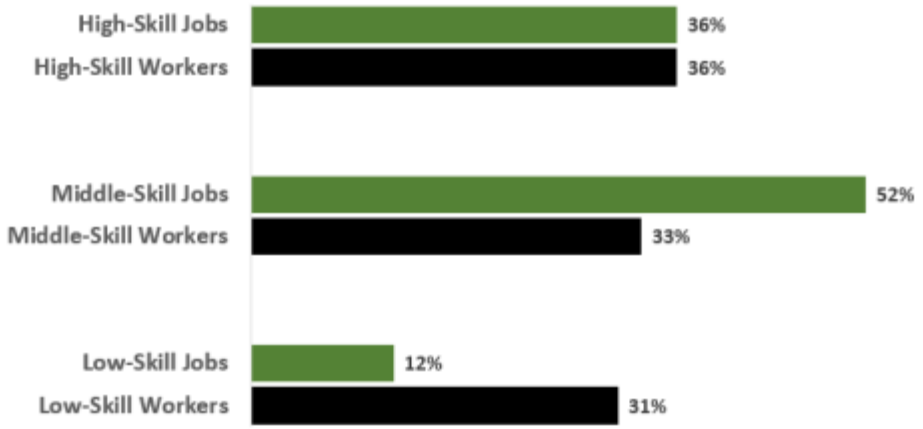


iv. Skill Gaps

Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.

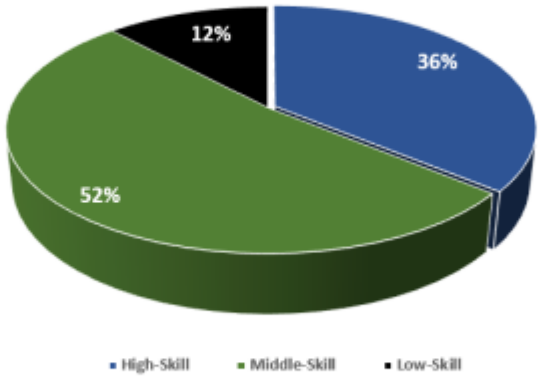
In a comparison of available high skill jobs, middle skill jobs and low skill jobs, Iowa has more middle skill jobs than any other category. Additionally, there are not enough middle skill workers to fill the jobs available in the state. The pandemic has exasperated this issue, however in recent data it appears that progress is being made in this area. Iowa has focused on upskilling low skilled workers into middle skills jobs through collaboration between partner services, training providers, employers and through the focus on the Future Ready Iowa goals and initiatives by the Governor. Through sector partnerships and collaboration local areas are incorporating strategies into their local plans to ensure top, specialized skills in their areas are filled by local workers.

Iowa Jobs and Workers, 2019-2020



Sources: 2019 Occupational Employment Statistics, Labor Market Information Division, Iowa Workforce Development. 2020 Current Population Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

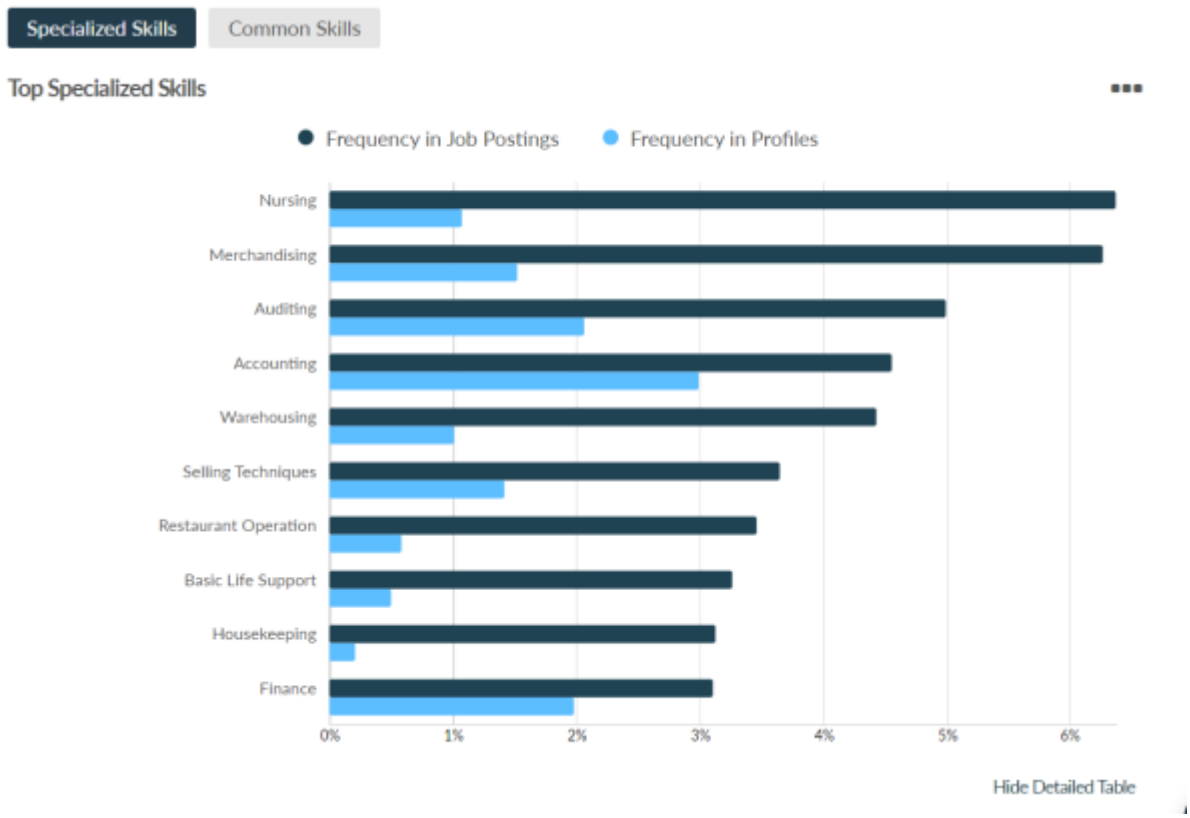
Iowa's Jobs by Skill Levels, 2019



Sources: 2019 Occupational Employment Statistics, Labor Market Information Division.

Iowa has more middle skill jobs than we do workers and an abundance of low skill workers when compared to the low-skill jobs. The focus should be to continue upskilling those low-skilled workers (+19%) into middle skills jobs.

Job Posting Comparison to Skills in Resume Profiles



2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

A. The State's Workforce Development Activities

Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required[1] and optional one-stop delivery system partners.[2]

Iowa boasts an array of programs, services and initiatives dedicated to supporting the efforts of a range of workforce stakeholders, including job-seekers and employers.

The U.S. Census Bureau (2020) estimated 14.7 percent of Iowans, 15 years of age or older, were nonwhite. Of that group, 8.1 percent participated to some extent with Iowa's community colleges in AY19-20, representing the highest penetration rate of minority students in community colleges nationally. Iowa has led the nation in community college penetration rate minority students for the past 12 years.

Iowa Workforce Development

The following section highlights some of the many workforce development activities. Customers entering the workforce system are provided comprehensive services and targeted referrals to other core partners. Through the Iowa*WORKS* integrated service delivery system:

- Customers are provided career services
- Services are provided through the 15 integrated one-stop centers, four satellite offices, and six expansion offices
- Dedicated Wagner-Peyser staff are located in each of the 15 integrated one-stop centers, four satellite offices, and six expansion offices
- Customers ready for employment after receiving career services may receive staff assisted job search and placement
- Customers in need of training services are referred to other core partners depending on customer needs
- Training services are provided through WIOA Title I, Title II or Title IV services

Online services include, but are not limited to:

- Resume builder
- Targeted job leads
- Career exploration and assessments
- Identification of gaps in skills, experiences and education
- VIrtual workshops
- Virtual one-on-one appointments with a career planner

One-stop services aim to respond to business demand for workforce improvement by up-skilling job seekers and equipping them with current, in-demand skills to help them compete in today's job market. The system provides collective access to career services to meet the diverse needs of job seekers. Career and training services, tailored to the individual needs of job seekers, form the backbone of the one-stop delivery system. All customers have immediate access to employment and skill advancement services in basic career services, with connection of the customer to additional individualized career services, when determined appropriate in order for a customer to achieve their career goals and obtain or retain employment.

Youth

Iowa's WIOA Title I Youth program connects eligible youth to a continuum of services and activities, aimed at teaching the youth to navigate the appropriate educational and workforce systems based on an established career pathway. Services are based on the unique needs of each individual participant, and include, but are not limited to:

- Creating awareness of career opportunities

- Connecting a youth's skills, interests and abilities to career opportunities
- Assistance in addressing and overcoming barriers to education and training
- Connection to education, training and work-based learning opportunities
- Support in attaining career goals

Youth program policies were updated and became effective during PY18 to align with the release of the new data management system. Standard operating procedures were also developed to align with policies and system requirements. Iowa has embraced the emphasis WIOA places on work-based learning and has consequently met the 20 percent work experience requirement since the enactment of WIOA, with the exception of program year 2015 which was a transition year. Additionally, Iowa recognizes the significance of serving out-of-school youth who are not engaged in education or employment. The Iowa Title I Youth program remains compliant with meeting the requirement to spend 75 percent of local area funds on out-of-school youth. Iowa has met this requirement since the enactment of WIOA, with the exception of program year 2015 which was a transition year.

Trade

The number of petitions filed in Iowa has remained consistent during the last two program years, with 10 petitions filed in PY19 and 12 in PY20. However, PY20 saw a significantly higher number of petition certifications with 11 of the 12 petitions certified compared to 4 from the 10 petitions filed in PY19. The increase in petition certifications can be attributed in part to the COVID-19 pandemic, as many of the PY19 petitions were denied due to most employers citing the pandemic as the primary cause of the layoffs. In addition, the increased certifications are the result of improved coordination with the state Rapid Response team, local area leadership, partner programs and employers to identify possible trade related layoffs as early as possible. Which has allowed for data driven research into possible trade-related layoffs prior to filing the petition by incorporating the U.S. Trade International Commission database and utilizing the Harmonized Tariff Schedule to identify potential import injury as a primary cause of the layoffs. Taking a comprehensive approach to petition filing with a focus on relationship building, research and data analysis has allowed for a more robust petition filing process and increased the probability of certification.

Participation in the TAA program also increased in PY20 with 294 total TAA participants, a 29% increase from PY19. Although petition certifications went up in PY20, three of the four larger certifications recalled all hourly employees resulting in lower uptake and participation rates in the TAA program respective to the number of Trade affected workers. Training continued to be the most popular benefit for PY20 with 179 participants enrolling in training, and Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) was the second most utilized benefit with 33 new participants enrolled. The job search and relocation benefits enrollments decreased, with only one participant seeking job search services and one seeking relocation services. The remaining participants served in PY20 sought individualized career services.

During PY20, the Trade team implemented a program redesign to better align with the TAA Final Rule that went into effect September 21st, 2020, including comprehensive training modules for field staff, policy and process updates, and library of training resources and needed documents accessible to all staff and Local Workforce Development Area partners. The redesign has resulted in a more streamlined and responsive approach that has enhanced communication between state and field staff and improved service delivery. This has allowed for a heightened focus on increasing Iowa's uptake rate for the TAA program for certified petitions.

In addition to the program redesign during PY20, the Trade team extensively prepared for Reversion 2021 regulations that will go into effect for any new petitions filed on or after 07/01/2021. Although any petition filed on or prior to 06/30/2021 will fall under the 2015 (September 21, 2021, Final Rule) regulations. This poses a unique challenge as the TAA program administration and service delivery will be operating under two different regulations dependent on petition number. In order to ensure seamless service delivery once the new regulations are in effect, the Trade team has begun to develop and implement trainings, prepared and updated forms, and shifted the training focus from classroom training to work based learning.

To begin increasing the uptake TAA program uptake rate new marketing and outreach strategies are also being implemented for PY21. Including electronic outreach via email to all workers that apply for unemployment insurance, social media marketing, informational packets mailed to all affected workers, and attending Rapid Response events to introduce the TAA program to affected workers. The Trade team is also attending job fairs to introduce employers to TAA funded work-based learning opportunities and encourage employers to hire trade affected workers.

By initiating early contact with workers and employers to introduce the TAA program, the Trade team plans to increase the PY21 uptake rate by concentrating on work-based learning opportunities through on the job training, customized training and apprenticeships. This strategy will address the current availability of work and potential hesitancy of workers may experience when considering enrollment in classroom training while being recruited by other area employers. The work-based learning model will ensure Trade affected workers have the opportunity to develop new skills, gain suitable employment, and have access to comprehensive case management and other services available through partner programs when enrolled in TAA approved training. While the employer hiring the TAA eligible workers will be reimbursed 50% of the workers' wages for the duration of the training, which will result in a well-trained long-term employee. Most importantly, a work-based learning initiative will encourage employers to hire locally and keep jobs in Iowa's communities.

Unemployment Insurance

Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) administers unemployment insurance benefits in the state of Iowa. Benefits are made available to workers who meet all requirements and have lost their jobs through no fault of their own, such as when a plant closes, they are laid off or in other similar circumstances.

Job seekers file for benefits online or in certain circumstances can be assisted over the phone through Iowa's call center or by calling any of the Iowa*WORKS* centers. Weekly certifications are also online and benefits can be direct deposited or customers can take advantage of Iowa's debit card.

Unemployment services are blended between a central call center that customers can dial toll-free to speak to a live agent or at any of the 15 comprehensive one-stop centers, four satellite Iowa*WORKS* offices or eight expansion locations with cross-trained state merit staff. Iowa's new case management system is tied into the online unemployment claim filing site, capturing full registration data for claimants not likely to return to the same employer and feeding that information back to the Iowa*WORKS* system, satisfying registration requirements for both programs.

At the Iowa*WORKS* centers, customers can utilize computer labs to file their initial or weekly claims, engage with trained staff who can answer the hard questions, adjudicate or fix issues on the spot. Customers can take advantage of Iowa*WORKS* centers in person for claim assistance to share services, connect with programs, classes and training options all on their first visit.

Iowa's unemployment system supports Iowa*WORKS* centers infrastructure and staffing costs, which allows services to be integrated into all functions of the workforce system.

Re-entry

Iowa returns nearly 6,000 citizens each year; a skilled pool of employees to meet Iowa employers' needs. In partnership with the Iowa Department of Corrections, IWD has implemented the Re-entry Initiative. IWD Offender Workforce Development Specialist certified re-entry staff are housed in four of the nine state correctional facilities, assisting with soft-skills training, resume creation, mock interviews, proctoring the National Career Readiness Certification (NCRC), teaching classes, acting as the sponsor for Iowa Department of Corrections Registered Apprenticeship programs, hosting career fairs inside the facilities, networking with employers, providing individualized job referrals, and connecting customers upon release with the American Job Center network in the area to which the individual returns. Additionally, inmates are offered work readiness classes that emphasize job applications, resume writing, interviewing skills and effectively addressing the criminal history issue. Many employers experiencing labor shortages believe their number one challenge is to identify, attract and retain employees. To address these needs, employers are increasing their applicant pools by considering individuals with criminal histories. Employed ex-offenders are some of the most dedicated and productive employees. They are overwhelmingly dependable and punctual and the turnover rate is atypically low. Re-entry staff served over 1,400 individuals in 2018 and are on track to serve over 2,500 in 2019.

Federal Bonding Program

Federal bonding benefits an employer by providing free fidelity bond insurance to protect them against loss of money or property due to employee dishonesty. The advantage of the program is that the employer benefits from the worker's skills and abilities while opening up doors of opportunity to job seekers that might otherwise struggle to overcome those barriers. The bond promotes confidence in a job seeker who needs to gain re-entry into or maintain a connection to the labor market and demonstrate that he or she can be a productive worker. Iowa was granted $35,249 to purchase fidelity bonds, giving the state the ability to issue up to 300 bonds. In August 2019, states were granted approval to purchase those bonds through UIG Insurance, and Iowa purchased 12 to start, with two being used in the quarter. Iowa's opportunity to increase capacity through marketing, employer, community and partner training is beginning to show results that will only grow.

Rapid Response Assistance and Layoff Aversion

Rapid Response (RR) efforts in Iowa continued to play an important part in business engagement. As Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notifications (WARN) are received, RR staff immediately begin working with company officials and local area leadership to organize and deploy RR activities. Iowa legislated that employers with any layoffs of more than 25 employees must notify IWD. This state requirement is in addition to the federal requirement to notify in the event of a layoff impact of 50 or greater.

When WARN notices are received, each employer is contacted by State RR staff. Subsequently, most receive local-level delivery of RR services. The RR Worker Information Meetings (WIMs) are scheduled as soon as possible to ensure services reach as many employees as possible. Iowa's Dislocated Worker Survey remains a key component to the WIM. During PY18, Iowa began experimenting with timing of survey distribution to promptly establish services. This does require support by the employer. An example of this type of unique partnership is the opportunity Procter and Gamble allowed for IWD staff to conduct WIMs and distribute the

survey prior to the official layoff. This allowed for advanced planning on services required for the worker group. This re-enforces the importance of collaboration with the community and the importance of building these relationships with the American Job Centers, and allows for layoff aversion to address the needs of the workers prior to layoff.

National Dislocated Worker Grants

On March 23, 2020, Iowa received a major disaster declaration (DR-4483-IA) from FEMA. USDOL awarded IWD $1,665,000 in emergency DWG funds to administer the COVID-19 Employment Recovery DWG. All Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) were eligible to apply for funds to implement employment recovery work. Of the nine LWDBs, seven applied and were awarded funds to provide, in total, 320 dislocated Iowans with career and training services. Career services cover a broad range of activities, including skill assessments, staff assisted resume preparation and job development, the development of an individual employment plan, career counseling and career planning, financial literacy, adult basic education, pre- employment training, and work experience. Training services include occupational skills training, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, and entrepreneurial training.

Veterans Services and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program

IWD currently has 15 Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOPs) specialists who are located in our Iowa*WORKS* offices across the state. DVOPs main activity is to provide individualized career services (comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs; development of an individual, employment plan to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives and appropriate combination, of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals; group counseling; individual counseling and career planning; and short-term prevocational services that may include development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training) to eligible veterans and eligible spouses who have a significant barrier to employment. DVOPs are an essential resource in our Iowa*WORKS* centers.

Iowa has two Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs), one of whom is domiciled in the Des Moines Iowa*WORKS* office, and the other in the Davenport Iowa*WORKS* office. The LVER conducts outreach to employers in the area to assist veterans in gaining employment, including conducting seminars for employers and, in conjunction with employers, conducting job search workshops and establishing job search groups; and facilitate employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans in a State under the applicable State employment service delivery system.

LVERs and DVOPs receive regular training and education from WIOA core partners (Title I through Title IV) as part of a fully integrated American Job Center. Representatives from each core partner provide information and training annually, if not more regularly, during staff meetings and staff in-service dates which are twice a year. Although not all core partners are co-located throughout the state, each partner still strives to work together in an effort to improve integration and braid funding whenever possible.

Similarly, optional one-stop delivery system partners are invited into the AJCs during staff meetings so that all employment services staff, to include LVERs and DVOPs, understand the resources at their disposal so customers can have the best possible employment outcomes.

Education and training for AJC staff regarding veterans' services is covered by LVERs, DVOPs, and the Veterans Program Coordinator (VPC). Specifically, the VPC and LVERs in the state are responsible for providing staff training on Priority of Service, veteran programs such as Home Base Iowa and the HIRE Vets Medallion Program, along with other veteran resources.

Iowa was the first state to partner with Hilton Worldwide with the nationwide Hilton Honors program, offering no-cost accommodations to military personnel. The Hilton Honors hotel stays can be used to pursue job opportunities in any industry - and can be used to support job interviews, skills training, housing searches for newly employed Iowans, and other job-seeking activities within the continental United States, Alaska and Hawaii. Iowa is making points available to Veterans, Transitioning Service Members, Spouse, National Guard and Reserve members, and anyone meeting the Wagner-Peyser definition of a Veteran. Case management is not a requirement.

Home Base Iowa

A program by Iowa's governor, "Home Base Iowa," was signed into law on Memorial Day, 2014. This legislation provides the following benefits to Iowa Veterans, as well as Transitioning Service Members looking to make this state their home:

- Fully exempts military pensions from state income tax, and includes surviving spouses in this exemption;
- Special license plate fees waived for those eligible for veteran-related specialty plates (Bronze Star, Disabled Veteran, Ex POW, Gold Star, Iowa National Guard, Legion of Merit, Medal of Honor, Pearl Harbor Veteran, Purple Heart, Retired by branch, Air Force Cross Medal, Airman's Medal, Navy Cross, Service Cross Medal, Navy/Marine Corps Medal, Soldier's Medal, Silver Star Medal, Veteran);
- Allows private employers to give preference in hiring and promotion to veterans and surviving spouses of military personnel who died either while on active duty, or as a result of such service;
- Increases funding and eligibility for Military Homeownership Assistance Program;
- Requires licensing boards to adopt rules giving credit for military training and experience, as well as draft proposals allowing license reciprocity for military spouses; and
- Higher education institutions must set academic credit standards for military experience.

Another component of Home Base Iowa is member businesses and communities. The Home Base Iowa Communities initiative designates communities as centers of opportunity for military

veterans and further highlights Iowa's statewide commitment to welcoming veterans to the state. Standards to become a Home Base Iowa community include:

- Ten percent of the businesses in the community agree to pledge to hire a specific number of veterans, post their jobs with IWD, and become a member of Skilled Iowa;
- The community develops its own welcome/incentive package for veterans;
- The community prominently displays the Home Base Iowa Community designation; and
- The community obtains a resolution of support from the appropriate local governing body.

Iowa currently has 100 Home Base Iowa communities. A public/private partnership, Home Base Iowa has connected 2,350 businesses with over 1,000 veterans that have registered on the site. For more information, see www.homebaseiowa.org. This website also provides information on job opportunities in Iowa through the jobs microsite for Veterans, https://workiniowa-veterans.jobs, veteran-friendly employers and communities, veteran resources, Home Base Iowa employers, and more.

Iowa Department of Education

Through leadership and service to the state education system, the Iowa Department of Education works to ensure all students are ready for college and career training and receive the postsecondary support they need to succeed. The Department provides oversight to the state education system that includes public elementary and secondary schools, nonpublic schools that receive state accreditation, area education agencies, community colleges, and teacher preparation programs.

Iowa Adult Education and Literacy

Adult education has a rich history in Iowa of providing services that assist adults in improving their skills, achieving their educational goals, and transitioning to further education or employment. Instruction is designed for adults functioning at the lowest levels of basic skills and English language instruction to advanced levels of learning. As defined by Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity (WIOA), Adult Education enables adults to: (1) become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency; (2) obtain the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children; and (3) complete a secondary school education.

The federally-funded adult education and literacy programs administered by the Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation provide lifelong educational opportunities and support services to eligible participants. Programs assist adults in obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for work, further education, family self-sufficiency, and community involvement. Iowa's adult education and literacy (AEL) programs are delivered through the state's 15 community colleges. By improving

the education and skill levels of individual Iowans, the programs enhance the competitiveness of Iowa's workforce and economy.

Through instruction in adult basic education (ABE), adult secondary education (ASE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs help learners to:

- gain employment or better their current employment;
- obtain a high school equivalency diploma by passing the state approved assessment;
- attain skills necessary to enter postsecondary education and training;
- exit public welfare and become self-sufficient;
- learn to speak, to read, and to write the English language;
- master basic academic skills to help their children succeed in school;
- become U.S. citizens and participate in a democratic society;
- gain self-esteem, personal confidence, and a sense of personal and civic responsibility.

Eligibility for enrollment includes persons that are at least 16 years of age and not enrolled or required to be enrolled in a secondary school under Iowa Code chapter 299.1A; and meet one of the following:

- lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to enable them to function effectively in society;
- do not have a secondary school diploma or a recognized equivalent, and have not achieved an equivalent level of education; or
- are unable to speak, read, or write the English language.

Adult education and literacy (AEL) program enrollment, reported in 2021, Iowa reported that 10,653 individuals received adult education and literacy services. Of those, 7,501 were reported as participants in the National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS).

While only a portion of the overall population is served by AEL programs, this subset represents learners who were assessed on measures fundamental to academic and vocational success. These measures include achieving education level gains, attaining secondary diplomas, entering and retaining employment, and transitioning to postsecondary education or training.

AEL instructional programs represent a progression of basic skill attainment as defined by the NRS educational functioning levels (EFL). Each level has a description of basic reading, writing, numeracy, and functional and workplace skills that can be expected from a person functioning at that level. As of 2017, six ABE Levels have been renamed ABE Level 1-6 with ABE Level 1 being the lowest and ABE Level 6 being the highest level. Similarly, the six ESL levels are ESL Level 1-6 with ESL Level 1 being the lowest.

ABE instruction had the most enrollees in AY20-21 with 4,942 participants, or 65.9 percent of total enrollment, while ESL had 2,559 participants, or 34.1 percent of total enrollment. ESL enrollment has continued to decrease with a five-year average of 14.8 percent, while ABE also has a five-year average decrease of 7.8 percent. Of those who were both enrolled in AY20-21 and federally reported, 54.2 percent were female and 37.1 percent self-identified as white.

Another 28.3 percent of participants identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino, 24.7 percent as black or African American and 5.6 percent as Asian. The remaining three categories

(American Indian, Hawaiian or Pacific Islander and two or more races) combined for 4.3 percent of the participants.

Due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, enrollment was down 22.9 percent to 10,676 students; however, there was an increase of students making the transition to online learning. In AY20-21, distance education served 2,290 participants with 241,203 hours. This is a 95.7 percent increase in distance education enrollment and a 47.0 percent increase in distance education hours over AY19-20. This increase in distance education enrollment contributes to the five year average increase of 84.0percent.

The three highest barriers to employment, as self-identified by participants upon entry into the AEL programs, include English Language Learners, low literacy, or cultural barriers (100.0 percent), low-income (3.1 percent), and single parents (2.2 percent). It is important to note that participants could indicate more than one barrier.

Of the 7,501 participants reported in NRS, 74.1 percent self-identified their highest level of school completed as between the 9th and 12th grades. The next highest level of education was having completed high school (12.5%). These self-reported grade levels indicate a starting point to measure progress in AEL programs, in which the primary purpose is to improve basic literacy skills. The NRS approach to measuring educational gain is to define a set of EFLs at which students are initially placed based on their ability to perform literacy-related tasks in specific content areas. Iowa's AEL programs use the federally approved Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to assess all incoming students for proper grade-level placement. After recommended hours of instructional intervention, students are again assessed to determine their skill levels. If a student's skills have improved sufficiently to place him or her one or more levels higher, an AEL gain is recorded.

In 2021, 3,849 (55.9 percent) of the total NRS reported participants persisted beyond the recommended hours and took a post-assessment. Of those who persisted, 3,591 (65.3 percent) completed an EFL.

Measurable Skill Gain–This measure demonstrates participants' progress toward achieving a credential or employment. For AEL programs, the NRS includes two ways participants can demonstrate a MSG: an educational functioning level (EFL) gain or receipt of a secondary credential. A participant may have more than one period of participation but only one gain per period of participation. Of the 7,645 periods of participation in 2021, 44.4 percent achieved a MSG.

High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED)—For many participants in AEL programs, the main goal is to achieve a HSED. To qualify for a measurable skill gain, a student must be a participant within the academic year and pass all five sub-sets within the program year.

During AY20, a total of 1,313 participants completed all five sub-tests and had data available for matching against HSED recipients. An additional 100 students earned a HSED using an alternative pathway AY20-21.

In January 2018, the Iowa State Board of Education (Board) adopted an administrative rule change establishing alternative pathways for an Iowan to earn a high school equivalency diploma (HSED). Previously, the only way to earn a HSED was by passing the HiSET®, the state-approved high school equivalency test.

The new pathways, which are in addition to the HiSET®, are based on completion of an approved program consisting of at least 36 secondary credits; the completion of a regionally accredited postsecondary credential equal to or beyond an associate degree; or to a resident participant who presents a postsecondary degree equivalent to an associate degree or higher from outside the United States. All of Iowa's alternative pathways are grounded in

comprehensive data, research, and integrity that ensures rigor and maintains quality standards important to Iowa. An additional 40 students obtained their high school equivalency based on one of these alternative pathways.

To qualify for core outcomes, participants must exit the program either by completing instruction or by no longer participating; however, to be included in federal reports, they must have completed a minimum of 12 hours of AEL coursework.

Iowa participates as a data-match state by partnering with Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) for employment and wage information. In addition, the MIS and National Student Clearinghouse are used to verify postsecondary student enrollment and credential attainment.

Of the 11,265 participants, 7,365 (53 percent) exited the program in AY19-20. Of those, 53 percent were able to be tracked through the databases used to match employment data and were employed, earning a median quarterly wage of $6,681.

During calendar year 2019, 7,891 participants exited and 4,196 (53.2 percent) were able to be tracked and found to be employed in the fourth quarter after exit. Of the 7,557 participants, 918 participants (12.1 percent) met the criteria for credential attainment cohort and 230 (25.1 percent) received a credential.

In Iowa, five community colleges work with the Iowa Department of Corrections to provide AEL services. In AY20-21, 1,101 participants were included as part of the total enrollment reported in the NRS. This number does not include all of the adults served in Iowa's correctional institutions because, as stated previously, participants must meet minimum requirements to be reported in the NRS.

For the past three years, Integrated Education and Training (IET) and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) has been a priority for educational services. Participants in an IET program received adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training Iowa colleges reported 159 IET participants in AY20-21 with 57.9 percent achieving an MSG. Top training programs included meat cutting, medical receptionist, nursing assistants and construction trades IELCE participants fell to 90 with an MSG rate of 50.0 percent compared to the five year participant peak of 360 participants with an MSG rate of 48.1 percent. When comparing those who exited during AY19-20, IELCE participants earned the most wages in the second quarter after exit with $11,045 compared to $3,440 for Corrections. Also, IET had the most employed in the second quarter after exit with 63 percent.

Career and Technical Education (Perkins)

The rapidly evolving skill requirements of the global economy pose challenges for young workers and businesses. Increasingly, workers of all ages must update their skills and credentials to obtain a job with family-sustaining wages, remain employable, or move ahead in a career. At the same time, businesses need a robust pipeline of qualified workers to meet the changing skill demands of their sector. Employers are generally looking for three types of skills in their entry-level employees: (1) employability or soft skills, (2) hard skills, and (3) occupation- or industry-specific skills. The intent of Iowa's Career and Technical Education (CTE) is to provide students with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in the global economy. Career and technical education equips students with the foundational knowledge to explore a cluster of occupations and careers. As students evolve through their educational experience, their focus is narrowed to a particular program. This process allows students to transition seamlessly while providing them with hands-on exploration, rigorous academics and the support necessary to succeed. HF2392, passed in 2016 and aligns with Perkins V, is divided in two sections - Division I addresses comprehensive, holistic career guidance and development, and Division II lays out the requirements for having all CTE programs be high-quality, regardless of person, place, or proximity. Under HF2392 Division I, through rule and guidance,

the IDOE requires all school districts choose a career information system, develop a district plan for career guidance, and have every eighth-grade student complete an individual career and academic plan (ICAP), which is updated annually until the student graduates from high school.

For Division II, the legislation requires the establishment of regional planning partnerships (RPPs) to facilitate planning around CTE in a given region. This is achieved through: (1) development of a multi-year plan and budget; (2) coordination of the mandatory secondary CTE program approval process: and (3) use of funds for key activities and items including career guidance, professional development, and equipment. In alignment with the fifteen (15) community college regions, fifteen (15) RPPs were established. At a minimum, all RPPs are expected to address the following:

- Promotion of career and college readiness through thoughtful career guidance and purposeful academic and technical planning practices;
- Promotion of high-quality, integrated career and technical education programming, including the delivery of quality career and technical education programs by school districts, and career academies, comprised of secondary exploratory and transitory coursework, to prepare students for higher-level, specialized academic and technical training aligned with labor market needs;
- Allowing students to access a spectrum of high-quality work-based learning experiences through collaboration with a work-based learning intermediary network; and
- Affording all students equitable access to programs and encouraging the participation of underrepresented student populations in career and technical education programming in six CTE service areas – agriculture, food and natural resources; business, finance, marketing, and management; health science; human services; applied science, technology, engineering, and manufacturing; and information solutions, which encompasses two divisions.

Registered Apprenticeship Programs

IWD has worked strategically to grow Registered Apprenticeship (RA) throughout the state. IWD has coordinated with the U.S. DOL/Office of Apprenticeship (U.S. DOL/OA) to register new RA programs and recruit talented and diverse job seekers. RA expansion efforts have been focused in the sectors of healthcare, information technology, and advanced manufacturing along with increase the traditional RA occupations within the skilled trades. Using internal referral procedures created in 2018, IWD and U.S. DOL/OA work very closely in the development and referral of programs. The progression of RA programs can be contributed to additional workforce systems staff training on developing RA programs, monitoring of local AJC, and rigorous one-on-one technical assistance by IWD during this performance year.

From October 2016 to July 2021, the U.S. DOL has provided over $7.5 million to the state for the expansion of RA programs. Through these grants, Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) has provided competitive funding opportunities and business incentives to Iowa businesses and high schools. These grants allowed IWD to create and expand programs and execute a statewide marketing and outreach campaign to heighten the visibility of the program throughout Iowa, aligned the RA eco-system to better communicate and plan for expansion of programs, and interagency collaboration of communication to employers and job seekers. IWD also made a significant investment in their staffing structure to ensure RA could be integrated into the workforce system.

In October 2021, IWD took over administration of the Iowa Apprenticeship Act Funding Program (15B) as well as Registered Apprenticeship Development Fund (15C), both previously administered by Iowa Economic Development Authority. By aligning RA efforts and related funding under IWD, sponsors, apprentices, interested businesses, high schools and have direct access to one centralized resource for RA related information and expertise.

The Iowa Apprenticeship Act was passed in 2014, increasing the available funding for 15B to $3 million for training grants awarded to "sponsors" to conduct and maintain a Registered Apprenticeship program. Funds awarded may only be used to help cover the cost of conducting and maintaining an apprenticeship training program.

15C funds provide $760,000 annually to support the growth of Registered Apprenticeship programs in high-demand occupations. Competitive grants are available annually for Registered Apprenticeship programs that create a new program with an eligible high-demand occupation or add an eligible high-demand occupation to their existing program. Both funding program have eligibility requirements and applications are accepted from January 1 thru January 31st each year.

Industrial New Jobs Training and Iowa Jobs Training Programs

Each year, U.S. employers spend $177 billion on formal training programs and $413 billion on informal on-the-job training. Two programs administered by Iowa's Department of Education's 15 community colleges and coordinated with the Iowa Economic Development Authority, the Department of Revenue, and Iowa Workforce Development are available to Iowa's local businesses. The Industrial New Jobs Training Program (260E) provides businesses expanding its Iowa workforce with new employee training funds. If a business is expanding operations, or relocating to a new facility in the state, the 260E program can provide flexible funding to meet a wide variety of training and employee development needs. The program is financed through bonds sold by the colleges. Depending on wages paid, the business then diverts 1.5 or 3 percent of the Iowa state withholding taxes generated by the new positions to the community college to retire the bonds. In addition to increasing worker productivity and company profitability, businesses participating in the 260E may also be eligible for reimbursement up to 50 percent of the award amount for on-the-job training, as well as a corporate tax credit if Iowa employment is increased by at least 10 percent.

The other program, Iowa Jobs Training Program (260F) provides job training services to current employees of eligible businesses located in Iowa. Eligible businesses work with the local Iowa community college, to assess training needs, determine funds available, and to provide training. For participating businesses, the advantages include valuable employee training at a reduced - or no - cost.

Iowa has two programs designed to support job training and development for new employees (260E) and existing employees (260F). Together, they are an important part of the state's workforce development efforts. These programs play an essential role in enabling employees to remain current in their training and development so that the businesses they work for remain competitive. Through these public-private partnerships, employer training is provided at little or no cost.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) exists to serve individuals with disabilities under Title II and Title XVI of the federal Social Security Act and Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The mission of the IVRS is to provide expert, individualized

services to Iowans with disabilities to achieve their independence through successful employment and economic support. The vision of IVRS is to make a positive difference for every person, one person at a time. Key services of IVRS are essentially separated into two major program areas:

- Services involving the evaluation of Iowa citizens' disabilities to determine eligibility for economic support via Social Security disability benefits; and
- Services that assist Iowans with disabilities to become employed in competitive integrated employment or to live independently in their homes through provision of various supports.

Disability Determination Services Bureau

The Iowa Disability Determination Services (DDS) Bureau of IVRS makes disability determinations for Iowans. DDS works with those who apply for and receive Social Security Administration (SSA) disability benefits to improve their quality of life. Those benefits include Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Rehabilitation Services Bureau

The Rehabilitation Services Bureau (RSB) has the primary responsibility for delivering the statewide program of quality vocational rehabilitation services to all recipients and eligible Iowans with disabilities through direct and purchased services from a network of providers. The focus of RSB is training individuals with disabilities to prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment. As such, IVRS works closely with the Iowa Department of Education and the Iowa Workforce Development system. Most IVRS offices are already co-located in One-Stop Centers across Iowa. Vocational Rehabilitation is a State-Federal program. The Federal share is 78.7 percent; the State share is 21.3 percent. The Rehabilitation Services Bureau has 13 area offices and 24 branch offices.

Administrative Services Bureau

The Administrative Services Bureau (ASB) provides fiscal, personnel, information technology services, and administrative support to the other Bureaus.

Planning and Development Team

The Planning and Development Team (PDT) is responsible for planning, program evaluation, and outreach. The mission of the PDT is to provide analysis, strategic initiatives, and program service delivery enhancing the agency's ability to comply with federal and state regulations in the delivery of the federal grant award. PDT optimizes available resources to enhance implementation of the IVRS agency mission and vision.

Independent Living

Services through the Independent Living Program may provide financial assistance to enable individuals with disabilities to maintain independent functioning as long as possible within their communities and to prevent institutionalization. An example of these services may include bathroom modifications and ramps to improve physical accessibility for safe entry and exit.

IVRS is an integral part of the statewide disability community and has demonstrated leadership nationally in assisting individuals with disabilities through a progressive employment process to achieve competitive integrated employment for the most significantly disabled Iowans who have never worked.

Pre-Employment Transition Services

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are activities that provide an early start at job exploration for students with disabilities to assist with transitioning from school to post-secondary education or employment. Students with a disability between the ages of 14 and 21, who have not yet applied or been made eligible for IVRS are considered to be potentially eligible for services. Both potentially eligible students and students eligible for IVRS are able to participate in Pre-ETS. IVRS eligible students must first complete a Pre-ETS Agreement prior to participating in these activities of an employment plan has not yet been developed. Pre-ETS include: job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities, workplace readiness training, and instruction in self-advocacy.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

IVRS provides a wide variety of services for individuals with disabilities that lead to the attainment of their employment, independence, and economic goals. Business and industry is also a customer of IVRS to whom various services are provided to help meet workplace and workforce needs. The desired outcome is competitive integrated employment that meets the needs and interests of eligible job candidates. Services include: assessment; counseling and guidance; referral for other services; physical and mental restoration services; vocational and other training services; maintenance; transportation; vocational rehabilitation services to family members; interpreter services; reader services; job-related services including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services; supported employment services; personal assistance services; post-employment services; occupational licenses, tools, equipment, initial stocks, and supplies; rehabilitation technology; transition services; technical assistance and other consultation services to assist with self-employment or similar employment outcomes; customized employment; and other goods and services necessary to assist individuals with disabilities to achieve their employment outcome.

Department for the Blind

The mission of the Iowa Department for the Blind (IDB) is to empower Iowans who are blind or have low vision to be gainfully employed and live independently. The IDB Vocational Rehabilitation program provides employment services to Iowans who are blind or have low vision and are looking for a job or want to retain or advance in their current career. The Department for the Blind believes that with the right skills and opportunities a person who is blind or has low vision can and should be competitively employed and live within their community of choice. The Iowa Department for the Blind works to educate and inform businesses, family members, service providers, advocacy groups, community and service organizations, as well as, the general public about the true capabilities of individuals who are blind or have low vision. IDB actively seeks ongoing communication, interaction, and collaboration with all constituencies. Iowa Department for the Blind collaborates with many stakeholders to provide opportunities for independence and employment throughout the state. IDB offers the following programs and services to address the education and skill needs of Iowa's workforce:

Pre-Employment Transition Services and Transition Services

The Iowa Department for the Blind has expanded opportunities for students and youth who are blind or have low vision. These individuals are able to access services designed to assist them to develop an understanding of work, navigate their communities, and obtain work experience before graduating from high school. Pre-employment Transition Services for students with disabilities or potentially eligible students include career exploration counseling, work readiness training, instruction in self-advocacy, counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs, and work-based learning

experiences. Services available to eligible students and youth with disabilities include rehabilitation technology and services, transportation and occupational clothing, and work related tools. Intensive services are also provided to eligible individuals who require additional supports with work behaviors, require job-coaching, need to build stamina to work and require assistance with identifying the right career field and work environment.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Iowans who are blind or have visual impairments and have goals to become employed can receive assistance planning for employment or maintaining current job through training, education, technology, career counseling, and more.

IDB provides services to eligible adults that include vocational and other assessments designed to assist an individual to define career goals and a plan to reach those goals. Disability related skills training is provided to assist individuals in preparing for and accessing education, training and employment. Additional services such as medical and psychological services, interpretation services and transportation are provided if needed to assist the individual in successfully attaining their goals.

IDB helps individuals obtain training such as vocational training or post-secondary education training to achieve the vocational goals they have selected. VR counselors help job seekers develop job-search plans, write résumés, practice interviewing, and locate job and placement resources. Supported employment services are also available to individuals who require long-term supports to obtain success in employment. Through services such as work site assessments, procurement of assistive technology, and training in the use of adaptive equipment, individuals who are blind or have vision loss can perform their jobs competitively and efficiently.

Adult Orientation and Adjustment Center Training Program

The Adult Orientation and Adjustment Center provides a curriculum for learning the skills of blindness needed for employment, from traveling to technology needed on the job for vocational rehabilitation clients.

Business Enterprises Program

The Business Enterprises Program (BEP) provides opportunities for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) clients of the Iowa Department for the Blind to manage their own businesses -- operating vending machines, road side vending sites, or snack bar/catering services. Program participants are provided with training as they learn the skills needed to manage their own business – hiring and managing employees, inventory control, ordering, scheduling, accounting and preparing equipment.

Iowa Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

This program provides resources and training to ensure individuals can participate in skill and certificate training. Accessible resources and training are provided to locate, evaluate and effectively use information. In addition, resources to develop and enhance digital literacy skills are available. The Library provides accessible resources and programs for English Language Learners who are blind or have low vision and individuals with other disabilities, i.e. dyslexia, hand mobility impairments, etc.

Iowa Department of Human Services

The Iowa Department of Human Services makes a positive difference in the lives of Iowans we serve through effective and efficient leadership, excellence, and teamwork. The Mission of the Iowa Department of Human Services is to help individuals and families achieve safe, stable, self-

sufficient, and healthy lives, thereby contributing to the economic growth of the state. We do this by keeping a customer focus, striving for excellence, sound stewardship of state resources, maximizing the use of federal funding and leveraging opportunities, and by working with our public and private partners to achieve results.

PROMISE JOBS

Promoting Independence and Self Sufficiency through Employment (PROMISE JOBS) is Iowa's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Employment & Training program designed to assist cash assistance recipients to become self-sufficient through participation in work ready activities. Program participants will develop an individualized Employment Plan outlining work ready activities in order to reach their individualized goals and reduce their dependency on the welfare support systems. A number of work ready activities are available to PROMISE JOBS participants, including:

- Assessments – Aptitudes and interest inventories are used to help participants determine their best route toward meeting their individual goals.
- Life Skills – Workshops covering money management, self-esteem, housing information, nutrition, parenting information, identifying personal goals, etc.
- Job Seeking and Skills Training – Workshops covering interviewing techniques, résumés, completing job applications, career exploration, networking, building skills and other work search information.
- Job Search/Job Coaching – Expanding and capitalizing on job search techniques in order to obtain employment with a livable wage.
- Employment & Community Service Opportunities – Obtaining/retaining full/part-time employment through unsubsidized employment, subsidized employment, self-employment, work experience, and/or community service opportunities to build and expand experiences and skills.
- Apprenticeship Opportunities – Education, training and employment option available to job seekers wanting to earn a wage while receiving specialized training in a skilled profession.
- Basic Education – Includes assistance with covering the costs and supportive assistance in order to obtain their high school diploma, HiSET (formerly known as GED) certificate, adult basic education, and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) to open doors to opportunities that provide sustainable earnings.
- Post-Secondary Classroom Training – Includes assistance with academic and vocational training and certification to prepare participants for careers that are in high demand.
- Parenting Skills – Classes that provide parents resources and techniques to adapt to demands parenting requires.
- Family Development Services – Supportive services to assist with addressing and overcoming the challenges and obstacles family and work place on participants.
- Family Planning Services – Classes that provide the resources to gain a better understanding on financial and social impacts of raising a family.

Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS)

This program provides intensive family development services to families receiving Family Investment Program (FIP) assistance who are identified as having multiple or severe barriers to self-sufficiency. FaDSS participants leaving FIP can continue to receive services for up to 90 consecutive days after leaving FIP.

Food Assistance Employment and Training Program

The Food Assistance Employment and Training program provides employment and training services to non-FIP food assistance recipients for the purpose of enhancing their employability. Program services include:

- Assessment
- Employment-related services: job club and job search
- Basic education: high school completion, English as a Secondary Language and Adult Basic Education

This program also pays expenses for transportation and child care for people participating in these activities.

Future Ready Iowa Governor's Initiative

Future Ready Iowa aims to achieve systemic changes to increase the number of citizens with a post-secondary credential with the intended result of increasing the number of skilled workers available to employers. The goal of Future Ready Iowa is for 70 percent of Iowa's workforce to have post-secondary education, training or a credential of value by 2025. Future Ready Iowa recognizes that education or training beyond high school is the new minimum to earn a living wage in a knowledge-based, global economy. In 2019, the Iowa Legislature passed $16 million in new funding for key Future Ready Iowa programs.

Last-Dollar Scholarship Program

The Last-Dollar Scholarship program is designed to cover tuition and mandatory fees for Iowans to complete education and training up to an associate degree in an eligible program related to a high-demand occupation. The Iowa Legislature unanimously funded this program for the first time during the 2019 legislative session.

The Fall 2019 semester is the first semester the Last-Dollar Scholarship has been available. Early numbers show that more than 5,800 Iowa students have received the new Future Ready

Iowa Last-Dollar Scholarship. More than $6.6 million has been awarded for the fall semester, helping pave the way for more Iowans to acquire the education and training needed for good-paying, high-demand jobs. That's over half of the $13 million appropriated by the Iowa Legislature for the 2019-20 academic year.

Summer Youth Internship Pilot Program

The Future Ready Iowa Summer Youth Internship Pilot Program provided $197,396.05 in grant awards for organizations to create and carry out internship programs for low-income students who are at risk of not graduating from high school. The pilot programs were hosted during the summer of 2019. The programs focused on helping the students develop the skills necessary to be successful in any workplace. The curriculum includes a focus on paid work-based learning and exposure to high-demand occupations. Three organizations offered pilot programs with this funding for 113 participants, ages 14-21, who successfully completed the programs.

Employer Innovation Fund

The Employer Innovation Fund was created with $1.2 million in funding from the Iowa Legislature during the spring 2019 legislative session. The purpose of the fund is to provide opportunities for Iowans to earn non-credit and for-credit post-secondary credentials leading to high-demand jobs in the state. Employers, community groups and other organizations working with employers can apply to receive matching funds to support local, grassroots efforts to meet employer needs and help Iowans successfully obtain needed credentials. The fund can also be utilized to address barriers Iowans have when obtaining the needed education and training (examples include: childcare, transportation or books and equipment). This fund encourages employers to find creative, innovative ways to strengthen their local workforce.

As of December 1, 2019, two rounds of funding have been completed. Thirty-four awards have been offered, totaling $955,899.69. A third round will wrap up by December 31, 2019 to award the remaining $244,100.31. These innovative projects will impact more than 1,300 Iowans in the next year alone.

Iowa Department for the Aging

On March 29, 2012, Governor Terry Branstad signed House File 2320 mandating a reduction in the number of Area Agencies on Aging. Frequently referred to as the "modernization of the aging network," this initiative effectively reduced the number of AAAs from 13 to six to enhance efficiency. The Iowa Department on Aging works closely with Iowa's six Area Agencies on Aging and other partners to design a system of information, education, support and services for Iowans that assists older Iowans and adults with disabilities maintain independence. A summary of services offered includes:

Advocacy

Advocate for changes in public policy, practices and programs that empower Iowans; facilitate their access to services; protect their rights; and prevent abuse, neglect and exploitation. Activities may include legislative advocacy, information dissemination, outreach and referral, research and analysis and coalition building.

Planning Development and Coordination

Conduct planning, policy development, administration, coordination, priority setting and evaluation of all state activities related to the objectives of the Federal Older Americans Act.

Health

Support policies, programs and wellness initiatives to empower older Iowans to stay active and healthy and improve their access to affordable, high quality home and community-based services.

Older Iowans

The 2010 U.S. Census found that 20 percent of Iowa's population is currently 60 years of age or older. By 2030, 20 percent of the population in 88 of Iowa's 99 counties will be aged 65 or older.

Senior Community Service Employment Program

Individuals age 55 and older, at or below 125 percent of poverty, and unemployed can take advantage of opportunities for economic self-sufficiency and useful part-time jobs in community service organizations. The primary objective is to increase the numbers of older persons who can obtain employment. Assist participants in receiving work skills training and provide work services for non-profit and governmental organizations.

All eligible participants start the program by receiving job training through a host agency. The host agency is a private non-profit (501(c)(3)) or a governmental agency. During the time the

participant is in training they are paid minimum wage ($7.25/hr), spending 18-20 hours per week providing services to the agency. The participant is also expected to be looking for unsubsidized employment during the host agency training time. The maximum time that can be spent in the program is 48 months.

Iowa Economic Development Authority

The Iowa Economic Development Authority's (IEDA) mission is to strengthen economic and community vitality by building partnerships and leveraging resources to make Iowa the choice for people and business. Through two main divisions – business development and community development – IEDA administers several state and federal programs to meet its goals of assisting individuals, communities and businesses. Workforce Training Programs include:

Accelerated Career Education (ACE – 260G): Partnering with community colleges to enhance Iowa's workforce. The ACE program is designed to provide businesses with an enhanced, skilled workforce. ACE assists community colleges to either establish or expand programs that train individuals in the occupations most needed by Iowa businesses.

Iowa Industrial New Jobs Training (260E): Helping Iowa businesses provide training opportunities for new jobs. The Iowa Industrial New Jobs Training program assists businesses creating new positions with new employee training. Eligible businesses may be new to Iowa, expanding the Iowa workforce or relocating to the state.

Iowa Apprenticeship Programs: Training employees through apprenticeships. There are more than 1,000 occupations eligible for apprenticeship training grants, from accounting specialists to nurses. Registered Apprenticeships are a proven approach to preparing workers for in-demand jobs and meeting the needs of business for a highly skilled workforce that can innovate and adapt. Iowa is committed to supporting Registered Apprenticeship Programs and increasing the number of registered apprentices in Iowa by providing training grants through the Iowa Apprenticeship Act (15B) and the Iowa Registered Apprenticeship Development Fund (15C).

Community College Consortium (260F): Funding community college-sponsored employee training projects. The Community College Consortium (260F) program provides funding assistance for community college-sponsored employee training projects in which two or more businesses participate.

Iowa Jobs Training Program (260F): Training current employees of Iowa companies. The Iowa Jobs Training Program (260F) provides job training services to current employees of eligible businesses, and helps companies train current employees with new skills.

Iowa Student Internship Program: Assisting businesses with a future workforce and linking Iowa students to careers. The Iowa Student Internship Program provides grants to small and medium-sized companies in targeted industries to support internship programs with a goal of transitioning interns to full-time employment in Iowa upon graduation. The goal is to retain educated workers in Iowa.

STEM Internship Program: Helping Iowa employers hire STEM students. The Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Internship program provides grants to Iowa companies for internship programs with a goal of transitioning interns to full-time employment in Iowa upon graduation. The goal is to retain educated workers in Iowa.

Iowa Finance Authority

The Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) was established in 1975 to undertake programs to assist in the attainment of housing for low- and moderate-income Iowans. Since then, the IFA's role has expanded considerably. The IFA offers a variety of programs that address a continuum of housing needs, from homeless assistance to multifamily rental to single-family ownership. In

addition to offering statewide affordable housing resources, the IFA also offers a wide variety of other programs to assist in community development, including:

Economic Development Loan Program: Through its Economic Development Loan program, IFA issues bonds and loans the proceeds to private entities or organizations for eligible purposes. The interest on the bonds may be tax-exempt (if eligible under the Internal Revenue Code), taxable or a combination of both. In 2018, the State of Iowa received $330 million of volume cap for allocation to eligible projects in the following categories: single-family, job training, student loans, beginning farmers, industrial and political subdivision.

Private Activity Bond Cap Allocation: The State of Iowa annually receives several millions of volume cap (the "State Ceiling") to be allocated to certain Private Activity Bonds set forth in Section 146 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended. Section 7C of the Iowa Code distributes the State Ceiling among these types of bonds. In 2018, the State of Iowa received $330 million of Private Activity Bond Cap ("Cap") for allocation to certain private activity bonds. These include industrial revenue bonds, affordable multifamily housing bonds and other purposes specifically defined by the IRS.

Department of Human Rights

The Mission of Iowa's Department of Human Rights is to ensure basic rights, freedoms and opportunities for all by empowering underrepresented Iowans and eliminating economic, social and cultural barriers. The Department helps individuals attain economic independence by ensuring access to government services and advancing educational achievement and entrepreneurial success consistent with their aspirations.

Weatherization Assistance Program

Is a federal grant program established to help reduce the heating and cooling costs for low-income persons, particularly the elderly, disabled, and children, by improving the energy efficiency of their homes. The installation of energy efficiency measures for each dwelling is based on a computerized energy audit which determines the cost effectiveness of each measure.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program

Is a federally funded block grant designed to help eligible low-income Iowa households in the payment of a portion of their non-business residential heating costs for the winter heating season.

Community Services Block Grant

Is a federal block grant program administered by the states. The purpose of the Program is to provide funding to states and local agencies for the reduction of poverty, the revitalization of low-income communities, and the empowerment of low-income families and individuals in rural and urban areas to become a fully self-sufficient.

Family Development and Self-Sufficiency

Families can participate if they are on the Family Investment Program and are required to participate in Promise Jobs. This Program provides services statewide, through 17 agencies, to families facing multiple barriers to self-sufficiency and provides comprehensive in-home services through certified Family Development Specialists.

Credit Union Family Partnership Individual Development Account

This Iowa Credit Union Foundation Program offers matched savings accounts for Iowa families with limited resources who meet income-based criteria.

Job Corps

Job Corps, a program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA). Originally established by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, the program currently operates under the provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Job Corps is a no-cost education and vocational training program to help young people ages 16 through 24 improve the quality of their lives through vocational and academic training. Many Job Corps participants face significant barriers to education and employment. About 25 percent of students self-reported that they had a disability, such as a cognitive or mental health disability. About 25 percent of students entered Job Corps without having progressed beyond the ninth grade, and the mean reading and math skills of students were below the eighth-grade level. Eight percent identified as English-language learners.

Job Corps students receive individualized services that are organized into four service periods: (1) outreach and admission, (2) career preparation, (3) career development, and (4) career transition services. There are two Job Corps locations in Iowa; one in Denison and one in Ottumwa.

During the first 60 days in Job Corps, students take the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to determine their academic achievement and competency. They also submit to medical and counseling assessments to determine their other needs. Following these assessments, students create and commit to a Personal Career Development Plan to guide their future training activities. Centers also must provide new students with career exploration activities, such as using labor market information to identify available career opportunities and assessing their own interests and skills when making career choices. Students receive targeted academic instruction and career and technical education and training in their chosen career. Job Corps offers training in more than 70 careers, but each center offers only a subset of trainings. As part of their training, students often obtain hands-on experience through real-world projects in the community.

The time a student spends in Job Corps varies, depending on his or her personal career plan and the goals set in the plan. The average stay in Job Corps is about 8 months, but program duration varies considerably: in PY 2015, about 18 percent left within 2 months and more than 20 percent stayed more than 12 months. Of those students who separated from the Job Corps nationally in PY 2015, 59 percent successfully graduated. To graduate, students must have, while in the Job Corps program, received a high school diploma or high school equivalency, or finished their training program.

National Farmworker Jobs Program

Proteus administers the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) in Iowa. The NFJP responds to chronic seasonal unemployment and underemployment experienced by migrant and seasonal farmworkers. The NFJP offers assistance that strengthens the ability of farm workers and their families to achieve economic self-sufficiency. Since its inception with the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, the farmworker program has been an integral part of the national workforce strategy. NFJP provides access to education services and job training, support, and additional services suited to the customer's career goals.

YouthBuild

There are an estimated 4.9 million young adults ages 16-24 in America who are neither in work nor school. Of these, there are estimated to be as many as 3 million youth living in poverty who

are not in education, employment or training. These are the opportunity youth with whom YouthBuild programs around the country work.

At YouthBuild programs in the United States and across the globe, low-income young people learn construction skills through building affordable housing for homeless and low-income people in their neighborhoods and other community assets such as schools, playgrounds, and community centers. YouthBuild programs provides pathways to rebuild participant's communities and lives, breaking the cycle of poverty with a commitment to work, education, family, and community.

YouthBuild has built a robust network of 252 urban and rural YouthBuild programs in 46 states. They are sponsored and managed by local nonprofits, community colleges, and public agencies with primary funding from the US Department of Labor (DOL) administered by the Employment and Training Administration. Iowa has one YouthBuild in the state managed by Des Moines Area Community College for the past nine years.

The DMACC YouthBuild program provides at-risk youth, age 18 to 24, with the opportunity to achieve economic self-sufficiency by gaining their DMACC high school diploma or equivalency (HiSET), construction skills training, and college credit while serving their community through construction of permanent, affordable housing for low-income families. Additionally, for the first time, Construction Plus is providing an additional occupational training track focused on Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics (TDL) which is a high-demand industry in central Iowa and across the country.

The YouthBuild program plans to enroll a total of 51 participants broken into three 7 month cohorts of 17 individuals on average over the course of the 2 year grant program cycle. DMACC's construction staff delivers the opportunity to achieve a nationally recognized Home Builders Institute certificate in Carpentry and weatherization which includes Basic Construction OSHA certification. Iowa's Habitat for Humanity partners to provide participants with an opportunity to practice workforce and employability skills related to on-time attendance, positive work attitude and actual hands-on skills related to carpentry and home building. Polk County and Blue Cross both makes available additional certification for a basic Lead Renovator and CPR/First aid training.

B. The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

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

Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

WIOA provided the appropriate context in which to conduct a full-scale examination of Iowa's workforce delivery system partners, supporters and beneficiaries. An analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities in Iowa has allowed the core partner agencies to identify how and where services could be further aligned to better support job-seekers, employers and service providers.

Strengths:

- Commitment and willingness among the core partners to build a better workforce development system. While the process has had many challenges, the partners have remained steadfast in their willingness to collaborate in creating solutions that benefit customers.
- Quality of service, programs and operations. Following several years of each agency striving to improve its core services, the core programs are now soundly positioned to

affect change. Over the past two years, all core programs have met or are progressing to meet the WIOA key performance measure benchmarks.

- Accessibility to stakeholders, business leaders and key decision makers. Collaboration and partnering are core strengths of Iowa's workforce development activities. Partnerships have fostered an environment where business relationships are strengthened, resources mobilized quickly and access to key decision makers is abundant.

Weaknesses:

- Iowa's diverse regions and dispersed population present barriers to the efficient delivery of services. As noted in labor market information, jobs that were once abundant in the state's outlying areas have disappeared, leaving many communities in a state of economic hardship, with low unemployment rates and scores of employers in need of employment services. Delivering services to these rural areas is a challenge. Moreover, limited public transportation networks make it difficult for many, including those with barriers to access employment opportunities.

- Gaps in coordination, communication and alignment within the workforce development system. Even though progress has been made, gaps continue in the areas of coordination, communication and alignment within the system. Iowa is taking steps to better integrate activities, starting with the creation of a Core Partner Working Group dedicated to ensuring coordination at the state level.

- Data sharing. Workforce partners recognize the importance of using valid and reliable information to drive decision making, program evaluation and to support policy initiatives. The core partners are working on methods to improve data sharing through the alignment of data systems and the sharing of data in a transparent manner to determine effectiveness and opportunities for improvement.

- Iowa has limited financial resources to address its many workforce development challenges. Under WIOA, federal program funds are allocated to states based on population size. Within these federal funds the allowable allocation for program administration has always been capped at 5 percent of the total. As a result, less populous states such as Iowa have substantially lower levels of funding to cover the fixed costs, infrastructure funding and required administrative activities in order to be in compliance.

C. State Workforce Development Capacity

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

The range of workforce development programs and activities previously described represent a significant investment of both human and capital resources into Iowa's workforce development system. Since 2014 when the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was passed, the State has made concerted efforts to increase interagency collaboration to better coordinate federal employment services and training for adults, dislocated workers and youth, and adult education, as well as create additional access points for participants with barriers to employment. These activities resulted in a developed network of physical assets, including strategically located one—stop centers.

Though the workforce system has made improvements since the passage of WIOA there is a recognized need to increase capacity. The goal over the next four years is to establish access to

all workforce system services regardless of where the individual client or employer is located. To reach this goal, the following steps will be taken:

- Expand ability of all partners in the network to inform clients of workforce system services. This will be the result of extensive cross—training.
- Assess the ability to increase access. The core partners will work with local boards and the future one—stop operators to assess the ability to increase access to the system. For example, a number of adult education programs may be made available as itinerant sites to provide basic career services. This action can greatly expand the number and proximity of access points of contact for both employers and clients.
- Expand the use of technology. Given Iowa's diverse regional needs, it cannot be assumed that all who need to travel to the current comprehensive sites will be able to do so. To address the barriers of distance, childcare, transportation and schedules that many people face, services will be available digitally. These services will include up—to—date and comprehensive employment and training websites with links to partner websites. In addition, resources will be accessible through the use of videoconferencing and live chat.

Iowa currently has 15 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) designated pursuant to Iowa Code Section 84B.3, in accordance with the "Special Rule Regarding Designated Areas" at WIOA Section 189(i)(1). On November 8, 2017, the U.S. Department of Labor / Employment and Training Administration (USDOL / ETA) Region 5 issued a WIOA Implementation Compliance monitoring report which, among other things, specifically addressed the number of LWDAs in Iowa. The monitoring report stated "the division of limited WIOA funds among 15 service areas, particularly in a State that has large rural areas, is stretching the available dollars so thin that the local areas are unable to fund core WIOA functions, such as staff support for the required [local area boards]." Given the likelihood that the funding requirements for 15 LWDAs would limit the capacity of State entities to maximize delivery of Title I workforce development activities, Iowa embarked on a year-long process to realign and reduce the number of LWDAs in the State. In February 2019, the State Workforce Development Board voted to realign Iowa from 15 to six LWDAs. This realignment vote was challenged through two rounds of appeals. On December 19, 2019, the USDOL / ETA issued a final determination that did not uphold Iowa's redesignation of LWDAs. As a result, the State must continue operating with the previous structure consisting of 15 LWDAs. If key stakeholders desire to revisit LWDA redesignation, Iowa will make every effort to ensure the local area designation and appeals processes are well understood.

Iowa Department for the Blind (IDB)

Continued communication and enhanced service integration among WIOA core partners remains a primary focus as we build the capacity of the state workforce system. The Iowa Department for the Blind operates out of one state office building, allowing staff to work from home office locations throughout the state. Telework practices and the ability to travel throughout the state have allowed IDB to increase service capacity. IDB has increased visibility in local Iowa*WORKS* offices by participating in disability access committees and other standing committees and workforce board activities. Counseling staff has also worked to develop cooperative working relationships with Iowa*WORKS* staff. Factors such as staff turnover and hiring needs affect customer service capacity. IDB conducts training needs assessments to ensure compliance of federal and state mandates and reviews individual personnel training requirements to current job performance, future job requirements, and career advancement needs. IDB requires continuing education of all staff who provide direct and indirect services to clients. The IDB currently has dedicated vocational rehabilitation staff coordinating, implementing, and tracking workforce development activities across multiple programs. IDB's services are provided statewide to clients and potentially eligible students with disabilities.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS)

Iowa has approximately 23,000 students under an Individual Education Program or 504 Plan and WIOA requires that all that are known to IVRS and must be served with at least pre-employment transition services. IVRS currently has fewer than 120 professional staff to serve those students. The capacity of IVRS to provide the identified activities is therefore significantly impacted. Such capacity issues impact all core partner agencies, since no one agency can effectively serve the host of job candidate and business needs. Thus, we are challenged to develop the patterns of collaboration and service strategies that would best meet the needs of our customers while improving and streamlining the quality and effectiveness of local service delivery.

For the 23,000 individuals who are on IEPs and 504 plans in Iowa, IVRS has developed collaborative service plans with each school district in all 99 Iowa counties, with specific roles designated between high school and VR staff, depending on the needs/gaps in each district. All 23,000 transition aged students whom IVRS is aware of must be served as either "potentially eligible," or determined eligible if they require more intensive rehabilitation services in order to be successful in their transition to employment.

Those who do not require specialized rehabilitation services can be served by the school system, and referred via warm referrals to other partner programs as needed. For eligible job candidates, IVRS can provide disability adjustment and career counseling and guidance, benefits planning, assistive technology assessment, training, and aids, on-the-job training, college and vocational/technical training, disability skills training, possible small business development services for those who are eligible, job placement with or without supports, and follow-up.

For our community businesses, IVRS can provide consultation on accessibility, disability etiquette training, information about tax incentives for hiring individuals with disabilities or making worksite modifications, and consultation on accommodations for specific disability situations.

Iowa Department of Education (IDOE)

The IDOE has the responsibility of overseeing Title II activities under the Adult Education and Literacy Act and the Perkins (through the Carl D. Perkins and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2018 (Perkins V)). As such, the capacity of the Iowa Community College system to deliver services via education and training that align with workforce needs is very strong. The Iowa Community College system is made up of 15 regions with 15 community colleges providing adult education and other education services in all 99 counties — are meeting the needs of employers and job seekers in their regions. More individuals start out their postsecondary education at a community college than at a four-year university, which highlights the capacity of the system.

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

[2] Workforce development activities may include a wide variety of programs and partners, including educational institutions, faith- and community-based organizations, and human services.

B. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

1. Vision

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

Iowa's workforce delivery system partners will collaborate to build a Future Ready Iowa. The system will provide the training and education needed to develop a pipeline of skilled workers who are prepared to meet the workforce needs of Iowa's current and emerging industries. Iowa employers will have access to the skilled workforce needed to prosper in today's global economy.

2. Goals

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

A. Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment[1] and other populations.[2]

Goal I: Iowa's employers will have access to skilled, diverse and Future Ready workers.

Goal II: All Iowans will be provided access to a continuum of high quality education, training, and career opportunities.

Goal III: Iowa's workforce delivery system will align all programs and services in an accessible, seamless and integrated manner.

B. Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers

See the Goals listed above in Section A.

3. Performance Goals

Using the table provided in Appendix 1, include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of

performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. (This Strategic Planning element only applies to core programs.)

Performance measurements are negotiated annually with the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education. Iowa has developed proposed targets for the applicable performance measurements for PY22 and PY23. These proposed targets are included in Appendix 1, and are subject to change in each program year based on the negotiation process with the federal departments.

4. Assessment

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

An effective assessment plan will review progress, obstacles and necessary changes in course of action for core partners, participants and employers. Iowa's Longitudinal Data projects should play an integral role in measuring long-term participant outcomes and in providing information that drives program evaluation and policy decisions.

The assessment plan will also review wage and employment outcomes of program participants by credential and program. Having a common list of Industry Recognized Credentials across core partners and measuring the attainment of these credentials will also be an important aspect for assessing progress. Once credentials are defined the assessment plan will review the employment outcomes of participants earning these awards.

Iowa should also consider utilizing a control group studies to assess performance emphasizing employer-based workforce preparation and promoting education alliances intended to limit duplication of services and to increase the engagement of employers in developing standards and articulating career pathways workers can take to attain entry to upper level skills.

Selecting a pool of individuals who successfully completed training during PY20, the state should analyze and compare the long-term employment and earnings outcomes of participants enrolled in employer-based training (OJT, Registered Apprenticeship, Customized Training, or employer-funded certificate training) with the outcomes of participants enrolled in traditional two- or four-year college degree or certificate programs. Information used to evaluate the outcomes of each of the participant groups will include the costs borne by the WIOA programs, as follows:

- Full cost of the formal component of participant training:
    - For college bound trainees: tuition, fees, books, remedial or pre-requisite courses and other charges of the educational institution;

    - For employer-based trainees: OJT wages, cost of any related classroom training or instruction, cost of customized training funded by WIOA;
- Full cost of supportive services funded for the full term of the training program;
- Percentage of staff time directly supporting the participant from the point of program entry to successful completion of training and including any follow-up services;
- Full amount and type of non-WIOA funds leveraged, such as: PELL, scholarships, individual contributions and employer wage and classroom cost match, including costs of employee benefits paid to participants while in training, if any.

Additional aspects that will be evaluated for each participant could include:

- Industry for which trainee was prepared;
- Length of time in formal training;
- Length of time from completion of training to attainment of employment;
- Whether or not the training included both an experiential and academic component;
- Whether or not the trainee attained a portable credential, degree, diploma, license or will attain a portable credential, such as a certificate of apprenticeship;
- Wages at second quarter after exit;
- Wages at sixth quarter after exit; and
- Wages at tenth quarter after exit.

In addition to participant analysis, employers offering the work-based training will be surveyed regarding their perspectives on the value and effectiveness of this approach. Employers will be asked to provide their input regarding the overall success of employees they hire just out of college with those they have hired and trained through WIOA supported work-based training. This input will be used to inform service providers who are developing work-based training programs for employers and participants.

Participants with similar socio-economic backgrounds and academic levels at entry will be randomly selected from across the state, using data captured through formal intake and assessment. Because it is assumed that the number of employer-based training approaches will increase under WIOA, additional comparison cohort groups will be selected each year through PY22. Data accumulated will be analyzed at the end of each program year and in total at the end of PY24. A report comparing the long-term employment and earnings outcomes of each of the two participant cohorts of the study will be produced. Results of the evaluation will be used to inform workforce development service providers and employers about the benefits and/or pitfalls of each of the approaches and to improve the practices involved with each of the approaches, including the following:

- Initial and ongoing involvement of the employer or industry for which employees from both cohorts are being educated and trained;

- Processes used to prepare and support participants throughout their preparation for training, training, and subsequent employment;
- Formulas for greatest return on investment and cost efficiencies identified;
- Level of relevance to the employer for each training approach;
- Level of skill quality produced as identified in earnings and employment of each approach;
- Amount of non-WIOA funds leveraged with each approach; and
- Overall lessons learned based on the findings including strengths and weaknesses of each approach for both the employer and the worker.

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

[2] Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth and any other populations identified by the State.

C. STATE STRATEGY

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

Sector partnerships are increasingly recognized as an effective method for aligning education, economic, and workforce development systems to address industry-identified labor market needs. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) shifts from an "employment first" strategy to one that emphasizes credential attainment through the use of sector partnerships and career pathways.

Sector Partnerships

Sector partnerships are comprised of industries with shared needs, as well as various education, workforce, economic, and community organizations in supportive roles. These partnerships develop and continuously evaluate goals, policies, and service-delivery strategies to meet the needs of employers in a given sector. In doing so, they operate within labor market regions and are not confined to municipal, county, educational, or state boundaries. Effective sector partnerships are industry-driven, meaning industries identify needs and assume the lead role in developing strategies which address their identified needs.

As called for in Iowa's Unified State Plan, the Sector Partnership Leadership Council (SPLC) will assume the lead role in the development, implementation, and achievement of policies and objectives related to sector partnerships and career pathways across the state. The SPLC will serve in a formal advisory role to the State Workforce Development Board on matters related to sector partnerships and career pathways. The SPLC membership emphasizes business, industry, and employer representation so that the council is truly industry led and oriented.

Under the guidance of the SPLC, the Iowa Department of Education has worked to support the planning, launch, and long-term success of sector partnerships in Iowa through a wide array of technical and financial assistance measures, including, but not limited to a series of informative facilitator toolkits and guides, the implementation of monthly facilitator conference calls and networking events, and the development of additional in-person or interactive webinar facilitator training sessions. These and additional resources, including an interactive map of the current sector partnership landscape in Iowa, can be found at SectorPartnerships.EducateIowa.gov.

With numerous sector partnerships in existence prior to the enactment of WIOA, and strong local and state support (via an allocation from the Iowa Legislature through the Pathways for Academic Career and Employment program), Iowa is equipped to achieve additional sector partnership expansion, while still supporting the growth and success of existing programs.

Currently, there are more than 50 such partnerships throughout Iowa in varying stages of maturity across a multitude of industry sectors, with all of Iowa's 99 counties and many from neighboring states supported at least partially by these grass-roots initiatives. Most sector partnerships in Iowa were established in 2015 or later and over two-thirds are convened by Iowa community colleges to help identify regional economic and labor needs and engage industry and support partners to develop strategies to address such needs.

Continued state funding, support, and collaboration with WIOA core partners will be critical as we continue to offer support and guidance for the expansion of industry-led, community-supported sector partnerships through the development of new print, digital, or hands-on technical resources and the thorough process of updating or refreshing previous efforts.

Career Pathways

Career pathways are one strategy utilized by sector partnerships to address industry-identified labor market needs. Career pathways organize education and training into a coherent, stackable sequence aligned within specific occupations within a given industry. In that way, career pathways support an individual in developing the personal, technical, and employability skills required for advancement within an industry and transitioning from training and education into the workforce. Colleges, primary and secondary schools, economic development agencies, workforce service providers, employers, labor groups, and social service providers all play a vital role in the successful development of career pathways.

A specific focus of sector partnerships is to research, design, and leverage robust career pathway materials that accurately reflect local in-demand career opportunities in critical industries like advanced manufacturing, health science, and information technology. General mystique and confusion are often associated with careers in these fields, which leads to inaccurate stereotypes, the facilitation of incorrect information, and ultimately shortages in locally qualified, skilled labor.

Under the guidance of the SPLC and in support of the Future Ready Iowa initiative, the IDOE has partnered with core partners, educators, employers, industry associations, and strategic community partners to conduct exploratory research and develop career pathway materials for these and additional exciting career sectors in Iowa. These collaborative efforts will help keep Iowa's employers strong, growing, and competitive.

These robust and informative career pathway materials highlight a wide range of entry, mid, and senior level careers within each industry that have consistent need or potential for future growth because of various factors like changes in technology, an aging workforce, and changing consumer preferences. General skills, knowledge, and abilities are highlighted to help readers better understand how to be successful within each capacity, as well as various education and training options available within the state of Iowa, including technical certificates, higher education degrees, on-the-job training, and Registered Apprenticeship programs. Wages are averaged based on quantitative labor market analysis and qualitative measures from direct employer feedback through online surveys and in-person focus groups hosted around the state.

Work-Based Learning

Work on the statewide career pathway projects identified the need to increase the number of high-quality, work-based learning opportunities for students and job seekers who may be interested in pursuing a career within these fields. While some communities have the resources and relationships already developed to do so, many do not. Without additional efforts to promote hands-on learning opportunities, many students will be less likely to take the necessary steps towards pursuing these careers. Students can more easily see the connection between academics and careers when they are engaged in learning with curriculum that is personally and occupationally relevant.

The IDOE again partners with core partners, educators, employers, industry associations, and strategic community partners to develop and implement a series of industry-specific work-based learning toolkits to serve as the culmination of the thorough process to identify solutions addressing the growing need for a skilled workforce in these critical industries, improved coordination across partnerships and regions, and the need for employers and educators to understand the value of these investments. These toolkits provide guidance, tools, and recommendations to address barriers to increasing opportunities for high school students, while also providing a wide range of real-world examples from across the state that can be modeled and replicated within local communities.

All of these resources are made available to employers, educators, and other community support partners to help better promote careers within these critical industries through the

Future Ready Iowa, Clearinghouse for Work-Based Learning, and Iowa Department of Education websites. Print copies are also available for distribution, pending funding and resource availability.

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

Goal I: Iowa's employers will have access to skilled, diverse and Future Ready workers.

Strategies associated with this goal will be measured by the WIOA primary indicator of performance of: effectiveness in serving employers.

State Strategy 1.1: Expand and support the framework of sector partnerships that are championed by business and industry to drive career pathways.

All core programs will collaborate with local workforce development boards to provide and gather information from local employers by developing effective relationships between the local workforce system and sector partnerships as a means to engage directly with industry across traditional barriers.

Championed by Workforce Development Boards, but "driven" by employers, Sector Strategies are regional in scope and industry specific. The goal of Sector Strategies goes beyond immediately placing workers in jobs; rather, the goal is to build regional talent pipelines, address skill shortages, and create meaningful "Career Pathways" for a range of workers in specific industry sectors.

- Building Capacity: Providing professional development and technical assistance to state administrators and regional stakeholders on how to expand and strengthen regional collaboration, industry-training programs, and other aspects of designing and implementing sector strategies.
- Provide technical assistance for state policy makers and administrators: Offer learning opportunities to enhance decision makers' understanding of both the benefits and the mechanics of implementing a sector partnership. Support efforts in making available and promoting such technical assistance services such as mini-academies and peer learning forums across states. Publish best practice guides and 'How to' manuals for state administrators and policy makers. Furthermore, provide direct technical assistance and consulting to regions that are ready to launch a sector strategy.
- Creating institutional seamlessness: Create seamless and easily accessible workforce systems that respond to the needs of industry Sector initiatives. Support seamlessness

by bringing about collaboration across agencies and jurisdictional boundaries. The coordination of activities among key stakeholders and multiple-employer focus allows sector initiatives to capitalize on economies of scale by spreading the costs and risks of new program development across multiple partners.

- Aligning Activities: Increase collaboration between public and private institutions that oversee and conduct workforce, economic development, education and social services.

State Strategy 1.2: Grow the skilled labor force by advancing the Future Ready Iowa initiatives, resources and programming to all Iowans.

- Further expand Iowa's sector workforce and economic development priorities like Future Ready Iowa: Educate on the results produced by sector initiatives and the potential to strengthen workforce and economic development infrastructures to target and support key industries. Enhance communications strategies that convey the value and effectiveness of sector strategies.
- Tap into underutilized human capital: Fully utilize all potential sources of workers and identify and develop underutilized sources of workers and talent. Sector initiatives help regions identify and tap underutilized and underemployed workers, addressing the barriers faced by workers in securing employment and advancing in high-wage, high-growth industries. Sector initiatives also utilize the expertise of education and workforce partners in coordinating training and support services to guide low-wage, low-skill workers on career paths out of poverty.
- Building a self-directed workforce: Create a workforce with the attitudes, learning habits, and decision tools necessary for upward mobility within industries. Sector initiatives create a self-directed, demand-driven workforce system due to the high level of employer involvement. They focus on, and succeed in giving individuals the tools needed for economic mobility, and businesses the resources needed to attract and retain skilled workers. Sector initiatives measure the benefits of participation to both industries and workers including pre and post training wages, employee retention, and employer satisfaction rates.
- Creating Funding Strategies to Support Future Ready Iowa goals: Providing and aligning state funding to support the creation and implementation of regional sector initiatives. This may be done through grants that encourage regional collaboration or by directing workforce resources toward a specific industry.

State Strategy 1.3: Collaborate with sector partnerships and Iowa employers to enhance work-based learning opportunities for all Iowans.

- Core programs will educate, promote, design and collaborate with Iowa employers to facilitate work-based learning activities.
- Strengthen economic growth and industry competitiveness by creating new pathways into targeted industries, and toward good jobs and careers. This approach benefits low-income individuals and sustains and creates middle-class jobs.
- Utilize the intermediary networks in facilitating the many stakeholders involved to develop and implement industry-based workforce solutions.

- Develop the interest of philanthropic and other investors to assist in sector initiatives: Engage existing philanthropy as partners in identifying and funding potential states and sites where sector strategies can be implemented. Educate potential funders on sector strategies and opportunities to finance them. Create funding collaboratives, long-term partnerships between philanthropy and the public sector, which will seed and sustain sector initiatives.
- Building Sector Intelligence: Analyzing labor market changes to produce workforce trend reports and industry occupational projections, conducting workforce surveys and skill gap analyses, identifying and defining boundaries of regional labor markets, charting the skills needed for specific occupations, and creating certification programs that validate workers' ability to perform effectively in a variety of occupations.

Goal II: All Iowans will be provided access to a continuum of high quality education, training, and career opportunities.

Strategies associated with this goal will be measured through the number of co-enrollments, referrals and how many students received services from workforce partners prior to high school graduation.

State Strategy 2.1: Further develop and promote accessible career pathways to all Iowans.

- Build upon prior work to expand regional partnerships that are deeply rooted in employer engagement and industry leadership, labor market alignment strategies and seamless career pathways that encompass grades 9-16, including youth and registered apprenticeship opportunities. Strategic emphasis will be placed on seeking solutions to work-based learning barriers at all levels of learning. Iowa will also continue its commitment to refining processes and protocols for validating the state's most in-demand industry certifications and credentials, ensuring an assessment and accountability system that is fully aligned to the needs of the state's workforce.
- Engage Iowa's students in the career path development process using creative, progressive, and self-directed techniques in the delivery of career services. Access to academic counseling, expansion of guided pathways which are aligned to career pathways.

State Strategy 2.2: Educate the system, partners and communities about the programs, initiatives, resources and opportunities available to up-skill the workforce.

- The goal of the state is to clearly communicate available pathways, resources and opportunities to students, adults, academic and work counselors, employers, community workforce partners as well as to those who might be assisting in choosing career pathways through an interactive website. These resources and pathways will also be communicated via printed brochures, flyers and social media by the system as a whole. Education faculty, staff, and administrators also help communicate information through public relations messaging, orientations, one-on-one advising, public meetings, and other methods.

- Develop a guide for students and parents, as well as another for high school counselors and administrators, which will include information on the various career pathways. The main message for all pathways is to make every credit count. The goal is to help parents, students, advisors and instructors understand that students should enroll in dual credit courses that have value and count towards their postsecondary plans.
- Standardize messaging across programs, initiatives and resources and focus communication to those Iowan's who are in most need of enhanced skill development.

State Strategy 2.3: Connect all Iowans with long-term career opportunities from high-growth, in-demand sectors.

- Iowans will be engaged in the career pathway development process by utilizing innovative approaches in the delivery of career services and offering a variety of career pathway navigation supports to enhance transition into the workforce.
- Activities to support career pathways strategies will be the development of an interagency definition of "self-sustaining employment." Workforce delivery systems will work in concert to provide workers with the skills, work-based learning opportunities, resources, accommodations and supports needed through the systematic development of career pathways for in-demand industries. All Iowans will have access to the occupational and training resources and skills needed to work to their fullest potential and to secure and maintain self-sustaining employment.
- Over the next four years, we will encourage sector partnerships to focus on their role in informing career pathway development for youth, adults, and individuals facing barriers to education and employment by promoting a recently developed framework and offering tools, resources, and technical assistance.
- Activities to support sector partnership strategies include working with employers to increase opportunities for all Iowans to gain the experience, skills, and credentials needed to obtain and maintain self-sustaining employment, closing skill gaps between Iowa's workforce and employers by expanding and supporting sector strategies for in-demand industries. Identifying and quantifying employers' education, training, and workforce needs will be a priority.

Goal III: Iowa's workforce delivery system will align all programs and services in an accessible, seamless and integrated manner.

Strategies associated with this goal will be measured through the number of co-enrollments and the percentage of growth in the number of participants utilizing an Integrated Resource Team (IRT). Number of IETs offered, participants, completion - WIOA outcome measures.

State Strategy 3.1: Align workforce programs and initiatives to improve service delivery and outcomes for all Iowans.

- Alignment of programs across the workforce system will greatly improve seamless delivery of services and outcomes for Iowans engaged in those activities. Core

partners realize that alignment of policy, resources, programs and staffing will result in a system integrated to drive success.

- All core programs will work to blend and braid resources to the extent possible to maximize benefits to Iowans, reducing duplication of services and enhancing the customer experience.
- Core partners will assess policies, both joint and individual, that can align to performance outcomes. They will assess programs for duplication and work to align those programs across the partners for a more streamlined integrated approach. Partners will also inventory resources to look for cohesive ways in balancing those resources across the system to better impact outcomes for customers.

State Strategy 3.2: Ensure seamless access to programs and services of the workforce delivery system to all Iowans.

- The quality of workforce development services is dependent upon the provision of consistent, integrated, and non-duplicative services across education, rehabilitation, economic and workforce activities.
- All core partners will employ an integrated service delivery model, giving customers seamless access to all programs and services needed, while reducing duplication of effort amongst programs. All core programs will promote a concurrent and contextual approach to their service delivery activities.
- Cross training will be a major focus between partners, programs, communities and employers to ensure Iowan's have access to services no matter which door they step into.
- Continued expansion of accessible technology resources, alignment of case management and program delivery systems and a seamless referral system that promotes program accountability and ultimately success for the individual.

State Strategy 3.3: Continuous improvement of the system to ensure no programmatic or physical barriers exist to accessing programs and services by all Iowans.

- Implement continuous professional development for staff from all programs to elevate internal expertise and professionalism and to equip them with the tools necessary to operate a comprehensive, holistic approach to talent development.
- Core partners will participate in and support state and local area Disability Access Committees work in improving physical, technology and program accessibility for Iowan's.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

A. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

1. STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS

1. State Board Functions

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

Iowa's State Board membership structure is codified in Iowa Code Chapter 84A. Per Iowa Code, Iowa's State Board voting membership is 33 voting members. The State Board meets the WIOA requirements with respect to the percentage share that representatives of business and the workforce must have:

- 17 representatives of business make up 51.5% of the State Board's voting membership; and
- 7 representatives of the workforce make up 21.2% of the State Board's voting membership.

Representatives of the Workforce

The representatives of the workforce consist of:

- 4 representatives of labor organizations;
- 2 representatives of community-based organizations; and
- 1 representative of a joint labor-management Registered Apprenticeship program, who is a training director.

State Elected Officials

The State Board has the following state elected officials as voting members:

- The Governor;
- 1 state senator from the Iowa Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate after consultation with the Majority Leader of the Senate; and
- 1 state representative from the Iowa House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives after consultation with the Majority Leader of the House of Representatives.

Local Chief Elected Officials

The State Board has the following local chief elected officials:

- 1 member of a county board of supervisors; and
- 1 mayor.

Representatives of the Government

The WIOA final rules require that, where the lead official represents more than one core program, that official must ensure adequate representation of the needs of all core programs under his or her jurisdiction. The WIOA final rules also allow that, where one state agency administers multiple required programs, the head of that agency may represent those programs on the State Board. 20 CFR section 679.100(d)(iii)(A) contains the list of required representatives of the Government, which includes "lead State officials with primary responsibility" for the core programs:

- Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs under WIOA Title I and the Wagner-Peyser Act;
- Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program authorized under WIOA Title II; and
- State Vocational Rehabilitation program authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA Title IV.

In Iowa, there are two distinct Vocational Rehabilitation programs. One is administered by the Iowa Department for the Blind (IDB) and one is administered by Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS), which is a division of the Iowa Department of Education.

The State Board has the following four representatives of Government who are responsible for representing the following WIOA core programs:

- Director of IWD, who represents the Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker programs under WIOA Title I and the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service program under WIOA Title III;
- Director of the Iowa Department for the Blind (IDB), who represents the Vocational Rehabilitation program administered by IDB under WIOA Title IV;
- Administrator of Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS), who represents the Vocational Rehabilitation program administered by IVRS under WIOA Title IV; and
- Director of the Iowa Department of Education, who represents the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program under WIOA Title II.

Some of these representatives represent more programs than just their respective core programs on the State Board. This is necessary to achieve the purposes of WIOA and the State

Board and is expressly authorized by 20 CFR section 679.100(f)(3), which states that a State Board member may not serve as a representative of more than core program "except where a single government agency is responsible for multiple required programs, the head of the agency may represent each of the required programs." In Iowa, the Director of IWD and Director of the Iowa Department of Education are the heads of agencies that are responsible for multiple required programs.

In addition to the WIOA Title I programs and Wagner-Peyser Employment Service program, the Director of IWD represents the following programs and grants that are administered by the agency:

- Unemployment insurance (UI);
- Reemployment (RES and RESEA);
- Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG);
- PROMISE JOBS, the State's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Employment and Training program, which IWD administers in partnership with the Iowa Department of Human Services;
- Trade Act Assistance (TAA);
- Ticket to Work (TTW);
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW);
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC);
- Federal Disability Employment Initiative Round 6 grant, which IWD administers in partnership with Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC);
- Federal Apprenticeship Expansion grant;
- Home Base Iowa; and
- State Offender and Ex-Offender Re-Entry.

In addition to the AEFLA program under WIOA Title II, the Director of the Iowa Department of Education also represents the following programs that are administered by the agency:

- Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education; and
- State Kindergarten through 12th grade programs, such as the Statewide Work-Based Learning Intermediary Network.

Iowa Code section 260C.50 is entitled "Adult education and literacy programs." Iowa Code section 260C.50(2) states, "The [Iowa] Department [of Education] and the community colleges shall jointly implement adult education and literacy programs to assist adults and youths sixteen years of age and older who are not in school in obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for further education, work, and community involvement." Iowa has 15 community

colleges, each of which received an AEFLA grant. In addition to the Director of the Iowa Department of Education, the State Workforce Development Board also has a nonvoting member who is appointed by the Iowa Association of Community College Presidents.

Representatives of Business

Each of the 17 representatives of business meet the requirements in WIOA section 101(b)(1)(C)(i) and the final rules. These members:

- Are the owner or chief executive officer for the business or organization, or is an executive with the business or organization with optimum policy-making or hiring authority, and also may be members of a local workforce development board as described in WIOA sec. 107(b)(2)(A)(i);
- Represent businesses, or organizations that represent businesses that, at a minimum, provide employment and training opportunities that include high-quality, work-relevant training and development in in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the State; and
- Are appointed from a list of potential members nominated by State business organizations and business trade associations.

Multiple members represent small businesses as defined by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The Iowa State Workforce Development Board meets quarterly. There are four required standing committees per Iowa Code:

- Operational
- Policies, procedures, and practices
- Youth
- Disability Access Committee

In addition, the SWDB has an Executive Committee and standing committees dedicated to Ex-Offender Re-Entry and Minority Unemployment and Outreach efforts. IWD currently performs the administrative functions for the state board, however Iowa is exploring options to provide the board a full-time Executive Director to support the work of the board. All information related to the SWDB can be found at https://www.iowawdb.gov.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

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

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

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

Iowa Workforce Development

Iowa has implemented an integrated service delivery model since 2010. By collocating and integrating workforce programs, Iowa's workforce delivery system has been coordinating services in an efficient, cost-effective manner for several years. The service delivery system strives to provide businesses with the skilled workers they need by assisting job seekers to gain and expand their skills for in-demand industries and occupations. Iowa recognizes the need to continually improve services for all customers, and places emphasis on the continuous enhancement of existing approaches while concurrently determining new, innovative approaches for service delivery.

There has been a long-standing emphasis on co-enrollment across programs in Iowa, however there was a lack of an official procedure. In August 2019, a co-enrollment procedure became effective pertaining to Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, Title III Wagner-Peyser, Ticket to Work, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW), Returning Citizens, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Registered Apprenticeship (RA).

The procedure spans from 100 percent co-enrollment between Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Dislocated Workers who are Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) certified, to when co-enrollment with other programs is beneficial to the customer. The use of Integrated Resource Teams is encouraged to maximize the benefits of co-enrollment without placing a burden on the customer while ensuring all programs have met their individual program policy requirements.

Across programs, emphasis is placed on working, and supporting, a customer through the time in which they attain their career goals. The time in which a customer may actively participate in a program differs based upon many factors. However, under common exit, the participant must complete services from all programs in which they are co-enrolled in order to exit from the system. In Iowa, common exit applies to participants who are co-enrolled in Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, Title III Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) and Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG).

The importance of work-based learning is a common theme throughout the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Iowa recognizes the importance of work-based learning, and the impact it can have on growing Iowa's workforce. Various programs specifically accent work-based learning within their requirements. For example, Iowa has maintained successful performance since program year 2015 in meeting the 20 percent work experience requirement for Title I Youth.

Additionally, IWD received $982,767.73 from the U.S. Department of Labor to expand Registered Apprenticeship opportunities in the state. This grant's Period of Performance runs from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2022. The goals of this grant are:

- Add 440 Registered Apprentices
    - 200 from RA Career Planners
    - 240 Request for Proposals
- Start 50 Registered Apprenticeship Programs in Iowa
- Help employers start or grow Registered Apprenticeship Programs in high-growth, high-tech industries: health care and advanced manufacturing, along with RAPS that reach rural communities
- Expand opportunities to underrepresented populations, including women, minorities, youth, veterans, and people with disabilities
- At least 25 percent of RA Sponsors included on Iowa's Eligible Training Provider List

Enhanced programming in the areas of work-based learning is an on-going goal within Iowa throughout the next four years.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Core Partners collaborate in high schools and learn about each other's services; make warm hand-offs and referrals; provide Pre-Employment Transition services, and plan events together. All members link up and coordinate services with community college teams. Specialized services from the Department for the Blind (IDB) are provided onsite for high school students as needed.

The personnel of both VR state entities provide technical assistance to improve programmatic and physical accessibility of One-Stops, and provide integration among Center programs.

IVRS and IDB continue to build relationships to ensure our clients and job candidates can utilize services in a welcoming atmosphere. Each Center worked on a strategy in making referrals and tracking them in an integrated service continuum. The state coordinated a strategy to improve customer-service, which Iowa implemented statewide. There are continued efforts to promote and replicate best practices across One-Stop Centers. Core partners meet in every region to work on problem solving and address issues impeding service provision. Joint efforts also occur between core partners during National Disability Employment Awareness Month annually. Also included are initiatives specific to: co-enrolment in future-ready Iowa initiatives, job fairs, internships, apprenticeships, on-the job training opportunities, career days, expos, and business tours.

Iowa Department of Education

The Sector Partnership Leadership Council (SPLC) maintains the lead role in the implementation and achievement of objectives related to sector partnerships and career pathways across the state, thereby assuming a more formal advisory role to the State Workforce Development Board. The SPLC membership emphasizes business, industry, and employer representation so that the council is truly industry led and oriented. Membership of the board is posted on the Department's website: https://www.educateiowa.gov/adult-career-and-community-college/sector-partnerships/sector-partnership-leadership-council

Resources have included facilitator trainings, a series of downloadable toolkit publications, community of practice networking opportunities, and survey findings of Iowa's sector partnerships. Guidance has been leveraged to aid in the expansion and development of sector partnerships through the stages of planning, emerging, and sustaining. Additional information and resources are housed at SectorPartnerships.EducateIowa.gov.

Adult education and literacy providers are encouraged to be involved and at the table in the development of sector partnerships and subsequent career pathway development in their respective regions with a focus on aligning services. Through involvement with the Moving Pathways Forward: Supporting Career Pathways Integration project, a three-year technical assistance grant, Title II has been working to connect the process of sector partnerships to career pathways through the development of integrated education and training activities.

B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

B. Alignment with Activities outside the Plan

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

Iowa Workforce Development

The core program partners are committed to working together to implement the goals of Future Ready Iowa. The Future Ready Iowa initiative was created after Iowa received a National Governors Association grant in 2014 for up to $170,000 to develop strategies to improve the educational and training attainment of Iowans and the alignment of those degrees to credentials with employer demand. Future Ready Iowa aims to build Iowa's talent pipeline for the careers of today and tomorrow. Several strategies have been derived as a result of the Future Ready Iowa initiative, including the Clearinghouse for Work-Based Learning, the Employer Innovation Fund and the Last-Dollar Scholarship.

The Clearinghouse for Work-Based Learning connects students and employers through shared projects that give students professional experience. This virtual platform is available to all Iowa

schools, K-12 classrooms, and businesses for project involvement through a system where both classes and businesses can enter themselves as an interested party and browse for a good match for a project. Students work on the projects primarily in the classroom, making this distinctly different from work-study or internship formats.

The Employer Innovation Fund was developed to expand the opportunities for more Iowans to earn for-credit and non-credit postsecondary credentials leading to high-demand jobs and encouraging Iowa employers, community leaders and others to collaborate to support regional workforce talent development. The fund awards competitive grants to support regional initiatives that accelerate credential attainment.

The Last-Dollar Scholarship program helps Iowans achieve education and training in high-demand jobs by paying the tuition for those who enroll in a pre-identified occupational program. This effort is geared towards training Iowans for in-demand occupations while meeting the needs of employers and growing Iowa's economy. The Last-Dollar Scholarship is intended to cover any remaining gap between federal and state grants and scholarships and the student's tuition and fees. Training programs included on the Last-Dollar Scholarship list are approved by the State Workforce Development Board, and can be found at https://www.futurereadyiowa.gov/college-list.

Iowa maintains a commitment to supporting registered apprenticeship programs and increasing the number of registered apprentices by providing training grants through the Iowa Apprenticeship Act and the Iowa Registered Apprenticeship Development Fund.

The Iowa Apprenticeship Act was passed in 2014, increasing the available funding to $3 million for training grants awarded to Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to conduct and maintain registered apprenticeship programs. Registered apprenticeships are a proven approach to preparing workers for in-demand jobs and meeting the needs of business for a highly skilled workforce that can innovate and adapt. The program is administered by Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) in coordination with the United States Department of Labor (DOL), Office of Apprenticeship (OA). Only apprenticeship programs registered and meeting USDOL standards are eligible for an IEDA training grant.

The Iowa Registered Apprenticeship Development Fund was created as a revolving fund in the State Treasury under the control of the IEDA with $1 million being appropriated for Fiscal Year 2019. A statutory formula is used to allocate training grants to eligible sponsors. Awarded funds may only be used towards the cost of conducting and maintaining a registered apprenticeship training program.

Additionally, an online website: https://www.earnandlearniowa.gov/ was developed to help employers understand how a registered apprenticeship program works, the value it brings to their business and the resources available to help them set up a registered apprenticeship program. Job seekers can also learn why a registered apprenticeship leads to a successful career and how to get involved and connected to a registered apprenticeship program. An accessible list of sponsors is maintained on the website.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

According to the local service plans in each region, IVRS and the partners have developed highly collaborative strategies designed to help ensure that the customers in both rural and urban locations can receive the total package of services they require to be best prepared for the local "in-demand" jobs in our communities. For the transition-aged population, very collaborative joint programs have been developed to expand capacity to serve the host of eligible and potentially eligible students in the state. In most districts, the high school "Fall Plan" for the district involves Title I, II, III, and IV staff, community college Intermediary programs, the Intermediary IN programs, VR, and the Department for the Blind, as well as DHS case management, and the local community rehabilitation programs. Other collaborative programs would include Transition Alliance Programs (TAP) which involve local high school staff, VR and IDB staff, local businesses, Community Rehabilitation Programs, Intermediary Network programs, AEL, Title I, and Wagner-Peyser staff. These programs provide pre-employment transition services, job shadowing, work skills, career awareness, and job placement and follow up services to job candidates transitioning from high school. Other collaborative programs impacting the transition-aged youth might include TEAM, Making The Grade, and Project SEARCH. For the adult population, the local service plans have worked to integrate services through the process of cross training so that all partners can identify both core or outside partner agencies with specific roles where warm referrals might be made. Local business services teams are integrated, such that in many regions, there is time set aside for case staffing, response to local business needs with those who have the needed expertise, and for planning and carrying out of public events like National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) events, job fairs, reverse job fairs, plant tours, and summer programs. A process has been developed for referral of individuals interested in an apprenticeship to be provided the needed information and referred to appropriate Center staff through a "passport" process.

Iowa Department for the Blind

IVRS and IDB work with Workforce boards and One-Stop Centers to assess program and physical accessibility as part of each area's Disability Access Committee. Additionally, cross-training opportunities are made available for interagency staff and partners to increase their understanding of the ADA and of available or needed assistive technology solutions. A regional plan is in place for integrated business services and responses to business requests for accessibility surveys, consultations on disability issues, job analyses, and recommendations for AT or accommodations strategies on the job. A process has been developed locally for Rapid Response, as well as responding to requests for reasonable accommodations. Core partner meetings occur with optional partners across the state to help with aligning services. Many regions have worked on sector partnerships to assist in developing career pathways. Business and community colleges continue to be involved in these partnerships.

Iowa Department of Corrections

Individuals with a criminal record face significant barriers in finding and keeping gainful employment. A 2010 study by the Center for Economic Policy Research estimates that reentrants are employed at a rate that is 5 to 20 percent lower than the general population. Without the skills to successfully re-enter the labor market, reentrants struggle to interrupt the

cycle of recidivism. Career pathway models have shown promise in supporting individuals who face barriers to employment. Career pathways combine education and training, work experience, and basic workplace skills ("soft" skills) to prepare individuals for success in the workforce. In a corrections setting, a career pathway model can align and connect education, training, counseling, and work experience opportunities within the prison to support inmates in building skills and experience needed to get – and keep – a job once released. The Iowa Department of Education has implemented an Memorandum of Understanding between the Iowa Department of Corrections (IDOC) and Iowa Workforce Development to track the impact of education services reducing recidivism. By making career pathways—or the sequence of education, training, and work experience within the IDOC—clearer and more visible, the IDOC is increasing opportunities for inmates to 'chart their own course' and build the skills and experience needed to succeed in jobs and careers.

Leveraging the WIOA priority on serving individuals with barriers to employment (including reentrants), IDOC is partnering with core partners in sharing labor market information, delivering reentry employment trainings and other key strategies to work with inmates and network with employers to address the barriers they may have in hiring returning citizens. The workforce development system is just one of many partners providing services to reentrants. Reentrants need extensive support, including housing, substance abuse treatment, medical care, family reunification and childcare, transportation. The IDOC is continuing to create relationships with organizations that support reentrants.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

CTE, Perkins V, specifies that one of the purposes of the Act is to develop more fully the academic knowledge and technical employability skills by increasing the employment opportunities for populations who are chronically unemployed or underemployed, including individuals with disabilities, individuals from economically disadvantaged families, out-of-workforce individuals, youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system, and homeless individuals. To accomplish this mission, secondary and community college staff will be supported in their efforts to provide equal access to their activities to special populations under the Act, including:

- Continue to collaborate with representatives from community college, K-12, AEAs, higher education, corrections, vocational rehabilitation, vocational services, business and industry, workforce and economic development, human services, and related agencies. Participants have an interest in special population students and provide guidance, input, and support for statewide equity efforts to ensure equal access to non-traditional employment, training, and programs.
- Continue to collect and analyze disaggregated program data to evaluate access and achievement of the special population students. The data serves as a benchmark to measure participation and completion rates for male and female students in non-traditional career programs; and is designed to understand equity gaps better to support program improvement processes.
- Continue to provide information to guidance counselors, teachers, community college student services personnel and faculty, and other key stakeholders regarding the value

of non-traditional occupations and strategies to promote them at the local level, including media promotion of non-traditional employment.

- Continue to award grants from the State Leadership Fund to serve individuals in the state correctional institutions, both those serving youth and those serving adults. The funds available will be utilized to provide services to individuals who choose to enroll in CTE programs.

C. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

C. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals

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

A key component in coordinating activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high quality customer-centered services, is to increase the integration of services made available to all job seekers on a local and regional level. The integration of services provided by all core and required program partners will also consider the future educational and employment needs of the job seekers served throughout Iowa. Expanding collaboration efforts around methods to improve local service delivery by improving our assessment of the opportunities and needs of individuals -- along with employer engagement -- will be key in our efforts to administer high quality, customer-centered services.

Sector Partnership Leadership Council

Iowa has developed and promoted an integrated Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) strategic planning process across education, workforce and economic development, which will provide comprehensive, high quality customer-centered services. The regional planning process included an examination of target population data provided by the state data team and other relevant local studies. Regional areas examined supply-side data and considered ways to leverage partners' expertise, programs, and resources to connect available talent pools to career opportunities in targeted industries. The planning process included analysis of how the partners in each region will address the specific needs of the targeted populations and an asset mapping process to inventory the career, education, training and supportive services that are available in each region.

Labor Market Information and Career Pathways

Labor market information (LMI) and demand-driven data set the foundation for the WIOA career services in Iowa. LMI utilized through the statewide platform, Career Coach, a web-based tool that incorporates Iowa specific actionable data on in-demand occupations and wages will allow students and job seekers to make informed decisions about their career pathways. These services will result in individualized plans addressing how to reach career goals based on career and skill assessments and identified barriers requiring support services.

Iowa's Career Pathway efforts uses this data to provide individuals with research groupings of careers, LMI and the knowledge, skills, abilities and credentials that are required for each occupation. Through partnerships between the core and required partners, Iowa's career pathways support local programs that empower students and participants of all ages to explore their academic and career interests. Iowa will leverage the work of statewide, public-private partnerships to better coordinate investments, resources and planning for those career pathways to expand access along with interactive delivery with the goal of providing more opportunities for targeted individuals.

Workforce and education partners including adult education, Career and Technical Education and Iowa's Community College system will expand career development guides and technical assistance materials to promote leading career pathway models and best practices that can be implemented through regional sector partnerships and other regional sector initiatives. These technical assistance materials (along with associated professional development) will address how to improve career services and expand customer access to accelerated and integrated work-based and classroom training, align and integrate programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and support services for targeted populations facing barriers to employment. They will also address how to fully mainstream targeted populations into sector-based career pathway initiatives in order to achieve outcomes similar to those of other populations.

Coordinated Case Management and Supportive Services

A key strategy outlined for Iowa is the development of policies for integrated and enhanced career services and case management. Iowa is working to develop case management teams to coordinate and support the delivery of enhanced case management services to participants across the required and optional program partners at the local level. As part of the cross-agency training and professional development which will be developed through a partnership with the core partners to ensure that needs are clearly understood by all parties, both core and required. This includes leveraging the resources of partners such as adult education to provide professional development to agency partners in the appropriate administration of educational assessment of basic skill deficiencies. Finally, as mentioned earlier, training will be delivered through technological solutions in order to maximize access and cost-effectiveness.

Incorporation of Required Partner Services to Targeted Populations

Iowa will highlight and encourage adoption of the best practices that are identified in statewide innovation projects that serve targeted populations throughout the state. This includes joint projects between the agencies responsible for administering the required WIOA programs.

- Aligning and implementing the best practices of the current and future Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) Projects. Iowa has partnered with the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) to explore Iowa service integration and the implementation of the requirements of WIOA. Leadership from core partner agencies worked with WINTAC to develop a strategy to engage staff in establishing a

common service flow in Iowa*WORKS* sites. These efforts are designed to increase the participation of individuals with disabilities (aged 18 and above) in integrated career pathway and academic programs through community colleges and non-profit organizations in cooperation with Iowa's workforce development system, including the one-stop centers, local workforce development areas and other regional partners.

- Aligning and developing integrated education and training (IET) programs for low-literacy and low-skilled adults to concurrently address foundational skills with workforce training. The state's IET programs prepare adults with limited academic or limited English skills to enter and succeed in post-secondary education and training leading to career path employment in demand occupations. The core partners will focus on expanding access and success in sector-based education and training programs that provide opportunities for low-skilled and low-literate youth and adults. The state will support new initiatives that promote sector-based pre-IET, and IET models that expand access and success of low-skilled youth and adults in career pathways. These programs are designed to introduce individuals to career pathway programs of interest.

- The state recognizes the use of bridge programs as a foundation for career pathway systems and also as a foundation for employment opportunities and other training. Title II will work closely with core and required partners under WIOA to re-examine the use of IET programs for those individuals who lack basic skills as a way of connecting with Title I and Title III for training opportunities, and with Title IV and Integrated Resource Teams (IRTs) will ensure participants have access to needed supportive services, while preventing duplication of services. Joint staffing, cross-training and consultations ensure the participants get the services they need.

- Aligning and coordinating WIOA Title I services with efforts that currently address justice-involved and returning citizens. Iowa is exploring a range of career pathway models for justice-involved participants that examines best practices and ways to braid and blend funding for maximum impact. Where possible these models will be folded into existing correctional efforts for seamless service alignment to add the expertise of WIOA service providers to strengthen employment and training models.

- Aligning and coordinating foster youth employment and training programs including youth who are aging out of the foster care system. Activities to expand career pathway services for older foster youth who are nearing age-out is a priority for the core partners. Successful models for braiding and blending WIOA and other required partners' funds are under consideration as a basis for Iowa's effort.

- Aligning and coordinating critical programs and services for Veterans. Iowa veterans will be served through the WIOA priority of service as well as targeted initiatives administered by the workforce and education partners and the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs. As the WIOA definition of case management describes, it takes a community of resources to assist Veterans to overcome/mitigate the identified barriers to employment and get them back into the workforce.

D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

D. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers

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

A proven strategy to better collaborate and align the efforts of core WIOA program partners not only with one another, but also with those of ancillary partner or support services within a community or region with similar goals, is through an employer-driven, community-supported sector partnership initiative. Through a shared table methodology, employers are invited to review their local workforce, economic, and community development needs, identify areas of focus, and then access a suite of wraparound services and support partners to help them achieve these local goals.

Although the common goal generally revolves around the attraction, development, and retention of a skilled workforce within a respective industry sector and region, the solutions can often vary greatly based on factors such as location, timeline, and capacity. Each group strives to be employer-led as much as possible and rely on their volunteer employer member to assume official leadership roles, fill subcommittee or working group positions, and actively participate in planning, implementing, and tracking various solutions to achieve their goals. A key strength of such a sector partnership is that all employers from a respective industry or region are welcome to join, including small business owners and those who may not be as consistently called upon for other workforce or community initiatives. This diversity of employers and support partners often leads to stronger, more lasting solutions and relationships.

Iowa Department of Education

The Iowa Department of Education partners with these sector partnership groups to offer broad statewide support through the development and validation of robust career pathways materials, industry-specific work-based learning guidance, and the identification or accreditation of industry recognized credentials. Additional technical and financial support efforts are modeled after successful programs from other states, as well as direct feedback from current and past sector partnership teams.

Iowa Workforce Development

Similar to the benefits the Iowa*WORKS* system provides job-seeker customers, the system also provides enhanced labor exchange access to Iowa's business customers. The system allows for enhanced recruiting for employers and third party agents. In Iowa's previous data management system, third party agents had to create individual accounts for their clients. In Iowa*WORKS*, they have the ability to create an account and select to represent their clients. This allows either party to inactivate the relationship at any time.

Employers are able to register and create a company profile, enter and manage job orders, manage recruitment, search for qualified job seekers, and view resumes and profiles of those qualified job seekers.

The Iowa*WORKS* system includes the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) module. The WOTC module allows employers and third party agents to complete electronic entry of IRS Form 8850 and ETA Form 9061, complete batch upload of applications, upload verification documentation, including powers of attorney, have access to application status, receive notification of determinations and requests for information, print certifications and have access to denials and requests for information. The functionality for employers and third party agents to upload applications, powers of attorney and verification documents helps to protect personally identifiable information of the employees and applicants.

In order to meet the needs of business across the state, Iowa utilizes the Employers' Council of Iowa (ECI). ECI is an advisory group that is located in each local area, and offers no-cost membership to all businesses in the local area. The role of ECI is to guide Iowa Workforce Development's (IWDs) business focus, address topics of concern to employers, sponsor training initiatives and assist IWD in meeting critical human resource needs.

In addition to local area ECI groups, Iowa maintains a State ECI board. The State ECI board represents local ECI members within their respective local areas at state meetings, serves as resource contact in the local area for ECI education and promotion, maintains communication with IWD and local AJC's in the area to lend support, to improve services, and to exchange information and ideas, maintains a high level of communication with local ECI Chairs and keep them informed about state and national issues relating to employers and IWD and gathers and disseminates information about the activities of local councils.

The Employer Disability Resource Network (EDRN) remains a tool to connect with business. EDRN was designed to increase the employment of persons with disabilities by pooling agency resources and providing technical expertise to employers throughout Iowa. Members of this group include representatives from, but not limited to, the core partners. Individuals from high school transition age to the aging population are also represented.

Iowa's core partners have developed strong partnerships at the local area levels with respect to business engagement. Integrated business outreach teams were developed to deliver quality services to employers in a one-contact format. Teams from the core partners are cross trained in each other's services so that whether one person from that team visits the employer or a small team of core partner's visit, the employer walks away with a contact that can speak on behalf of and connect that employer to any of the services offered from the system. The core partner business engagement teams meet regularly to debrief from visits, review next steps and deliver the services that are tailored to the employer's needs.

Similar to the core partner business engagement teams, IWD and IVRS staff at the local level have teamed up to deliver on-site ADA assessments to any employer that requests. All staff

have been trained to deliver and support employer's efforts in assessing their physical sites for accessibility opportunities.

A key initiative in Iowa, supporting employers with up skilling and expanding their workforce is the Future Ready Iowa Employer Innovation Fund. This fund is a grant opportunity to carry out creative solutions that address local workforce issues. It encourages employers, community leaders, and others to lead efforts for developing regional workforce talent pools. Employers can promote credit and non-credit education and training opportunities in high-demand jobs.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Services to businesses are tracked between core partner groups. Businesses are able to inform partner programs of their needs through the Workforce Board activities. Invitations are extended to partners in the Rapid Response team efforts.

E. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

E. Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions

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

Iowa Workforce Development and Iowa Department of Education

One of the best ways to ensure that future workers will meet the new and evolving skill requirements for jobs is through partnership with postsecondary educational institutions. To meet the skill needs of employers, partnerships with educational institutions are critical to provide the needed training to create a pipeline of skilled workers. One-Stop staff works with local institutions and businesses to identify and create applicable training for occupations in need. To engage young people in the workforce system and educate them about the labor force, relationships with K-12 are invaluable, but it does not stop there. There must be a coordinated and continuous effort made by and in harmonization with all of Iowa's educational entities.

Iowa has 60 colleges and universities listed under the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, including the community colleges, four-year institutions, and regents. Included are:

- two research universities,
- nine masters' universities,
- 19 baccalaureate colleges,
- 21 associate's colleges.

In addition, 11 special-focus institutions and three baccalaureate/associate's colleges operate in the state. The Board of Regents, State of Iowa, a governing board, oversees the state's three public universities - the University of Iowa, Iowa State University, and the University of Northern Iowa.

Effective July 1, 2017, following the competition and the awarding of the Title II funds, all 15 of Iowa's community colleges are providers of adult education and literacy services. Since as early as 1918, Iowa's community colleges have been committed to preparing a skilled workforce to contribute to Iowa's economic growth and stability. Iowa's 15 community colleges educate well over half (58.5 percent) of all Iowa residents enrolled in public or private two- and four-year postsecondary institutions in the state, exceeding the national average of 41.0 percent reported by the American Association of Community Colleges. In addition, the student body served by Iowa's community colleges has become increasingly diverse. Students representing racial and ethnic minorities made up a record high 22.4 percent of total enrollment during the 2018-2019 academic year (AY) at Iowa's community colleges. As such, Community Colleges serve a critical role in the state reaching its Future Ready Iowa goal of 70 percent of Iowans in the workforce with education or training beyond high school by 2025.

As grant recipients for Title II funds, Iowa's community colleges are well poised to support the needs of adult learners, to effectively incorporate workplace skills and workforce training and to provide high quality educational instruction to participants in adult education and literacy activities. As partners, Iowa's 15 locally governed community colleges play vital roles in the economic development of their communities and the state. In several regions, community colleges are the service providers for Title I Youth and Adult, Dislocated Workers as well as providing the physical space for the one-stop centers therefore offering a full range of assistance to job seekers. As key partners in statewide industry, workforce, and education initiatives, Iowa's community colleges provide individuals with access to high-quality education and training to ensure employers have a pipeline of skilled workers that meet their specific needs. By working together and forming connections with local business and industry, community organizations, state agencies, and other key stakeholders, Iowa's community colleges are tightly linked to regional economic development and labor force needs and well-positioned to collaboratively address statewide challenges. As such, for every dollar of public money spent on educating students at Iowa's community colleges, taxpayers receive an average return of $3.50 over the working lives of the students.

One-Stop staff are partnering with educational institutions to provide relevant information to students through workshops in the classroom, providing educators with information on how to access workforce services and use LMI in the classroom, as well as career fairs and career days. Career days have been a successful way to partner with K-12, local post-secondary educators, businesses and One-Stops to provide information to young people about post-graduation options. State leaders realize that it is critical to continue to develop improved relationships and to engage educational leaders and innovators at all levels.

To further enhance partner engagement with educational institutions, the State of Iowa is improving the way it manages and disseminates the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Customers interested in training opportunities are made aware of all training options available to them through the ETPL. Eligible providers listed include community colleges, regent universities, private universities as well as other training programs including Registered Apprenticeship Programs.

Youth programming is among the many critical updates under WIOA and active involvement with Iowa's educational institutions is essential to operating successful youth programs across

the state. State-level coordination and support is also important to creating and implementing necessary system changes to support improved workforce delivery programs reaching Iowa's youth.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

IVRS agencies provide counseling and guidance, assistive technology and other services and support for participants who have disabilities to be able to access programs at the community colleges and CTE schools. Title IV programs initiate jointly planned business tours, career days, job fairs, and summer pre-employment transition services programs with local educational institutions.

F. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

F. Partner Engagement with Other Education and Training Providers.

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

Iowa Workforce Development

The State chose to utilize the ETPL module within the Iowa*WORKS* system. This transition led to a significant change in which training providers would apply and be maintained on the list. In 2018, each provider on the ETPL was contacted with information on why and how to transition to the new system.

Additionally, updated ETPL policies were drafted, posted for public comment and taken before the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) for approval. WIOA compliant ETPL policies were passed by the SWDB in September of 2019, and became effective November 15, 2019. The combination of updated ETPL policies, and a WIOA compliant ETPL module, will ensure that training providers are engaged and maintained accurately and according to federal regulations. As Iowa continues to progress in the area of ETPL management and maintenance, we will also be able to shift focus on progression of outreach and engagement of new training providers to ensure the intent of consumer choice is fully applied.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Title IV programs work with program participants to access to on-the-job trainings, occupational skill trainings, apprenticeship programs, community-based trainings, and other programs offered through local educational institutions and community providers

G. LEVERAGING RESOURCES TO INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

G. Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access

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

The State's strategies include blending and braiding of funding to maximize the leveraging of other Federal, State, and local investments in order to enhance access to workforce development programs at all levels. State leaders realize the benefit and added strength of bringing diverse agencies and programs together.

Adult Education and Literacy

The adult education and literacy (AEL) program is Iowa's front-line program to help adults without a high school diploma or equivalency. As part of the state procurement for the Iowa Skilled Workforce and Job Creation Fund (ISWJCF) allocated to Iowa's 15 community colleges, AEL services are being provided to individuals who need assistance acquiring the skills necessary to be successful in job training and employment. Funds from the state are leveraged with Title II funds, awarded through competition, to increase access to services through Your Future Starts Here Iowa (http://yourfuturestartshereIowa.org/). In addition, providers from community and faith based organizations are engaged with the Iowa Literacy Council, engaged in statewide efforts to increase access for adult education and literacy services including services targeting English Language Acquisition participants. These organizations are leveraged by ensuring a pipeline for participants with shared best practices and a connection to the American Job Network.

Funds leveraged from the state procurement for AEL programs adhere to the allowable use restrictions of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA). The $5.3 million investment has supported efforts to integrate standards based instruction with workplace learning to prepare participants to successfully transition to postsecondary training and careers. The funds received by the community colleges is used to expand services and improve the quality of AEL programs. Now more than ever, Iowans understand that college and career readiness is the first step to success. They realize that education, skill acquisition, and training have become necessary to succeed in both postsecondary education and the workforce. In 2016, the Iowa State Board of Education adopted a new definition of college and career readiness to reflect what students should achieve to be prepared for postsecondary success. Iowa students who are college and career ready have successfully:

- achieved proficiency in essential content knowledge;
- acquired practical transition skills;
- developed key learning skills and cognitive strategies; and
- built a strong foundation of self-understanding and engagement strategies.

Iowa's community colleges facilitate college and career readiness through programs such as joint enrollment, work-based learning opportunities, adult education and literacy, and high-quality credit and noncredit programs.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

WIOA requires that 15 percent of the budget be allocated towards the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS). IVRS has developed strong policy surrounding the provision of Pre-ETS service delivery. IVRS collaborates with every public school district in Iowa to develop a Local School Plan that addresses the following information: the services the school district will provide to students with disabilities, the new and/or expanded services IVRS will provide within the district, services provided by community partners and/or IVRS contracted programs, and any gaps in services. Local School Plans are also developed with private accredited high schools across the state along with some identified alternative educational settings.

- As gaps in services are identified on the Local School Plans each Fall, programs have been developed collaboratively with school districts and other community partners across the state. The following programs have been developed to assist with delivering VR services, including Pre-ETS, in collaboration with school districts across the state:

- IVRS Intermediary Networks (INs): IVRS awarded funding through the Department of Education/IowaGrants to regional intermediary networks to develop and expand work-based learning opportunities in selected regions. The program prepares students with disabilities for the workforce by connecting students, the education system, business and the community through relevant, work-based learning activities across all 16 career clusters, with specific emphasis on Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM). The goal is to align students' career interests to appropriate post-secondary education through delivery of Pre-ETS.

- Innovative Learning Project: This is a collaborative project between IVRS, Boone Community School District and iJAG focused on a work-based learning continuum of awareness, exploration and training in partnership with a variety of employers and higher education institutions. Students in this program participate in various Pre-ETS activities.

- Making the Grade (MTG): Students with disabilities in this program participate in Pre-ETS activities to teach and reinforce the skill sets and habits necessary to be successful on the job. Students with disabilities in participating high schools are placed in paid work-based learning experiences in the community to assist with skill building necessary for their future career.

- Project SEARCH: The goal for each student participant is competitive integrated employment. The program provides real-life work-based learning experiences combined with workplace readiness training in employability and independent living skills to assist students with significant disabilities make successful transitions from school to productive adult life.

- Transition Alliance Program (TAP): TAP is a collaborative program developed between IVRS and school districts. TAP services are provided through a collaborative service

coordination model, which includes Pre-ETS, with the ultimate goal of obtaining competitive integrated employment.

- Transitioning to Employment and Advocating for Myself (TEAM): TEAM is a collaboration between Easter Seals, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) and Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS). The focus of TEAM is on developing and providing Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities who are attending all high schools within Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS), including students covered under Section 511 and students who are potentially eligible for IVRS, prior to graduation. TEAM staff will work collaboratively with the IVRS Counselors assigned to DMPS and the DMPS Work Experience Coordinators (WECs) in order to provide new or expanded services for students with disabilities in each of the five required activities for Pre-ETS. TEAM may not duplicate any class or program already provided by the district. Year round services will be provided to include activities that occur during the school day and after school, as well as activities throughout the summer.

- Juvenile Re-entry System (JReS): The Iowa Department of Human Rights (DHR), Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (CJJP), is overseeing the Juvenile Reentry Task Force (JRTF) in the development and implementation of the juvenile justice reentry system. Multiple state agency partners, including juvenile placement settings, are assisting with the development of policy, procedure, and structural elements of its Juvenile Reentry System (JReS). The goal of JReS is the reduction of recidivism rates and to improve other youth outcomes through implementation of comprehensive system-wide reforms to juvenile reentry policies and processes, which include: enhanced cross-system coordination, utilization of quality and effective programing, data sharing and prioritization of resources. IVRS has been an active partner in this process for implementation of Pre-ETS in these alternative educational settings.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the Iowa Department of Education both share responsibility to prepare students with disabilities for successful community employment. A current Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) defines the responsibilities of both divisions. This MoA is designed to facilitate the integration and coordination of transition services from school to post-secondary education and/or employment for individuals with disabilities who are enrolled in secondary education, and are eligible or potentially eligible to receive vocational rehabilitation services.

Iowa Student Aid Commission

The rising price of higher education often stands in the way of college aspirations. Fewer than 1 in 4 adults believe college is affordable to everyone in the United States. In order to receive any federal financial aid, most state financial aid and even many forms of institutional aid, students must file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA. In 2016–17, the number of Iowans filing the FAFSA was 157,444, which is 5 percent lower than the previous academic year. The number of filers has been gradually declining since 2011–12 and is reflective of Iowa's recovery from the Great Recession. As job availability has improved over time, some Iowans were more likely to enter the workforce than to enroll in college.

In 2016–17, roughly $316 million in Pell Grants was awarded to students attending Iowa institutions with an average award amount being approximately $3,500. The lowest-income students—those eligible for the federal Pell Grant— are most likely to enroll in two-year institutions. Nearly half of Pell recipients enroll in community colleges, nearly a quarter in Regent universities and nearly another quarter in private not-for-profit institutions.

The state of Iowa appropriations for financial aid in 2017–18 were $63.6 million, which was down 4 percent from the year before. The largest state-funded financial aid program is the Iowa Tuition Grant for private not-for-profit institutions. In 2017–18, funding for this program was $46,630,951, or nearly three-quarters of scholarship and grant appropriations. In 2016–17, the state of Iowa funded 20,807 grant and scholarship awards totaling $66,392,369.

The Kibbie Grant is one of two state-funded grant programs Iowa College Aid administers specifically for students enrolled in career education and career option programs at Iowa community colleges. The second program, the Iowa Vocational Technical Tuition Grant (IVTG), has been operational since the 1974-75 academic year. IVTG provides need-based grants to students who enroll in any career education or career option course at an Iowa community college. The eligibility criteria for the Kibbie Grant and IVTG are generally the same, with three primary differences:

- The IVTG serves students in all career education and career option programs at Iowa community colleges, whereas the Kibbie Grant serves only students enrolled in targeted career education and career option programs that lead to occupations in Iowa that are experiencing a shortage of skilled workers.
- The maximum award for the IVTG is set statutorily at $1,200, whereas the maximum award for the Kibbie Grant adjusts each year to fund one-half of the average tuition and mandatory fees at Iowa community colleges.
- The EFC range for IVTG ($201–$5,100) is more limited than that of the Kibbie Grant ($0–$6,000), primarily due to the Kibbie Grant receiving a significantly larger appropriation to fund a smaller number of programs of study.

Given the similarities between the Kibbie Grant and the IVTG, stakeholders and Iowa College Aid staff developed an awarding methodology that leverages the grant dollars from each program, as well as the Federal Pell Grant, to provide an adequate amount of grant aid to low-income students. Kibbie Grants are awarded in conjunction with Federal Pell Grants and Iowa Vocational Technical Tuition Grants to leverage federal and state funding with the intent of making a community college education more affordable for low-income students.

Additionally, in the fall of 2019, Iowa College Aid began administering the Future Ready Last Dollar Scholarship and Future Ready Grant. These funds were appropriated to address the goal of having 70 percent of Iowans with a postsecondary degree or industry-recognized credential or certification by 2025. The "last dollar program" takes into account any additional public funding or grants the student is eligible for, such as a federal Pell Grant. The total amount of "last dollar" funding a student receives to cover the direct costs of being a student varies

depending on other public funding for which the student is eligible. Programs eligible for funding are based on high demand scholarship as determined by the State Workforce Development Board.

The Future Ready Iowa Grant, aids students who did not complete an eligible bachelor's degree program but have previously earned at least half the credits necessary that will lead to a high-demand job. Accredited Iowa colleges or universities that offer bachelor's degree programs aligned with high-demand jobs must offer student support services, guidance counseling and employment outreach for grant recipients.

Iowa will continue to leverage state, federal and private resources to increase educational access for all Iowans, including those with barriers to employment and traditionally underserved populations.

PATHWAYS FOR ACADEMIC CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT (PACE) AND GAP

Both statewide programs are recipients of state appropriations from the Iowa Skilled Workforce and Job Creation Fund aimed at supporting participants achieve educational skills needed to address middle skill gaps in-demand industries.

The PACE funding has been used to implement a simplified, streamlined, and comprehensive process to navigate at-risk participants with customized support services, to acquire effective academic and employment training to secure gainful, quality, in-state employment. Target population includes:

- Persons deemed low skilled for the purposes of attaining gainful, quality, in-state employment.
- Persons earning incomes at or below two hundred fifty percent of the federal poverty level as defined by the most recently revised poverty income guidelines published by the United States department of health and human services.
- Unemployed persons.
- Underemployed persons.
- Dislocated workers, including workers eligible for services and benefits under the federal Trade Adjustment Act of 2002, Pub. L. No. 107-210, as determined by the department of workforce development and the federal internal revenue service.

PACE programs include the following components:

- Measurable and effective recruitment, assessment, and referral activities designed for the target populations.

- Integration of basics skills and work-readiness training with occupational skills training.
- Combining customized supportive and case management services with training services to help participants overcome barriers to employment.
- Providing training services at times, locations, and through multiple, flexible modalities that are easily understood and readily accessible to the target populations. Such modalities shall support timeless entry, individualized learning, and flexible scheduling, and may include online remediation, learning lab and cohort learning communities, tutoring, and modularization.

The leveraging of resources includes the building upon the pipeline process established by PACE to better serve the academic, training, and employment needs of the target populations. The goals of the pipeline include:

- Strengthening partnerships with community-based organizations and industry representatives.
- Conducting and managing an outreach, recruitment, and intake process, along with accompanying support services, reflecting sensitivity to the time and financial constraints and remediation needs of the target populations.
- Conducting orientations for qualified participants to describe regional labor market opportunities, employer partners, and program requirements and expectations.
- Eliminating temporal and instructional barriers have been minimized or eliminated.

Each PACE program is actively supporting and developing career pathways and bridge curriculum that can be leveraged by the core partners with the following goals:

- The articulation of courses and modules, the mapping of programs within career pathways, and establishment of bridges between credit and noncredit programs.
- The integration and contextualization of basic skills education and skills training. This process shall provide for seamless progressions between adult basic education and general education development programs and continuing education and credit certificate, diploma, and degree programs.
- The development of career pathways that support the attainment of industry-recognized credentials, diplomas, and degrees through stackable, modularized program delivery.

In addition to PACE, the GAP program was established to provide funding to community colleges for need-based tuition assistance to support applicants completing continuing education certificate training programs for in-demand occupations. While funds are targeting toward tuition assistance, support is also leveraged for related certificate costs including but not limited to books and materials.

H. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

H. Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials

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

It is widely acknowledged that in today's ever-evolving economic and jobs climate, improving access to post-secondary credentials is an urgent need in Iowa and across the nation. Portable and stackable credentials are essential to developing an ever-progressing and Future Ready workforce. Partly due to their open access admission policies, community colleges serve a heterogeneous population of students, from those in high school earning college credit through joint enrollment opportunities, to displaced workers seeking industry-recognized training to improve employment prospects. Iowa's community colleges are helping to build the state's talent pipeline by upskilling and recertifying the current workforce. The colleges accomplish this through a variety of program offerings, which include arts and sciences college parallel (transfer) programs designed to transfer to four-year colleges and universities; career and technical education (CTE) programs to prepare students for industry-specific careers; training and retraining programs for Iowa's businesses and industries; and a variety of adult education and noncredit courses.

Future Ready Iowa

Iowa's Future Ready Iowa initiative aims for 70 percent of Iowans to have a post-secondary credential beyond high school by 2025. The Future Ready Iowa initiative was created after Iowa received a National Governors Association grant in 2014 to develop a shared vision and strategies to improve the educational and training attainment of its citizens and the alignment of those degrees and credentials with employer demand. With Iowa's shortage of skilled workers to fill jobs in business, industry and non-profit organizations throughout the state, innovative solutions are being sought to close the skills gap through better alignment of education and workforce resources. Career Coach is a Future Ready Iowa initiative to assist job-seekers in developing a personal career path, accessing the ETPL, and improving direct contact with at-need employers.

Last Dollar Scholarship and Future Ready Grant, as noted above, are initiatives designed to engage new high school graduates and returning adults to complete high demand industry-recognized credentials in targeted programs. These funds are made available through the Iowa College Aid Commission.

Iowa also offers Gap and PACE (Pathways for Academic Careers and Employment) programming to students seeking credentials through non-credit opportunities aligned with in-demand occupations. These programs provide targeted populations with financial need, a direct pipeline to employment using employer driven academic and skills training through community college non-credit academic, career, and employment programs. Since 2013 for Gap and 2014 for PACE, these funds have been providing career pathways to those targeted populations to secure gainful, quality employment that further partnerships by linking community colleges to industry and nonprofit organizations and regional community-based resources.

Community college pathway navigators have been the anchor to the success of the PACE and Gap program funding providing wrap-around family support funding, academic counseling along with career and employment services to ensure the academic and employment success for students as they navigate their career pathway. Working directly with local and regional employers has been key to moving these students forward in their academic and employment journey.

Sector Strategies

Iowa's Unified State Plan goals include the robust development of sector strategies that engage employers in the continuous and dynamic development of programs and initiatives which are responsive to Iowa's existing and future labor-market needs.

Industry-driven, community-supported sector partnerships provide a vehicle by which local business and industry leaders are able to connect and work closely with public and private partners from trade, education, workforce, economic and community development agencies or associations. The goals of these collaborative initiatives often align closely with those of Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) or are included as a direct strategy or goal within approved Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) plans, with a specific focus on the attraction, development and retention of a skilled workforce within a given industry or sector and region or community of the state. Workforce education and training are often central to these three focal areas, with public and private partners working together to design, implement, expand and support related programs, credentials or partnerships that attract new talent by building awareness and interest, developing both the new and current workforce through industry recognized training programs and credentials of value, such as Registered Apprenticeship and Quality Pre-apprenticeship programs, and retaining through clearly designed regional career pathways, cross-training and custom training solutions.

The Core Partners will work with industry to increase these and related opportunities for all Iowans to gain the experience, skills, and credentials needed to obtain and maintain self-sustaining employment. Expanding and supporting sector strategies for in-demand industries will lead to closing critical skill gaps between Iowa's workforce and employers. The direct identification and quantification of local or regional employers' education, training, and workforce needs afforded by collaborative sector strategies and capturing those needs in an accessible and multi-tiered system will strengthen the ability of the job-seeker to connect with the appropriate employer(s). Job-seekers will be able to learn about industry recognized credentials and find opportunities to seek out employers who value their experience and accept their industry recognized credentials.

Career Pathways

Coordinated efforts will engage all Iowans in the career pathway process using innovative approaches in the delivery of career services. Key to these efforts will be the offering of a variety of career path navigation supports to enhance transition into the workforce for all Iowans. Coordinated action steps within Iowa's career pathways work will include:

- Equipping workers with skills, work-based learning opportunities, resources, accommodations and supports needed for all Iowans to secure self-sustaining employment.
- Ongoing supports so ALL Iowans can maintain self-sustaining employment and work to their fullest potential.
- Adult Education and Literacy provider engagement with community college's continuing education and career and technical education programs have established relationships with employers. This relationship building has promoted the development of Integrated Education and Training (IET) activities as an avenue to address workforce needs.

The Iowa Department of Education has provided extensive technical assistance to address IET models that have focused on in-demand industries and occupations. Reported IET activities have included healthcare, retail, and manufacturing sectors.

Career and Technical Education Joint Enrollment

In a potentially positive sign of readiness for both college and careers, the number of Iowa high school students enrolling in college-level courses has more than doubled since 2004. In academic year 2021, over 47,000 Iowa high school students were jointly enrolled in college-level courses. Of courses taken, enrollment into career and technical education (CTE) courses represented more than a third (33.7%) of these joint enrollments.

The vast majority of these college-level CTE courses are accessed by high school students through enrollment into a career academy. These career academy programs are career-oriented programs of study that link secondary CTE to a postsecondary education program through joint enrollment.

Overall, these college-level CTE course opportunities and career academy programs are helping to prepare more high school students for success in college, postsecondary training and the workforce. In fact, the number of awards conferred by Iowa community colleges to jointly enrolled students increased 15.7 percent in academic year 21' to 1,122 awards, including 241 associate degrees, 79 diplomas and 801 certificates.

Corrections Education

Iowa's community colleges are the primary point of entry for most incarcerated and returning citizens. A continuum of educational services is addressing many of the challenges faced by incarcerated and formerly incarcerated students including lack of college-readiness and supporting them through credential, degree, transfer and employment.

Correctional education programs are intended to break the cycle and reduce recidivism by providing opportunities to develop the skills required to succeed in workplaces and communities. The recidivism rate for PY 2019- 20 in Iowa was 38.7 percent. Based on the terms of an MOU and the use of shared state leadership funds, all correctional education programs are required to report on WIOA performance, except when excluded, and they are subject to Iowa's assessment policies.

Programming inside correctional facilities include access to: (1) high school credentials; (2) career and technical education credentials to equip inmates with the occupational skills needed to find and maintain employment; and (3) postsecondary education credentials to close access, achievement, and completion gaps. In 2022, four of Iowa's community colleges have been approved and either are currently offering or will be offering postsecondary education through the Second Chance Pell to incarcerated individuals.

Iowa's community colleges that share the service areas for federal, state and local correctional facilities enrolled 1,101 unique individuals during AY 2020-21 in adult education and literacy (AEL) services. AEL programs pre- and post-test participants after a minimum number of instructional hours. Without a post-test, measuring gains would be impossible. Of those post-tested, 41.3 percent made an educational functioning level gain. Additionally, in AY 2020-21, 2,981 unduplicated individuals enrolled in post secondary education and registered for 23,144 credits. Courses offered ranged from robotics to agriculture with the majority of enrollment in a Liberal Arts and Sciences program. In this academic year, issues with access to course work and distance education were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the students enrolled, there was a 76% (17,560) credit completion rate.

Research has shown that access to correctional education and training can boost post-release employability, reduce recidivism, and, by extension, improve stability and mobility for the families and communities most affected. In response to the economic and human effects of incarceration, Iowa is beginning to take steps toward improved transition services, and greater interagency coordination. Iowa will pursue grant opportunities that focus on correctional education and connections to employment upon reentry with an emphasis on optimizing and increasing access to post-secondary education.

I. Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies.

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

Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA)

The IEDA has representation on the State Workforce Development Board in accordance with Iowa Code §84A.1A, ensuring coordination between economic development and workforce activities.

IEDA continues to coordinate four workforce training programs that deliver customized training to grow a skilled and talented workforce for Iowa business, including the:

- Iowa Industrial New Jobs Training Act (Iowa Code Chapter 260E) which assists businesses creating new positions with new employee training. Eligible businesses may be new to Iowa, expanding the Iowa workforce or relocating to the state.
- Iowa Jobs Training Act (Iowa Code Chapter 260F) which provides job training services to current employees of eligible businesses. The program assists businesses in developing their current workforce in order to remain economically competitive.
- Accelerated Career Education Program Act (Iowa Code Chapter 260G) which is designed to provide businesses with an enhanced, skilled workforce and assists Iowa's community colleges to either establish or expand programs that train individuals in the occupations most needed by Iowa businesses.
- Iowa Apprenticeship Act (Iowa Code Chapter 15B) which was created as a way to increase the number of registered apprentices in Iowa by assisting eligible apprenticeship programs in the form of training grants.

The State's Labor Market Information (LMI) System provides the foundation for workforce analysis, research and strategic planning. The LMI Division within Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) maintains a dynamic web site https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/labor-market-information-division that provides data and information for individuals, workforce professionals, researchers, and economic development professionals and also produces customizable query tools using Tableau. Reports are available by region and local area such as workforce analysis reports, including employment and industry/occupation projections that will enable workforce partners to plan and coordinate their efforts more effectively. The Iowa Sector Partnership Leadership Council will use the most relevant and up to date labor market information to expand and develop appropriate and employer driven sector partnerships in the region most in need.

Statewide Laborshed Study Initiative is a joint initiative between IWD and IEDA to ensure that stakeholders in the workforce development system have up-to-date, common data for planning purposes, including local workforce development plans under WIOA, local economic

development business recruitment/retention data and the effective implementation of individual programs and initiatives such as the WIOA core programs.

Iowa's Laborshed Study was developed by the University of Northern Iowa in 1998 to identify and estimate labor availability based upon documented commuting patterns into a community. IWD took on the responsibility of conducting the Laborshed Study in 2001.

The Laborshed labor market information data generated aids local economic and workforce development officials in their facilitation of industry expansion/recruitment and their service to existing industry in the area. This labor supply study gives employers, economic development entities, workforce development entities, education professionals, students, and workers insight into the availability and characteristics of their local labor force which is not captured in other traditional LMI data.

Between 2001 and June 2018, local economic development organizations, community colleges, and local utility partners were responsible for approximately 25 percent of the total cost incurred for each Laborshed Study. The remaining 75 percent was covered by IWD. This partial fee model made it difficult for many small and rural communities/counties to purchase a Laborshed Study for their local area. It also created inconsistencies in the geography and timeliness of data collection and study completion. While a statewide Laborshed Study has been conducted each year with financial assistance from the IEDA, due to the fee for service model on the individual basis, local and regional Laborshed Studies were not run in a systematic fashion as each local area chose if and when to complete a study. Starting July 2018, in partnership with IEDA, IWD will begin conducting at least one Laborshed Study in each of Iowa's 99 counties at no cost to the local or regional economic development organizations.

The Laborshed data updates is done on a two-year cycle. IWD will complete studies for approximately half (51 counties) the state in state fiscal year 2019 and complete the remaining half (48) in state fiscal year 2020. This biennial rotation will continue year after year.

Even though the Laborshed Studies is 100 percent funded by IEDA and IWD, IWD's LMI Division continues to collaborate with local economic development officials to promote data collection, determine the most effective methods of delivering the resulting information, and presenting to local stakeholders.

The Laborshed Study begins with a survey of a community's employers. IWD asks employers (with 5+ employees) to provide a count of their employees by their residential ZIP code. In partnership with local workforce and economic development contacts, IWD attempts to ensure the participation of each community's largest employers (in terms of employment level) in the survey. After a sufficient response is achieved, IWD aggregates the data and through the use of geographic mapping software displays the Laborshed (commuting) area, by ZIP code, of a community's workforce. Once the Laborshed area has been documented, IWD contracts with a third party vendor to conduct a telephone survey alongside an in-house online survey of individuals (18 to 64 years of age) living within the documented Laborshed area.

This survey consists of questions covering numerous labor force related topics including but not limited to: employment status, likeliness to change/accept employment, occupation, industry, current/desired wages, current/desired benefits, education/training, commuting, and job search methods. Prior to both the employer survey and the residential telephone survey IWD works with local economic developers to coordinate the publication of a news release in the community and surrounding areas to improve survey participation and ease residents' concerns of possible phone scamming in the area.

When the residential survey is completed, IWD projects the results upon the local population using estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau. The results of the community's and region's Laborshed Study is shared with local stakeholders and are often presented to local economic development, workforce development stakeholders including local employers.

This initiative allows the entire state of Iowa to have up-to-date data for planning purposes, regardless of the size or location of the community, and will consequently improve the ability to have data-based planning for economic and workforce development in the state. In particular, it will better position Local Workforce Development Boards to perform more effective strategic planning with local workforce development plans based on accurate and up-to-date regional analysis.

Additionally, the Future Ready Iowa Coordinator ensures there is a coordinated effort across partner agencies and programs, including the WIOA core programs and the IEDA, to help Iowans meet the goals set out in Future Ready Iowa.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Iowa Workforce partners will work with emerging industries to ensure that they have access to quality, skilled workers for their businesses.

B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

See the following sections.

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

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

Labor Market Information (LMI) Division

The Labor Market Information (LMI) Division of Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) website, www.iowalmi.gov, provides data and information related to Iowa's labor market, economy and workforce. The website contains, but is not limited to, information about the following areas: wages employment; unemployment; industry and occupational employment; industry and occupational projections; unemployment insurance statistics; Laborshed Studies; employer surveys; education outcomes; career information; and other labor market related publications.

Information is organized by topic (i.e. indictors, industry, occupation and research) and uses Tableau to provide and display data for users such as job seekers; employers, IWD staff; economic developers; academic institutions; government agencies; nonprofit organizations; legislators; grant writers; labor organizations; consultants and other partners in an informative manner.

Career Coach

Career Coach is a Future Ready Iowa initiative in collaboration with IWD, IDOE, and the community colleges. Career Coach provides career pathways by region, access to the ETPL, and many other features to assist job-seekers in online career exploration. It provides users with local occupational level wages, industry trends, employment projections (growth/decline), occupational tasks, skills, education/training needed by occupation, where to find types of education/training, demographic data, and current job postings for employers in Iowa. The tool also includes a career assessment tool (short and long versions), military occupation crosswalk, career cluster, and resume builder.

Career Coach brings together federal, state and private sources under one simple-to-use on-line tool for anyone looking to explore career options by providing them the information to make career decisions. The data sources include the US Department of Commerce, US Department of Labor, US Department of Education, US Census Bureau, Employment & Training Administration and Careerbuilder.

Iowa Workforce Development

The Iowa*WORKS* data management system encompasses case management, data collection, reporting, labor exchange, LMI, etc. and is used in all of the AJCs among several partners to track customers and activities in one common database. Iowa*WORKS* is an intuitive, customer centered, WIOA compliant system which allows customers, both job-seekers and employers, as well as AJC staff enhanced access to workforce services and delivery. The system provides a coordinated method to manage multiple programs, while streamlining services to customers. The communication center allows AJC staff to communicate with job-seekers and employers. Appointments and notifications can be easily shared within the system ensuring continuous accessibility for individuals when accessing programs and services.

Job seekers have the have virtual access to enter work registrations, resumes, and explore careers from their homes, or by visiting an AJC. Similarly, employers can easily enter job order information virtually at their own convenience. Iowa will be adding the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) module which offers Employer Outreach Specialists, Business Services Representatives (BSRs), and other workforce system staff a full range of tools and resources to actively manage employer recruitment efforts. The CRM module can be a tool to convert potential business customers into marketing leads in order to provide assistance to these businesses and track the profile details they manage on behalf of the potential employer. The online survey feature will be beneficial in soliciting feedback from users and enhanced data tracking.

Iowa is planning to add a module for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training. Like many of the other modules, individuals can register and apply for services, track activities and services, receive notifications and schedule appointments.

Iowa*WORKS* will also allow access for all Vocational Rehabilitation and Department for the Blind staff. Once complete, all business engagement activities across the core partners will be captured in a single case management system, improving the coordination of services and reporting of employer data. Referrals across core programs will also be completed in the Iowa*WORKS* system; all referrals will be tracked and resulted within the system ensuring no customer falls through the cracks. This system improves Iowa's ability to track co-enrollment and increase the effectiveness of integrated resource teams.

Iowa Department of Education provides assessment and accountability services through a web based data system called TOPSpro (Tracking of Programs and Students) Enterprise for Title II case management and performance tracking. TOPSpro is a computerized database designed for program administrators in adult education, including statewide assessments and related accountability software to accurately measure progress, mastery of skills, and competencies needed to both complete, and advance one or more Educational Functioning Level (EFL). It automates scoring, collects student demographic data, tracks agency and individual student performance, generates reports, and aggregates data for state and federal year-end reports. Features of the data system and relevant processes include the following:

- Used for collecting information for the purposes of programmatic and annual reporting.
- Each local program uses TOPSpro Enterprise (TE®) that enables local providers to have immediate access to the data for targeting instruction for continuous program improvement.
- Local data is submitted monthly and annually to the IDOE for monitoring and aggregation into state and federal reports.
- TE® records each student's goals on entering a class (via the TE® entry record), as well as their educational outcomes (via the TE® update record).
- Assessments are designed to measure student performance through a checklist of competencies mastered. eTests are automatically loaded in TE® for reference and to drive program decisions.
- Exit tests for various instructional levels are provided and certain funding streams require that these tests be administered regularly to document student progress.
- The data collected consists of measurable skill gains in the following programs areas: English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), and Adult Basic Education (ABE).

IDOE intends to use the same data system to meet program-specific requirements for collecting and reporting data for WIOA performance reporting requirements. This reporting structure is based on National Reporting System (NRS) guidelines, which are retained under WIOA. The

area of change for the IDOE pertains specifically to the addition of UI wage record data as part of the reporting structure.

The data collection process begins with local providers inputting the data at each site during the program year. Data collected from AEFLA funded agencies is aggregated at a statewide level through the web based portal. The annual data aggregation and data validation begins July 1 of each year. The purpose of the annual data validation process is to compile state and federal year-end reports due to ED:DAEL annually, December 31.

Performance measures include all elements in the federal NRS reports, including enrollment, attendance hours, completion of an EFL and advancement of one or more levels, separation before completion, and persistence within a level. Additional performance measures include attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and placement, retention, or completion of postsecondary education, training, or unsubsidized employment or career advancement.

Iowa's Title II has developed on-line tools to assess the enrollment rates of students enrolled in ABE, ASE and ESL respectively monthly and is publishing outcome data on attainment of equivalency diplomas.

Research is conducted on several adult education-related topics from which analysis and report are produced. Below are the following products:

- Condition of Community Colleges Report
- Annual Condition of Secondary Career and Technical Education
- Analysis of the Economic Impact and Return on Investment of Education
- Fall Enrollment Report
- Iowa Skilled Workforce and Job Creation Fund Reports
- Joint Enrollment Report

B. Data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including those present in one-stop centers[1].

Core partners in Iowa realize there are currently significant data system limitations. The main barrier to joint case management is the inability to share data through a streamlined process due to the lack of a common participant identification method. Information collected is not aligned across core partners due to statutory regulations (e.g., Adult Education does not require a Social Security Number to receive services). Currently, core partners collect their data using their respective state agency systems. There is currently no ability to track participants across programs and no mechanism to identify when a participant has exited from all applicable WIOA core programs.

To begin to overcome these challenges, Iowa intends to explore a common intake system that will:

- customize and expand the existing intake system used in Iowa*WORKS* offices that assists in determining program eligibility and promotes co-enrollment;
- assign a unique identifier to each program participant that will be used to link participants in each of the partner data systems;
- gather required reporting elements common across all partners;
- create a common portal by which customers may access services;
- allow participants to self-refer to partner agencies and partner agencies to refer participants and track referral follow-up and outcomes; and
- create a staff dashboard with the status of each program participant and shares data across agencies.

The Iowa core partners have long-standing data sharing agreements in place whereby the agencies are able to request data matching of the Unemployment Insurance Wage Record Data for performance reporting. WIOA continues to motivate the agencies to look closely at the long-term agreements and determine if changes need to be made to accommodate new and innovative methods of sharing data. The agreements facilitate cross-program access to data about common participants while minimizing duplicative systems costs. This data sharing agreement allows for the sharing of agency data via the newly established State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) agreement.

The core partners are actively reviewing technology interoperability solutions. While Iowa does not use a fully integrated data system, it is nevertheless committed to pursuing alignment and integration of participant and performance data across core programs with the goal of providing effective and efficient services that lead to the participants' employment as quickly as possible. Core partners have been working to identify and address any data collection gaps through the following actions:

- Core partners have adjusted their own data systems in response to performance accountability requirements under WIOA and based on Federal guidance as it became available. Partners have identified data collection methods and standards that are best practices that could be explored for use by other core program partners (e.g., how to account for participants who lack a Social Security number when reporting performance outcomes);
- Core partners have researched mechanisms for facilitating smart referrals, and allowing core program partners to share information directly with each other's systems; and
- Core partners could review prototype dashboards to track individual agency and aggregate performance data across programs.

Iowa will continue to use existing web-based interfaces that integrate data via API tools when applicable. Real-time access to workforce development resources for individuals, businesses and workforce professionals if available, and shareable in user-friendly formats is invaluable for developing better customer service. Ongoing discussions include how to further integrate the various program data systems to enhance program alignment and service delivery.

Iowa Workforce Development

Data collection begins immediately at the point a customer registers in the Iowa*WORKS* system. When they complete the registration process by providing basic information, they become a reportable individual for Federal reporting purposes. As an individual transitions to participant level services, data continues to be collected from the time they become reportable, through their fourth quarter after exit. Joint case management and data collection between programs is expected to improve with the implementation of the Iowa*WORKS* system.

Iowa*WORKS* reporting features allow for improved access to current data in real-time and allows State and AJC staff to make data-driven decisions and easily manage the data. Reports are available to be generated statewide, locally and at the individual customer level. Users can create reports to see who is using the system and the methods in which they are accessing the system, the types of services being utilized, statistical data regarding job orders, job seekers, demographics and resumes, and case management data regarding the number of applications entered, enrollments, caseloads, exits, outcomes, measurable skill gains, and credentials. These reports can assist staff in managing their case load and predicting performance indicators in local areas.

Data sharing agreements with partner programs are being explored to ensure comprehensive data collection. Data collection policies and procedures are being refined to ensure that the integrity of the data being collected aligns with the requirements of the WIOA compliant Iowa*WORKS* system.

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

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

In Iowa, co-enrollment is encouraged across all programs to ensure customers are provided the most applicable and benefits and the best services possible to ensure positive outcomes. A co-enrollment procedure is in place for Title I programs, Title III, JVSG, Ticket to Work, MSFW, Returning Citizens, Trade, PROMISE JOBS (Iowa's TANF E&T program) and Registered Apprenticeship. The goal is to streamline service delivery, reduce duplication, enhance collaboration and provide value-added customer services. While Title IV is not currently on the same case management system as other Titles, Title IV has been an active partner in discussions regarding the potential of a change in case management systems. Title IV has also been actively involved in the sharing of information and the development of strategies to ensure data is shared and service delivery continues to be streamlined. Until information can be shared across all Titles, local areas utilize co-enrollment processes that work best for that specific area. These co-enrollment processes are identified in the local plans.

Iowa's core partner programs have worked together to establish state policies that support the implementation of Iowa's One-Stop Delivery System. Administration and Governance policies

were drafted by the core partners and approved by the State Workforce Development Board in September 2019. This included policy 1.4.10 Memorandum of Understanding which outlines requirements to promote integrated service delivery. It also requires that MOUs must include how the infrastructure of the system will be funded through an IFA. Further work on the development and implementation of IFA policy will be focused on during PY22 which will further support the strategies of the state plan.

Each LWDB has representation from Title II, Title III, Title IV, as well as higher education entities. This has increased the collaboration between the core programs and other IowaWORKS center partners to implement statewide strategies of sector partnerships, career pathways and work-based learning across Iowa's workforce delivery system. Policy 1.4.3.3 Local Planning provides the guidelines for engaging in local planning as well as completion of these plans.

Additionally, Iowa has recently jointly developed One-Stop Certification procedures and guidance which the State Workforce Development Board approved during their May 2022 meeting. The certification system is set to launch October 1, 2022, with a deadline of September 30, 2023, for all comprehensive and affiliate centers to be certified. State core partners are prepared to provide technical assistance to LWDBs and stakeholders throughout the certification process.

3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

A. State Agency Organization

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

<u>Iowa Workforce Development</u>

Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) is the designated state workforce agency in Iowa and is responsible for administering the WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, as well as the Title III Wagner-Peyser Act. Additionally, IWD administers the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), and the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker advocacy system under Title III. In coordination with the Division of Labor Services and the Division of Workers' Compensation, the department is comprised of the following areas of services:

-
    - Administrative Services Division
    - American Job Centers (AJC) Division
    - Workforce Services Division
    - Information Technology Division
    - Unemployment Insurance Division (including Appeals and Labor Market Information)
    - Division of Labor Services
    - Division of Workers' Compensation

Director Beth Townsend has general supervision over the various areas within IWD. The director prepares, administers, and controls the budget of the department and its divisions along with Rod Roberts who is the Division of Labor Workers' Compensation Commissioner.

Administrative Services Division

The Administrative Services Division provides a variety of services to keep the agency operating smoothly and to assist with the upkeep of the Iowa*WORKS* offices (AJCs). Duties of this division include: human resources, building and grounds management, printing services, accounting and financial reporting.

American Job Centers (AJC) Division

In conjunction with local workforce partners and Local Area workforce development boards and service providers, the AJC Division is responsible for the delivery of various state and federally funded employment and training services at the local level. The Iowa*WORKS* offices and affiliate sites provide a variety of services to meet the workforce and workplace needs of job seekers, dislocated workers, unemployed persons, and Iowa businesses through partnerships of state and local service providers. They provide career counseling, assessments, workshops, job training, and assistance to all populations with an emphasis on special needs populations. Iowa's Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) services and Re-Entry programs, including Federal Bonding, are also administered from this Division.

Workforce Services Division (WFS)

The Workforce Services division administers the following employment and training programs for the state of Iowa:

- WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs
- WIOA National Dislocated Worker Grants
- WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser)
    - Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Advocacy System
    - Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)
    - Foreign Labor Certification (FLC)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Act
- Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)
- Registered Apprenticeship
- PROMISE JOBS (IWD is the subcontractor from the Iowa Department of Human Services)

Administration of these grants and programs includes establishing state policy and procedures for all programs, providing training and technical assistance to all stakeholders for the programs, and conducting monitoring and oversight off all grants/programs. The WFS division acts as the liaison between the state and our federal and local partners, and completes and issues all required state and federal reporting for the above grants.

Information Technology Division

The Information Technology Division within IWD helps develop, maintain, and manage all of the necessary information technology services utilized by both IWD employees and customers

using IWD's variety of services. This includes a recent modernization of the case management system used for federally funded workforce programs such as WIOA and Trade Adjustment Assistance.

Unemployment Insurance Division

The Unemployment Insurance Division collects unemployment insurance taxes, maintains the Iowa Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund and determines eligibility for unemployment insurance to make payments to eligible jobless Iowans. In addition, the Unemployment Insurance appeals unit has administrative law judges who hear and decide administrative appeals regarding unemployment insurance benefits. Four departments comprise the Unemployment Insurance Division: UI Benefits, UI Tax, UI Integrity and UI Appeals. Each bureau serves an important role in ensuring Iowa's unemployment insurance program is administered efficiently and with integrity. Oversight of the Appeals and Labor Market Information departments is maintained within this Division as well.

Labor Market Information Department

Under the supervision of the Unemployment Insurance Division Administrator, the Labor Market Information (LMI) department collects, analyzes and prepares a wide array of labor market data including the unemployment rate, employment levels, industry and occupational statistics, wages, projections, trends and other workforce characteristics for the State of Iowa as a whole as well as for other defined geographic areas within the State. It is the mission of this department to produce and deliver information in a reliable and timely manner in order to inform data-driven decisions for business, career, educational programming and economic development.

Division of Labor Services

The office of the Labor Commissioner was created by the General Assembly in 1884. The Division of Labor administers a variety of services to employers, contractors, and other entities involved in creating and managing workplace safety. The following services are managed by the Division of Labor:

- Amusement Parks and Rides Inspection
- Asbestos Abatement Licensing
- Boiler Inspection
- Child Labor
- Contractor Registration
- Elevators and Escalators
- Hazardous Chemical Required Reporting
- Minimum Wage and Wage Collection
- Iowa Occupational Safety and Health Consultation and Education
- Iowa Occupational Safety and Health Enforcement
- Federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) Recordkeeping

Division of Workers' Compensation

The Workers' Compensation Law was enacted by the General Assembly in 1913. The law provides medical services and wage replacement benefits to workers who sustain injuries

arising out of their employment. The Workers' Compensation Law is administered by the Division of Workers' Compensation Commissioner. Iowa was one of the first states to provide benefits for injuries, occupational diseases, and occupational hearing losses sustained by workers. Injuries resulting in death, permanent disability, or temporary disability must be reported to the commissioner. If a compensation agreement cannot be reached, the employee may request a hearing before a deputy commissioner that covers the judicial district where the injury occurred. Decisions are reviewed by the commissioner and may be appealed to the district court and Supreme Court.

Iowa Workforce Development Organizational Chart is attached at Appendix 2.

Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program (Title II)

The Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) works with the Iowa State Board of Education to provide support, supervision, and oversight for the state education system that includes public elementary and secondary schools, nonpublic schools that receive state accreditation, area education agencies (AEAs), community colleges, and teacher preparation programs. Iowa's adult education and literacy programs assist adults in becoming literate and obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency, assists adults who are parents in obtaining the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children, and assists adults in completing a secondary school education. This chart is designed to reflect the line of authority from the authorized state official signing the state plan extension to the state director for adult education. The line of authority goes from the state director for adult education to the bureau chief of the Bureau of Community Colleges to the division administrator of the Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation to the Director and Executive Officer of the State Board of Education. The Director is the authorized State Official who has the authority to sign Iowa's Adult Education and Literacy State Plan.

Adult Education and Literacy Organizational Chart is attached at Appendix 2.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The mission of the Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services: We provide expert, individualized services to Iowans with disabilities to achieve their independence through successful employment and economic support.

Disability Determination Services Bureau is responsible for determining the eligibility of Iowa residents who apply for disability benefits under the Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income programs. Rehabilitation Services Bureau assists eligible individuals to become employed. Persons receiving vocational rehabilitation services have a wide range of disabilities. Most offices are already co-located in the One-Stop Centers across Iowa. Vocational Rehabilitation is a State-Federal program. The Federal share is 78.7 percent; the State share is 21.3 percent. The Rehabilitation Services Bureau has 14 area offices and 32 service units. Administrative Services Bureau provides support to the other elements of the Division through the functions of fiscal accounting, budgeting and payroll; statistical records, reporting and closed case file control; personnel management and collective bargaining

administration; purchasing and property control; information systems and the physical plant management of the Jessie Parker State Office Building. The Office of the Administrator is responsible for overall administration of the statewide programs. The administrator determines program scope and policies, promotes public interest and acceptance, directs budget funds, develops program plans and provides for staff development, research and evaluation. Under the umbrella of the administrator is the State Rehabilitation Council.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services Organizational Chart is attached at Appendix 2.

Iowa Department for the Blind

The Iowa Department for the Blind works to educate and inform businesses, family members, service providers, advocacy groups, community and service organizations, as well as, the general public about the true capabilities of individuals who are blind or have low vision. IDB actively seeks ongoing communication, interaction, and collaboration with all constituencies. The Department for the Blind believes that with the right skills and opportunities a blind or have low vision person can and should be competitively employed and live within their community of choice. Iowa Department for the Blind collaborates with many stakeholders to provide opportunities for independence and employment throughout the state. IDB provides employment services to Iowans who are blind or have low vision who are looking for a job or want to retain or advance in their current career. Its library features one of the world's most comprehensive collections of reading materials in alternative formats (e.g., Braille and digital audio). The Department continues to utilize innovative methods and technology to provide quality services to eligible individuals. The administrative rules define the specific standards, criteria and guidelines that govern the Department's operations. The administrative rules are based on the legislation defined in the Iowa Code. The rules are created through a process of confirmation by the Department, the public and legislative rules committees.

Iowa Department for the Blind Organizational Chart is attached at Appendix 2.

B. STATE BOARD

See the following sections.

I. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

i. Membership roster

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

Voting Members:

- Kim Reynolds, State of Iowa, Governor
- Waylon Brown, Senate Appointed by President, State Representative
- Dave Deyoe, House of Representatives Appointed by Speaker of the House, State Representative
- Beth Townsend, Iowa Workforce Development, Director

- Dr. Ann Lebo, Iowa Department of Education, Director or Designee
- Emily Wharton, Iowa Department for the Blind, Director or Designee
- Daniel Tallon, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Administrator IVRS or Designee
- Lynn Schreder (Chair), KHI Solutions, LLC, Business
- Jay Iverson (Vice-Chair), Home Builders Association of Iowa, Business
- Alicia Stafford, Wellman Dynamics, Business
- Amy Larsen, United Equipment Accessories, Business
- Becky Jacobsen, Smithfield Foods, Business
- John (Jack) Hasken, Jackson Manufacturing, Inc., Business
- LuAnn Scholbrock, Coloff Digital, Business
- Daren Westercamp, Ag Leader Technology, Business
- Kelly Barrick, The Private Bank, Business
- Teresa Hovell, Vermeer, Business
- Curt Strouth, City of Sheldon, Business
- Jessica Dunker, Iowa Restaurant Association, Business
- Mary Landius, Lisle Corp., Business
- Ofelia Rumbo, Wells Ag Supply, Business
- Alexander Severn, Capitol Data Analytics, Small Business
- Brad Elliott, Podium Ink, Small Business
- Deb Mauricio, Smithfield, Business Carrie Duncan, International Association of Machinists Local 1010, Labor
- Rich Kurtenbach, Labor Organization: Construction Industry, Labor
- Charles Wishman, Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, Labor
- Andy Roberts, Plumbers and Steamfitters Local #33, Labor
- Jason Shanks, UA Local 33, Joint Labor – Management Apprenticeship Program
- Jayson Henry, The Well, Community Based
- Vacant, Community Based
- Quentin Hart, City of Waterloo, City Elected
- Nancy McDowell, O'Brien County Board of Supervisors, County Elected

Ex Officio, Nonvoting Members:

- William Dotzler, State of Iowa Senate, Minority Leader Appointee
- Kirsten Running-Marquardt, State of Iowa House of Representatives, Minority Leader Appointee

- Drew Conrad, University of Northern Iowa, Board of Regents Designee
- John Smith, Drake University, Association of Independent Colleges Appointee
- Kristie Fisher, Iowa Valley Community College, Association of Community College Presidents Designee
- Rita Grimm, Iowa Economic Development Authority (IDEA)
- Kyra Hawley, Iowa Department on Aging (IDA)
- Beth Skinner, Iowa Department of Corrections (DOC)
- Kelly Garcia, Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS)
- Mary Cannon-James, Largest Statewide Labor Organization for State Employees American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Council 66
- Vacant, Labor Organization: Construction Industry
- Vacant, Labor Organization: Manufacturing Industry

II. BOARD ACTIVITIES

ii. Board Activities

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

As prescribed in WIOA, the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) is an integral part of the success of the workforce system in Iowa. In the Fall of 2019, the Iowa SWDB underwent retraining efforts to ensure all existing and new members have a robust understanding of their roles and responsibilities to ensure each member has the tools necessary to be an active, effective member of the board. Training topics included: an overview of the workforce system and governance under WIOA; membership categories and roles and responsibilities of SWDB members; an overview of the local workforce system, including local workforce development boards and how the state and local levels work together within the workforce system; and high impact board strategies, including sector partnership and career pathways. Additional training is planned to take place annually to expand upon the information received at these trainings. New member training is also planned to ensure new members have the tools they need to be effective members of the SWDB. After completing training in the fall of 2019, SWDB members also participated in an Operational Planning Session, designed to further build understanding of the value and indicators of a strategic, high functioning SWDB and identify priorities for moving the Board to a strategic role. Both the training and planning sessions were extremely successful and the Iowa SWDB is poised to begin 2020 with energized members who are motivated to move forward the strategic vision of the workforce system in Iowa.

As the designated state workforce agency in Iowa, Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) has served as staff to the board, performing administrative functions for the SWDB. IWD will continue to serve in this capacity until the SWDB is able to hire dedicated staff, a task that is hoped to be accomplished in the Spring of 2020.

The State WDB has four required standing committees per Iowa Code which include: Operational; Policies, Procedures, and Practices; Youth; and Disability Access. The SWDB has

established two additional standing committees dedicated to Ex-Offender Re-Entry and Minority Unemployment and Outreach efforts.

The Operational Standing Committee should provide information and assist with operational and other issues related to the state workforce development system and will be tasked with the following:

- Coordination and staffing of activities of the State Board.
- Facilitation and coordination of all research, reports data, analysis, and recommendations associated with the operations team and its purposes.
- Provision of regular updates to the Workforce Development Board on the status of activities of the operations team and the progress made in aligning programs pursuant to the purposes of the board.

The Policies, Procedures and Practices Standing Committee should provide recommendations regarding policies, procedures, and proven and promising practices regarding workforce development programs, services, and activities. In the fall of 2019, the Directors of the state agencies tasked with administering the WIOA Core Programs (Titles I - IV), created and implemented a WIOA Core Partner Working Group, a functional partnership comprised of representatives from the agencies overseeing key workforce programs. The Working Group will be charged with collaborating to carry out the vision and strategy established by the Governor and the SWDB by developing joint policy and an integrated approach for monitoring, program oversight/support and technical assistance for local service design and delivery. Moving forward, Iowa will work to integrate the WIOA Core Partner Working Group with the Policies, Procedures and Practices standing committee.

The Youth Standing Committee provides information and assistance to local workforce development boards with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth.

The Disability Access Standing Committee's mission is to address issues relating to providing workforce services to individuals with disabilities, including (but not limited to):

- Issues relating to compliance with applicable state and federal nondiscrimination laws regarding the provision of programmatic and physical access to the services, programs, and activities of the state workforce development system.
- Appropriate training for staff on providing supports for or accommodations to, and finding employment opportunities for, individuals with disabilities.

Goals of the Disability Access Standing Committee is to lead a statewide initiative to:

- Ensure that Iowa's one-stop delivery system meets all accessibility requirements for individuals with disabilities under the ICRA, ADA, and WIOA; and
- Increase accessibility for individuals with disabilities to the programs, services, and activities of Iowa's one-stop delivery system.
- Continuously improve for individuals with disabilities the provision of services within the one-stop delivery system.
- Improve opportunities for individuals with disabilities in competitive integrated employment.

Each Local Workforce Development Board has been tasked with creating a Local Disability Access Committee to work with the State Disability Access Committee as part of the statewide initiative.

The State Disability Access Committee will provide direction, guidance, and technical assistance to the Local Disability Access Committees to help meet the goals of the statewide initiative.

The Ex-Offender Reentry Standing Committee is focused on aligning efforts by State and local entities to give ex-offenders a better opportunity to start a new career and find self-sustaining employment to help them successfully re-enter their communities.

The Minority Unemployment and Outreach Standing Committee was created to address disparities in the minority unemployment rate in Iowa. According to the latest Census information, Iowa's statewide unemployment rate was 3.9 percent, while African Americans had an unemployment rate of 14.2 percent, Native Americans had a rate of 11 percent, Asian Americans had a rate of 5.3 percent (other pacific islanders had a rate of 13.6 percent) and Hispanic Americans had a rate of 8.1 percent for the same time period.

Former State Representative Wayne Ford is credited with bringing this issue to the State Workforce Development Board and helping in the development of the group's goals and agenda. The goal of the subcommittee is clear and measurable: to reduce unemployment in minority communities by five percent (or to the state average) in five years. Four counties have been identified as pilot communities: Polk, Dubuque, Black Hawk and Pottawattamie.

These counties were selected based on having high concentrations of minority residents and unemployment rates. Listening tours were held, which provided opportunities for members and leaders of the communities to gather a broad perspective and identify connections and influences within communities. A strategic plan is being developed that aligns with the Future Ready Iowa Alliance's recommendations to the Governor. To meet the goal of the Future Ready Iowa initiative, all Iowans need to be able to obtain the education and soft skills necessary to take advantage of the employment opportunities available in Iowa.

Currently, the SWDB does not have dedicated staff and the lead state workforce agency, IWD, has performed its administrative functions. However, Iowa is exploring options to provide the board a full-time Executive Director to support the work of the board. All information related to the SWDB can be found at https://www.iowawdb.gov.

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

A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE PROGRAMS

A. Assessment of Core Programs

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

The state agencies responsible for each of the core programs outlined in program specific areas constantly assesses performance accountability measures at the state, regional and local levels as required by each core program. To ensure that program partners are well positioned to meet the performance accountability requirements of WIOA, a working group on performance accountability focused on coordinating core partners to ensure that systems have the capacity to collect and report required new and updated data elements under WIOA, as well as the capacity to track aggregate data for performance indicators applicable to all four core partners.

The core programs will continue to work with the working group to establish updated procedures to negotiate performance benchmarks as applicable. The state will develop strategies for aligning technology and data systems, and to evaluate common performance outcomes (including the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs by local areas). One potential tool to support that assessment is a dashboard to aggregate data for all core programs. The working group could explore the logistics such a dashboard, if practical, will provide as a high-level view of each core program's performance and help identify the need for technical assistance or adjustments. Meanwhile, the state will continue to work to accurately reflect the hard work that the local areas are performing in serving Iowans.

Under the provisions of WIOA Title II - Adult Education and Literacy - each of the local workforce areas are required to review, not approve, the Adult Education competitive applications for Adult Education and Literacy federal funding through the Iowa Department of Education (IDOE). The local workforce areas will review if there is alignment between the submitted Adult Education application and the local plan for the workforce area. The information gathered from the review will be used to evaluate alignment and develop ways to improve alignment between Adult Education and other core and required partners.

The WIOA performance accountability measures in Section 116 will be used to assess the effectiveness of programs and service providers statewide and ensure continuous improvement in the service delivery system. Through ongoing Core Partner Group meetings, strategies will be assessed for their performance and the implications of that performance on the workforce system overall in relationship to the overarching goals and specific program performance measures. In an effort to increase awareness, accuracy, and transparency, performance reports will be published for each region. These reports allow the state and local areas to track and monitor performance regularly. Programs are assessed on their fiscal management, program implementation - including enrollment and performance benchmark attainment, and data management. The state will target programs for technical assistance that fail to meet the state performance benchmarks. Failure to meet the performance benchmarks for two consecutive years could result in the reduction or elimination of funding.

The state's assessment of core programs, which aligns to Iowa's Performance Measures (Appendix 1), uses the U.S. Department of Labor's (USDOL) performance criteria that build in accountability through appropriate performance and outcome standards for the state and each program. Beginning with Program Year 2016 (July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017), the state utilizes the following WIOA Performance Measures for all WIOA core programs: adult, dislocated workers, youth, adult education and literacy (AEL), vocational rehabilitation and Wagner-Peyser (Wagner-Peyser will be excluded from performance measures 4 and 5. Based upon Federal guidance, some core partners are collecting and establishing baseline data to be reported for implementation at a later date.)

1. Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit: The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

For youth: Placement in Employment or Education 2nd Quarter After Exit: The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after exit from the program.

2. Employment 4th Quarter After Exit: The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.

For youth: Placement in Employment or Education 4thQuarter After Exit: The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.

3. Median Earnings: The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

4. Credential / Diploma: The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. Program participants who obtain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent shall be included in the percentage counted as meeting the criterion if such participants, in addition to obtaining such diploma or its recognized equivalent, have obtained or retained employment or are in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program.

5. Skill Gains: The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment.

6. Serving Employers: The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers with baseline years PY16-PY19 are determined by the State in two of the three following areas where baseline data is being collected:

- Retention with same employer
- Employer penetration
- Repeat business customers

Iowa will continue to negotiate performance goals in accordance with the requirements of the respective federal agencies that oversee the core programs. Following guidance issued by the DOL ETA Region 5 office on July 3, 2018, IWD will complete Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth performance negotiations with Local Areas after realignment of Local Areas is complete and within 90 days of the establishment of WIOA compliant Local Boards.

In addition to measuring annual performance outcomes, quarterly progress is measured and shared with the local areas. The local areas are able to use these reports to identify areas for improvement. Should local areas fall significantly behind on their goals, they will be required to submit a performance improvement plan outlining the steps needed to bring their performance outcomes up to standards. The core partners work with local programs to monitor performance measures consistently throughout the year and provide technical assistance to improve outcomes.

The State of Iowa assesses and ensures data integrity in data collection and reporting in a multitude of ways throughout the year to ensure quality data. This includes but is not limited to:

- Federal monitoring of programs, fiscal/financial and reporting systems
- State audits of programs, fiscal/financial and reporting systems
- Data Validation conducted annually, and quarterly beginning in PY19
- Trade Independent Review of submitted reporting quarterly
- IT Procedure and Business Unit Report Submission process reviewing data integrity a minimum quarterly
- Quality Assurance Review (regular monitoring/review of programs) conducted by State staff
- Trade Adjustment Assistance Data Integrity initiative (TAADI self-check tool)
- WIOA Title I Data Integrity initiative (WIOA Data Integrity self-check tool provided by DOL in future)
- UI Data Integrity Initiative.

Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) will conduct annual on-site monitoring reviews of each Local Workforce Development Area's administration and governance, program delivery, performance and reporting, and fiscal compliance in accordance with 2 CFR 200.

Monitoring may be conducted as standalone reviews or incorporated into other program reviews which results in promising practices, areas of concern, and findings, and identifies opportunities for technical assistance and program improvements. IWD may utilize the following monitoring techniques:

- Random sampling
- Risk assessments
- Desk reviews
- On-site visits
- Customer satisfaction surveys
- Data validation

Local Workforce Development Boards (WDB), on behalf of the Chief Lead Elected Official for the Local Workforce Development Area, are to conduct on-site monitoring of all contracted service providers at least annually or, for contracts lasting less than one year, once during each contract term for financial and programmatic compliance. Local WDBs are to submit the approved monitoring report and resolutions to IWD for review.

IVRS uses a data metrics system for analysis of program effectiveness as well as for measuring the success of a number of innovative system designs that have been implemented during the last year including but not limited to:

- Provision of pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities transitioning from school to post school outcomes
- Provision of work experience opportunities to students with disabilities in transition through the Making the Grade contracts
- Participation of the potentially eligible student population in pre-employment transition services
- Engagement of and delivery of services to the aging population through the Employment Services Contract with Iowa Department of Aging
- Infusion of systemic alignment of state agency services through the Medicaid aligned funding agreement
- Provision of strategic employment services in the healthcare industry through Project Search MOAs
- Expansion of the Assistive Technology program
- Expansion of the Benefits Planning program

B. ASSESSMENT OF ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS

B. Assessment of One-Stop Program Partner Programs

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

Workforce partner programs will be assessed using common performance measures, in addition to other required program specific performance accountability measures. Performance will be reviewed at both the state and the local area level.

TAA will implement monitoring to effectively oversee the operation and administration of the TAA program and to improve the timeliness of reported data, as well as verify the accuracy of such data. Monitoring will include a review of the administration of the TAA program, the TRA program, training, ATAA/RTAA, job search, relocation, and employment and case management services. Monitoring will identify and share best practices, identify and correct deficiencies, and identify and address staff training needs. Quarterly monitoring of random samples of 20 cases shall be audited to include two certifications. The four quarterly samples within the calendar year should cover at least four of the sixteen regions within the state.

Monitoring may result in one of more of the following outcomes:

- Strengths – Areas of notable effectiveness that may be recognized as best practices.
- Areas of Concern – Issues of quality that are not attributable to a failure to comply with policy or program requirements that may be a symptom of a larger problem or lead to non-compliance in the future. Concerns may result in recommendations from IWD and do not require a response from the region.
- Findings – Issues that can be cited as non-compliance with policy or program requirements. Findings will require a response from the local area, to include a corrective action plan, to resolve the findings.

The Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) will be monitored by the Veterans Program Coordinator (VPC) in conjunction with the local American Job Center (AJC) leadership teams. This includes the requirement that the JVSG program must maintain a 90% Individualized Career Service (ICS) rate. The ICS calculates the percentage of individualized careers services provided to eligible veterans by DVOP specialists. Individualized career services include: Career Services, Development of IEP, Objective Assessment/comprehensive skills and career assessments, Guidance and Counseling, Pre-Vocational Services (pre-employment), Staff Assisted Job Search activities, Staff Assisted Resume Prep & Assistance, Interviewing Skills, Career Guidance, Referrals to assist with barriers, Financial literacy, Work experience, Job Shadow, Internship, Apprenticeships, Skill upgrading, Tracking Progress On the Job, and Referrals to federal jobs and federal contract jobs.

The VPC shall monitor and evaluate performance data related to the JVSG program, including achieving the minimum ICS rate and to ensure the median earnings and employment rate for eligible veterans with significant barriers to employment is exceeded or met in the 2nd and 4th quarters following program exit.

The VPC shall conduct quarterly case reviews on each Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP) to ensure the DVOP is providing and documenting services appropriately. The VPC will identify and correct deficiencies, and identify and address staff training needs with the help of AJC management.

States are currently working towards developing performance measures that Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs) must meet including effectiveness in engaging employers. Once agreed upon, the VPC will work with AJC management to monitor the LVERs' performance on a quarterly basis.

The VPC will audit each AJC annually to ensure staff are aware of and correctly following Priority of Service for veterans and eligible spouses. Also, the VPC shall evaluate the level of integration of veterans services and Priority of Service for all employment and training programs within the AJC.

As the single state agency responsible for administering the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant, the Iowa Department of Human Services (IDHS) is a mandatory one-stop partner. Under TANF, states are required to meet federal work participation rates each federal fiscal year. There are two separate rates based on the number of families receiving "assistance" as defined for TANF purposes, one for all families, and one for two-parent families (both parents sharing a common child receiving assistance are in the home). The Family Investment Program (FIP) is Iowa's TANF assistance program subject to work rate requirements. Unless meeting a federal exemption, a parent or other adult in the household receiving assistance is considered to be a "work eligible" individual. Work rates are based on the percent of cases with one or more work eligibles who participate a minimum average number of hours each week in one or more of twelve "countable" activities specified by federal law. The IDHS contracts with Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) to provide case management services to work eligible individuals to facilitate their participation in these activities.

While there are other federal and state requirements and prohibitions, for purposes of this Plan, assessment of TANF as a one-stop partner is limited to the following:

(1) The appropriate and timely referral of work eligibles to IWD to receive services related to work, education and training. As part of the FIP application process, work eligible individuals are referred to IWD through an automated process that occurs daily. Procedures are in place to identify any breakdown of this process and notify the IDHS and IWD so corrective action can take place. Any issues have been few and resolved quickly.

(2) Meeting the required work participation rates each federal fiscal year is a shared responsibility of the IDHS and IWD. With the exceptions of federal fiscal years 2012-14 when the state failed the two parent rate, the state has otherwise consistently met both rates. The IDHS monitors performance through monthly internal reports indicating both rates as determined by the IDHS, and through quarterly reports from the federal TANF agency representing the official rates. Program managers from the IDHS and IWD meet on a regular basis to discuss and resolve issues.

C. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The State's assessment of core programs uses the USDOL and USDOE performance criteria to assess the effectiveness of workforce programs in the state.

Title I - Adult Program

	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2020	Program Year 2020
	Negotiated Level	Actual Level	Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Employment (2nd Q after exit)	72%	70.4%	72%	72.2%
Employment (4th Q after exit)	70%	71.6%	70%	67.5%
Median Earnings (2nd Q after exit)	$4,900	$5,432	$5,400	$5,758
Credential	67%	67.9%	67%	61.9%

	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2020	Program Year 2020
Attainment				
Measurable Skills Gains	Baseline	54.3%	44%	44.1%

Title I - Dislocated Worker Program

	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2020	Program Year 2020
	Negotiated Level	Actual Level	Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Employment (2nd Q after exit)	73%	85%	85%	81.3%
Employment (4th Q after exit)	71%	88.4%	83%	81.2%
Median Earnings (2nd Q after exit)	$6,100	$8,763	$8,400	$8,763
Credential Attainment	67%	74.9%	68%	69.9%
Measurable Skills Gains	Baseline	54.5%	30%	54.9%

Title I - Youth Program

	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2020	Program Year 2020
	Negotiated Level	Actual Level	Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Employment (2nd Q after exit)	72%	76.3%	73%	76.8%
Employment (4th Q after exit)	71%	75.3%	72%	74.9%
Median Earnings (2nd Q after exit)	Baseline	$3,421	$3,600	$3,877
Credential Attainment	59%	54.5%	59%	55.3%
Measurable Skills Gains	Baseline	46%	41%	48.9%

Title II - Adult Education and Literacy Act

	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2020	Program Year 2020
	Negotiated Level	Actual Level	Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Employment (2nd Q	50%	57.65%	50%	53.06%

	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2020	Program Year 2020
after exit)				
Employment (4th Q after exit)	44%	55.29%	44%	53.17%
Median Earnings (2nd Q after exit)	$5,475	$5,881.95	$5,500	$6,681.64
Credential Attainment	24%	86.27%	25%	77.18%
Measurable Skills Gains	46%	37.42%	46%	44.43%

Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation Program

	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2020	Program Year 2020
	Negotiated Level	Actual Level	Negotiated Level	Actual Level
Employment (2nd Q after exit)	N/A	59.5%	N/A	56.1%
Employment (4th Q after exit)	N/A	54.1%	N/A	53.6%
Median Earnings (2nd Q after exit)	N/A	#3,598	N/A	$4,022
Credential Attainment	N/A	54.8%	N/A	59.8%
Measurable Skills Gains	N/A	34.6%	38.7%	39.4%

Oversight and monitoring of programs is conducted, at a minimum annually, to include assessment of performance. Each core program provides targeted technical assistance to LWDBs and local programs to ensure performance outcomes are understood and improved progress is made where applicable. Local career planners are provided ongoing training related to case management, co-enrollment, documentation, etc., including how they affect performance outcomes. Programs continue to identify and refine service delivery strategies as needed to ensure effective case management and programmatic success. Performance results are provided to all LWDBs on a quarterly basis, and technical assistance provided as needed.

D. EVALUATION

Iowa is committed to developing an evidenced-based workforce system. Evaluation and research projects on activities under the WIOA core programs will be an ongoing process. Each core partner has considerable history in supporting Federal, State and external research and program evaluations. Each core program uses their performance data to measure success or to identify areas of improvement for the implementation of the program.

Iowa has not yet engaged in an evaluation of Title I or Title III workforce activities in the state. We understand and agree that this is an important component of WIOA and are committed to implementing an evaluation process in Iowa during this planning period. As the designated state workforce agency, IWD will utilize the Evaluation Readiness Assessment tool in the Evaluation Toolkit available on WorkforceGPS during PY22. This will enable us to identify our capacity to meet the evaluation requirements of WIOA and develop a strategy to begin evaluation in PY23.

Title II has been an active participant in recent initiatives such as Teaching Skills that Matter and Integrated Education and Training (IET) Bootcamps. These areas of focus were identified as needs for Adult Education and Literacy providers and support the State's strategies of extending a Future Ready workforce by expanding high quality instruction and IET models across Iowa.

Collectively, data sharing agreements have strengthened the ability of core partners to identify areas of coordination to support policy analysis, research and program transparency (dashboards) such as https://educateiowa.gov/ael-results. State partners have collaborated with one another with grant opportunities, and will look for ways to further establish joint efforts whether specific to grant required program evaluation studies or more broadly envisioned analysis or policy research.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

A. FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

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

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

Following the Within State Allocations options detailed in WIOA section 128(b)(2) and C.F.R. 20 § 683.120(c)(1), Iowa will utilize the formula allocation method to distribute youth funds to the local areas. All funds not reserved by the Governor in WIOA section 128(a) will be allocated using the following federally prescribed formula:

- 33 1/3% of the funds are allocated on the basis of the number of disadvantaged youth in each local area compared to the total number of disadvantaged youth in the state;
- 33 1/3% of the funds are allocated on the basis of the excess number of unemployed individuals in each local area compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state;
- 33 1/3% of the funds are allocated on the basis of the number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in each local area compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state.

- Additionally, no local area shall receive an allocation percentage that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local are for the 2 preceding fiscal years. Any amount needed to provide increased allocation(s) to the affected local areas will be obtained by ratably reducing the allocations to the other local areas.

Previously, Iowa's State Plan indicated that youth funds would be allocated to local areas using the discretionary allocation formula, however, the discretionary formula was calculated using the same data factors for excess youth poverty and excess unemployment above the state average in both the 70 percent portion and 30 percent portion of the formula. This resulted in funds being allocated to the local areas in the same amounts as if the allocation method had been used. During PY22, IWD will work with the labor marketing information division to research the data factors identified in WIOA section 128(b)(3)(B)(i) and consult with local CEOs and boards to determine if Iowa should utilize a true discretionary allocation in the future.

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),

Following the Within State Allocations options detailed in WIOA section 133(b)(2) and C.F.R. 20 § 683.120(d)(1), Iowa will utilize the formula allocation method to distribute adult funds to the local areas. All funds not reserved by the Governor in WIOA section 133(a) will be allocated using the following federally prescribed formula:

- 33 1/3% of the funds are allocated on the basis of the number of disadvantaged adults in each local area compared to the total number of disadvantaged adults in the state;
- 33 1/3% of the funds are allocated on the basis of the excess number of unemployed individuals in each local area compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state;
- 33 1/3% of the funds are allocated on the basis of the number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in each local area compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state.

Additionally, no local area shall receive an allocation percentage that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local are for the 2 preceding fiscal years. Any amount needed to provide increased allocation(s) to the affected local areas will be obtained by ratably reducing the allocations to the other local areas.

Previously, Iowa's State Plan indicated that adult funds would be allocated to local areas using the discretionary allocation formula, however, the discretionary formula was calculated using the same data factors for excess poverty and excess unemployment above the state average in both the 70 percent portion and 30 percent portion of the formula. This resulted in funds being allocated to the local areas in the same amounts as if the allocation method had been used. During PY22, IWD will work with the labor marketing information division to research the data factors identified in WIOA section 133(b)(3)(B)(i) and consult with local CEOs and boards to determine if Iowa should utilize a true discretionary allocation in the future.

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.

After allowing for Governor's reserve funds per WIOA section 133(a)(1) and (a)(2), state dislocated worker funds will be allocated using the following six factors and giving equal weight to each factor:

Insured Unemployment Data: For the most recent calendar year, the monthly average number of individuals who were receiving unemployment insurance.

Unemployment Concentrations Data: Based on the most recent calendar year, local areas with unemployment rates above the state average.

Plant Closing and Mass Layoff Data: The number of employees during the most recent calendar year that were impacted by a mass layoff or plant closing.

Declining Industries Data: During the most recent 24-months, the total number of jobs lost in the most recent four quarters as compared to the previous four quarters.

Farmer-Rancher Economic Hardship Data: During the most recent calendar year, the number of farmers/ranchers who have delinquent loans as reported by U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Long-Term Unemployment Data: For the most recent calendar year, the monthly average number of individuals who meet the definition of long-term unemployed. An individual is considered to be long-term unemployed if he/she was out of work for 15 weeks out of a continuous 26-week period of time.

For the dislocated worker allocation process, equal application of all six factors of the formula ensures that all possible economic and workforce elements that exist in each local area impact the allocation process. In this manner, factors that might favor or disadvantage certain areas are equally applied.

The federal statute also requires that a minimum funding provision be applied to the WIOA Dislocated Worker funding stream. A local area must not receive an allocation percentage for a program year that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the two preceding program years. This minimum funding provision will also apply after any local area redesignation in Iowa. Iowa will calculate the amount of funding for each new local area by applying the funding allocation amounts from the previous two program years to the new local areas to ensure the minimum funding provision is met. Any amount needed to provide increased allocation(s) to the affected local areas will be obtained by ratably reducing the allocations to the other local areas.

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

All organizations who meet the definition of "Eligible Provider" as provided in WIOA Title II—AEFLA Federal Requirements and described below are invited to submit bids. Interested Applicants shall complete an Eligible Provider Form and submit it with the proposal. The Department will review all proposals to determine eligibility as defined by the requirements below. Applicants determined to be ineligible because they did not meet the eligible provider requirements will not be considered for funding. Applicants will be notified in writing that they are ineligible and will have appeal rights as outlined in PART V, F. Refer to PART V, A for the eligibility review process.

1. Applicants may apply if they meet the definition of eligible provider. An "eligible provider" means an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in two consecutive years *(state requirement)* in providing adult education and literacy activities and may include (WIOA §203(5)):

- a local educational agency;
- a community-based organization or faith-based organization;
- a volunteer literacy organization;
- an institution of higher education;
- a public or private nonprofit agency;
- a library;
- a public housing authority;
- a nonprofit institution that is not described in any of subparagraphs (a) through (g) and has the ability to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals;
- a consortium or coalition of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described in any of subparagraphs (a) through (h);
- a partnership between an employer and an entity described in any of subparagraphs (a) through (i); and
- any other organization type, even if not specifically listed above, to apply if they meet the demonstrated effectiveness requirement (34 CFR 463 Preamble).

2. Applicants are eligible to submit bids if they have provided services to eligible individuals in the past two consecutive years *(state requirement)* in any of the areas outlined below.

An eligible provider must demonstrate past effectiveness by providing performance data on its record in improving the skills of eligible individuals, in particular, individuals who are basic skills deficient in the content domains of reading, writing, mathematics, and English language acquisition. An eligible provider must also provide information regarding its outcomes for participants related to employment, attainment of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and transition to postsecondary education and training (34 CFR 463.24). Eligible Providers can demonstrate past effectiveness in two ways:

- An eligible provider that has been previously funded under Title II of the Act must provide two consecutive years *(state requirement)* of performance data to demonstrate past effectiveness in the areas listed above.
- An eligible provider that has not been previously funded under Title II of the Act must provide two consecutive years *(state requirement)* of performance data to demonstrate its past effectiveness in serving basic skills deficient eligible individuals, including evidence of its success in achieving outcomes listed in the WIOA Title II AEFLA Federal Requirements. (See WIOA Final Rules Subpart C, §463.24 and 29 U.S.C 3272(5)).

The Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) is the State's Eligible Agency (SEA) for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds. The Department is responsible for administering the funds and providing program and performance oversight to grantees. AEL eligible providers competed and were awarded funds July 1, 2020 for a multi-year award and

local providers will be funded for 5 years. Funding during this grant cycle will be based on their ability to meet demonstrated effectiveness and fulfillment of grant expectations which is measured annually through a status update, financial reports, program performance reports and monitoring.

During the program year 2020, the Department extended the due date for the grants due to the impact of the pandemic. Between May 1 and the announcement of awardees, all grant applications from eligible providers were reviewed based on the considerations specified in Sec. 231 (e) of WIOA. with additional state priorities, standards, and context. All eligible providers that can demonstrate effectiveness in providing adult education activities to eligible individuals were considered.

Grant applicants were required to describe their activities planned to support the adult education and literacy in their proposed service delivery area as well as their local workforce development area, using the previously submitted local plans which did not reflect the newly approved reduction in areas. However, applicants were asked to discuss (1) outreach efforts for attracting participants with low literacy skills to the program; (2) program design accommodations particularly focused on the needs of participants (i.e., child care, class times and locations, curriculum content, and materials); and (3) linkages established with education, workforce and community partners to facilitate the integration of services for participants. The Department has continued to consider an equitable and inclusive approach for services. These efforts have included reaching out to community, faith-based and local education agencies to share information and discuss potential partnerships or collaborations in addressing literacy and basic skill needs.

The grant application has been aligned with and awarded providers in alignment with subpart C for both sections 225 activities and 243 funds and will be monitored based on compliance and the following principles of Iowa's AEL Program Standards associated with high quality and continuous program improvement.

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

ii. Ensure direct and equitable access

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

The IDOE uses developed internal processes to ensure that there is direct and equitable access to the grant funds. All currently funded providers and all other identified eligible agencies receive a grant or contract application notification by email. This includes all known community-based organizations, community colleges, libraries, literacy councils, public housing authorities, and any other provider that is eligible pursuant to Section 203(5). An announcement is posted on the Iowa Grants website at https://www.iowagrants.gov/. In addition to the general distribution of the federal funds for Sections 225, 231 and 243 application notifications. IDOE will post a notice of the availability of funding on the website maintained by http://www.iowa.gov/. In addition, the IDOE provides application information at conferences, workshops, and other activities attended by potential providers.

The IDOE requires all eligible providers for Sections 225, 231 and 243 to use the same application process. This ensures that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. Statewide leadership activities are provided through contracted service providers in compliance with state contracting requirements. The IDOE has also developed interagency agreements with the Department of Corrections to provide the appropriate and necessary services for returning citizens. The IDOE ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants or contracts. It also ensures that the same grant or contract announcement, application, and proposal process is used for all eligible providers through the grant management system. During the initial period of the grant submission process, any eligible agency that contacts IDOE with an interest in participating will be provided the information needed. The IDOE believes that these approaches meet the requirements specified in AEFLA and is satisfied that every effort is made to ensure direct and equitable access.

C. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The federal vocational rehabilitation basic support state grant in Iowa is divided between the Iowa Department for the Blind and the Iowa Department of Education - Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services in the ratio of 19 percent to 81 percent. This is a historical agreement and has been in place for in excess of 40 years. The U.S. Department of Education - Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) acknowledges the 19/81 ratio between the agencies. The total allocation of basic support dollars to the State of Iowa are granted by RSA to the two state agencies in the ratio of 19 percent to Iowa Department for the Blind and 81 percent to Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

6. PROGRAM DATA

A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

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

Iowa's core partners have long-standing data sharing agreements in place whereby the partners are able to request data matching of the Unemployment Insurance Wage Record Data for performance reporting. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) has motivated the agencies to look closely at the long-term agreements and determine if changes need to be made to accommodate the new and innovative sharing of data between the agencies. The agreements facilitate cross-program access to data about common participants while minimizing duplicative systems costs.

In PY19, IWD launched the IowaWORKS data management system, comprehensive modules for: Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth, TAA, WOTC, and Wagner Peyser, including JVSG and RA services. The required partner program SNAP E&T completed and began using its module with the IowaWORKs system in PY19. IowaWORKS incorporates a common intake system which:

1. determines program eligibility and promotes co-enrollment
2. assigns a unique identifier to each program participant that will be used across programs

3. gathers required reporting elements common across all partners
4. creates a common portal by which customers may access services
5. allows participants to self-refer to partner agencies and partner agencies to refer participants and track referral follow-up and outcomes;
6. creates a staff dashboard with the status of each program participant and shares data across agencies

The existing Title II and Title IV case management systems are WIOA compliant and cost efficient. Iowa will continue to work to obtain interoperability of all WIOA core program case management and reporting systems during the 2020 - 2023 state planning cycle. Iowa's core partners will explore this by:

1. Pursuing the development of interface system(s) that integrate data via API tools when applicable. This technology could allow core programs to share common data elements at intake and "sit-on-top" of existing technology to maximize the efficient exchange of common data elements and improve performance reporting across core programs;
2. Finding access points in our respective systems that can allow appropriate sharing of data reporting across core partners; or
3. Establishing defined data points that can be manually reported on a quarterly or ad hoc basis to maximize assessment of performance and evaluation of effectiveness across the state and within local workforce development areas.

These methods will be reviewed and assessed for effectiveness between the state core partners and put into place within the 2020-2023 state planning cycle.

Additionally, all core programs are currently working on using IowaWORKS as a single reporting system for the Employer Services tracking functionality. This allows all partners to report all Effectiveness in Serving Employer measures jointly. As Iowa continues to develop and refine our data management systems, the exchange of information and common data elements will improve and continue to expand.

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

Knowing that each individual agency will need the flexibility to conduct analysis, evaluate data, engage service providers and prepare data for internal and state uses, as well as meet their unique reporting requirements of their corresponding federal agencies, core partners are maintaining existing legacy data systems or have been involved in the launch of IowaWORKS. Each system has their respective capability to mark and track co-enrolled participants and is able to produce all the WIOA required reports under Section 116.

While a common intake through a single data management system isn't being utilized across the core partners, all Titles are collecting and reporting based on the WIOA required PIRL data elements through their respective system. This process lends itself toward co-enrollment and referrals to core partner programs and/or outside community agencies. Increased collaboration among core partners within local areas with cross training has shown an increase in co-enrolled participants who could benefit from the services provided by core partner programs and

community agencies. The improvements to the process allows for direct connection by and between key agency staff, and holds agencies accountable for assisting workers in achieving success and making it easier for job seekers to navigate the system.

While current field practices have included secure tracking sheets and frequent core partner meetings to track service delivery among shared co-enrolled participants, best practices are still being reviewed by the state. As outlined in the previous plan section, Iowa will continue to pursue the development of a technological solution to integrate data when applicable. This technology could allow core programs to share common data elements at intake and "sit-on-top" of existing technology to maximize the efficient exchange of common data elements and improve service delivery tracking across core programs. Iowa will continue to work to streamline intake across all core programs.

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

The State WDB facilitates the development and implementation of WIOA and the one-stop delivery system. Standing committees and workgroups continue to provide additional resources in many capacities including process improvement and recommendation to continue to move WIOA forward on behalf of the State WDB. Additionally, state standing committees provide direction, guidance, and technical assistance to local standing committees in order to meet the goals of the state system as a whole.

Improved data collection ensures streamlined processes, increase efficiency throughout the workforce delivery system, and aids in accurate performance measurement to help improve decision-making. The state has worked to minimize the participatory burden of an accessible system through the implementation of Iowa*WORKS* and a common intake and reporting system among core and relevant agencies.

To ease transitions within and across systems and programs in Iowa*WORKS*, a standard operating procedure was developed in regards to referrals to programs and partners. Referrals to core partner programs and/or outside community agencies will be done by utilizing the Iowa*WORKS* system, ensuring that participants who could benefit from the services provided by core partner programs and community agencies are appropriately referred and resulted. The process allows for direct connection by and between key agency staff, and holds agencies accountable for assisting workers in achieving success and making it easier for jobseekers to navigate the system.

Iowa is dedicated to developing a plan towards greater data alignment and integration, and is in the process of researching centralized and federated methods to track, share, manage, and report performance data over the medium term, but is doing so in a manner that appreciates the complexity of the task at hand, while improving on previous methods of extracting data. Data-sharing and data integration efforts make the most sense where there is a commonality of interest, need, or purpose and a set of shared goals. Any efforts to develop data-sharing agreements or, where appropriate, move towards data- integration will proceed on the basis of value-added partnership such that all partners gain something from the partnership.

The WIOA core programs are an integral part of service delivery in the IowaWORKS centers and workforce system overall. Referrals to partner programs who may not participate in the IowaWORKS case management system, are tracked at the local level between career planners and respective partner staff. Referrals among all core programs include a "warm hand-off," which entails the career planner introducing the customer to the other program's case manager, and follow-up regarding the partner services provided. If a customer is co-enrolled, ongoing collaboration between program case managers occurs. Additionally, the referral is tracked in the Title II data system, TopsEnterprise, as well as IowaWORKS and the Title IV case management systems, IRSS and eForce, by recording a participant-level service code. This tracking allows for internal reporting to enhance case management and for required performance reporting.

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

The data tracking system in Iowa is extremely valuable to the efforts to improve system performance. Because the state provides a comprehensive tracking system for its programs, the network of One-Stop Centers is supported by coordinated data tracking. The comprehensive reports and query capabilities provided by this system are essential to program analysis at both the state and local levels, leading to data-driven decisions that improve quality and efficiency.

An effective performance management and accountability system depends upon several important factors:

- Clearly defined performance goals and measures;
- A data tracking system that provides timely and accurate information, which can be queried or reported in formats that permit close analysis;
- An on-going evaluation process that not only reviews the current level of performance, but also includes historical and projected performance;
- Flexible program policies that allow rapid adjustment to issues of economic and workforce impact; and
- A system of incentive and sanctions.

The State of Iowa has these elements in place for performance accountability of the workforce system. The primary goals featured in the system are the mandated program goals for WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth) and Title III (Wagner-Peyser). While some of these measures (placement rates and earnings at placement) are elevated to an enterprise-wide or broader system level for purposes of gubernatorial reports or the Results Iowa website, there are no additional state-established goals for the employment and training system. Regional boards also have the option of establishing additional goals for their workforce areas. In practicality, extensive statutory program goals and reporting requirements that exist in the system mitigates local areas with limited resources to establish any additional goals, however. For this reason, Iowa welcomes federal initiatives to establish measures that are most representative of system success.

On-going evaluation and analysis of performance achievement occurs at federal, state and local levels. The ETA Regional Office provides a quarterly assessment of performance and

expenditure levels of the 10 states in the region. This information is used for comparative and analytical purposes, and is shared with local service providers. At the state level, regional representatives compile data on each region, to include enrollment levels, expenditure rates, and performance achievement. This information is shared with local boards and service providers. Locally, Local Workforce Development Boards routinely receive and analyze performance and enrollment data as part of their oversight responsibilities.

The partners will collaborate to develop common performance indicators to ensure:

- Federal investments in employment and training programs are evidence-based, labor market driven, and accountable to participants and taxpayers.
- Performance will be transparent and accountable to the communities and regions served.
- Data entry staff are trained and understand the importance of data validation, data collection processes, and the importance of accurate reporting.
- Compliance with applicable federal standards.
- Compliance with applicable Partner confidentiality obligations.

The WIOA performance accountability measures in Section 116 will be used to assess the effectiveness of Adult Education statewide and ensuring continuous improvement in the service delivery system. In an effort to increase awareness, accuracy, and transparency, performance reports will be published for each region. These reports allow the state and regions to track and monitor performance regularly. Programs are assessed on their fiscal management, program implementation - including enrollment and performance benchmark attainment and data management. Additional assessment may include partnership, collaboration, and career pathway efforts.

The core partners will target programs for technical assistance that fail to meet the state performance benchmarks. Failure to meet the performance benchmarks for two consecutive years could result in the reduction or elimination of funding. Possible actions for noncompliance are set forth in the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200.338), as well as USDOL/ETA Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 11-19.

The participant service account will include the Participant Information Record Layout (PIRL) distributed by DOL. Each partner had the opportunity to submit feedback to the USDOL in September. The PIRL was reviewed members of each core agency. Each core partner will need to create a link to the participant service account. The unique PIRL Identifier will be the common shared data element used to link participants. The participant service account will populate each of the agency specific databases.

Next decisions for the PIRL include whether the participant, staff, or an agency batch process will complete specific data elements. Identification of allowable locations needs determined. IWD secured funding for the initial project to move forward. A project plan and scope need to be developed with a clear timeframe. Sustainable costs are not included. Modifications to agency specific applications are also not included.

A comprehensive list of data elements dependent on partners will be compiled to help develop the state data sharing MOU. This state level template will focus on measures and reporting requirements to be used for regional MOUs. The participant service account will store information about the participant's post program success and Unemployment Insurance Wage record data. Reporting performance outcomes, the details of who, when, and how this information is to be shared are yet to be determined. The Participant Profile application includes identity authentication steps as a means to verify individuals and maintain privacy.

Purpose of the Project

- Implement new performance accountability measures
- Refine the Eligible Training Provider application and approval process
- Develop recommendations for additional measures

Scope of the Project

- Review new performance measures and identify potential issues, including recording and reporting information
- Analyze current state of reporting requirements, identify gaps, efficiency opportunities needed indicators of performance
- Develop a matrix of required data and reporting requirements and coordinate with State leadership to identify additional shared performance requirements across agencies
- Develop IT scope of work guidelines for data sharing to successfully implement new data and reporting requirements, including the integration of additional program data (i.e. apprenticeship data, STEM credential data, etc.) into longitudinal data coordination efforts
- Make recommendations regarding effective dissemination of performance data to stakeholders, the public, workforce customers, and program managers
- Coordinate with NGA Talent Pipeline team
- Negotiate levels of performance/adjustment factors
- Delivery Plan
- Provide data to be shared by core partners to go into MOU
- State data dictionary
- Issue List
- An intake system to collect participant data
- A reporting mechanism for reporting state performance to USDOL which is viewable by all core partners.

In order to meet the requirements of WIOA for cooperation between the programs of Workforce Development, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Department of Education common portal, referred

to as the "Participant Profile," collects common demographical information and assigns a state wide Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) number. The profile uses OpenID to permit users to use their personal email address and password. This portal is owned by Iowa Workforce Development and is currently scheduled to receive upgrades which will make agency cross-use more efficient, reliable and secure.

The participant may create their own profile or one may be created by a staff member. The ID of the participant can be verified through DOT records or through Experian. Each individual program will have additional information specific to that program but will use common information, along with the unique identifier, from the profile.

The staff will have a dashboard with the status of each program by participant. Only the staff authorized for each program will have the ability to access details for each program.

Iowa's common data-collection and reporting processes are used for all programs and activities provided by workforce investment funds at Iowa's AJCs. Iowa's Integrated Service Delivery system uses a common job-seeker registration and enrollment process that also uses the same computer software that generates the participant database. Iowa*WORKS* is Iowa's data management system.

Iowa*WORKS* is web-enabled, requires a secure-password access and has been customized to meet Iowa's case management and reporting system needs. Each job seeker who comes to a AJC is asked to enter their specific demographic information, which begins their registration. This registration information is verified by AJC staff to ensure complete data entry.

Iowa*WORKS* is the common data-collection process for the following programs:

- Title I, Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth
- Title III, Wagner-Peyser
- Veterans Employment Training programs
- Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers
- TANF
- Food Assistance Employment & Training
- Iowa's State Performance Accountability System

The comprehensive reports and query capabilities provided by Iowa*WORKS* is essential to program analysis at both the state and local levels, leading to data-driven decisions that improve quality and efficiency. The system can generate predictive reports on the WIOA primary indicators of performance to evaluate potential program outcomes, and address data entry concerns as applicable across programs.

On-going evaluation and analysis of performance achievement occurs at federal, state and local levels. The ETA Regional Office provides a quarterly assessment of performance and expenditure levels of the ten states in the region. This information is used for comparative and analytical purposes, and is shared with local service providers. At the state level, data is compiled on each local area, to include enrollment levels, expenditure rates, and performance achievement. This information is shared with local boards and service providers. Local WDB's routinely receive and analyze performance and enrollment data as part of their oversight responsibilities.

The core partners will target programs for technical assistance that fail to meet the state performance benchmarks. Failure to meet the performance benchmarks for two consecutive years could result in the reduction or elimination of funding.

Currently, all core partners are collecting and reporting many similar performance measures. This includes using the Unemployment Insurance (UI) database to report employment data through a data match using participant social security numbers. Postsecondary enrollment information is currently obtained using the National Student Clearinghouse and through the IDOE Community College Management Information System (MIS) to conduct a data match to track successful postsecondary enrollment in recognized education or training programs.

Title II is able to produce all the WIOA required reports under Section 116 and will continue to work with any workgroups in researching other available resources and ways to streamline the compilation of data necessary for the required performance measures. The core partners could also explore ways for tighter alignment with the Department of Labor's expanded Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI). Through data sharing, core partners intend to coordinate and align measurable skills assessment by implementing one assessment tool that can be used by all partners. For example, use of the eCASAS assessments by all local Adult Education programs, one-stops, and other eligible training providers will enable the core partners to share the assessment data and meet reporting requirements.

Vocational Rehabilitation (IVRS and IDB)

Both Vocational Rehabilitation agencies (IVRS and IDB) are responsible for collecting the data necessary to meet the reporting requirements under RSA-PD-16-04 Case Service Report Manual (RSA-911) and the ETA-9169, WIOA Annual Report and for having internal control processes in place to ensure the accuracy and validity of their data.

Under section III. Unique Identifier Data Elements, Section A. Unique Identifier of RSA-PD-16-04 (RSA-911), when a blind or general agency in the same State identifies that an individual has been or is being served by the other agency, every effort should be made to ensure the same unique identifier is used for both agencies. To fulfill this requirement, within 30 days after the conclusion of each calendar quarter (January 30th, April 30th, July 30th, October 30th), IDB sends a list of all potentially eligible and eligible individuals being served by the IDB program to IVRS. The list includes each individual's First Name, Middle Name, Last Name, Social Security Number, Date of Birth, Client ID and Unique ID. IVRS uses the list to identify individuals being served by both agencies. IVRS uses the unique ID assigned by IDB for federal reporting for IVRS.

ETA-9169, WIOA Annual Report requires that IVRS and IDB submit one combined State report to the Rehabilitation Services Administration. At the conclusion of each program year, after RSA has populated the WIOA Annual Report with data submitted through the RSA-911, IVRS and IDB calculate the required elements not reported in the RSA-911 including:

- Funds expended on Career Services (See TAC 17-01 Attachment 7, Table D for which services count as Career Services)
- Funds expended on Training Services (See TAC 17-01 Attachment 7, Table D for which services count as Training Services)
- Cost per participant served in Career Services
- Cost per participant serviced in Training Services
- Percent enrolled in more than one core partner program

IVRS acts as the responsible party for submission of the WIOA Annual Report for the State. IDB provides the information needed for IVRS to calculate the combined elements no later than September 15th each year. IVRS calculates the combined elements and submits the report prior to the October 1st deadline.

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

B. ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPANTS' POST-PROGRAM SUCCESS

B. Assessment of Participants' Post-Program Success

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

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

IVRS obtains 2nd and 4th quarter wage data from Iowa*WORKS* through special access granted to specific VR staff in each region. This information is reported electronically, and also used for internal progress analysis. Additionally, by special agreement with the Iowa Department of Education, IVRS may be able to receive information on measurable skill gains for the transition population. This information will be gathered along with credential attainment. Data is also collected on the numbers of Ticket-to-Work handoffs for the eligible IVRS job candidates receiving SSA benefits, along with which Employment Network the tickets were referred to. Our goal is that 100 percent of available tickets will be released and referred to ENs for follow-up once the VR casefile is closed. Additionally, at various key points in the VR process, IVRS offers client satisfaction and exit surveys, and this information is used for quality improvement.

Iowa Department for the Blind

IDB uses UI wage data to track job retention and wages through interagency agreements. The information is used to validate data collected across programs and to identify gaps in data systems. IDB is exploring additional agreements with the Department of Education and other partners to verify measurable skills gains, credential attainment and post-program success. Strategies will be explored to eliminate manual data entry and reduce errors. Case management follow-up services are used to assess the progress of participants exiting to employment and post-secondary education.

Iowa Workforce Development

IWD is exploring utilization of the LMI Division in order to track participant outcomes post-exit for Title I and Title III exiters. Annual analysis will include those program participants who exited during the program year. Services data will be extracted from the Iowa*WORKS* system and matched to the State of Iowa Unemployment Insurance database. Participant wages may be analyzed during the year preceding program enrollment and the year post-exit. Post-program data collection may include, but is not limited to, educational attainment, job retention, wages and industry sector of employment. Follow-up services will also be utilized to assess the progress of participants exiting programs.

Developing long-term participant outcome metrics is essential to creating a continuous cycle of program and system improvement. Moreover, as discussed in the first section of this Unified Plan (Economic and Workforce Analysis), Iowa has a variety of workforce challenges that require measurement, tracking and assessment. As such, Iowa's core partners are committed to producing an evaluation system that extends beyond what's required for federal reporting. Iowa's Longitudinal Data System could play an integral role in measuring long-term participant outcomes. This system represents:

- An integrated infrastructure for data connectivity across K-12, Community Colleges, Regents Universities, and workforce organizations;
- An inter-agency decision making system for approving, prioritizing, and responding to cross-agency data requests;
- A program evaluation measure and report for K-12, post-secondary, and workforce efforts; and
- A streamlined data collection system for post-secondary institutions.

Developed under grants from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences the system has been intended to enhance the ability of the state to make data-driven decisions to improve student learning, as well as facilitate research to increase student achievement and to close achievement gaps. As part of the efforts to measure post-program progress, the system could be used to measure the outcomes of workforce development system program participants. To do so, under the direction of the State Workforce Development Board, a working group will need to collaborate to define the data that is required to inform decision making and program improvement.

Iowa Adult Education and Literacy

Title II obtains 2nd and 4th quarter wage data along with median wages from access to UI by agreement with Iowa Workforce Development. The information is reported electronically, and used for national and state reporting along with provider analysis. Initial reporting has already shown that participants engaged in Integrated Education and Training (IET) activities are earning an average of $2,000 more in median wages than Title II participants that exit without those services. Along with emphasizing the impact that IET has for increasing earning potential is the tracking by occupational data to strengthen sector partnerships. High growth areas with increased earning potentials can lead to further customized training opportunities for additional IETs.

In addition, Title II also tracks the success of the program by reviewing credential attainment and participation in post secondary or additional training opportunities. IDOE is able to track adult education participants through their college ID's as they access credit or non-credit courses after exiting services. If participants engaged in an IET activity, future educational services are tracked by CIP code and industry cluster to determine return on investment, completion and length of study. This information is used for continuous improvement in retention, reducing barriers and accelerating the learning experience.

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

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

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

Unemployment insurance wage record data has and will continue to be matched to assist program data collection for students, apprenticeships, training participants, and Promise Job participants for purposes of matching it to employment, wages, and industry. Individual contracts and data sharing agreements are established between IWD and training providers. In return, IWD will provide an aggregate analysis of how their students faired economically after they left their program using wage records.

Iowa Workforce Development has an internal-earnings transfer procedure, and contracts with other national agencies in order to use quarterly wage information to measure progress for state and local performance measures. Each quarter, earnings from Iowa employers are uploaded, and the state system performs the job match by way of Social Security Number matches. Iowa also has a contract with the state of Maryland's administration of the Federal Employment Data Exchange System (FEDES) and with the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS), a data sharing tool jointly managed by the Department of Education (ED) and the Department of Labor (DOL) which provides earnings data for out-of- state individuals who participated in Iowa's workforce programs. These systems also provide information on individuals who, as a result of our services, obtain employment with the U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Postal Service, and federal jobs, in general. All earnings data is secured through multiple, fire-walled systems, and access is granted only to individuals with a legitimate business need. By participating in SWIS, Iowa has a more accurate picture of the effectiveness of the workforce delivery programs, and is able to report more comprehensive outcomes against performance measures.

D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

D. Privacy Safeguards

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

Confidential information follows each organization's internal policies - no universal release is available at this time.

The usage of TopsEnterprise (TE®), the information management system of Iowa's adult education and literacy, is in line with FERPA regulations and monitored on an ongoing basis to assure alignment. Personally identifiable information at the individual record level is protected by having all staff sign a confidentiality agreement and, when appropriate for non-departmental agencies, release of information forms signed by customers are obtained in order to release UI data to that agency. In terms of outside agencies personally identifiable information is protected by aggregating individual records and standardized confidentiality screening. AEL public facing results are aggregated to protect the confidentiality of participants being measured. In addition, outcomes with fewer than 10 participants are suppressed for confidentiality purposes. AEL also requires each local program to sign an assurance as a part of the funding application indicating adherence to outlined GEPA requirements.

In regard to Iowa*WORKS*, the vendor, Geographic Solutions, is subject to the security and privacy requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act Administrative Simplification, and its regulations, in addition to state privacy security laws and regulations. Security commitments are standardized and include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Security principles within the fundamental designs of Virtual OneStop application that are designed to permit system users to access the information they need based on their role in the system while restricting them from accessing information not needed for their role
- Use of encryption technologies to protect customer data both at rest and in transit

Iowa Workforce Development utilizes data sharing agreements with the schools, agencies and training providers. The entities permit us social security numbers through Globalscape, a secured FTP site provided by IT. The social security numbers are then matched to unemployment insurance records. IWD reports findings in aggregate and reports if we have three or more participants. If we don't have at least three that information is suppressed. This is done so that you can't identify any individual specifically.

7. PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS

7. Priority of Service for Veterans

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

Iowa prides itself on providing outstanding services to our veterans. All WIOA team members are trained on veteran services and resources and have a solid understanding of Priority of Service. State policies across Department of Labor funded programs contain requirements for Veterans Priority of Service, which ensures veterans and their eligible spouses receive access to services before or instead of a non-covered person. The SOP is designed to identify veterans and eligible spouses at their first point of contact. As part of Iowa's Standard Operating Procedures, each new customer who visits an American Job Center (AJC) is asked by non-JVSG (Jobs for Veterans State Grant) Career Planners, "Have you, or your spouse, ever served in the U.S. Military?" If the customer states that they are a veteran, they are thanked for their service. If the customer is a spouse, the customer is thanked for their support. During an initial "triage" conversation to determine the reason for their visit, the veteran is provided a folder with veteran- related resource information, including information regarding Priority of Service. If it determined that the veteran or eligible spouse needs assistance beyond self service, priority of service is applied to ensure the veteran or eligible spouse is given precedence in services compared to other job seekers. The veteran or eligible spouse will meet with a Career Planner to complete a Wagner-Peyser application; if, during the application process, it is determined that the veteran has a service-connected disability, an electronic referral to a DVOP career planner is completed and the veteran will receive individualized career services from the DVOP career planner.

All AJCs have Priority of Service posters in several locations throughout the center. Iowa has a 24-hour hold on all job orders so that veterans receive priority over non-veterans. Additionally, when AJCs hosts large job fairs, veterans, service members, and spouses are invited to attend earlier than the general public.

Each AJC has at least one designated computer for veteran customers in the Exploratory (resource) area. This area has a plethora of information displayed regarding veteran programs, Priority of Service, and Home Base Iowa.

To monitor and ensure Veterans are aware of all services, AJC operations managers run a monthly report that displays all registered individuals which allows them to identify Veterans that may have registered outside of the center. Non-JVSG Career Planners then contact those veterans, share information regarding programs and services, and invite them into the Center. Core partner programs refer customers to JVSG and DVOP services, and DVOP's often refer customers to core partner programs, ensuring Veterans receive the services they need.

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

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

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

Each region has a disability access committee (DAC) with a chair and co-chair from IVRS/IDB. The DACs are composed of various core partner and outside partner members who work together under the direction of the Statewide DAC. They have conducted physical accessibility and ADA accessibility surveys and continue to work on program accessibility. All groups have

conducted disability focus groups to gather information about the various needs of customers with disabilities in accessing Center programs. In addition to this, the groups have completed local assessments of the assistive technology options that would be available to the community, the level of comfort of Center staff in offering those accommodations, and as well, the appropriate process for working with requests for accommodations from customers. The DACs in the various regions also drive the Integration Continuum process.

The State of Iowa is committed to providing programs and services in a readily-accessible format and delivery method to any individual who is seeking services from the workforce system. Accessibility as referenced throughout this plan refers to the direct and indirect ideas, actions, philosophies and physical and emotional supports used by an individual or employer to support employment for all Iowans. Core partners have legal obligations under federal and state anti-discrimination laws when providing workforce services. Federal and state antidiscrimination laws prohibit discrimination in the provision of services on the basis of an individual's race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, age, or disability. Meeting the partners' legal obligations under federal and state antidiscrimination laws must be a focus when they develop and implement policies, procedures, guidance, and proven and promising practices with respect to increasing and maximizing access to workforce services, and when assessing the physical and programmatic access of one-stop system partners, physical office spaces, websites, etc.

Individuals with disabilities constitute a population that has traditionally been underserved or unserved by the workforce development system. Partners recognize that state and federal anti-discrimination laws impose legal obligations with respect to workforce services delivery to individuals with disabilities. Further, WIOA singles out individuals with disabilities as a group with a barrier to employment that the partners must target for increased and maximized access to workforce services. As such, the partners will develop policies, procedures, guidance, and proven and promising practices to create maximized physical and programmatic access and opportunity for individuals with disabilities. Implementation of policies, procedures, guidance, and proven and promising practices to increase and maximize physical and programmatic access for individuals with disabilities must be an element of One-Stop Certification that is strictly applied. In developing the Unified State Plan, Iowa has incorporated several measures which will assist in ensuring that all Iowans have equal opportunities within the workforce delivery system and throughout the workforce. Iowa has worked very closely with and has relied upon the expertise provided by the Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) and the Iowa Department for the Blind (IDB). As core partners, IVRS and IDB provide ongoing technical assistance and support regarding development of policies, procedures, and system design and evaluation protocols to ensure that all Iowans have full and welcoming access. The Iowa Department for the Blind will also be utilized to consider all form of accessibility impacting field of vision. Their Assistive Technology services will ensure accommodations are in place to support access for needed services and supports for all Iowans.

Additionally, key staff and WIOA work group implementers have participated in LEAD Center Webinars regarding serving persons with disabilities under WIOA and have infused the promising practices and policies throughout the vision and goals and the entirety of the Unified State Plan. The one-stop operations and system design group is developing effective policies, plans and procedures that will be incorporated into the One-Stop Center operations. In utilizing the reference guide as a foundation on which to design supportive policies, it is important to note that until such time as the Department of Labor announces new regulations pursuant to WIOA Section 188, the current Section 188 regulations cited herein are used. Section 188 regulatory requirements are organized into three Sections:

- Providing Universal Access to Programs and Activities

- Ensuring Equal Opportunity
- Obligation to Ensure Equal Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities
- Implementing Universal Access and Equal Opportunity through the designation of a Qualified Equal Opportunity Officer

While the state does not have a finalized One-Stop Certification policy, the Core Partner Policy working group is tasked with drafting this policy.

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

9. Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals who are English Language Learners.

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

To meet this challenge, Iowa's core programs are committed to grow and diversify Iowa's workforce through improved access and engagement by developing strategies to engage populations that tend to have lower labor participation rates including, but not limited to, people with disabilities, veterans, women, older workers, people without a high school diploma, ex—offenders, individuals with language barriers, female heads of households with dependent children and out of school youth.

The State Board recognizes that innovative strategies and policies must also be created to build the pipeline of Future Ready Iowans. The one-stop delivery system will address accessibility for Individuals who are English language learners by identifying and attempting to bridge the barriers faced in accessing and maintaining usage of the services provided by core partners. Barriers to obtaining and maintaining services from core partners include but are not limited to transportation, awareness and understanding of services, language barriers, and familiarity with culture and civic education. The obstacles faced by English language learners when accessing the one-stop delivery system can be minimized by implementing the following:

- Creating an inclusive environment for Iowa's one-stop system through deliberate diversity training;
- Provide culturally relevant and translated materials throughout the one-stop system as needed, driven by participant needs;
- Collaboration with additional partners who can assist with the barriers;
- Interweaving civic education in training offered to core partners and one-stop system staff;
- Develop a cadre of diversity trainers and translators for core partner agencies; and
- Incorporate accessibility for English language learners in the one-stop system certification process to address local policies relevant to the needs of English language learners.

To grow the economy, transitioning these populations into employees must become a priority for policy makers and for employers. Of the working age adults in Iowa, there are 93,111 that speak English less than very well according to ACS data.

The following procedures will be in place for all comprehensive one-stop centers and core partner locations:

1. In the reception areas where customer services are provided, partners shall post and maintain signs in various languages, informing the public of interpreter services available at no charge to the public. Interpreter services include providing in-person or remote ASL (American Sign Language) interpreters and Limited English Proficient interpreter services. Where facilities have communication equipment, such as Interpretype or assistive listening devices, staff shall ensure the equipment is available and operational for communication between customers and staff.

2. TTY (Telephone for the deaf) numbers must be included in any listing of partners' telephone numbers. TTY numbers must be listed and clearly identified on all letterhead, business cards, brochures or fliers, posters, web sites, or similar documents or communication tools whenever a telephone number is listed.

3. TTY, and/or equivalent such as Nextalk, must be available and operational in all office locations and facilities. Staff must have instruction and demonstrated proficiency in TTY use and access to TTYs sufficient to perform their job tasks. Frontline staff must be capable of receiving and initiating TTY calls and relay calls (including voice carryover and hearing carryover). Training and performance standards must include the handling of potential TTY calls ("silent calls"). TTYs must not be set on automatic answer in locations where voice telephones are answered by a staff person.

4. In offices where video communication equipment is installed, staff must have instruction and demonstrated proficiency to operate the equipment for communication, such as videophone calls, sufficient to perform their job tasks.

<u>Language Assessment and Primary Language Identification</u>

1. Initial contact — Staff, observing the following, should consider that a customer may be Limited English Proficient or deaf or hard of hearing:

- Family member speaks or companions are non-communicative,
- Speakers exhibit limited English skills (broken English) or use one-word answers, or
- Speakers have a heavy accent.

The staff person should consult, if necessary, with other people in the office and referral sources to determine native or primary language.

2. Explain rights — If the customer is Limited English Proficient or deaf or hard of hearing, staff should explain to the individual the right to have a language interpreter service at no cost.

3. Notation — The staff person must make a distinctive note on the outside of the customer's paper file and/or on-line record that interpreter services will be needed, reading: "Needs Interpreter Services: Language _____"

4. When a staff person becomes aware that effective communication is not occurring, appropriate interpreter services should be provided to ensure equal access.

5. Getting Interpreters — It is the responsibility of the service provider to arrange for interpreters as follows:

- If an in-house bilingual employee is available for the needed language and can provide immediate communication, staff should use him/her. The Department encourages bilingual employees to assist with translation. However, it is not intended for bilingual staff to provide ongoing interpretation.
- Contact an interpreter from the list of community interpreters. Otherwise, contact one of the Limited English Proficient interpreter services, which are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

6. Other translators — When an individual declines free interpreter service, staff shall use other persons who can provide effective communication between the parties. The staff person will write in the customer's record, the name of the person interpreting. It is not recommended that a family member or friend be utilized unless other interpreter services have been offered and refused and both parties have agreed to the family member or friend. Minors (under 18 years old) may never be used as interpreters under any circumstances. An individual has the right to change his/her mind and request a different interpreter.

<u>Staff Expectations</u>

1. Staff members who are proficient in languages other than English, including ASL, are encouraged to utilize those languages in communicating directly with a customer, if it is the customer's choice.

2. Staff should avoid conflicts of interest and assignments that create the appearance of a conflict of interest. The roles assumed by staff in the provision of services to customers are incompatible with the interpreter role.

3. Situations where staff may provide interpreting for others include:

- Bilingual staff may assist with immediate communication for arranging interpreter services.
- Emergencies, during which life, health or safety of customers or others may be in immediate jeopardy, are sufficient justification to permit staff to utilize their best judgment and efforts to facilitate communication until such time as qualified interpreters become available in accordance with 32 MRSA §1525-A(2).

Printed Translation of Documents

In addition to the required initial contact sign posted in each reception area of partner offices where customers are served, there may be a need to print certain other documents in various languages. Partners will determine on a case-by-case basis which documents will be printed depending on the customer's primary language and the number of customers needing language interpretation and whether the document is considered vital. Audio or video translations, if needed (in lieu of printed material) may be utilized. In the event no written translation of documents is available, partners will ensure that in-person translation or translation by telephone will be provided in a timely manner.

Complaint Rights and Process

Partners will take appropriate corrective action if a complaint or other information indicates a failure by any of its staff to adhere to a policy of equitable and fair access. All complainants must be given a procedure and process by which a complaint might be recorded and forwarded to the EEO Coordinator.

Translated materials and interpreter assistance will be provided during the complaint process.

All staff members who receive complaints from customers must forward them to their immediate supervisors.

The complaint procedure and complaint form shall be distributed to the Limited English Proficient individual in the appropriate language (if available); otherwise the complaint procedure will be communicated to the individual who is Limited English Proficient in their language in another effective manner on a case by case basis.

Public Communication

A. Videos and Public Service Announcements produced or used by partners must be captioned. Labels and promotional material must clearly identify the presence of closed captioning. Material already existing before January 2019 need not be modified to include captioning except when necessary to provide effective communication.

B. Notices of conferences or workshops open to the general public with pre-registration must state that sign language and assistive listening devices are available upon request. Notices of events open to the general public without pre-registration must state that sign language interpreters and assistive listening devices will be available.

C. Printed material for the use of the general public must include the notation that the material is available in alternate formats upon request. Alternate formats may include translation of the

material into a specific language other than English, large print, Braille, audio or electronic version, etc.

Training of Staff

Staff members who may be called upon to utilize interpreter services under these requirements will be trained on the processes involved in requesting and providing those services as well as training on the following:

- The impact of ethnic and cultural differences and effective communication.
- The crucial need for sensitivity and understanding of ethnic and cultural differences.
- Definition of the role of the Title VI/EEO Coordinators.
- How to use interpreter services effectively
- Non-discrimination and equal opportunity statutes, policies and procedures.

This training should be incorporated into New Employee Orientation and/or New Supervisory Training for each respective core partner provider.

The Core Partner Policy group will plan to draft policy regarding the accessibility of services for individuals who are English Language Learners.

IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

As part of the WIOA system transformation currently underway in Iowa, the directors of the agencies that administer the core programs under WIOA have designated a WIOA Core Partner Working Group, a functional partnership comprised of representatives from the agencies overseeing key workforce programs. The Working Group will be charged with collaborating to carry out the vision and strategy established by the Governor and the State Workforce Development Board by developing joint policy and an integrated approach for monitoring, program oversight/support and technical assistance for local service design and delivery. The Group contains an appointed representative, authorized with decision making authority from each of the core partner agencies: Iowa Workforce Development, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Iowa Department for the Blind, and the Iowa Department of Education.

The objectives of the WIOA Core Partner Working Group are:

- Ensure policy and guidance issued to the local system is aligned across agencies and programs and advances the objectives of WIOA and the priorities outlined in the State WIOA Plan;
- Develop integrated and collaborative approaches for cross program functions that support the local system including monitoring, performance measurement, resource braiding, and the provision of technical assistance; and
- Support implementation of customer-centered approaches designed to drive continuous improvement of the workforce system to meet the needs of Iowa businesses and individuals.

Member Functions and Commitments include:

- Attend and participate in quarterly scheduled meetings as well as other meetings as needed (e.g. meetings may move to monthly or as needed during key times, such as WIOA State Plan development);
- Engage in research, discussion, planning, writing, etc. to support the work of the group including plan and policy development, establishment of joint policy, procedures and resource leveraging;
- Serve as an ambassador for WIOA and the State Plan by integrating the key principles, priorities and strategies into their respective agency messaging, policy, procedures, etc.; and
- Communicate on an ongoing basis the purpose, role, objective and progress of the WIOA Core Partner Working Group to leadership of member agencies.

The WIOA Core Partner Working Group will also facilitate coordination with all required one-stop partner programs to ensure streamlined and integrated programs and services across the workforce system in Iowa.

While the WIOA Core Partner Working Group ensures coordination at the state level, the partner agencies and programs at the local level are actively involved in coordinating their efforts to ensure a holistic approach to services and ensuring programs and services are offered based on the individual needs of customers. Iowa has long employed an Integrated Services model approach, which is at the center of the successful services provided to Iowans every day.

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	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administrating the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;	
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	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);	
11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and	Yes
12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.	Yes

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

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

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

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

Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas

Iowa currently has 9 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA), effective July 1, 2020, as follows:

Northwest Iowa LWDA

Buena Vista, Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Kossuth, Lyon, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo Alto, and Sioux counties.

Northeast Iowa LWDA

Allamakee, Black Hawk, Bremer, Butler, Buchanan, Cerro Gordo, Chickasaw, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette, Floyd, Franklin, Grundy, Hancock, Howard, Mitchell, Winneshiek, Worth, and Winnebago counties.

North Central Iowa LWDA

Calhoun, Hamilton, Humboldt, Pocahontas, Webster, and Wright counties.

Western Iowa LWDA

Audubon, Carroll, Cass, Cherokee, Crawford, Fremont, Greene, Guthrie, Harrison, Ida, Mills, Monona, Page, Plymouth, Pottawattamie, Sac, Shelby, and Woodbury counties.

Central Iowa LWDA

Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Madison, Marion, Polk, Story, and Warren counties.

East Central Iowa LWDA

Benton, Cedar, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn, and Washington counties.

Southwest Iowa LWDA

Adair, Adams, Clarke, Decatur, Montgomery, Ringgold, Taylor, and Union counties.

South Central Iowa LWDA

Appanoose, Davis, Hardin, Jefferson, Keokuk, Lucas, Mahaska, Marshall, Monroe, Poweshiek, Tama, Wapello, Van Buren and Wayne counties.

Mississippi Valley LWDA

Clinton, Des Moines, Henry, Jackson, Lee, Louisa, Muscatine, and Scott counties.

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.

Prior to July 1, 2020, Iowa had 15 LWDAs designated pursuant to Iowa Code Section 84B.3, in accordance with the "Special Rule Regarding Designated Areas" at WIOA Section 189(i)(1). According to WIOA section 189(i)(1), a State that has enacted, not later than December 31, 1997, a State law providing for the designation of service delivery areas for the delivery of workforce investment activities, may use such areas as local areas, notwithstanding WIOA section 106. The Iowa General Assembly enacted the law that is codified at Iowa Code section 84B.3 on May 2, 1996, before the deadline prescribed in WIOA section 189(i)(1). Therefore, Iowa may use areas designated under Iowa Code section 84B.3, notwithstanding WIOA section 106. The U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration (USDOL/ETA) Region 5 has affirmed as recently as April 4, 2019 that Iowa qualifies for the exception provided by the "Special Rule Regarding Designated Areas" at WIOA Section 189(i)(1).

The 15 LWDAs in Iowa date back to the Job Training Partnership Act under which States established "Service Delivery Areas" or SDAs. These SDAs were formed to align with service delivery in the State and, in Iowa, this resulted in areas that aligned generally with community college areas throughout the State. Subsequent workforce development legislation, first the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and, most recently, WIOA, allowed for existing service areas to continue to serve as LWDAs, with only minimal qualifying criteria.

On November 8, 2017, the USDOL/ETA Region 5 issued a WIOA Implementation Compliance monitoring report which, among other things, specifically addressed the number of LWDAs in Iowa. Finding 1 of the monitoring report stated "the division of limited WIOA funds among 15 service areas, particularly in a State that has large rural areas, is stretching the available dollars so thin that the local areas are unable to fund core WIOA functions, such as staff support for the required [local area boards]." As a result, USDOL/ETA Region 5 directed the State to establish WIOA-compliant LWDAs that are able to fulfill all of the required roles and functions of a LWDA.

In response to USDOL/ETA Region 5's direction, the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) convened on November 20, 2017 and created a standing Realignment Committee to make a recommendation with respect to LWDA realignment to ensure WIOA compliance. The Realignment Committee was comprised of representatives from all of the WIOA core partners, which include the Department of Education, Department of the Blind, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation and Iowa Workforce Development (IWD), SWDB members, legislators from both

parties, community college representatives, and local workforce board members. The Realignment Committee held its first public meeting on December 13, 2017. IWD provided a detailed response to the monitoring report, including a Realignment Plan, to USDOL/ETA Region 5 on December 21, 2017.

Between December 2017 and February 2019, a total of 88 public meetings were held wherein the realignment process was discussed (five at SWDB, six Realignment Committee meetings, and 77 Chief Elected Official / Local Board meetings). These public meetings resulted in significant input to the Realignment Committee, including several recommendations regarding different LWDA configurations and numbers. In February 2019, the Realignment Committee arrived at its recommendation to reduce and realign Iowa's LWDAs from 15 to six. The Realignment Committee created two different configurations consisting of six LWDAs, and presented these configurations to the SWDB on February 18, 2019. At this meeting, the SWDB adopted the recommendation of the Realignment Committee to reduce the number of LWDAs from 15 to six, and the SWDB selected one of the recommended configurations.

Following the SWDB realignment vote, eight of the existing local boards appealed the SWDB decision. On May 30, 2019, the SWDB convened to consider the appeals and vote on whether any changes would be made to its February 18, 2019 realignment decision. After reviewing all materials and listening to public comments, the SWDB had a full and open discussion and voted to affirm its realignment decision of February 18, 2019. On June 25, 2019, the Chief Lead Elected Officials from seven LWDAs appealed the SWDB's realignment decision to the USDOL/ETA in accordance with WIOA section 106(b)(5) and its implementing regulations at 20 C.F.R. 679.290(a).

On December 19, 2019, the USDOL/ETA issued a decision that did not uphold Iowa's redesignation of LWDAs from 15 to six. Specifically, the decision stated that Iowa must continue operating with the previous structure, consisting of 15 local areas, until the State:

1. Issues a local area designation policy and procedure publicly and transparently;

2. Issues a local area designation appeals policy in accordance with WIOA section 106(b)(5) and 20 C.F.R. 679.290; and

3. Seeks meaningful local input and consultation as the State implements a compliant local area designation policy and local area designation or reorganization.

Simultaneously, in summer 2019, IWD began a statewide WIOA System Transformation and Realignment project designed to engage and educate state and local workforce development system stakeholders on WIOA Governance requirements. Statewide training for local Elected Officials (CEOs) was held in September/October 2019; these trainings built the understanding of WIOA and the CEO roles and responsibilities within the workforce system and introduced tools and best practices to assist the CEOs in establishing WIOA compliant governance structures across Iowa. In November 2019, IWD facilitated a Local Area Designation consultation session for all CEOs in Iowa. Through these trainings and technical assistance, CEOs across the state identified to need to realign local areas in Iowa to ensure WIOA compliance and began working together locally to realign local areas. After consultation with existing Local Workforce Boards and prior to the quarterly meeting on the SWDB on May 15, 2020, CEOs from 10 (ten) of Iowa's existing 15 local areas submitted letters to the SWDB requesting to consolidate and form new local areas, those requests included:

- Previous regions (local areas) 1, 2 and 7 requested consolidation into the Northeast Iowa LWDA

- Previous regions (local areas) 8, 12, and 13 requested consolidation info the Western Iowa LWDA

- Previous regions (local areas) 6 and 15 requested consolidation into the South Central Iowa LWDA
- Previous regions (local areas 9 and 16 requested consolidation into the Mississippi Valley LWDA

At the May 15, 2020 SWDB meeting, members heard from the CEOs regarding their work to reach their decision and subsequent requests for consolidation. The SWDB voted and unanimously approved all four consolidation requests, resulting in nine local areas in Iowa effective July 1, 2020. Each of the nine local workforce development areas also represents a region in Iowa.

This process satisfies all requirements outlined by the US DOL/ETA decision of December 19, 2019.

Additionally, a Designation of Local Areas policy was presented to the State Workforce Development Board in September 2019. The SWDB approved the policy at their board meeting on September 20, 2019. The Core Partner Working group determined that the policy would become effective December 29, 2019. Iowa's Designation of Local Areas policy is as follows:

The purpose of a Local Workforce Development Area, each with its own Local Workforce Development Board (WDB), is to serve as a jurisdiction for the administration of workforce development activities and execution of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I program funds allocated by the Governor through the State workforce agency (Iowa Workforce Development).

Local Workforce Development Area Designation

WIOA at 189(i)(1) states, "A State that has enacted, not later than December 31, 1997, a State law providing for the designation of service delivery areas for the delivery of workforce investment activities, may use such areas as local areas under this title, notwithstanding section 106." As a result of this provision, the State of Iowa follows Iowa Code Section 84B.3 to designate Local Workforce Development Areas. This Code section allows that, after consultation with applicable Local WDBs and with the approval of the State WDB, IWD may designate Local Workforce Development Areas.

Considerations

IWD may designate or redesignate a Local Workforce Development Area in accordance with this policy, which includes consideration of the extent to which the proposed area:

- Is consistent with labor market areas in the State
- Is consistent with regional economic development areas in the State
- Has the Federal and non-Federal resources, including appropriate education and training institutions, to administer activities under WIOA subtitle B
- Is consistent with population centers
- Is consistent with commuting patterns that demonstrate movement of workers from their residences to their workplaces

Process for Designating Local Workforce Development Areas

IWD shall consult with Local WDBs and Chief Lead Elected Officials (CLEOs). This consultation must include the opportunity for Local WDBs and CLEOs to provide input regarding the proposed designation.

IWD will consider all information gathered during the Local WDB and CLEO consultation process and provide a recommendation for Local Workforce Development Area designation to the State WDB. The State WDB will issue a decision on the designation of Local Workforce Development Areas.

Local Workforce Development Area Review

IWD may review the designation of a Local Workforce Development Area at any time, but must review all Local Workforce Development Area designations prior to submitting the Combined or Unified State Plan during each four-year state planning cycle. Reviews are performed to ensure the Local Workforce Development Area is meeting the requirements for redesignation as it relates to:

- Consistency with labor markets in the State
- Consistency with regional economic development areas in the State
- Whether the Local Workforce Development Area has the Federal and non-Federal resources, including appropriate education and training institutions, to administer activities under WIOA subtitle B
- Consistency with commuting patterns that demonstrate movement of workers from their residences to their workplaces
- Whether the Local Workforce Development Area, in the prior two program years, met or exceeded the adjusted levels of performance for primary indicators of performance or the common measures
- Whether the Local Workforce Development Area has the capacity to manage funds, provide oversight of programs, and provide for the proper stewardship of public funds
- Whether the Local Workforce Development Area met the local planning requirements outlined in the state and local plans
- Whether a Local Workforce Development Area in a planning region met the regional planning requirements outlined in both the state and regional plans

If IWD's review determines that a Local Workforce Development Area or areas does not meet the requirements for redesignation, IWD, following established processes for Local Workforce Development Area designation, will redesignate or realign Local Workforce Development Areas to ensure compliance with WIOA legislation and state policies.

Appealing a Designation Decision

A Local WDB chair or CLEO may appeal a designation decision to the State WDB within 30 calendar days of the date such designation is approved by the State WDB.

Appeals must include the following information:

- Intent or notice to appeal
- Name and contact information of the Local WDB chair or CLEO filing the appeal
- Provide justification for the appeal, including the reason the Local Workforce Development Area disagrees with the decision and a proposed alternative Local Workforce Development Area designation as outlined under the Local Workforce Development Area Designation section of this policy.
- Signature and date of the Local WDB chair or CLEO

The appeal must be submitted electronically to the State WDB at: WIOAgovernance@iwd.iowa.gov.

The State WBD will review the appeal, provide the appellant with the opportunity for a hearing at the next regularly scheduled State WDB meeting, and make a ruling on the appeal within 30 calendar days of that meeting. The State WDB shall notify the Local WDB chair or CLEO in writing of its decision.

In accordance with the WIOA regulations, in the event the State WDB denies the appeal or fails to issue a decision within 30 calendar days following the State WDB meeting that considered the appeal, the Local WDB or CLEO may further appeal the State WDBs decision, or lack thereof, to the Secretary of the United States Department of Labor (USDOL). The appeal must be filed within 30 calendar days from the receipt of the written notification of the State WDBs denial or failure to issue a decision.

The appellant must establish in its appeal to the USDOL that the appellant was not afforded procedural rights under the appeal process set forth in this policy, or that it meets the requirements for local designation provided under state Local Workforce Development Area Designation criteria.

The appeal must be submitted by certified mail, with return receipt requested, to: Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DS 20210, Attention: ASET.

A copy of the appeal must be submitted to the State WDB at: WIOAgovernance@iwd.iowa.gov at the same time the appellant sends the appeal to USDOL.

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

A Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Chair or CLEO may appeal a designation decision to the SWDB within 30 calendar days of the date such designation is approved by the SWDB.

Appeals must include the following information:

- Intent or notice to appeal.
- Name and contact information of the LWDB Chair or CLEO filing the appeal.
- Provide justification for the appeal, including the reason for disagreement with the decision and a proposed alternative WIOA-compliant designation.
- Signature and date of the LWDB Chair or CLEO.

The appeal must be submitted electronically to the SWDB at: WIOAgovernance@iwd.iowa.gov.

The SWBD will review the appeal, provide the appellant with the opportunity to be heard at the next regularly scheduled SWDB meeting, and make a ruling on the appeal within 30 calendar days of that meeting. The SWDB shall notify the appellant in writing of its decision.

In accordance with the WIOA regulations, in the event the SWDB denies the appeal or fails to issue a decision within 30 calendar days following the SWDB meeting that considered the appeal, the LWDB Chair or CLEO may request review of the SWDB's decision, or lack thereof, by the Secretary of the United States Department of Labor (USDOL). The request for review by the USDOL must be filed within 30 calendar days from the receipt of the written notification of the SWDB's denial or failure to issue a decision.

The appellant must establish in its request for review by the USDOL that the appellant was not afforded procedural rights under the appeal process set forth in this plan, or that the area meets the requirements for local designation under state Local Workforce Development Area Designation policy.

The request for review must be submitted by certified mail, with return receipt requested, to: Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DS 20210, Attention: ASET.

A copy of the request for review must be submitted to the SWDB at: WIOAgovernance@iwd.iowa.gov at the same time the appellant sends the request for review to the USDOL.

The appeals process described in this plan can also be found in Iowa's WIOA Administration and Governance Policy.

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

Any Local Workforce Development Board (WDB) or One-Stop required partner may appeal for cause, within 10 business days, the Governor's determination regarding the portion of funds (or non-cash contributions) it is to provide for One-Stop infrastructure costs.

WIOA stipulates that the State mechanism allocation determination may be appealed only if the determination is inconsistent with the requirements of WIOA sec. 121(h)(2)(E). The Final Rule further limits admissible grounds for an appeal to three possibilities. The appellant must make a case that the State's determination is inconsistent with the:

- Proportionate-share requirements
- Cost-contribution limitations
- Cost-contribution caps

To be officially received, an appeal must fully contain and evidence the following:

- An introduction identifying the appellant and designating the correspondence letter as a formal appeal.
- Full citations from WIOA or the corresponding regulations that support the appeal.
- Identify the basis for the appeal.
- Signature and date of the appellant.

The appeal must be submitted electronically to: WIOAgovernance@iwd.iowa.gov.

The state shall review the appeal and documentary evidence submitted by the board or one-stop partner for the grounds that the governor's determination was inconsistent with proportionate-share requirements, cost-contribution limitations, or cost-contribution caps. Additional information may be requested or an investigation conducted if necessary. A written response/decision will be issued within 20 business days of the receipt of the appeal.

Appellants who do not receive a decision within 20 business days or who received an adverse decision may file an appeal with the State WDB. The appeal must be filed in writing within 10 business days after the adverse decision was received or if no decision is received. Upon receiving an appeal, the State WDB will review the appeal and issue a final decision within 20 business days after the appeal was filed.

The appeals process described in this plan can also be found in Iowa's WIOA Administration and Governance Policy.

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.

Iowa has recently launched a public e-Policy website that will house all of Iowa Workforce Development's policies, including administrative and programmatic, which have been reviewed and approved by the State Workforce Development Board. Currently, these policies include Administration and Governance, Eligible Training Provider List, Title IB Programs and WIOA Definitions. Policies are accessible at: https://epolicy.iwd.iowa.gov/Policy/Home.

As Iowa continues to work through WIOA system transformation, comprehensive WIOA policies are being established including comprehensive financial policies. Such policies are being drafted with an anticipated completion date for PY20.

The process of updating policies to ensure compliance with WIOA has been an ongoing goal in Iowa. Many policies require participation of core partner program representatives. To respond to this, Iowa has created a Core Program Policy Group which meets to discuss and draft policies that effect all programs. Policy development includes a 30-day public comment period, and subsequent review and approval of the SWDB.

Additional guidance is disseminated via field memos, desk aids, standard operating procedures, webinars and technical assistance sessions. The State is currently in the process of migrating all of these resources into the new e-Policy site for enhanced accessibility of program staff, stakeholders and the public.

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.

Iowa will evaluate the amount of state set-aside fund availability, and with guidance from the SWDB, will determine approaches to utilize the state set-aside in coordination with the goals and strategies outlined in the State plan. Certain industry sectors may be identified for priority use of state set-aside based on identified sector strategies at the State and local level. Iowa will continue to explore opportunities to invest funds in initiatives which may include, but is not limited to:

- Bridging Youth Apprenticeship to Adult Apprenticeship
- Dual Enrollment
- Business Services
- Skills Gap and Labor Shortages
- Services to special populations and groups

Potential ideas to implement include a partnership between Title I programs and Registered Apprenticeship to co-enroll Title I eligible participants into Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs. Funding may be used to assist in paying the Registered Apprentice's On-the-Job Training wages, Related Training Instruction, and/or supportive services for Registered Apprentices who are co-enrolled in Title I throughout the RA program.

The State Dislocated Unit is responsible for overseeing and facilitating Rapid Response and uses a variety of approaches and strategies to avert and respond to layoffs. The objective of Rapid Response coordination is to create an appropriate time and approach for the delivery of resources and services. Rapid Response set-aside dollars may be used, when necessary, to support a local area which has experienced an influx of dislocated workers from a single employer, or group of workers connected to a specific industry or industries. If this approach is utilized, requests for additional assistance must be submitted to the State Dislocated Worker Unit and is subsequently reviewed on an as-needed basis. The Dislocated Worker Survey must accompany the request in order to assess how additional financial resources can help support the employment and training needs of dislocated workers. Additionally, the State is exploring utilization of Rapid Response set-aside to purchase equipment that can be used to ensure accessibility to services within rural areas during Rapid Response events.

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.

Following confirmation of a natural disaster, the State Rapid Response (RR) Coordinator will coordinate with Local Workforce Development Boards and Iowa*WORKS* leadership to quickly begin the rapid response process for an organized, multifaceted response. The State RR Coordinator and local Iowa*WORKS* leadership will determine if there is a need for a mobile one-stop unit. The local office or mobile one-stop will assist those affected by the natural disaster in filing an Unemployment Claim or disaster unemployment assistance claim. The State RR Coordinator will coordinate with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) or other disaster-response organizations to assist those in the affected area.

Contact will be made with the company(s) and labor officials were applicable, affected by the natural disaster to hold an Employer Meeting. This meeting can be conducted via phone or virtually as the need arises. Information will be gathered on workforce and determine the best plan for Worker Information Meetings. The company will need to send Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) to the employees' last known address, even if their homes were destroyed.

Worker Information Meetings are conducted in the same format as regular layoff notifications. The Dislocated Worker Survey will be given to all those attending to gather demographic information for potential emergency grant applications. Information will be given on services available through the Iowa*WORKS* centers including Unemployment Insurance benefits, finding

new employment, career counseling, training in a new career, and the impact of the layoff with regards to health care. Other state agencies or community-based organizations are invited to participate in the meeting to help workers adjust in a time of crisis.

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.

Early intervention is provided to impacted worker groups through a functionally aligned and coordinated effort between state and local area staff. Providing early intervention both prior to and immediately following dislocations where TAA benefits may be available is an essential component to ensuring those affected receive information detailing the comprehensive services offered through TAA and its partner programs.

The process begins with State Rapid Response and TAA Program Coordinators reviewing WARN notices, and other layoff notifications, to make an initial determination regarding potential Trade eligible factors evident in the layoff. Trade Program Coordinators attend all initial rapid response meetings with company officials to explain the benefits of the Trade program and discuss the potential for a Trade certification based on the dislocation circumstances. As soon as evidence of Trade impact is identified and if a petition has not already been filed, the state TAA program coordinator submits a petition to DOL. While awaiting a determination, TAA program information is disseminated to impacted workers at Rapid Response Worker Information Meetings (WIMs). In addition to an overview of all benefits available to dislocated workers, these meetings provide basic Trade program information while emphasizing that these benefits will be accessible if the petition is certified. Additionally, a brochure containing information on TAA program benefits is provided to all potentially Trade eligible workers.

Upon certification of a Trade petition, Trade specific WIMs ae scheduled, and targeted outreach is conducted to notify impacted workers of eligibility and disseminate program information. Workers are notified by various methods including mailed letters, emails, newspaper publications, and any other means necessary to reach all workers certified under the petition. State staff coordinate with the employer and local area staff to host in-person WIMs at various locations and times to ensure all workers receive the information. For example, if a manufacturing plant that runs three shifts is closing and is trade certified before the layoff occurs, WIMs are held on location at the plant at the beginning of each of the three shifts. If WIMs are unable to be held on-site at the employer, they will be held at the AJC, other community locations, or virtually if needed. These meetings provide a full presentation on all Trade benefits, including: Training (including Registered Apprenticeships and OJTs), Job Search Assistance, Relocation Assistance, RTAA, TRA, and Case Management. Eligibility requirements are reviewed, including providing workers with the information specific to their corresponding Trade petition needed to apply for benefits. Additionally, Iowa*WORKS* Career Planners (case managers) are in attendance at the WIMs, to introduce themselves, provide contact information, and begin assisting workers with applications. This comprehensive approach provides impacted workers with all necessary information on the TAA program and a clear path forward to apply for and utilize the available benefits.

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. Work-Based Training Models

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

Work-based learning continues to be a priority training approach in Iowa. Engagement in work-based learning activities continues to be an emerging practice for the Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs in the state. Work-based learning benefits both job-seekers and business, by up-skilling individuals and assisting employers to off-set training costs of a potential job candidate.

Iowa incorporates on-the-job training (OJT), incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, customized training and transitional jobs within its menu of available services to Adults and Dislocated Workers.

The State emphasizes utilization of a stair step approach when engaging participants in work-based learning activities. Some individuals with multiple barriers to employment may need to begin with a less intensive activity such as transitional jobs, where they learn or become accustomed to the basic expectations of a workplace. Whereas, other individuals may present as job ready and can be placed in a more intensive OJT arrangement. Conversely, it is important to place individuals with the right fit, and ensure business partners are aware of their obligations as well. Business service teams are integral in engaging participating businesses and ensuring they are educated about the benefits and responsibilities of a business partner. Like job seekers, businesses must be screened to identify what type of placement they are equipped to manage, and the business service teams serve an important role in ensuring a suitable placement exists for both customers.

OJT is beneficial to participants who are prepared to enter the workforce long-term. OJTs are used to teach a participant specialized skills and competencies needed to perform a specific job at a worksite where there may be a chance for advancement. The participating business has a major investment in the OJT process as they assist to complete a training plan, and are the employer of record. Incumbent worker training is designed to assist employers in upgrading the skills of their current workforce. These efforts have shown to increase the competitiveness of employers in their designated markets while creating an internal workforce whose skills are assisting the employer to remain competitive with a skilled workforce and increased worker tenure. Employees benefit by receiving training to upgrade their skills, wages, and increased experiences within an organization.

Incumbent worker training is designed to assist employers in upgrading the skills of their current workforce. These efforts have shown to increase the competitiveness of employers in their designated markets while creating an internal workforce whose skills are assisting the employer to remain competitive with a skilled workforce and increased worker tenure. Employees benefit by receiving training to upgrade their skills, wages, and increased experiences within an organization.

Transitional jobs are a time-limited work experience that is combined with comprehensive employment and supportive services. This work-based learning activity is for individuals with barriers to employment, are chronically unemployed, or have an inconsistent work history. The purpose is to support individuals to establish a work history, demonstrate success in a work environment and develop skills to obtain and retain unsubsidized employment.

Customized training provides training that is specific to an employer (or group of employers) specific requirements so that individuals will be hired by the employer after successful completion of the training. Customized training is designed to provide local areas with flexibility to ensure that training meets the unique needs of the job seekers and employers or groups of employers. These types of activities are very effective training models for both youth and adult populations. Gaining hands-on training in a work environment allows individuals to gain not only the transferable skills needed in employment, but the soft skills employers require.

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

2. Registered Apprenticeship

Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy for service design and delivery (e.g., job center staff taking applications and conducting assessments).

The Governor, with support of the Iowa Legislature, increased the state's capacity to meet the rapidly evolving needs of employers through increased support to Registered Apprenticeship programs. In 2014, funding to support Registered Apprenticeship Programs was tripled to $3 million. In 2019, the Governor further supported this program with the creation of the Future Ready Iowa Registered Apprenticeship Development Fund with additional $1 million investment. IWD received additional funds from the Apprenticeship State Expansion Grant to advance the state's work on growing RA programs and hiring additional job seekers into programs. IWD created two RA Career Planner positions to assist in this referral process. IWD is working in conjunction with the US Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship to increase the number of High School RA Programs throughout the state. IWD and IVRS are currently implementing a pilot program to recruit Individuals, who are blind, into RA and Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Programs. IWD has actively recruited RA Sponsors to apply for inclusion on the Eligible Training Provider List and hopes to have at least 25 percent of all sponsors on the list by 2022.

IWD is also promoting the co-enrollment of RA into every Workforce Services program by communicating and training with AJC staff. RA Program Coordinator also discusses with Trade Program Coordinators when Trade petitions are certified to encourage RA when possible. IWD is also using WIOA set-aside funding to enhance participation of Title I participants with a funding opportunity for local workforce development boards.

In 2020, IWD was awarded the State Apprenticeship Expansion 2020(SAE2020) grant that runs July 2020 through June 2023. The SAE2020 is $3.4 million to support further expansion of RA programs. With the growing demand for RA program development in Iowa, these funds will focus on expansion within the healthcare, agricultural, and industries affected by COVID-19. These funds also support modernization of RA data tracking and reporting to allow for the ability to more easily capture performance. IWD also added additional RA-focused staff to support Iowa employers and job seekers to develop and staff expanded RA programs in throughout the state. Through targets business outreach and continued collaboration with IWD partners, IWD looks to continue to grow RA in Iowa.

3. Training Provider Eligibility Procedure

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

Iowa's state policies that describe the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs, are provided below. Iowa understands these policies meet the minimum requirements for ETPL and we are currently in the process of reviewing and updating these policies to include more rigorous requirements; ETPL policies will be updated during Program Year 2022.

Iowa policy 7.2 Training Provider Eligibility: provided below and located at: https://epolicy.iwd.iowa.gov/Policy/Index/108

Providers may be eligible to receive training funds for participants who enroll in training services under WIOA Title I. Only eligible training providers and their eligible programs will be included in Iowa's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

Potential Eligible Training Providers

Potential Eligible Training Providers include entities that provide a program of training services and must be one of the following types:

- Institutions of higher education that provide a program which leads to a recognized post-secondary credential
- An entity that carries out programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act. Registered Apprenticeship programs will be included and maintained on the ETPL for as long as the program remains registered under the National Apprenticeship Act.
- Other public or private providers of training, which may include:
    - Community Based Organizations (CBOs) or private organizations of demonstrated effectiveness that provide training under contract with the Local Board
    - Joint labor-management organizations
    - Eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II of WIOA, if such activities are provided in combination with training services described at 20 CFR § 680.350.

Training providers may be classroom based, online based, or outside of the state. Providers of all types are required to meet the same eligibility and performance criteria. A provider must be in statutory compliance with Iowa laws in relation to operation as a training education institution.

Providers of on-the-job training, customized training, incumbent worker training, internships, paid or unpaid work experience, or transitional jobs are not subject to ETPL requirements.

Provider Registration

All providers who seek to be included on Iowa's ETPL must complete the registration process via the data management system located at http://www.iowaworks.gov. After provider registration has been completed, training program applications must also be submitted through

the data management system. Please see the Initial Eligibility policy and the Iowa Eligible Training Provider User Guide for more information.

After a provider is successfully registered in the system, all changes in required information must be reported within ten days of the change through entry in the data management system. See the Iowa Eligible Training Provider User Guide for a list of required fields.

Iowa Policy 7.3: Training Program Eligibility:

A program of training services is defined as one or more courses or classes, or a structured regimen that leads to:

- An industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of a Registered Apprenticeship, a license recognized by the State involved or the Federal government, an associate or baccalaureate degree
- A secondary school diploma or its equivalent
- Employment; or
- Measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment

Training services may be delivered in person, online, or in a blended approach. Training programs must make every effort to provide training services that are physically and programmatically accessible for individuals who are employed and individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities.

After a program is approved in the system, all changes in required information must be reported within ten days of the change through entry in the data management system. See the Iowa Eligible Training Provider User Guide for a list of required fields.

Iowa Policy 7.3.1 Initial Eligibility: provided below and located at: https://epolicy.iwd.iowa.gov/Policy/Index/115

In order to determine initial eligibility, a training provider is required to provide the following program specific information for each program of training services at initial application.

Information Submission Requirements

After Provider Registration is complete in the data management system, an application for each education and training program must also be completed via the Iowa Workforce Development data management system located at http://www.iowaworks.gov.

When completing an application, the following information is required:

- Description of each program of training to be offered
- Information addressing a factor related to the indicators of performance as described in WIOA
- Description of whether the provider is in a partnership with a business
- Information which demonstrates high quality training services that leads to recognized post-secondary credentials
- Description of how the training program(s) align with in-demand industries and occupations, as identified in State or Local Plans

Completing all required fields in the application will meet the above requirements.

Programs which are approved receive initial eligibility for one year. Once initial eligibility expires, these programs will be subject to the Continued Eligibility policy.

Iowa Policy 7.10 Registered Apprenticeship: provided below and located at: https://epolicy.iwd.iowa.gov/Policy/Index/119

All Registered Apprenticeship Programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act with the U.S. Department of Labor/Office of Apprenticeship are exempt from initial eligibility procedures and are automatically eligible to be included on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Registered Apprenticeship programs must be included and maintained on the list of eligible providers of training services as long as the corresponding program remains registered.

Termination of Registration

Once included on the Iowa ETPL, Registered Apprenticeship Programs will remain on the list of eligible training providers until:

- They are deregistered,
- They notify Iowa Workforce Development that the program no longer wants to be on the list, or
- It is determined that they have intentionally supplied inaccurate information or have substantially violated any provision of WIOA Title I or WIOA Regulations.

See the Registered Apprenticeship (RA) Programs on Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) policy for more information.

Iowa Policy 7.3.2 Continued Eligibility provided below and located at: https://epolicy.iwd.iowa.gov/Policy/Index/114

Prior to the end of the initial eligibility period, providers who wish to have each of their education and training programs continue to be included on the *Eligible Training Provider* List (ETPL) must complete a review of continued eligibility. After the first continued eligibility determination, programs will be reviewed for continued eligibility on a biennial basis.

Information Submission Requirements

For continued eligibility of programs, the provider must submit the following information through the renewal process in the data management system located at http://www.iowaworks.gov:

- Program-specific performance information regarding participants, including:
    - The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter and fourth quarter after exit from the program
    - The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
    - The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one (1) year after exit from the program
    - Information on recognized post-secondary credentials received by program participants
    - Cost of attendance, including the cost of tuition and fees
    - Completion Rate

- A description of how the provider provides access to training services, including to rural areas, including the use of technology
- A description of the degree to which training program(s) align with in-demand industries and occupations in the State, as identified in State and Local Plans
- Any applicable state licensure requirements of training providers
- A description of training provider's ability to offer industry-recognized certificates and/or credentials through the program
- A description of training provider's ability to offer programs that lead to post-secondary credentials
- A description of the quality of the program of training services including a program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential
- A description of the ability of the providers to provide training services that are physically and programmatically accessible for individuals who are employed and individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities
- The timeliness and accuracy of the eligible training provider's performance reports
- Relevant information reported to State agencies on Federal and State training programs other than programs within WIOA Title I

Iowa's WIOA compliant data management system, IowaWORKS, requires providers to submit the required data elements for all students in a training program including WIOA participants. Once submitted by providers, it is reviewed by the ETPL Program Coordinator and approved accordingly. Data is then shown on the customer facing side. An example can be found here: https://www.iowaworks.gov/vosnet/CIS/CRS/crs_programdata.aspx?enc=2pWzCNDNz8d3ac4VWqaxQTl5FjvN3gw7E8Sq33a14OfuZ+QMzDDAkfFOPljEGhnUILe+gQU8SgVia5o1LNRf2jbJ+nPzZ+i4Vbzvr8IUhhR3iDQCHVrablxjgfh/ZZ64udHFX7bQ3ojuE6wrPHWeBvMBqB5eFNGCtE4vmx2f11/5BVcI6OADzzDt9I2Ai9OZ+7aLR59nbbYJ/BBbaHozPLMbnuPjV5xZN4XkOEDrrO+QpYoeiW43/A6vuFvBVG8R

4. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR THE PRIORITY FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS, OTHER LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF WIOA SEC. 134(C)(3)(E), WHICH APPLIES TO INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES AND TRAINING SERVICES FUNDED BY THE ADULT FORMULA PROGRAM

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

<u>Iowa policy 8.3.3.2 Adult Priority of Service:</u>

WIOA establishes a priority requirement with respect to funds allocated to a local area for adult individualized career services and employment and training activities; there is no priority

applied for receipt of basic career services. Funds must give priority to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, individuals who are basic skills deficient, and individuals with barriers to employment. Priority must be implemented regardless of the amount of funds available to provide services in the local area.

Veterans and Adult Priority of Services

Veterans and eligible spouses continue to receive priority of service for all DOL-funded job training programs, which include WIOA Title I programs. A veteran must meet each program's eligibility criteria to receive services under the respective employment and training program.

Application of Priority

In regards to WIOA Adult funds, priority must be provided in the following order:

1. To veterans and eligible spouses who are also included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA Adult formula funding. This means that veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient would receive first priority for services with WIOA Title I Adult formula funds for individualized career services and training services.
2. To non-covered persons (that is, individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA Title I Adult formula funds.
3. To veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups.
4. To priority populations established by the Governor and/or Local Workforce Development Board (Local WDB).
5. To non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA.
6.

Priority of Service for Adult Program Funds

1. Recipients of public assistance
    a. Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
    b. General Assistance (GA)
    c. Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA)
    d. Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
    e. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
    f. Other income based public assistance
2. Low-Income Individuals
    a. Receives, or in the past 6 months has received, or is a member of a family that is receiving or in the past 6 months has received, assistance through the SNAP, TANF, SSI under Title XVI of the Social Security Act, or state or local income-based public assistance program; or
    b. Receives an income or is a member of a family receiving an income that in relation to family size, is not in excess of the current U.S. DOL 70 percent Lower Living Standard Income Level Guidelines and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines, or
    c. Is a homeless individual, or

d. Is an individual with a disability whose own income meets the income requirements above, but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet this requirement.

3. Individuals Who Are Basic-Skills Deficient must meet at least one of the following:

    a. Lacks a high school diploma or equivalency and is not enrolled in secondary education; or

    b. Is enrolled in Title II adult education (including enrolled for English Language Acquisition); or

    c. Has poor English-language skills and would be appropriate for ESL, even if the individual isn't enrolled at the time of WIOA participation; or

    d. The career planner makes observations of deficient functioning, and, as justification, records those observations in the data management system; or

    e. Scores below 9.0 grade level (8.9 or below) on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE); Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) or other allowable assessments as per National Reporting System (NRS) developed by the U.S. Department of Education's Division of Adult Education and Literacy; or

    f. Individual does not earn the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) (e.g., one or more of the scores are below a Level 3 on the Workplace Documents, Applied Math, or Graphic Literacy assessments).

4. Individuals with Barriers to Employment. Individuals with barriers to employment may include:

    a. Displaced homemakers

    b. Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians

    c. Individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities

    d. Older individuals (age 55 and older)

    e. Ex-offenders

    f. Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system

    g. Individuals who are:

        i. English language learners

        ii. Individuals who have low levels of literacy (an individual is unable to compute or solve programs, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, or in the individual's family, or in society); and

    h. Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers

    i. Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers

    j. Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime TANF eligibility

    k. Single parents (including single pregnant women)

    l. Long-term unemployed individuals (unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks)

m. Underemployed Individuals. Underemployed individuals may include:

i. Individuals employed less than full-time who are seeking full-time employment

ii. Individuals who are employed in a position that is inadequate with respect to their skills and training

iii. Individuals who are employed who meet the definition of a low-income individual

iv. Individuals who are employed, but whose current job's earnings are not sufficient compared to their previous job's earnings from their previous employment, per state and/or local policy

The above list is used only for applying priority for the individual to receive individualized career services and training services. Certain individualized career services or training services may require pre- and post-test scores to measure skills gain for the specific activity; in this case the determination is made by administering an acceptable skills assessment or by using scores from any partner's previous assessment.

Local WDBs must develop, and include in their local plan, policies and procedures for determining priority of service for adults.

Monitoring policies have been drafted and are being refined prior to going to the SWDB for approval. Program year 2019 monitoring procedures have been developed and are outlined in Field Information Memo: 19-05, which includes a review of the application of Adult Priority of Service. Iowa plans to review Adult Priority of Service requirements within its annual compliance monitoring of each local area within the state.

5. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S CRITERIA REGARDING LOCAL AREA TRANSFER OF FUNDS BETWEEN THE ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

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

Field Information Memo: 21-01 outlines the process for the transfer of funds between Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. WIOA 683.130, and Iowa procedure accordingly, allows up to 100 percent of a program year allocation for Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to be transferred between Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. The following process must be used when initiating transfer of funds between programs.

To request a transfer of funds, the LWDB Chair is required to complete the WIOA Title IB Adult and Dislocated Worker Transfer of Funds Request Form by April 30th of the program year. The following information must be included in the request:

1. Amount of funds requested to be transferred, including which program and funding allotment the funds are requested to be transferred to and from.

2. Current labor market information and/or general economic conditions of the local area to assess justification for the request to transfer the funds, for example, current unemployment rates that explain the need for more or less funding in one program or information on a mass layoff event in the local area.

3. Summarization of the outreach process the LWDB has used to recruit and market the availability of services for the programs.

Once this process has been completed, a program coordinator provides IWD Financial Management with a signed copy of the WIOA Title IB Adult and Dislocated Worker Transfer of Funds Request Form to initiate the transfer of funds.

C. WITH RESPECT TO YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED IN SECTION 129 OF WIOA—

1. IDENTIFY THE STATE-DEVELOPED CRITERIA TO BE USED BY LOCAL BOARDS IN AWARDING GRANTS OR CONTRACTS FOR YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AND DESCRIBE HOW THE LOCAL BOARDS WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ABILITY OF THE PROVIDERS TO MEET PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES BASED ON PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR THE YOUTH PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 116(B)(2)(A)(II) OF WIOA IN AWARDING SUCH GRANTS OR CONTRACTS.[11]

1. 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.[1]

Iowa policy 1.4.8.1 Service Provider Procurement and 1.4.8.2 Allowable Methods for Competitive Procurement of Service Providers was approved by the SWDB in September 2019 and will become effective during program year 2019.

When selecting an entity as the service provider for youth workforce investment activities, the Local WDB must consider the entity's programmatic and fiscal integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance and other factors that demonstrate transparency and responsibility.

State policy requires that local boards award grants for local youth activities through a competitive procurement process in accordance with their local procurement procedures which must be in compliance with the provisions of applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations and based on recommendations of the Local Youth Committee and/or Workforce Development Board.

The procurement must be a process that provides for full and open competition and avoids even the appearance of a conflict of interest (either individually or organizationally). Procurement actions must be conducted in a manner that provides for full and open competition and prevents the existence of conflicting roles that might bias judgment and cause unfair competitive advantage. Such actions must assure separation of those who develop or issue the solicitation, or are involved in the selection process, from those who bid upon it. Supporting documentation of the history of each procurement action must be maintained. Such documentation must include a rationale for: the method of procurement, selection of contract type, contractor selection or rejection, and the basis for the contract price. Such documentation also includes evaluation criteria or rating factors to support the provider's ability to perform successfully, with consideration given to integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance, in addition to financial and technical resources, that follow state and federal guidelines.

Contracts must be awarded based on the vendor's:

- Ability to deliver services to the targeted population in accordance with locally established guidelines;
- Experience in working with youth in similar programs and activities;

- Past and current collaboration with other service providers
- Past performance record, including both programmatic and fiscal integrity;
- Understanding of and commitment to meeting goals and objectives; and
- Demonstration of understanding of and commitment to continuous improvement methods.

All policies supporting Iowa's WIOA Youth program can be found at:
https://epolicy.iwd.iowa.gov/Policy/Home

[1] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

2. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH AS DESCRIBED IN 129(A)(1)(B), INCLUDING HOW IT WILL LEVERAGE AND ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE.

2. 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.

Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) are encouraged to establish youth standing committees to provide information and to assist the Local WDB with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth, which must include community-based organizations with a demonstrated record of success in serving eligible youth. It is intended that these committees will set local area procedures and oversee efforts to expand and enhance services to out-of-school youth, including the selection of youth services providers that demonstrate the capacity to ensure successful programmatic outcomes. Currently identified youth standing committees have representation across core programs and other one-stop partner programs.

The State WDB appointed Youth Standing Committee has identified areas of focus of the committee are expanding system capacity, standards for 75 percent out-of-school youth services and improving work-based youth activities. Strategies to improve these outcomes include outreach, building capacity of educators, institutional partnerships, educating businesses, facilitating connections to statewide support systems, family engagement and youth engagement with business. The committee will continue working to refine strategies surrounding the areas of focus with everchanging economic, workforce and education conditions in Iowa.

The State has continuously met the needs of out-of -school youth since the inception of WIOA according to the requirements outlined in legislation and regulations. Iowa has recognized the intention of the law and the necessity to serve this population to ensure that young adults with no connection to education or the workforce have a mechanism in which to become connected through the WIOA Title I Youth program or other available programs. As such, Iowa has not pursued a waiver to the 75% out-of-school youth requirement, and as stated previously, has continuously met this requirement as a state.

Additionally, the State has placed a great deal of emphasis on education and training of career planners in the AJCs to ensure they have the tools to effectively serve individuals through WIOA, including Title I out-of-school youth. Training is delivered through bi-weekly sessions to field staff which focuses on case management, system requirements, policy implementation, etc. To

supplement this method of training, an annual youth summit was initiated in PY21. A Youth Winter Forum was held with a focus on youth work experiences. Ensuring understanding and implementation of the focus and importance on youth work experience opportunities will in turn ensure out-of-school youth are adequately targeted for service provision in this area. Future annual summits will continue to be facilitated by the State which will include targeted focus areas to enhance service delivery for Title I youth, including out-of-school youth.

In addition, Iowa's Youth Workforce Program Coordinator has recently completed a series of technical assistance sessions with each local workforce development area, and plans to continue recurring meetings with youth service providers to provide on-going guidance, technical assistance, and promising practices regarding youth services, including outreach and services impacting out-of-school participants

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]

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.[1]

Iowa policy 8.2.5.0 Program Elements outlines that local programs must make each of the 14 youth elements available to youth participants. The full policy can be found at: https://epolicy.iwd.iowa.gov/Policy/Home. Local programs may determine what services a youth participant receives based on their objective assessment results and individual service strategy. Local programs are not required to provide every element to participants, and should partner with other entities to provide program elements that cannot be provided by the local program.

Monitoring policies have been drafted and are being refined prior to going to the SWDB for approval. Program year 2019 monitoring procedures have been developed and are outlined in Field Information Memo: 19-05, which includes a comprehensive review of files and case management of Title I programs from application to exit. This will include, but is not limited to, compliance with Title IB program policies, compliance with state and local policies, and data entry into Iowa*WORKS*. Iowa plans to review these requirements within its annual compliance monitoring of each local area within the state.

[1] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)

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.

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.

Iowa policy 8.2.3.4 Additional Assistance outlines the criteria for both out-of-school youth who require additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program and in-school youth requiring additional assistance to complete an education program, or to secure and hold employment. The full policy can be found at: https://epolicy.iwd.iowa.gov/Policy/Home, and states:

Youth who require additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment, includes:

1. Migrant youth
2. Incarcerated parent
3. Behavior problems at school
4. Family literacy problems
5. Domestic violence
6. Substance abuse
7. Chronic health conditions
8. One or more grade levels below appropriate for age
9. Cultural barriers that may be a hindrance to employment
10. American Indian, Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian
11. Refugee; or
12. Defined as needing "additional assistance" by the Local Workforce Development Board within local policy

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.

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.

The definitions of the terms attending school and not attending school were presented to the State WDB and approved in September 2019. These terms can be found on the e-Policy site at: https://epolicy.iwd.iowa.gov/Policy/Home, and states:

Attending School

When an individual is homeschooled, attending classes, or is registered to begin classes at:

- A public or nonpublic educational institution offering any grade kindergarten through twelve;
- An alternative school program; or
- An institution providing post-secondary instruction which uses "college," "academy," "institute," "university," or a similar term in its name to imply that the individual is primarily engaged in education

Not Attending School

When an individual is:

- Not attending, or registered to attend, any school and has not received a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- Not attending, or registered to attend, any school and has either graduated from high school or has an equivalent diploma; or
- Attending a program through: Adult Education and Literacy, YouthBuild, Job Corps, a high school equivalency program or a dropout re-engagement program.

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.

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.

Iowa uses the definition of basic skills deficient contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B) as follows:

Basic Skills Deficient

An individual who:

- Has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
- 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.

State Policy defines how to determine if an individual meets this definition by providing a list of allowable source documentation, including acceptable forms of verification and documentation.

Acceptable Verification and Documentation for Adults includes:

- Standardized assessment
- Verification of enrollment in a Title II adult education program or an ESL program
- Case notes (career planner's observations of deficient functioning)
- Self-certification that the individual lacks a high school diploma or equivalency
- Self-certification that the individual has poor English language skills and would be appropriate for ESL even if the individual isn't enrolled at the time of WIOA participation

Acceptable Verification and Documentation for Youth includes:

- Copy of any generally accepted standardized test
- Transcript with a failing grade in a math or reading during the most recent academic year
- Case notes (must have verified status with appropriate entity)

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).)

This section does not apply to Iowa.

4. A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ONE-STOP PARTNERS.

This section does not apply to Iowa.

5. THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS USED TO AWARD THE SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR TITLE I ACTIVITIES.

This section does not apply to Iowa.

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.

This section does not apply to Iowa.

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.

This section does not apply to Iowa.

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.

This section does not apply to Iowa.

E. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

Waiver Request #1

Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) WIOA No. 15-16, "Competitive Selection of One-Stop Operators," states:

The WIOA Joint Final Rule requires that a competitive process he conducted at least once every four years. The requirement to use a competitive process for one stop operator selection is set forth in WIOA sec. 12l(d)(2)(A). Due to this statutory requirement, the competitive selection process for one-stop operators in all Local Areas cannot be waived. While the Local WDB must select the one-stop operator through a competitive process at least once every four years, a State may require, or a Local WDB may choose to implement a competitive selection process more often than once every four years.

TEGL No. 15-16 makes clear that the Secretary of Labor will not waive the requirements relating to the competitive designation or certification of the One-Stop Operator (OSO). But it appears to leave open the possibility of waiving eligibility requirements for the OSO. These eligibility requirements arc in WIOA section 121(d)(2), which states:

To be eligible to receive funds made available under this subtitle to operate a one-stop center referred to in subsection (e), an entity (which may be a consortium of entities)-

1. (A) shall be designated or certified as a one-stop operator through a competitive process; and
2. shall be an entity (public, private, or nonprofit), or consortium of entities (including a consortium of entities that, at a minimum, includes 3 or more of the one-stop partners described in subsection (b)(l)), of demonstrated effectiveness, **located in the local area,** which may include-
    a. an institution of higher education;
    b. an employment service State agency established under the Wagner Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. ,49 et seq.), on behalf of the local office of the agency;
    c. a community-based organization, nonprofit organization, or intermediary;
    d. a private for-profit entity;
    e. a government agency; and
    f. another interested organization or entity, which may include a local chamber of commerce or other business organization, or a labor organization.

Iowa requests a waiver of the requirement in WIOA section 12l(d)(2)(B) that the entity that is the OSO be "located in the local area." Eliminating this requirement will allow multiple Local WDBs to jointly select an entity to serve as the OSO for their local areas even if the entity is not located in one of the local areas. Performing the OSO role remotely for the comprehensive one stop center(s) and local area(s) in which the entity is not located will allow participating local areas to save money on the OSO.

If there is one one-stop operator working for multiple local areas, services would be more consistent across the state. Iowa would expect a measurable increase in referrals from partner programs as consistent processes are utilized. Additionally, we estimate a cost savings of 20% of WIOA funds spent on OSOs for local areas who utilize this waiver.

In regard to the impact of this waiver on individual customers, services will be improved on consistency. Given an expected increase in referrals, it is expected that participation numbers will increase thus providing more Iowans WIOA services.

To monitor the effectiveness of this waiver, a specific monitoring related to OSO procurement for all local areas will be conducted during PY22; the State will review all OSO contracts and procurement processes for each local area and determine if the waiver was utilized. If a local area did utilize the waiver, comparison will be made on previous OSO contracts to determine cost savings. Additionally, an audit of program referrals year over year will be conducted to determine if a single OSO across multiple local areas resulted in an increase in referrals.

The State engaged in consultation sessions to elicit feedback from local stakeholders on the contents of the State Plan. As a part of these consultation sessions, this waiver was specifically reviewed and no feedback was received. Consultation regarding this waiver was conducted twice, once during the original PY20 submission and the PY22 modification.

Due to the realignment of Local Workforce Development Areas effective July 1, 2020 and delayed OSO procurement policy from the State, most LWDBs have only had an OSO in place for less than 1 year. This has prevented the state from determining effectiveness to date. It is imperative for Iowa to be granted this waiver for the remainder of the PY20-PY23 State Plan for LWDBs to utilize this waiver.

Current OSOs have been engaged with State monitoring efforts and Customer Satisfaction Survey development virtually since their procurement with positive engagement and results. The State in unaware of any complaints of OSO engagement.

The following supporting information is provided:

1. The statutory and regulatory requirements are identified above, within the waiver request.
2. There are no State or local barriers that would prevent the implementation of this waiver.
3. This waiver request will help Iowa's local workforce development areas (local areas) to fulfill the WIOA requirements for OSO competitive selection despite limited federal funding.
4. The State anticipates that this will help program outcomes by allowing Iowa to use less money on OSOs, which will free up funds for use in other areas to meet WIOA requirements.
5. This waiver request will help local areas, including Local WDBs, by allowing them to combine their efforts and resources when competitively selecting an OSO, which will allow them to find cost efficiencies that would otherwise be unavailable.
6. Iowa will continue to monitor local areas and Local WDBs for WIOA compliance, including with respect to the competitive selection of OSOs. Iowa will collect and include information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA annual report.
7. Iowa will post waivers for a public comment period as part of the WIOA State Plan prior to submitting the waiver request.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

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

The State Plan must include	Include
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;	
10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.	Yes
11. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3);	Yes

ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	72.5%	72.5%	73.0%	73.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	66.0%	66.0%	67.0%	67.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$5,500	$6,100	$5,600	$6,100
Credential Attainment Rate	65.0%	65.0%	66.0%	66.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	44.0%	44.0%	44.0%	44.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter	81.0%	81.0%	81.5%	81.5%

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
After Exit)				
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	81.5%	81.5%	82.0%	82.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$8,500	$8,900	$8,600	$9,000
Credential Attainment Rate	69.0%	69.0%	69.5%	69.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	31.0%	44.0%	32.0%	44.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	73.0%	73.0%	74.0%	74.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	73.0%	73.0%	74.0%	74.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$3,700	$3,700	$3,800	$3,800
Credential Attainment Rate	59.0%	56.0%	59.0%	57.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	41.0%	41.0%	41.0%	41.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR WAGNER-PEYSER PROGRAM (EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)

A. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL STAFF THE PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES UNDER THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT, SUCH AS THROUGH STATE EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO STATE MERIT STAFF EMPLOYEES, STAFF OF A SUBRECIPIENT, OR SOME COMBINATION THEREOF.

Iowa will continue to utilize merit staff to provide Wagner-Peyser services.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF TO ENSURE STAFF IS ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

Iowa*WORKS* offices develop annual strategic plans to ensure that all team members are provided ongoing training opportunities that will enhance their knowledge on a range of topics from workforce related programs to professional development. Iowa*WORKS* team members are cross-trained, as appropriate, to increase staff capacity, expertise, and efficiency. Cross-training allows staff members from differing programs to understand every program and to share their expertise about the needs of specific populations so that all staff can better serve all customers. Staff development incorporates the learning and awareness of required and optional partner programs as well as other community and faith based initiatives and organizations are provided in the following contexts:

-
    - Iowa*WORKS* Team Meetings (All core partners are invited)
        - Conducted every Wednesday morning for one hour
        - Topics range from customer service to program specific updates, Priority of Service, team building, conflict resolution, and community partner and employer presentations
        - Other topics are scheduled on an as needed basis specific to the Center needs.
    - Iowa*WORKS* Team Meetings (Individual teams meet for 30 minutes each morning to discuss topics that are relevant for that specific team)
        - Business Engagement, Welcoming, Exploratory, and Career Services
    - Additional Quarterly Meetings
        - Iowa*WORKS* Leadership Meetings, Business Engagement Team Meetings
    - February and October (Federal Holidays)
        - Safety
        - Procedures & Policy Reviews
        - EEO and ADA
        - State Workforce Initiatives such as Future Ready Iowa and Home Base Iowa

- Other relevant topics as identified by Local Areas, Partners and/or the State.

Throughout the course of the year a variety of professional development opportunities are available by and to each of the partners within the workforce delivery system. During the spring of 2019, Iowa*WORKS* leadership team traveled to five locations in Iowa and trained all AJC partners on the new Standard Operation Procedures that were developed. A shared drive was established to house all SOP related documents as well as folders for team members to share best practices. Additionally, in the summer of 2019, a training bureau was established and will be charged with ensuring that professional development practices are appropriate to the current needs of the workforce system beneficiaries, providers and employers.

During the spring of 2019, Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) was invited to Iowa to engage our core partner leadership teams in a discussion regarding WIOA integration. Following the training, Iowa*WORKS* partners met with together with their teams to discuss the strategies that WINTAC discussed. Iowa*WORKS* team members (Title 1, 3, and 4) met and completed the Integration Continuum, assessing their current level of engagement between the core partners. Following the assessment, teams discussed the outcomes of the assessments; identified opportunities to strengthen or improve partnerships; and developed short-term and long-term goals for ongoing evaluation for informing, shaping and measuring efforts and outcomes. This provided a renewed focus on how core partners are cross-trained and work together to deliver services in our Iowa*WORKS* and all core partners plan on continuing this strategic planning.

In addition to the WINTAC project, all local areas have Disability Access Committees which regularly evaluate our centers and provide training to our core partner team members. Recently, ADA accessibility training was conducted for team members and DAC members. In collaboration with IVRS, our team members provide ADA accessibility evaluations for employers.

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

Iowa continues to incorporate Unemployment Insurance services in the IowaWORKS Centers. Iowa's Unemployment Insurance Division regularly provides UI training at basic and advanced levels. The trainings are conducted in person with occasional virtual sessions. Team members from field offices attend these classes as local management determines necessary and provides in-service training to IowaWORKS Center staff when appropriate. Additionally, online policy and procedure documents are available for any team member or partner staff to access if needed. The library of documents is in a keyword searchable format. This process has been very beneficial to ensure the most recent version of a procedure is available when handling UI issues.

Each of the IowaWORKS Centers and satellite offices have staff trained in recognizing and referring UI eligibility issues for adjudication. During these training sessions, local staff are encouraged to proactively identify and provide assistance to identified individuals on a case-by-case basis. If a local office team member has a question about a claimants' situation, IWD has a direct messaging system the team member can contact a UI expert in the main IWD office in Des Moines for assistance.

In addition, Iowa participates in the RESEA program which provides additional opportunities for addressing UI concerns while connecting customers with employment services.

B. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION AND MEANINGFUL ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING ASSISTANCE IN FILING A CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION THROUGH ONE-STOP CENTERS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA AS A CAREER SERVICE

All customers who visit an Iowa*WORKS* center will receive a warm welcoming and will complete basic registration. Our integrated Career Planners will ensure all center customers have seamless access to all Iowa*WORKS* services. Career Planners provide informational only services to those customers who are seeking the ability to conduct self-directed/guided job search. These services, which Iowa refers to as, Exploratory Services, are provided immediately and continuously without further eligibility or documentation requirements. These Basic Career Services, are to include Labor Exchange Services, Labor Market Information, initial skills assessments, workshops, program eligibility information, Email assistance, and basic information regarding resumes and unemployment. When an Iowa*WORKS* Career Planner determines that a customer will benefit from Individualized Career Services, or when a customer expresses interest in additional services, to obtain or retain employment, these services will be made available to the individual. After the individual completes the appropriate application, the individual will meet with a Career Planner for a one-on-one appointment and complete enrollment into either Title I or Wagner Peyser depending on the needs of the participant.

Iowa's Unemployment Division is a One-Stop partner that provides a robust menu of services to UI claimants/unemployed individuals in partnership with the American Job Center Division. These individuals receive services beyond what they could obtain on their own using self-service tools including but not limited to staff-assisted services.

Iowa provides participants with a seamless, one-stop experience that includes a professional level of service provided in a timely manner.

Iowa provides the following access to services:

- Each One-Stop has team members that are trained in UI in order to provide meaningful assistance. Team members are able to assist customers in filing their UI claim and provide the claimant with their rights and responsibilities. The team members are able to offer assistance to claimants with barriers such as Limited English proficiency, disabilities or other barriers.
- Each One-Stop has partner program staff physically present and all team members in the One-Stop are trained on partner programs and are able to provide meaningful information to customers about the partner programs.
- Each trained UI team member is able to submit questions or eligibility issues to the main UI department through technology. All team members working on the One-Stop have the ability to call the ACD UI line to get additional assistance for a customer if necessary. All One-Stop Operations Managers have access to the UI Benefits Managers if needed to assist a customer.

All offices have dedicated phones for customer use that can be used to dial directly into the UI customer service line for assistance if a team member is not available in person. All Wagner-Peyser Career Planners have received basic UI training and can answer basic unemployment related questions. Career Planners are able to submit questions or eligibility issues to the main UI department through technology if additional assistance is needed.

All Iowa*WORKS* Centers have dedicated phones for customer use to contact the UI customer service line for assistance if a Career Planner is not available in person. Additionally, all Iowa*WORKS* Career Planners have the ability to call the UI line to obtain additional assistance for a customer if necessary. Iowa*WORKS* Operations Managers also have access to the UI Benefits Managers if needed to assist a customer.

Trained State Merit Staff will provide meaningful Unemployment Insurance (UI) appointments for individuals who require more in-depth assistance or guidance in resolving UI issues.

UI appointments are reserved for those individuals who require staff-assisted services (beyond self-service or information-only service). Any individual who requires these staff-assisted services will meet with a Career Planner prior to the appointment, complete the Wagner Peyser (WP) enrollment, and provide any additional Individualized Career Services and/or referrals that the participant may need to be successful in their job search.

Career Planners will encourage and facilitate access for center customers to all appropriate career services at each and every center visit to continuously engage them in the service delivery process until employed in self–sufficient employment. Business Engagement Team Career Planners meet one-on-one with individuals who are job ready and who express interest in receiving staff-assisted job search services. These Career Planners schedule mock interviews, facilitate job developments, and refer to employer led workshops.

C. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UI CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

Integrated Service Delivery

The State of Iowa will provide reemployment services to UI claimants and other unemployed individuals using an integrated service delivery.

- Integrated data systems - RESEA, Rapid Response, TAA and WIOA Title I Dislocated Workers program use a common data system. This data system displays services, case notes, workshop attendance and the overall progression of the UI claimant/unemployed individual.
- Streamlining case management and assessments - Each program is able to see case notes and services provided to the UI claimant/unemployed individual. eliminates duplication of services and assessments.
- Job Search and Training Services - The One-Stop provides a variety of job search activities including but not limited to job search workshops (resume building, interviewing, career planning, mock interviews, application assistance and a variety of

other workshops), hosting job fairs, employer meet and greets and assistance in filling out online/paper employment applications. The One-Stop has a direct referral process to training programs to provide short term training for high demand occupations through a variety of partner programs including but not limited to Adult Basic Education, Vocational Rehabilitation and WIOA Title I. These services are available to all UI claimants/unemployed individuals.

- Helping UI claimants access the full range of on-line and in person services delivered through the American Job Centers - All UI claimants that come in person to the American Job Center is provided information on the range of services offered by the One-Stop. UI claimants are also encouraged to visit the website and the One-Stop when call the UI ACD call center. This includes entering information into database to receive job alerts that meet their skills and abilities.

- Ensuring Claimants Meet Eligibility Requirements-

    - Iowa continues to incorporate Unemployment Insurance services in the Iowa*WORKS* Centers. Iowa's Unemployment Insurance Division regularly provides UI training at basic and advanced levels. The trainings are conducted in person with occasional virtual sessions. Team members from field offices attend these classes as local management determines necessary and provides in-service training to Iowa*WORKS* Center staff when appropriate. Additionally, online policy and procedure documents are available for any team member or partner staff to access if needed. The library of documents is in a keyword searchable format. This process has been very beneficial to ensure the most recent version of a procedure is available when handling UI issues. Each of the Iowa*WORKS* Centers and satellite offices have staff trained in recognizing and referring UI eligibility issues for adjudication. During these training sessions, local staff are encouraged to proactively identify and provide assistance to identified individuals on a case by case basis. If a local office team member has a question about a claimants' situation, IWD has a direct messaging system the team member can contact a UI expert in the main IWD office in Des Moines for assistance.

    - All customers that are selected to participate in an initial or sub RESEA program will complete a UI Eligibility Review to ensure the claimant is conducting appropriate work search contacts and is registered for work in the database system. The RESEA program staff have been fully trained in UI and are able to issue immediate decisions if an eligibility issue arises. There is an immediate feedback loop between UI program staff and the American Job Center for potential eligibility issues. The issue is reported via technology and then the UI program can establish a fact finding if necessary.

- Ensuring all Claimants are notified of all deadlines and eligibility requirements associated with the TAA program/seamless communication with case managers

- Working with rapid response teams

- Providing effective services for Veterans that file for UCX - Veterans that file for UCX will be profiled for the RESEA program to ensure services are offered early in the Veteran UI claim and is connected to the menu of services in the American Job Center. If these Veterans are identified as having a significant barrier, a referral to a local DVOP will be made to provide additional services.

- Undertaking strategies to promote entrepreneurship

Connecting UI claimants to career services through the RESEA (Reemployment Services & Eligibility Assessment) program

Initial RESEA Program

The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) program is a program to assist individuals receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits. The program connects participants with in-person or virtual assessments and reemployment services through local American Job Centers (AJC). Activities include, but are not limited to, developing an individual reemployment plan, providing labor market information, identifying job skills and prospects, and reviewing claimant's continued UI benefit eligibility.

The following items will be reviewed/discussed at the RESEA appointment:

- Discuss the purpose of the appointment
- Complete Wagner-Peyser enrollment
- Review of UI claim
- Review weekly job searches and reemploynment activities submitted by the claimant
- Unemployment Eligibility Assessment
- Review of work registration and quality information entered into database to set up Virtual Recruiter to receive job lead notifications
- Discussion on occupation, salary expectations and work availability
- Discussion on utilizing Iowa*WORKS* for job searching, and reemployment services
- Labor Market Information for claimant's occupational profile will be provided
- Available community resources
- Referrals to core partner and other partner programs
- Brief review of resume
- Register in Iowa*WORKS* Orientation and will register claimant for four weeks of Virtual Job Club
- Complete a re-employment service plan

Following the RESEA initial appointment RESEA customers enter the following information into their Iowa WORKS account in order to receive quality job referrals.

- Name, mailing address, email address
- Education
- Last 10 years or 3 jobs (whichever is less) employer or experience, including internships, volunteer work or military experience
- minimum of 20-word job description
- 6 job skills selected
- Virtual Recruiter must be set up
- Resume Status must be searchable/visible to employers

SUB RESEA Program

The SUB Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) program is a program to assist individuals receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits. The program connects participants with reemployment services through local American Job Centers (AJC). Activities include, but are not limited to, developing an individual re-employment plan, in depth resume assistance, business engagement meeting referral, discussion on job searching progress and job referrals and reviewing claimant's continued UI benefit eligibility.

The following items will be reviewed/discussed at the SUB RESEA appointment:

- Discuss the purpose of the appointment
- Review weekly job searches and reemployment activities submitted by claimant.
- Unemployment Eligibility Assessment
- Intense review of resume for occupation.
- If it is not "usable" for job searching the RESEA Career Planner will sign up the customer for a resume writing class. The resume will then need to be emailed and approved by RESEA Career Planner
- Discussion on occupation, salary expectations and work availability
- Customer will be registered for four weeks of A Game
- Discuss additional targeted re-employment questions
    - Applying for more than 3 jobs per week?
    - How many interviews and what companies in the past 4 weeks?
    - What is preventing you from securing a job?
    - What workshop did they choose during their initial?
    - What takeaways did they learn from the class?
    - Did they sign up for watch any other workshops?
    - Verify email address and that they are checking it regularly
- Refer them to three jobs from our website that match their skills
- Referrals to core partner and other partner programs
- Make a referral to Business Engagement team if resume and claimant is "business ready."

REEMPLOYMENT CASE MANAGEMENT STATE INITIATIVE (RCM)

The Reemployment Case Management (RCM) state initiative designed to assist individuals receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits to be connected to reemployment services and employment. The program connects participants with in-person or virtual assessments and reemployment services through local American Job Centers (AJC). Activities include, but are not limited to, developing an individual reemployment plan, identifying job skills and prospects, and reviewing claimant's continued UI benefit eligibility on a regular basis.

The following items will be reviewed/discussed at the RCM appointment:

- Discuss the purpose of the appointment

- Review weekly job searches and reemployment activities submitted by claimant.
- Referrals to core partner and other partner programs
- Additional re-employment services will be assigned

D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE W-P FUNDS TO SUPPORT UI CLAIMANTS, AND THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN W-P AND UI, AS APPROPRIATE INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

The coordination between employment services and UI claimant services is essential to ensure an integrated approach to reemployment service delivery. The services described in section (c) are often provided by Wagner Peyser team members. The services provided include but are not limited to the following:

- Job Search and Training Services - The One-Stop provides a variety of job search activities including but not limited to job search workshops (resume building, interviewing, career planning, mock interviews, application assistance and a variety of other workshops), hosting job fairs, employer meet and greets and assistance in filling out online/paper employment applications. The One-Stop has a direct referral process to training programs to provide short term training for high demand occupations through a variety of partner programs including but not limited to Adult Basic Education, Vocational Rehabilitation and WIOA Title I. These services are available to all UI claimants/unemployed individuals.
- Helping UI claimants access the full range of on-line and in person services delivered through the American Job Centers - All UI claimants that come in person to the American Job Center is provided information on the range of services offered by the One-Stop. UI claimants are also encouraged to visit the website and the One-Stop when call the UI ACD call center. This includes entering information into database to receive job alerts that meet their skills and abilities.

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

The One Stop focuses on providing a variety of employment related labor exchange services including but not limited to job search assistance, job referral, and placement assistance for job seekers, re-employment services to unemployment insurance claimants, job seeker assessment of skill levels, abilities and aptitudes, career guidance when appropriate, job search workshops, referrals to training and recruitment services to employers with job openings. Services are delivered in one of three modes including self-service, facilitated self-help services and staff assisted service delivery approaches.

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

Claimants that are not expecting to return to work must register for work in Iowa's database. When a claimant files an unemployment insurance claim online, they will answer questions to determine if there is still a job attachment and whether or not they will be required to complete work searches. If the claimant is required to complete work searches, the application system will check to see if the claimant has an active resume on file with our IowaWORKS system for their work registration. If they do not have an active

resume, the claim application will take them through a series of questions to get the claimant registered for work. When the application is submitted, the information provided on their application will be transferred to the IowaWORKS system to create their account (if one does not exist), create a resume and set the resume to be online and searchable by employers. If a customer files a claim by phone in a few circumstances, the customer is instructed to complete the online work registration. If a customer is selected for the RESEA program, the claimant's information entered in the work registration is reviewed and additional information is required to be entered into the system to increase the number of job alerts.

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

All customers that are selected to participate in an initial or sub RESEA program will complete a UI Eligibility Review to ensure the claimant is conducting appropriate work search contacts and is registered for work in the database system. The RESEA program staff have been fully trained in UI and are able to issue immediate decisions if an eligibility issue arises. There is an immediate feedback loop between UI program staff and the American Job Center for potential eligibility issues. The issue is reported via technology and then the UI program can establish a fact finding if necessary. The One-Stop provides a variety of job search activities including but not limited to job search workshops (resume building, interviewing, career planning, mock interviews, application assistance and a variety of other workshops), hosting job fairs, employer meet and greets and assistance in filling out online/paper employment applications.

Continued Eligibility Work Search Requirements:

- Unless waived by IWD, individuals are required to make a minimum of two job contacts each week. The work search requirement may be waived if an individual is temporarily unemployed and expects to be recalled by their former employer within a reasonable period of time or is approved for Department Approved Training (DAT). The work search requirement will be determined each time a claim is filed. In order to meet the work search requirements, individuals must make two job contacts between Sunday and Saturday of the week they are claiming benefits.

- Method and results of contact IWD recommends keeping detailed records of those efforts. Members of a union hiring hall are required to be in good standing and must contact the union in accordance to hall rules.

Ability to Work and Availability for Work Individuals must be able and available for work while claiming benefits. It is important to notify IWD of any condition or situation which would prevent an individual from working, accepting work, or looking for work.

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

The One-Stop has a direct referral process to training programs to provide short term training for high demand occupations through a variety of partner programs including but not limited to Adult Basic Education, Vocational Rehabilitation and WIOA Title I. These services are available to all UI claimants/unemployed individuals.

IowaWORKS Career Planners are trained in the basic eligibility requirements of all WIOA Core programs as well as community resources that might be beneficial to our customers. Our integrated service delivery system provides our customers assistance with employment applications, resume assistance, assessments, skills development and employment services programs. Career Planners provide information to participants on community resources, Labor Market Information, HiSET (high school equivalency program), occupational training, on–the–job training and support services. Additionally, Career Planners share the ETPL with participants so they may make an informed decision on training providers. They also provide information on GAP/PACE, Title I programs, Future Ready Iowa Last-Dollar Scholarship, and other grants and scholarships that they may be eligible for. Career Planners identify participants' needs, assist with unemployment insurance, employment and reemployment assistance, trade services, workshops and training. When Career Planners identify that a customer may benefit from a referral, they facilitate a "warm handoff" to our core partners. Currently, each local area tracks these referrals with their own system. In the future, Iowa plans on utilizing our IowaWORKS (Geo) system to place and track referrals, both initial and follow ups.

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.

See the following section.

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

Top five labor-intensive crops

Based on information from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa leads the nation in corn and ranks among the leaders in soybean production. Other top crops include oats, hay, red clover, flaxseed, rye and wheat. Iowa's primary fruit production is apples. Top vegetables grown in the state include cabbage, cucumbers, green beans, onions, potatoes and sweet corn.

Agricultural employer needs

Agricultural employers in Iowa primarily hire seasonal workers from within their communities. It is becoming harder for these employers to fill their workforce needs with local workers. More and more they are using farm labor contractors to recruit workers. Additionally, employers are experiencing a decline in the number of farmworkers willing to migrate for seasonal opportunities. One reason for this decline is younger populations are not interested in migrating long distances as were previous generations. Many opt to stay closer to their permanent residences in southern states where climates allow for more year round farming opportunities. Older generations are retiring and being supported by their younger generations who are not entering the farming industry at the levels their parents and previous generations once did. As a result, there is a shortage of available migrant workers from which to recruit. The H-2A visa program is on the rise in Iowa. The majority of these jobs provide labor for construction needs on farms (The H-2A program allows U.S. agricultural employers anticipating a shortage of domestic workers to bring non-immigrant foreign workers to the U.S. to perform agricultural labor or services of a temporary or seasonal nature.).

Employers have expressed difficulties in communicating with non-English speaking workers and the need for either workers to be more fluent in English or additional staff who are bilingual/multilingual and can act as translators for the employer.

Employers are requiring an increased need for individuals with advanced training and skills to operate equipment on their farms. Farm applicators are in high demand and require additional training and skills. Additionally, there is a shortage of workers with driver's license and/or a CDL license for employers to hire. An increasing number of agricultural jobs are requiring the ability to perform multiple job duties, including driving farm equipment

Economic, natural, and other factors that are affecting agriculture in Iowa

Weather affected Iowa farmers more in 2019 than in recent years. The negative impact to Iowa's economy from flooding will reach $2 billion as farmers struggle with damaged grain, massive cleanup, and impassable roads and bridges to fields and livestock. The Iowa Farm Bureau Federation says the losses to farmers along the flooded Missouri River ripple throughout the economy, driving the state projected $1.6 billion in damages higher. The flooding in Iowa was not only vast, but with a lasting impact to affected areas.

Land erosion creates major economic issues for Iowa. Soil erosion causes serious problems for farming, surface water, plant and animal life, and the residents of Iowa. It is the number one pollutant of Iowa's waters. It threatens our environment for two reasons: 1) soil is eroded from areas where it is needed, e.g. tillable acres, and must be removed from areas where it is not wanted, e.g. drinking water, reservoirs, lakes and ditches; 2) loss of topsoil reduces available natural plant nutrients and organic matter, leading to heavier reliance on commercial fertilizers. Soil run-off causes many other costly problems as well.

3. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS MEANS SUMMARIZING MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKER (MSFW) CHARACTERISTICS (INCLUDING IF THEY ARE PREDOMINANTLY FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES, WHAT LANGUAGE(S) THEY SPEAK, THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MSFWS IN THE STATE DURING PEAK SEASON AND DURING LOW SEASON, AND WHETHER THEY TEND TO BE MIGRANT, SEASONAL, OR YEAR-ROUND FARMWORKERS). THIS INFORMATION MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DATA SUPPLIED BY WIOA SECTION 167 NATIONAL FARMWORKER JOBS PROGRAM (NFJP) GRANTEES, OTHER MSFW ORGANIZATIONS, EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, AND STATE AND/OR FEDERAL AGENCY DATA SOURCES SUCH AS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL) EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION

The SWA received data on numbers of MSFWs they work with from Proteus, Iowa's NFJP grantee. This data was requested by the SMA and information received was used to determine peak season numbers, low season and year-round activity. The majority of Iowa's farmworkers

are from Mexico, and predominantly from the states of Zacatecas, Dugrango and Tamaulipas. Many of these individuals have relocated to Iowa and work as seasonal workers. Those who migrate during peak season (July through September) reside in Texas or Mexico during the winter and migrate to Iowa during peak season to work. The primary language spoken is Spanish. While workers are predominantly from Mexico, Iowa has Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW) from Costa Rica, Central and South America, South Africa, and the Ukraine. During the peak season, Iowa estimates more than 10,700 MSFWs working in the state. Non-peak season in Iowa is January-March when the number of MSFWs drops to approximately 2,630.

Language Barriers

Many MSFWs lack English language skills which creates a communication barrier. This barrier makes it difficult to look and apply for employment, attend training, complete paperwork and obtain a job that will provide a livable wage. All outreach workers in Iowa are bilingual, speaking English and Spanish. Almost all of Iowa's American Job Centers (AJCs) employ individuals who speak Spanish. All AJCs have access to a language line that provides interpretation services.

Available resources

MSFWs in Iowa have many resources available to them, however, the lack of knowledge of these resources creates a greater need - the ability to access these resources. Iowa's outreach workers meet with individuals within their communities to provide information and educate them about available local resources.

Health Issues

Limited access to medical, public health, and preventive care services has consequences, especially among these isolated populations. New and older workers come unprepared to face the daunting work in the field which can lead to the need for medical care. Health needs also arise due to underlying health issues. Pregnant women need assistance as they are exposed to extreme heat and field conditions.

Housing

The lack of affordable rental housing in rural Iowa creates a need for Iowa's MSFWs. Many, if not all, migrant workers who come with Farm Labor Contractors (FLCs) are required to pay for their own housing. These housing locations are not inspected prior to occupancy and are only inspected if the Iowa Department of Public Health receives a complaint. Other Iowa housing locations provided by FLCs are not reported or issued a housing permit. Outreach workers are only made aware of these locations when conducting outreach at worksites. MSFWs routinely complain about the lack of clean housing, overcrowding and high rent payments paid to the FLC. They are left with no other choice as they are here only for a short time and have no other accommodation options.

Public Benefits

Iowa's MSFWs often need assistance with public benefit applications or to appeal application denials. Migrant workers often do not understand they can apply for food assistance while living in Iowa as a migrant worker. Outreach workers have contact with the Iowa Department of Human Services across the state to assist with the completion and processing of these applications. Outreach workers help MSFWs complete these applications online as well. Additionally, seasonal workers in Iowa may be eligible for Medicaid. This is another program for which outreach workers provide application assistance.

Mistreatment and lost wages

Iowa has experienced an increase in complaints from MSFWs about mistreatment and not being paid wages owed. Outreach workers in Iowa conduct vigorous outreach across the state. While conducting this outreach, MSFWs are informed about their work rights and the complaint system. Many times after the outreach worker leaves, the MSFW will contact the outreach worker to file a complaint. MSFWs must be paid for all hours worked and not be mistreated by employers. The majority of complaints are against farm labor contractors operating in the state.

Education

There is a significant need for educational resources that focus on this population. Workshops for the general public are offered in AJCs, however, Spanish-language workshops are not offered. Many MSFWs do not have a resume and may not understand the importance of maintaining an update-to-date one. Many of Iowa's MSFWs have less than a high school education. Although Iowa's AJCs market career development to everyone who walks in the door, the MSFW population is less likely to take advantage of those resources. Because this population is less likely to visit a center, it is crucial, and required, outreach workers make available AJC services, or provide information on what services are available within a center, where they work and congregate

Social Isolation and Chronic Poverty

Due to the inherent isolation of this population, many issues arise such as lack of transportation and all that results from decreased mobility. Many MSFW cannot independently seek employment or supportive services even if they wanted to and/or knew how or where to go for such services. Childcare is a noted need of many MSFW families, but is difficult to secure, afford and access within the isolated MSFW communities.

Most MSFW populations live at or near the poverty line and are also considered to be underemployed. Currently, AJC efforts and resources are focused primarily on individuals who are chronically unemployed.

4. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

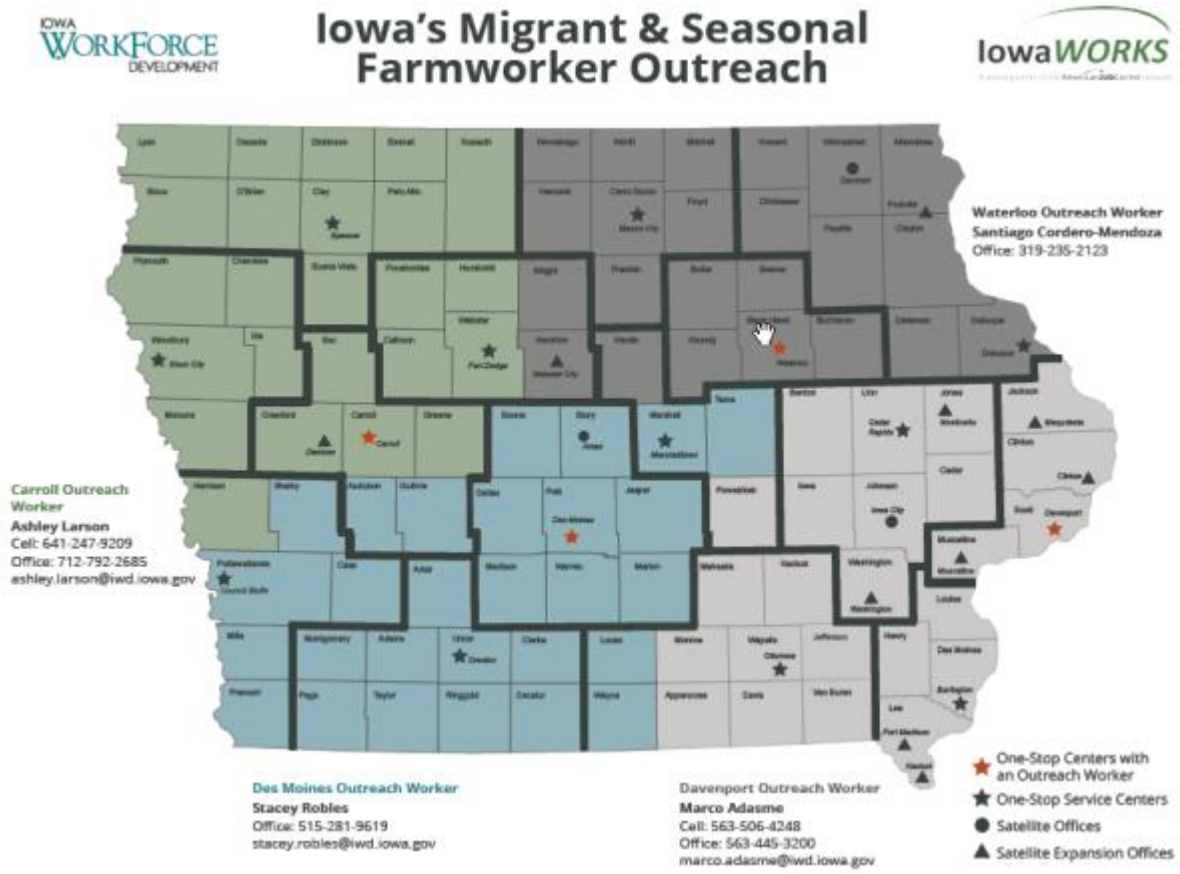
See the following sections.

Reaching Farmworkers

Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) serves the agricultural community through its outreach program designed to contact MSFW who are not being reached by normal intake activities conducted at the AJC.

Iowa plans to continue strengthening cooperative partnerships with the National Farmworkers Jobs Program (NFJP), Proteus; the Iowa Department of Education; and Iowa Legal Aid to conduct outreach activities to enhance the service offerings to MSFWs.

IWD currently has four outreach workers. The outreach workers are strategically placed across the state to allow outreach to be conducted in each county without more than a two-hour drive. This allows the outreach workers to visit each local office in their area at least once each month. The new IWD outreach map aligns with the Iowa NFJP grantee outreach map. This allows for improved joint outreach across the state.



Utilizing technology

Outreach workers each carry an Apple iPad to assist in recruitment efforts. These iPads are used to register MSFWs on location. MFSWs are able to search for jobs and make referrals to employment without traveling to an AJC. Outreach workers assist in resume writing, job search activity, and job referrals all from the MSFWs location and at times convenient for the MSFW.

Communication

Outreach workers are using social media to reach MSFWs. They use several different mobile apps and will continue to review new apps as they become available. MSFWs use of technology continues to increase. Text messages are used, when appropriate, by outreach workers to contact MSFWs.

Departure meetings

Iowa's outreach workers continue to attend onboarding events when the workers arrive for the season, and are exploring the option of departure meetings with employers. Departure meetings will be held on the last or near last day of work with MSFWs. These meetings will focus on how the MSFW's season went with the current employer, the possibility of returning to the same employer next season, and other job opportunities available in Iowa. Departure meetings will be beneficial to both employers and MSFWs.

Community event

Community events, coordinated by IWD outreach workers, will be held outside of MSFWs working hours. These events will be held in areas of the state that have the largest concentrations of MSFW populations. Local organizations from within the community will be invited to provide information about their organizations. Other organizations that serve

MSFWs will be invited to attend. By providing these events, MSFWs will gain knowledge of available services and how to access these services.

Outreach Workers Schedule

A normal day for an outreach worker is 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. These work hours can make it difficult to contact MSFWs, because MSFWs often have the same work hours. As expected, employers do not like to have MSFWs away from work during peak season. In 2020 outreach workers will begin to work outside of their normal hours to allow for more targeted outreach. This effort will increase Iowa's outreach contacts.

Employer Visits

It is important for IWD to establish positive working relationships with Iowa's agriculture employers. Employers are more willing to open their doors to outreach workers if they have been contacted prior to the season and understand the benefits of working together. Outreach workers will me with employers in the off-season to explore needs for the upcoming season. This will help open the door for them when the workers arrive. Outreach workers will discuss the previous season and advise of any changes employers could make for the upcoming season in relation to the hiring and recruitment of workers.

Resources

Iowa's AJCs offer materials about available resources. Unfortunately, not all of this material is translated into Spanish. AJCs review the provided material and determine what needs to be translated and submit it to the IWD Communications bureau. Material is required to be available to MSFWs in their native language.

Unique needs

Migrant workers often arrive with only a backpack of clothes and a willingness to work in Iowa. There is a great need for personal hygiene items, as well as food items for these workers. Each year outreach workers coordinate with local AJCs to collect items to distribute to MSFWs in their communities during onboarding events and while conducting outreach.

Regular Trainings to Outreach Workers

All outreach workers will receive annual training on local office procedures and on services, benefits, and protections afforded MSFWs by Employment Services. They will also receive training on the Employment Service and Employment-Related Law Complaint System, Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS), daily logs and reports, and joint outreach best practices.

New outreach workers will receive two weeks of training in the local office on local office procedures prior to receiving training conducted by the State Monitor Advocate (SMA). The SMA's training will include training modules from WorkforceGPS as well the complaint system, Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS), reports, MSFW definitions, and monitoring requirements for all new outreach workers.

Outreach workers will receive training annually from Iowa's NFJP, Proteus, at the state's annual meeting. This training will be conducted by both Proteus staff and the SMA; and will include services offered by Proteus, eligibility requirements, referral processes, and joint outreach opportunities.

Additionally, outreach workers will receive training annually on protecting farmworkers against sexual harassment and issues such as sexual coercion, assault, and human trafficking.

Iowa Agriculture Conferences

Outreach workers will attend conferences that focus on farmer associations and agriculture businesses. These conferences include, but are not limited to, Practical Farmers of Iowa, Iowa State Extension, Iowa Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference, Women in Agriculture, Agribusiness Showcase, Iowa Organic Conference, and Farming for the Future.

Conferences for Outreach Workers

Outreach workers are encouraged to attend one of the following conferences each year: National Farmworker Annual Conference (MAFO) which focuses on farm worker rights and laws or the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Program's Annual Conference (AFOP) which is the conference for the NFJPs and focuses on ways to collaborate with that organization. Outreach workers may attend any regional or national training provided by U.S. Department of Labor.

Unemployment Insurance training

Outreach workers will receive training from IWD's Unemployment Insurance division. Many times migrant workers will file unemployment in Iowa prior to returning to their home state. Outreach workers will be trained to answer basic questions that may arise.

Wednesday morning meetings

Every Wednesday morning local AJCs provide training to all center staff on various topics. Past topics include Title I, Registered Apprenticeship, Rosetta Stone software, Iowa Department of Transportation, and How to Handle Stress. Outreach workers are encouraged to attend these meetings in person whenever possible. These meetings may also be attended remotely, or listened to at a later date as they are recorded. These trainings provide valuable information about AJC services, partners, and resources available in the community. Outreach workers may attend meetings in any of the local AJCs they cover.

Professional Development

Iowa offers Performance and Development Solution (PDS) classes to all state employees. These classes offer a way for employees to continue professional development. Outreach workers will be offered the opportunity to attend classes.

Training Bureau

IWD has created a new training bureau to onboard new agency employees. All new outreach workers are encouraged to attend the new worker training provided by the bureau. As training classes are created, current outreach workers will attend when the training is beneficial.

WorkforceGPS

All outreach workers will create an account in WorkforceGPS and review all current training material. Outreach workers will attend all new webinars offered by the National Monitor Advocate. Outreach workers are encouraged to attend webinars held for the NFJP as well.

National Farmworker Job Program

IWD has strategically set up the MSFW outreach map to align with the NFJP's outreach map. This allows outreach workers and NFJP case managers to conduct joint outreach more effectively. Outreach workers invite NFJP case managers to all outreach events they attend where MSFWs are present. Outreach workers carry NFJP brochures to give to MSFWs and provide information about the program when case managers are unable to attend events. Outreach workers utilize an electronic form to submit all referrals to the NFJP. This enables these referrals to be tracked between the agencies. Outreach workers are able to complete this form while conducting outreach when they determine an individual is interested in the program. The SMA, outreach workers and their AJC managers meet with the director and case

managers of the NFJP quarterly to plan outreach activity and discuss upcoming events across the state. The current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be renewed July 2020.

Iowa Migrant Education

IWD is currently working on an MOU with Iowa's Migrant Education program. This MOU will set the foundation for joint outreach and collaboration moving forward. It will also assist in identifying data sharing elements that will aid in conducting outreach. Outreach workers currently attend events hosted by Migrant Education. During the summer, Migrant Education holds events at schools for students enrolled in summer reading programs. These events have assisted outreach workers in locating and identifying migrant workers. Outreach workers invite Migrant Education to all onboarding events where migrant workers are hired and families are present.

Iowa Legal Aid

IWD currently works alongside Iowa Legal Aid to conduct joint outreach to MSFWs. Iowa Legal Aid provides free legal assistance to MSFWs through the farmworker project. Legal services available include employment rights, taxes, health and safety, immigration, education, and housing. Every complaint IWD receives that requests a referral to Iowa Legal Aid is referred via the complaint form. Iowa Legal Aid attends outreach events with the outreach workers and addresses questions that arise during these events.

MSFW Coalition

The Iowa SMA and outreach workers are part of a MSFW coalition that meets quarterly. At each meeting an organization is invited to discuss the services they offer and how these services may assist MSFWs. The coalition discusses trends across the state and any issues that have arisen during the previous quarter. The coalition communicates using a Google Group, with emails sent to the Group and distributed to those in the Group. This ensures all participating agencies are receiving the same information. IWD will continue to be an integral part of this coalition.

Business Engagement Teams

Outreach workers will work alongside the business engagement teams in their local offices. They are encouraged to meet with each business engagement team monthly and set up a business outreach plan for the month. This outreach plan will target new agricultural employers in the area along with employers the AJC has worked with in the past. Plans will include when employers will be contacted, who will contact the employer, and which employers will be visited that month. Outreach workers will discuss the hiring needs of the agricultural employers in the area during this monthly meeting.

OSHA

IWD plans on creating new partnerships to reach additional MSFWs. A partnership with USDOL OSHA will assist outreach workers in locating MSFWs in the event of an accident on a farm or facility. In the past IWD was only made aware of these incidents if OHSA contacted them requesting information about an employer. Outreach workers can be of assistance to OSHA during an investigation with both interpretation and completion of documents. This will allow the outreach worker to document a complaint or apparent violation, if applicable.

Radio Stations

IWD is working to form relationships with local Spanish-speaking media outlets across the state. This relationship will help open the door for outreach workers to provide information to MSFWs via the radio. ARS job orders can also be promoted on the air. Radio stations are often

made aware of migrant workers who have come to the community to work. This relationship may open the door to new pockets of migrant workers within the community.

Department of Transportation

A relationship with the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) will assist outreach workers when questions are asked about driver's licenses or CDLs. Migrant workers here on an H-2A visa often will have questions about obtaining state-issued licenses. The DOT offices in rural Iowa are not always familiar with this type of visa. This partnership will provide education to DOT staff as well as education to the outreach workers.

Latino Coalitions

Local Latino coalitions are beginning to form across the state. These coalitions consist of organizations providing services to the Latino population in their community in a unique way. Iowa's outreach workers will become members of these organizations as they are formed and attend meetings regularly. It is important that outreach workers become familiar with the services available in the communities to which they provide outreach.

5. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

i. How career and training services required under WIOA Title I will be provided to MSFWs through the one-stop centers;

WIOA Title I partners will be trained on identifying MSFWs. Outreach workers will meet with Title I staff every month to review MSFW referrals. Outreach workers will utilize the referral form created at the AJC to make referrals to the Title I provider. When completing a referral to the NFJP, a dual referral will be made to the Title I provider, if applicable.

ii. How the State serves agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such services.

Business Engagement Team

Business engagement teams across the state currently write job orders for agricultural employers. They recruit for employers, offer job retention courses, and labor marketing Information. Hiring events are also held in the AJC for employers. Topics such as layoff aversion, unemployment insurance and human resource assistance are discussed with employers.

Spanish vocabulary classes will be offered to agricultural employers that utilize the ARS. These classes will be offered prior to the workers arriving at the job site. Commonly used words will be taught and a glossary of terminology will be handed out. Employers will have the opportunity to provide a list of industry specific words to be translated for them as well.

Business engagement teams receive annual training on the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS). Training includes how to market the ARS, what benefits employers receive from utilizing it, and how workers are recruited through the system.

The Labor Marketing Division assists in identifying agriculture employers. Outreach workers will work with this division to assist in identifying potential agriculture employers that hire on a temporary or seasonal basis.

The Iowa State Extension Office is a great resource for locating farmers that hire MSFWs. Extension offices work with farmers across Iowa to advance land-grant values, and will hold

farm tours to engage farmers in the community. Outreach workers will partner with extension offices to gain access to new farmers.

Practical Farmers of Iowa's mission is to equip farmers to build resilient farms and communities. Many of Iowa's farmers are part of this organization. Each year they hold field days on farms across the state. These field days offer the opportunity for AJC staff and outreach workers to get to know their agriculture community. Farmers from the area attend these field days as a way to engage with other farmers. This is the perfect opportunity to learn how farms operate.

Complaint system training is conducted annually for all AJC staff. It is important that staff understand the system in order to explain it to MSFWs. Each office has a designated complaint specialist along with a back-up person. These individuals receive additional training each year.

The MSFW Coalition will receive a presentation once a year on the importance of utilizing the established complaint system. This presentation will be given by the IWD SMA and outreach workers. Complaint forms will be shared with the coalition and they will be encouraged to utilize these forms.

Outreach workers will explain the complaint system during every onboarding event held with MSFWs. They will distribute business cards to each worker and ensure they know how to file a complaint if an issue arises. During every departure event the complaint system will again be explained to the MSFWs and complaints taken onsite if one needs to be filed.

Outreach workers will carry a checklist that must be completed for every onboarding event and departure meeting. This will ensure the topic of the complaint system is covered and explained to MSFWs.

IWD's complaint poster with the SMA's information is prominently displayed at every AJC. Additionally, it is posted inside every housing location that is inspected by outreach workers or IWD's designated agency. Agricultural employers are encouraged to post the complaint poster in break rooms were MSFWs gather.

Handbook

IWD currently utilizes several different marketing materials to promote the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) to agricultural employers and MSFWs. The current *Agricultural Recruitment System Handbook* is given to agricultural employers who hire seasonal labor and have had difficulty filling positions. Business engagement teams and outreach workers take the handbook with them when contacting businesses. The handbook will be updated to reflect current information.

Brochures

Two brochures have been created that give an overview of system benefits. One brochure targets the employer and the other provides information to the individual looking for work. The worker brochure describes the guarantees that are outlined in an ARS job order.

Marketing Videos

The IWD Communications division, along with the SMA and outreach workers, are creating marketing videos with testimony from an employer that utilized the ARS. This video will be shared on all IWD social media platforms to encourage employers to utilize this system. This video also will be shareable via email. An additional video will be created to attract individuals to Iowa to work on these contracts. It will share, from the workers' perspective, the benefits of working on an ARS contract. This video will be used in the recruiting process for employers.

IWD's SMA and outreach workers will present at conferences throughout the year that agricultural employers attend to market the ARS. This platform will raise awareness of the ARS and its benefits.

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. COLLABORATION

The SMA signed a MOU with our NFJP, Proteus, in February 2019. Although the MOU is required by the U.S. Department of Labor, IWD and Proteus went above and beyond in their agreement to ensure collaboration. Each year the two organizations hold a joint annual training. Topics are selected by both organizations, with the complaint system presented at each training. The organizations carry each other's marketing materials and invite each other on outreach activity. Outreach plans are shared to identify areas where outreach can be conducted together. Co-enrollment strategies have been developed to avoid duplication of services. An electronic referral form is used to make referrals to both agencies.

IWD has an active MOU with the U.S. Wage and Hour Division (WHD). This MOU was established to facilitate the sharing of information regarding complaints and apparent violations. A point of contact was established at each agency with the SMA being the point of contact for IWD. WHD is able to share information regarding the results of complaints and apparent violations submitted by the SMA. This MOU assists with the SMA's requirements to follow up with MSFWs who file complaints. IWD and WHD also carry each other's marketing materials and agree to jointly disseminate outreach material to MSFWs.

IWD will establish an MOU with Iowa Migrant Education during calendar year 2020. This MOU will be the start of a partnership. Both agencies want to collaborate on MSFW outreach efforts. A joint training was conducted in November 2019. This training allowed both agencies the opportunity to better understand the services each offers. The MOU will set training frequency, information sharing, outreach requirements and referral processes. It will be the first MOU established between the two organizations.

IWD will explore the option of establishing an MOU with Iowa Legal Aid during calendar year 2021. Currently the two agencies conduct joint outreach whenever possible, however this relationship can be expanded. Meetings will be held in calendar year 2020 to determine the need for an MOU. IWD would like to establish a third party authorization form to allow Iowa Legal Aid the ability to share information about complaint referrals and apparent violations.

B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

The state engaged in public consultation sessions to elicit feedback from local stakeholders on the contents of the State Plan. Iowa solicited public comments on the State's Unified State Plan in its entirety, including the Agricultural Outreach Plan. Other targeted stakeholders were notified of the posting and included the MSFW outreach workers; Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship; the NFJP grantee, Proteus; The Department of Education Migrant Program; Iowa Legal Aid Farmworker project; and Iowa's MSFW Coalition. The plan was also posted (or linked to) on all core partner websites with instructions on how to submit public comments. A statewide press release was issued by IWD and the Governor's office, a targeted and broad-based email notification was issued to all identified required and optional workforce partners, and the draft was publicly available on Iowa's Administrative Rules website. No comments were received as a result of the public comment period for the PY22 modification.

C. DATA ASSESSMENT

IWD met three out of the five equity indicators for PY18: Referred to Jobs, Received Staff Assisted Services, and Career Guidance. IWD did not meet the equity ratio for Job development

contacts. IWD provided 4% of Non-MSFWs job development contacts while only 0.4% of MSFWs received this same service. IWD did not track services for "referred to support services" during PY18 because of system limitations. Iowa implemented a new WIOA-compliant data management system, IowaWORKS, in June 2019. IowaWORKS allows IWD to more accurately record and track services. Iowa is now able to record and track all WIOA required services per TEGL 14-18. Additional training will be conducted during 2020 for all AJC staff on the importance of recording services provided to MSFWs and providing equitable services. Training will also be conducted to ensure AJC staff are able to identify MSFWs. Outreach workers will receive additional training on completing a Wagner-Peyser application while onsite with MSFWs. Outreach workers now have access to an IPad that allows them to take an electric application onsite.

Iowa experienced several vacancies in outreach worker positions during the previous plan period, which resulted in reduced services provided to MSFWs. In order to meet performance goals and provide effective and equitable services to MSFWs, IWD is committed to maintaining sufficient staffing of the Outreach Specialist position across the state. Additionally, the SMA will work with local leadership to ensure contingency plans are available and utilized to maintain service provision to MSFWs during periods of staff turnover. IWD recognizes the importance of providing equitable services to MSFWs and will strive to meet all of the equity indicators in the future.

D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Agricultural Recruitment System

IWD fully implemented the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) in 2017 and markets this system to agricultural employers in Iowa and surrounding states. Handbooks and brochures were created for both employers and potential workers. A total of 14 ARS job orders were created over the past three years. IWD will continue to promote and market this system.

Outreach workers attend monthly AJC staff meetings as stated in the prior AOP. They present on topics related to MSFWs and agriculture employers. These presentations raise awareness with AJC staff of the needs of MSFWs and agriculture employers.

Complaint System Training

Outreach workers, AJC managers and local office staff received complaint system training each of the last four years. This training was conducted by the SMA. A designated complaint system specialist was assigned in each AJC at the point of contact for all MSFW complaints. Training will continue to be provided annually.

Conferences

Outreach workers attended the MAFO conference every year as stated in the AOP. This conference gave outreach workers the opportunity to network with other states and learn promising practices in other states. Each year outreach workers attended local conferences within Iowa to connect with agricultural employers.

MOU

The SMA established an MOU with Iowa's NFJP February 2018. This MOU is required by USDOL; however, the SMA and NFJP included additional items to enhance collaboration. This MOU will be renewed in July 2020.

IWD's prior AOP focused heavily on H-2A housing inspections. Iowa's outreach workers no longer conduct housing inspections, allowing them to devote their time specifically to outreach. Iowa had several outreach worker position vacancies in the outreach worker position

throughout the last four years. Iowa needs to be fully staffed with four (4) outreach staff in order to meet the demands of the workers and employers. Continuing to increase coordination with our AJC partners will provide additional staff support when conducting outreach activities to workers and employers.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The State Monitor Advocate has reviewed, provided input to, and approved the Agricultural Outreach Plan in its current form.

The State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111 the State has eight significant MSFW one-stop centers. Each office has an outreach worker assigned to cover the area to conduct vigorous outreach activities. Each office employees a bilingual Spanish speaking staff member.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time (sec 121(e)(3));	Yes
2. If the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111, State Workforce Agency staffing requirements;	Yes
3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser Act services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and	Yes
4. SWA officials: 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services; 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued; 3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued; 4) Approve corrective action plans; 5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days; 6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and 7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing.	

WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	50.0%	60.0%	51.0%	60.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	55.0%	67.0%	56.0%	67.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$6,200	$6,600	$6,300	$6,700
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS

A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

Iowa has adopted and implemented standards-based instruction to promote the quality of adult education and literacy outcomes to prepare learners for success in adult education, postsecondary education, and employment. AEL funded providers use a student centered approach to facilitate participant progress by aligning curriculum and instruction with college and career standards. Providers lead and participate in local and statewide high quality professional development and training to support learners in achieving their educational and employment goals..

The FY21-25 Competitive Grant Application for AEFLA (WIOA, Sec 231 and Sec 225) required that all grantees adopt and align instruction to the CCRs, the English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards, Iowa's 21st Century Skills, and Adult Citizenship Standards. These challenging academic content standards are in accordance with Iowa's administrative rule 23.7(1) adopted January 14, 2015.

b. The development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous and scientifically valid research available; and

c. Appropriate reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition, distance education, and staff training practices aligned with content standards for adult education. College and Career Readiness standards are designed to prepare all adult education participants for postsecondary education and training, career advancement, and economic self-sufficiency.

The Iowa adult education and literacy team supports the implementation of academic content standards by supporting participation in national training to coach program instructors in the fundamental advances in instruction that the College and Career Readiness standards demand. Training for instructors includes critical information (methods and materials) about the CCR standards with a strong focus on level-specific instruction, standard aligned lesson plans and curriculum, and approaches to implementation of the CCR program-wide.

Iowa's English language acquisition programs are designed to support ELLs in becoming skilled in reading, writing, and comprehension of English, obtaining a high school credential, and supporting them as they move toward further education, training, or employment. The English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards for adult education ensure that English language learners (ELL) receive the focused and effective instruction they need to access Iowa's academic content standards. Program instructors participate in professional development in the ELP standards to address the need for educational equity, access, and rigor for adult ELL students.

Iowa increased access to core academic content for ELL by participating and supporting AEL providers' attendance in Standards-in Action 2.0 training cohorts. The national professional development opportunity addressed the needs of ELLs in two areas: language and content development. The materials and training aligned with the state-adopted standards and introduced the instructors' researched-based engaging activities.

Iowa has developed statewide online courses aligned with CCRS, ELP standards, and 21st Century Skills to adapt to the educational environment and increase access to high quality standard aligned content. The courses/modules in reading, writing, math, social studies, science and ESL are designed to incorporate content standards and researched based instructional approaches to engage participants in instructional material that is relative to adult learners. The courses teach skills in civics literacy, employability skills, financial literacy, health literacy, and digital literacy. The State continues to expand its catalog of online offerings by designing career essential courses for all levels of participants.

Local educational programs will continue to provide standards–based curriculum, instruction, and assessment focusing on the skills that enable learners to participate more fully as citizens, workers, and family members. The State will utilize its revised and enhanced monitoring and technical assistance process to track the continued alignment of lesson plans, online courses, curriculum, and assessments for preparation in transitioning learners successfully to further education or employment. The State will continue to deliver technical assistance and professional development related to intentional, standards-based instruction as determined through analysis of these measures.

B. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

The Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) is the State's Eligible Agency (SEA) for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds. The Department is responsible for administering the funds and providing program and performance oversight to grantees. AEL eligible providers competed and were awarded funds July 1, 2020 for a multi-year award and local providers will be funded for 5 years. Funding during this grant cycle will be based on their ability to meet demonstrated effectiveness and fulfillment of grant expectations which is measured annually through a status update, financial reports, program performance reports and monitoring.

During the program year 2020, the Department extended the due date for the grants due to the impact of the pandemic. Between May 1 and the announcement of awardees, all grant applications from eligible providers were reviewed based on the considerations specified in Sec. 231 (e) of WIOA. with additional state priorities, standards, and context. All eligible providers that can demonstrate effectiveness in providing adult education activities to eligible individuals were considered.

Grant applicants were required to describe their activities planned to support the adult education and literacy in their proposed service delivery area as well as their local workforce development area, using the previously submitted local plans which did not reflect the newly approved reduction in areas. However, applicants were asked to discuss (1) outreach efforts for attracting participants with low literacy skills to the program; (2) program design accommodations particularly focused on the needs of participants (i.e., child care, class times and locations, curriculum content, and materials); and (3) linkages established with education, workforce and community partners to facilitate the integration of services for participants. The Department has continued to consider an equitable and inclusive approach for services. These efforts have included reaching out to community, faith-based and local education agencies to share information and discuss potential partnerships or collaborations in addressing literacy and basic skill needs.

The grant application has been aligned with and awarded providers in alignment with subpart C for both sections 225 activities and 243 funds and will be monitored based on compliance and the following principles of Iowa's AEL Program Standards associated with high quality and continuous program improvement:

a) Learner Progress – Program provides an interactive intake procedure with information presented using adult education principles and is accessible to ALL learners. Informal and formal assessment and collaborative goal development are used to gauge learner progress, guide instruction, advising and other services that support a "successful" transition and demonstrate gains in abilities.

b) Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development – Curriculum development and instruction meets learners' needs and learning styles, is embedded in real-life contexts while anchored in standards. The program provides opportunities for all instructors to participate in on-going professional development with support in integrating new evidence-based strategies into instruction through practice, feedback, reflection, and observation to improve instructional practice.

c) Program Design and Leadership – Program serves the adult education needs of the community. Program leader provides vision, direction, resources, evaluation and support for all program operations and staff that is effective and equitable in the provision of adult teaching and learning.

d) Accountability – Program implements processes for fiscal and data management that ensures accuracy in reports, validity, reliability, privacy and security. Sufficient resources and training is allocated to implement the processes for financial and data management with clearly defined procedures and the ability to monitor program efficiency and effectiveness.

e) Community Interaction and Outreach – Program establishes a visible and valued presence in the community through outreach and local partnerships. Program recruits and coordinates with partners and local resources to ensure the continuation of services to adult learners in the community.

f) One-Stop System Integration – Program addresses design principles that support the alignment of core and required WIOA partners to ensure seamless integrated services that are accessible to all jobseekers, workers and businesses through unified strategic planning and shared governance.

Eligible providers are required to be a full-service adult education program in providing instruction for ALL educational functioning levels (EFL) (five Adult Basic Education (ABE) and all six English as a Second Language (ESL)), based on identified needs of the learners and the region. Funded providers are also charged with preparing adult learners for and support them in achieving successful transition to postsecondary education and training or employment which includes 21st Century Skills.

Eligible providers are required to offer these activities, per the Iowa WIOA Unified State Plan

- Adult education;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Literacy; and
- Workforce preparation activities.

Eligible providers may also offer any of the following, as needed, per 34 CFR Part 463.30, Subpart D:

- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- Family literacy activities; or
- Integrated education and training.

Eligible providers may also be able to offer up to twenty percent (20%) of the state's allocation on the following, as needed for the purpose of serving Corrections Education and Other Education of Institutionalized Individuals, per subpart C, 34 CFR Part 463, and Subpart F: Eligible programming for corrections education includes adult basic education, literacy, English language acquisition, adult secondary school completion and high school equivalency preparation, college transition, integrated education and training, and workforce preparation. Efforts should focus on increasing support and attention to reentry activities, enhancing access to College and Career Readiness educational opportunities and workforce preparation activities, and expanding access to support services that enable eligible individuals to transition to full, productive members of their communities.

Outreach Efforts

Each provider sets an enrollment target annually that will be measured and used for performance monitoring. Enrollment is also reviewed for co-enrollment as well as percentage of participants with multiple barriers to employment. These enrollment goals are part of a strategic effort to increase the skill set for adults in becoming future ready and connecting to the talent pipeline for employers in high demand industries. Some strategies that are encouraged by the Department include but are not limited to offering flexible schedules, increasing access to distance education including expanded resources for devices and connectivity, collaboration in providing support services and year–round activities in age–appropriate settings. In addition, an area of focus for Iowa is increasing the number of low skilled individuals successfully transitioning to certificate attainment, so efforts to increase connectivity with education and training beyond secondary education is reinforced with community college connections through navigators and student support services.

Program Design

Eligible local providers will be required to describe in their application for funds their process for development and/or approval of curriculum and evidence of how instruction meets learners' needs and learning styles, while embedded in real-life contexts anchored in Iowa's

Adult Education and Literacy standards (College and Career Readiness Standards, 21st Century Skills and English Language Proficiency Standards). All adult education, literacy, and English language acquisition activities are required to be based upon the Department's adopted content standards. Eligible providers were also required to detail their practice for ensuring high quality instructors are engaged in on-going professional development with support in integrating new evidence-based strategies into instruction through practice, feedback, reflection, and observation to improve instructional practice.

Providers are encouraged to be innovative in delivering instruction to include individual and group activities, to meet the diverse needs of adult learners. Adjustments to activities can be documented in the annual status update and might be the result of ongoing input from the local workforce development board which could include shifting local area demographics, workforce demands and education and training alignment as analyzed in the most recent local workforce development plan. Adult education programs offer a student–centered approach, in which instructors help participants set and achieve learning goals. Iowa adult education and literacy programs facilitate student progress by incorporating college and career readiness standards in instruction, sharing best practices and providing ongoing professional development and training for instructors, data specialists and coordinators of programs. Local programs measure educational levels and progress using standardized assessment tools and by following the assessment policy guidelines disseminated to programs annually. All funded providers will be required to record gains using the Tops Enterprise (TE®) online reporting system. The state and local providers use the data to analyze program performance.

The state benchmarks for each educational functioning level (EFL) remains the focus for all funded providers with performance–based funding and a targeted post–test rate established annually and posted in Iowa's Assessment Policy Guidelines. This performance data is reviewed monthly during webinar meetings with all funded providers. In addition, training from the state data specialist and publicly posted benchmark progression has made it possible for each provider to review local and statewide data. Iowa adult education and literacy programs help to ensure that adults have the skills needed to compete in the knowledge–based economy. This is in keeping with increasing economic opportunity and raising the standard of living in Iowa. Pilots have been conducted and will be expanded to partner with credit and non–credit courses to encourage the transition of adult learners to a career pathway. The pilots are designed to increase the number of adult learners earning transferrable credit, marketable credential, and/or entering postsecondary education.

A significant investment in distance education through a statewide common learning management system with standardized curriculum for adult learners aligned to CCRS standards has been under development for the past year with pilots launched in 2022. These efforts to broaden access to instructional services that are instructor driven have been supported by the use of Governor Emergency Education Relief Funds used to purchase technology and access devices

Adult Education and Literacy

As a requirement for all funded providers, the goal of Adult Basic Education (ABE) activities is to improve participants' basic skills in language arts and mathematics. ABE activities are performance oriented and deliver instruction through processes that facilitates, measure, and certify learning outcomes. In addition to offering comprehensive services to meet the diverse educational needs of participants and to prepare them to transition to postsecondary education and job preparation classes, activities are conducted within flexible time limits and are relevant to the practical needs of adults.

Adult education activities include literacy (reading and writing) and computational skills necessary for functioning at levels comparable to the skills needed to complete a high school equivalency diploma. Courses may be remedial for students or they may provide educational

opportunities for students who speak, but do not read, English. These activities are standards–based and are designed to teach the academic skills necessary for success, and to help participants acquire family sustaining employment.

With the incorporation of STAR (Student Achievement in Reading), managed enrollment has been encouraged by the Department for activities to provide direct explicit instruction in adult education and literacy classrooms. This delivery approach is research based and is evidenced through program performance. This shift in classroom management has required a transition period for AEL providers, but has been a required component for applicants to respond to in the grant application.

English Language Acquisition

As part of required core services, English language acquisition activities assist adults in becoming literate and obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self–sufficiency; assist adults who are parents in obtaining the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children; and assist adults in completing a secondary school education.

In order to prepare the English Language Learner (ELL) population for unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and integrate them into the workforce system, the Department will support extending the existing ELA activities with employability skills and integrating digital literacy skills. The ELA activities are required to align to the English Language Proficiency Standards. In their application for funds, eligible providers are required to describe the curriculum and instructional materials to be used (which includes reading, listening, comprehension and speaking) and any planned workforce preparation activities must align to Iowa's 21st Century Skills.

Within the ELA activities, participants are placed in appropriate skill–level classes through assessments of general language proficiency. There are six levels of instruction: beginning literacy, beginning low, beginning high, intermediate low, intermediate high, and advanced. The assessments for progressing from one level to another measure both general language proficiency and specific standards mastered.

The key objectives for adult education English language acquisition are to:

- Provide stress–free and comfortable learning environments in order to reduce anxiety that interferes with obtaining language fluency;
- Integrate language acquisition with relevant life experiences stressing the importance of critical thinking, problem solving, and self–sufficiency;
- Use proficiency standards for assessing the major accomplishments of the students;
- Develop students' receptive English language skills of listening and reading comprehension;
- Develop students' productive English language skills of speaking and writing;
- Provide students with the ability to use English that is accurate and appropriate in a variety of academic and social settings; and
- Provide students with English language and citizenship instruction necessary to successfully complete the citizenship application and interview process.

Workforce Preparation

With the increased awareness of the need for a workforce to be able to function in a highly technical environment, more emphasis is being placed on education. The adult education and

literacy program has responded to this focus by supplying their services either in business and industry or in the classroom. Collaboration, coordination, and cooperation have been the mainstays of the services offered by AEFLA funded providers from the beginning including: 1) effective referrals, 2) comprehensive assessment, 3) tracking participant goals and progress, and 4) data-informed decisions driving planned services for the participant. There has always been strong collaboration with federal employment training programs to help adults prepare for the workforce and become self–sufficient. Adult education and literacy programs, in their local communities, seek out working agreements with Iowa Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Iowa Department of Human Services, Iowa Department of Workforce Development, adult and juvenile court officials, and other service agencies.

All adult basic education must be based on the College and Career Readiness content standards with workforce preparation activities aligned with Iowa's 21st Century Skills. All workforce training services referenced in WIOA Section 134 (c) (3) (D), must be anchored on industry standards. Eligible providers are required to describe in their application for funds how the instructional materials to be used meets these requirements.

Integrated Education and Training (IET)

Iowa incentivized the delivery of IET and awarded ten of the 15 eligible providers effective July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2019 based on their application with an annual enrollment target of 400+ participants. Ongoing technical assistance and professional development has been offered to identify promising and best practices for program design. The integrated education and training activity as defined by WIOA Sec. 203 is a service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement targeted industry recognized credentials that aligns with Iowa's sector partnership efforts.

The Department's focus has been to promote the engagement of all core partners to blend adult education content, workforce preparation activities and workforce training. There are several examples for IET based on partnerships and designed to meet labor market demands in the local workforce development areas. These examples will be shared to encourage eligible providers in the PY2020 competition to offer IET and IELCE activities. Experience with the exploration of regional labor market needs and career pathway sectors; engagements with core partners; and workforce training with industry recognized credentials, such as in nursing, truck driving and welding, will ensure that the newly awarded providers have the required technical assistance to begin immediately offering this service approach to their participants. All workforce training services referenced in WIOA Section 134 (c) (3) (D), must be anchored on industry standards. Eligible providers are required to describe in their application for funds how the instructional materials to be used meets these requirements.

C. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

The Iowa Department of Corrections (IDOC) has been an excellent partner with Iowa's adult education and literacy programs. One of IDOC's major objectives is to provide educational and career and technical training to incarcerated youth and adults, to ensure a smooth transition for returning citizens and a reduction in the state's recidivism rate. The Iowa Department of Education will continue to work collaboratively with the IDOC in aligning their curriculum and student performance standards, data accountability system, and teacher training with the state administered AEL services.

Eligible providers may provide corrections education and education for other institutionalized individuals when such facilities are located within their service area. Priority shall be given to eligible individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program (WIOA§225). The IDOE will ensure that only up to twenty percent of the 82.5 percent of the local grants and contracts under Section 231 of WIOA is used for corrections education and the education of other institutionalized individuals, per federal regulations 34 CFR 463.61(a).

Recidivism definitions and terms used in Iowa's reporting of recidivism were developed by The Association of State Correctional Administrators (ASCA) to establish standard performance measures. The three-year recidivism rate for 2021 is 38.7% — 0.9% lower than the recidivism rate observed in 2020.The releases tracked are parole; discharges due to end of sentence; and sex offender releases to special sentence supervision.

Iowa's AEFLA funded providers enroll participants at state correctional institutions and through local correctional and institutionalized facilities. Effective through an MOU and the use of shared state leadership funds, all correctional programs are held accountable to the required WIOA performance except when excluded and are subject to Iowa's assessment policies. In PY 2020, data shows that 14 percent (1,101) of total periods of participation in adult education were corrections and institutionalized individuals. Of those, 42.1 percent achieved a measurable skill gain during their participation.

The IDOC's contract with educational providers, in partnership with the community colleges and the Iowa Department of Education work to establish the level of staff, curriculum and program standards to be offered in each of the nine state facilities. With additional focus on transition services and reducing recidivism, the use of Section 231 funds is being applied to support and extend the state funded academic programs to assist participants in acquiring the basic skills and competencies necessary to move from an institutional setting into the workforce and community.

The IDOC reports several implementation efforts, which include but are not limited to:

- Prioritizing institutional and community-based treatment for high risk individuals.
- Utilizing evidence-based programs.
- Improved and aligned reentry practices.
- Increased access to education and educational opportunities.
- Building capacity within apprenticeship programs.
- Training staff in core correctional practices (CCP).
- Enhanced case management training.

Programs will provide adult education instruction at all levels of basic academic skills, for students who meet the eligibility requirements for enrollment. Participants in correctional settings must qualify for adult education and literacy activities by lacking sufficient mastery of basic educational skills, or have not obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent. The use of funds will include all allowable activities detailed in Sec. 225(b)(1-8). Particular emphasis will be in developing programs that integrate the basic skills instruction with life skills, employability skills (which includes digital literacy) to help participants acquire necessary abilities to become and remain self-sufficient after leaving prison. Transition focused activities include pre-apprenticeship efforts as well as integrated education and training activates that are in partnership with the apprenticeship efforts. Corrections will continue to be a partner in the career pathway efforts to ensure that instructional activities are aligned with regional needs at each correctional location. Iowa's adult education and literacy program gives priority to serving

individuals who are likely to leave correctional institutions within five years of participation in adult education programs.

The department has been actively engaged with IDOC in securing initiatives and grants that prioritize the delivery and expansion of postsecondary education in correctional facilities. These efforts will partner with adult education in ensuring that a strong pipeline of college ready participants have the skills necessary to continue their educational pursuits. Two upcoming grants with Lumina and Ascendium will specifically focus on optimizing and expanding access to post-secondary education. These grants have allowed the hiring of statewide correctional education navigators to assist in developing educational plans for incarcerated individuals that in combination with the institution's treatment director will allow additional opportunities for returning citizens to access educational services.

D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) will leverage past experiences with providing English literacy and civics education in meeting the new requirements for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) under WIOA. Programs will be established through an application for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IECLE) and will follow subpart C and Section 243 to require applicants to provide a narrative describing plans to provide English language acquisition (ELA) that is aligned with the English Proficiency Standards and civics education along with program access to integrated education and training services. In addition, each program will ensure access to career advising for each participant while engaging in occupationally relevant education and training that is aligned to a regionally developed career pathway and Iowa's 21st Century Skills. The application will be reviewed and scored by the department to ensure compliance and quality of services. The review will take into account the following factors: selection committee's scoring and recommendations (scoring rubrics will be published on the AEL program website here); alignment of proposed applicant activities with needs for services in the intended service area; evaluation of cost of service relative to need and cost efficiency; evaluation of historic program data provided by the applicant; and evaluation of financial internal controls provided by applicant. During the grant year 2020-21, the department implemented a multi-year competitive application process for IELCE funding. Funding will continue based on annual performance and may be adjusted. IELCE awards will be based on the number of participants grantees are serving.

Section 243, IELCE, funds can be expended during the program year on personnel, contracts, software, travel, professional development, and supplies necessary, allocable and allowable to implement the IELCE program under the Uniform Guidance. These expenditures are to be reported on the quarterly expenditure claim reports in Iowa Grants. The Iowa Department of Education encourages providers to seek out partnerships that leverage workforce services for participants of the IELCE program. For example, a provider might collaborate with local WIOA partners to fund the training component of the IET activities.

The department plans to issue continual guidance and technical assistance to eligible providers on how to co-enroll participants in occupational training, and how Section 243 funds may be used to provide occupational training as part of an integrated education and training program, as appropriate.

There were 5 awards granted tor the years 2020-2025 ranging from $50,000 to $159,000.

The following steps were taken in conducting the IELCE competition:

- February 14: IDE publishes Request for Proposals (RFP).
- February 20: IDE provides a bidders' conference.
- April 3: Applications are due.

- May 1: Feedback from the LWDB is due.
- June 1: Department announces applicants that will receive funding.
- July 1: IELCE grant providers began multi-year grant cycle.

Current practices which have been adopted as an Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) program include the following service delivery model:

- An awarded eligible provider offers English language acquisition and civics education and/or blended learning instruction with embedded workforce preparation activities aligned to a specific career pathway; and
- Partner with another educational provider to provide an industry recognized relevant occupational certificate that support in-demand regional employers.

Recent examples of this model includes co-teaching in the manufacturing industry with a resulting certificate as a CNC operator (which has been identified through sector partnership work as in-demand occupation with clearly defined educational ladders and lattices to other training and occupational fields). This example includes integrated contextual and employability skills offered over a 16-week period. The course includes key objectives related to building basic skills and becoming certified through an occupational assessment. As appropriate, the training includes introductions to regional employers and hands-on training, internships or apprenticeships to build work experience opportunities for cohort participants. Other examples include on-site instruction in the food processing industry along with Certified Nursing Assistant licensure. Another strategy to ensure direct input and validation from local employers is to involve Coordinators with employer-driven, community-supported sector partnership initiatives. A common goal of these voluntary workforce, economic, and community development efforts is to better attract, train, and retain a skilled workforce within a respective industry sector and region. Underutilized populations, such as those in need of IELCE, are often addressed directly by these efforts through customized offerings and strategies. All of our IELCE providers subscribe to the final rule 34 CFR §463.37, integrated education and training is part of a career pathways strategy that supports acceleration in accordance with the definition of career pathways in section 3(7)(E) of the WIOA and, accordingly, within the scope of the program, the adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities, and occupational training should occur simultaneously and not sequentially.

Entities must provide annual status updates to demonstrate their effectiveness and how they have meet their grant considerations along with alignment with their local workforce development plans. To determine if a provider continues to receive funding providers will be monitored and required to demonstrate continuous quality improvement. Based on labor market information, IELCE providers will update their scope of activities annually which allows current details reflective of the newly approved workforce areas and their plans to direct the work with sector partnerships in developing career pathways for in-demand industries. These career pathways form the basis for integrated education and training (IET) activities for IELCE programs.

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

Iowa's adult education and literacy team is committed to the required state leadership activities and has identified a number of areas in which services are being provided through technical assistance or through targeted training. Funds under section 222(a)(2) will not exceed more than 12.5 percent of the AEFLA funds. Activities that support the required leadership activities include:

1. Funds will be used to build the capacity of local programs to coordinate and align services which will include cross-training core partner staff on intake/orientation, eligibility screening, and a common referral process. Additional efforts to align services include working toward a common distance education platform that integrates education and training of basic skills, employability skills and career and technical education.

2. In addition, the development of sector partnerships and subsequent career pathway development will continue to be a priority with a focus on aligning services as a participant transitions from adult education through integrated education and training to further their education and employment opportunities. A state advisory board for career pathways and sector boards has been formed to guide further discussion and development of unified definitions, an approval process and performance measures for evaluating effectiveness.

3. The state adult education and literacy program supports high quality professional development as demonstrated in the adopted Iowa Administrative Code 281:23.7 which defines the responsibility of the programs for providing professional development opportunities for professional and volunteer staff, including:

- Proper procedures for administration and reporting;
- The development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous and scientifically valid research available; and
- Appropriate reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition, distance education, and staff training practices aligned with content standards for adult education.

Professional development standards incorporated in the administrative code outline the minimum annual hours of instructor training, individual professional development plans, and monitoring of staff qualification and high quality professional development. A professional development management system is used to report professional development activities in adult education and literacy programs. The system tracks instructor professional development plans, hours of professional development attended (including required pre-service), and catalogs of state and local training.

State leadership funds are targeted to support high quality professional development activities. A data-driven planning process that includes monitoring, individual and local plans, and classroom observation, is used to identify professional development needs and to set priorities for each program year. Professional development activities include content standards implementation, evidence-based reading instruction (EBRI), adult learning, integration of the skills that matter, research-based instructional methodologies and approaches, effective program management (universal design), integrated education and training, bridge programming, transition to post-secondary education, use of technology, distance education, serving students with disabilities, and tutor training and recruitment. Recent professional development related to research-based training and technical assistance include Student Achievement in Reading (STAR); Teaching Skills that Matter (TSTM); Standards in Action 2.0; online instruction, and IET Design Camps. The adult education and literacy team will develop a statewide professional development system that includes the Professional Development Facilitator project concentrated on local program needs, state dissemination of products and information, and leadership development. Local adult education instructors from around the state will assist in the development of local professional development plans by identifying the greatest areas of opportunities for improvement.

4. Technical assistance will be provided to local programs to enhance program effectiveness, increase the ability of providers to meet established program, instructor and performance standards, and fulfill obligations associated with being a one-stop partner. Specific areas of focus include:

a. Increasing the capacity of instructors and programs to provide quality instruction in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition, and distance education via implementation of professional development activities and associated technical assistance such as:

- STAR training in alphabetics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension;
- Providing programs access and training on course development and instruction in Canvas, learning management system;
- Hosting an adult education and literacy virtual conference to showcase best practices and resources in areas such as:Educating Adult Refugees and Immigrants, Explore Google for Education Free Applied Digital Skills, Iowa Online Adult Education and Literacy courses;Developing Workflow and Process for IELCE Programs, and Canvas tutorials.
- Annual Adult Education and Literacy Summer Conference to equip AEL educators with the skills and knowledge participants need to be successful in the 21st century. Topics of note at the conference are leadership, career essentials for adult learners, teaching skills that matter, innovative classroom strategies, and Iowa's Distance Education Adult Learning (IDEAL) project. The conference engages adult education instructors, administrators, staff and advocates to strengthen leadership skills, build understanding of state initiatives, online teaching, integrated education and training, and community.

b. Enabling local programs to establish, strengthen, and maintain effective relationships with their regional core partners with common training on a system orientation, referral process, data sharing/reporting, and integration of education with occupational training, and sector partnership and career pathway development.

c. Using technology to improve program effectiveness through a professional development management system, developing standard aligned blended learning courses for reading, writing, math and language acquisition, online instructor and volunteer training through customized modules, and technical assistance focused on identifying and utilizing technology to enhance instruction, programming, and distance education.

5. Iowa's adult education and literacy team use a variety of methods to ensure that information about proven or promising practices and models is disseminated to local programs, practitioners and participants. These methods will include activities such as:

- Local program site visits to assess programs and to highlight core partners' areas related to partnerships, shared governance and collaboration;
- Sessions at state and local conferences showcase promising practices and models in areas such as creating a virtual classroom, distance education in Adult Education and Literacy, online educational resources aligned to the standards, using CASAS data to inform practice, integrating technology into the Adult Education classroom, and blended classrooms;
- Technical assistance showcasing promising practices and models;
- Monthly online coordinator meetings and data specialist trainings throughout the year to provide technical assistance on topics such as enrollments; reviewing the AEFLA applications, forms, and submission guidelines; assessment policies; financial reporting; fiscal reporting; developing budgets, and claims; retention of students; strategic planning; and Iowagrants.gov;

- Bi annual, leadership staff orientations to include training on topics such as program targets, financial claims, data management, and program monitoring and continuation of WIOA activities;
- Job descriptions which detail professional development activities based on the adopted Iowa administrative code;
- Dissemination of standards and annually updated handbooks; and
- A Statewide Professional Development Facilitator project that will establish professional development priorities and disseminate information.

Local programs are evaluated for effectiveness by the department through their status updates, oversight of data integrity, fiscal accountability as well as desktop and site monitoring.
For programs with reported findings associated with the administration of their grant, a corrective action plan is developed and approved by the state to track continuous improvement in identified areas of concern.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE

Iowa's adult education and literacy team uses funds made available under section 222 (a)(2) to provide activities such as the operation of professional development programs; the provision of technology assistance; development of curriculum implementing the essential components of reading instruction; program improvement and support; alignment studies with standards and competencies, incorporating 21st century skills; and promoting workplace adult education and literacy activities. Additional supported activities include coordination with other agencies to increase enrollment and successful completion in adult education programs and linkages with post-secondary institutions.

Online professional development offered through video conferencing, on-demand webinar recordings, or the learning management system make it possible for Iowa's adult education and literacy team to disseminate best practices in areas such as new instructor training, aligning academic standards with course content, developing models of integrated education and training, and accessibility to career pathways without disrupting local programs' services for adults. Online professional development improves consistency of instruction while reducing travel costs for trainers and participants. The state team, with the assistance of community partners, local AEL providers, and professional development facilitators will continue to develop online training opportunities that can be accessed at the convenience of the educator. These interactive professional development courses will include, learning management systems 101, teaching skills that matter, motivating the adult learner, blended learning models, integration of English language instruction with workplace education, and a continued focus on alignment of adult education activities with academic standards of reading, language arts, mathematics, and English language acquisition.

Iowa Distance Education Adult Literacy (IDEAL) initiative provides a single learning management system, Canvas, adopted for all providers through a partnership with the Iowa Community College Online Consortium (ICCOC).. High-quality, standards-driven, state master courses are developed and can be delivered entirely online and customized to add area specific content to address regional demands and the needs of the participants. Local providers will continue to offer face to face classes as usual and will use IDEAL to expand services while providing accessibility for participants that may struggle with attending in person classes. This system will assist in the implementation of technology applications and support the use of instructional technology in the adult education classroom.

Iowa has established professional development standards that detail professional development expectations and effective teaching strategies. Professional Development standards will assist

programs in providing state approved targeted training that is aimed at improving quality instruction to adult learners. In support of the professional development and instructor standards, the Professional Development Facilitator project is being implemented to concentrate on local program and statewide needs, state dissemination of products and leadership development. The professional development facilitators will consist of local adult education and literacy instructors who will collaborate with local providers to develop local PD plans and coordinate state level staff development activities. Adult education and literacy leadership activities will also include:

- Develop and disseminate guidance, documents, and models to align state policy with the qualification of staff and implement instructional standards for classroom management and high quality instructional practices;
- Expand Teaching Skills that Matter to all local programs;
- Increase the use of the STAR reading program with each funded program implementing the evidence based strategies in reading instruction; and
- Diversify the online professional development services

Activities supported by state leadership funds are evaluated by the following criteria:

- Statewide implementation, adoption, and diffusion into adult literacy instructional strategies, methodologies and curriculum infusion;
- Programs' alignment of professional development to Iowa's Adult Education and Literacy Professional Development Standards http://bit.ly/IowaDepartmentofEducation;
- Alignment with Iowa Administrative Code (IAC):281.23;
- Implementation of standards based instruction: lead standards approach; designing coherent units of instruction; conducting lesson studies; participating in peer groups; and engaging in classroom observations for continuous quality improvement;
- Long-term improvement in program outcomes measured by the state and local program's ability to continually meet the state negotiated benchmark levels; and
- Adult learner assistance to effectively meet personal and program literacy goals.

Surveys were conducted to establish a baseline of current practices and levels of integration for the one-stop centers. Based on this information, guiding documents were developed and disseminated to assist eligible funded programs in their roles and responsibilities associated with partnering with the one-stop centers. Training was developed to accompany these documents to assist with implementation and to help address barriers to ensure seamless delivery for the participant. The Department will continue to assess current practices and integration with the one-stop centers to maximize the impact of the adult education activities.

F. ASSESSING QUALITY

The Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) assesses the quality of Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funded providers on an annual and ongoing basis, including: professional development evaluations and reports; on site and desktop monitoring; program status updates; monthly performance reviews; and quarterly financial reviews. The results of these assessments provide the basis for program improvement actions and plans.

A. Professional Development Evaluation. Iowa administrative code 23.7(3) delineates the professional development standards for adult education and literacy providers. These standards drive the state's evaluation and continuous improvement process for staff development, including decisions informed by local program personnel. IDOE identifies priorities, analyzes effectiveness, and sustains continuous improvement of professional learning with data collected through participant surveys following all workshops, conference presentations, and other activities. The department conducts these surveys, manages event registration and evaluations, tracks participant hours of engagement, and monitors individual professional development plans through an online professional development accountability platform. Local program personnel likewise document self-assessments and classroom observations in the platform, thereby providing a full cycle of data from self-appraisal to the eventual impact of staff learning on instruction.

The annual state training plan includes priorities derived from surveys and training requests submitted through the professional development platform. Survey results and requests are reviewed to identify local technical assistance needs, define objectives, and determine the best delivery method. Annual priority areas include:

- New Coordinator Training. Provides new coordinators with information such as federal and state guidelines, data collection and National Reporting System (NRS) requirements, and resources needed to administer programs.
- Data Reporting and Program Improvement Training. Provides coordinators and data personnel with training on the fundamentals of the NRS, including monitoring, data analysis and collection, types of data and measures, assessments, data quality, and related information.
- Instructor Training. Provides information and resources to support instruction in the areas of high school equivalency preparation, evidence based reading instruction, math, college and career readiness, career awareness and planning, career pathways instructional strategies, and such standards as the English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards.
- Fiscal Accountability Training. Provides information and resources on financial management policies and practices for compliance with state and federal financial rules and regulations, including federal Uniform Cost Principles, factors affecting allowability of costs, documentation of expenditures, time and effort reports, cost sharing, and maintenance of effort. The IDOE requires AEFLA-funded providers to offer local personnel opportunities for professional development and it allocates state leadership funds to support efforts that focus on established priorities.

Actions to Improve Quality: The IDOE uses participant survey data, attendance hours, individual professional development plans and classroom observations, to make data-driven decisions about state-sponsored professional development, including revisions to future trainings. This allows the department to establish priorities based on issues in common among local providers. Challenges that are isolated to a local area must be addressed in the annual status update and, if persistent, require an improvement plan.

B. Monitoring. The Iowa adult education and literacy monitoring process examines the alignment of program policies, processes, and capacity with program standards and WIOA. IDOE also uses a risk-based quality assurance system to ensure student performance improvement, financial accountability, program quality, and compliance with federal laws and regulations. While local providers are encouraged to use the risk assessment tool for internal review, the IDOE completes an assessment annually to determine the appropriate monitoring strategy (virtual or on site) for each local entity.

The outcome of the annual risk analysis identifies programs at high, moderate, or low risk of noncompliance and determines the strategy appropriate for each provider, including virtual monitoring, improvement plans, or participating in the dissemination of noteworthy practices. The department also conducts an on-site monitoring visit to each provider during the five-year federal grant cycle (PY21-25). While virtual monitoring involves a targeted review of select standards, the on-site reviews address all program standards,

Six principles of program quality guide the annual monitoring of adult education programs. Benchmarks for each principle, described below, provide a framework for continuous program improvement and progress.

1. Learner Progress

a. The program provides an interactive intake procedure with information presented in a manner that is based on principles of adult learning and is accessible to all learners.

b. Informal and formal assessment and collaborative goal development are used to gauge learner progress, guide instruction, advising and other services that support a successful transition and demonstrate gains in abilities.

2. Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development

a. Curriculum is embedded in real-life contexts while anchored in standards.

b. Instruction meets learners' needs and learning styles.

c. The program provides opportunities for all instructors to participate in on-going professional development to improve instructional practice with support for integrating new evidence-based strategies in instruction through practice, feedback, reflection, and observation.

3. Program Design and Leadership

a. The program addresses access and equity and is responsive to the regional needs identified by key stakeholders, including learners most in need of services.

b. The program leader provides vision, direction, resources, evaluation, and support for all program operations and staff that is effective and equitable in the provision of adult education and literacy.

c. The continuous improvement planning process is purposeful, ongoing, and systematic and is focused on the program's effectiveness in supporting learners.

4. Accountability

a. The program maintains a stable financial condition operating in a financially sound and publicly accountable manner.

b. The program has a system for collecting and reporting data that ensures integrity and demonstrates achievement towards the state's negotiated benchmarks for enrollment and performance.

c. The program ensures accuracy in reports, reliability, privacy, and security of records.

5. Community Interaction and Outreach

a. The program builds a collaborative system of support services that promote learner achievement and program goals.

b. The program's collaborations result in increased options for learners in postsecondary education, training, and employment aligned with regional needs and identified in the application and local plan.

c. The program successfully recruits learners from the community identified in WIOA as needing literacy services, including those with barriers to employment and hardest to serve.

6. One-Stop System Integration

a. The program has in good faith participated in the development and implementation of the local plan, infrastructure funding agreement and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with core and required partners, as regionally applicable.

b. The program is actively engaged in the coordination of services and resources that support the one-stop system as a comprehensive system that seamlessly provides integrated services accessible to all job seekers, workers, and businesses.

c. The program shares in the performance measures of the regional one-stop comprehensive system.

This monitoring framework assures a continuous improvement process whereby AEL programs develop education, training, and career services that address and promote equity in recruitment, service design, implementation, and support services that aim to provide equitable access and outcomes to individuals seeking access to AEL services.

Actions to Improve Quality: When the state monitoring team identifies findings of noncompliance, programs must implement corrective action based on a program improvement plan submitted within 45 days of receipt of the monitoring report. The corrective action plan must identify specific strategies the local entity will implement to ensure that findings have been resolved. The monitoring team also encourages providers to implement their recommendations during the upcoming program year.

C. Program Status Update. For each continuing year of the grant, local AEFLA-funded providers report strategies implemented during the program year to address goal and performance areas requiring continuous improvement. Specific targets that must be updated can include enrollment, post-testing rates, educational functioning level gains, transition services, and integrated education and training participation. Programs must also provide evidence of implementation for the previous year, which may be qualitative or quantitative, as well as improvement plans that address unmet performance targets that detail actions to improve quality in the upcoming year. Programs create status update forms and upload related documentation to evidence implementation of strategies in the state grant management system. The IDOE can generate ad hoc reports to compare applications with updates within and across local providers. The Department uses this information to track continuous quality improvement of programs across the state.

Actions to Improve Quality: Status updates are reviewed by a panel of department personnel. Updates that lack sufficient documentation or continuous improvement are negotiated back to providers through the online grant management system with a request for additional information. Technical assistance is provided to those local entities and may include goal setting strategies, examples of documentation, or clarifying definitions.

D. Monthly Performance Review. Iowa's AEL Assessment Policy requires programs to conduct monthly reporting on data integrity and student records. This data is pulled from an online data management system and reviewed for validity. The following data elements are reviewed: participant educational levels; attendance; number of participants exiting services after 90 days and with no scheduled services; and a unique identification number. Key data elements are posted on the department's website for tracking local AEFLA-funded providers' progress toward targets, including NRS enrollment and High School Equivalency Diplomas awarded. Each funded provider is also assessed for post-test percentage and progress toward the state negotiated educational functioning level benchmarks among participants served. While this

data is available to each provider at any time through the data management system, the state's review is conducted at least monthly.

Actions to Improve Quality: The IDOE allocates funds to providers based on performance. In addition, the department ties program performance reports to continuous improvement plans with required actions for data elements that are not updated on a monthly basis. Providers that do not report data on a monthly basis are out of compliance with Iowa's Assessment Policy and they limit the department's ability to make data-driven decisions. In order to assist programs in developing improvement plans, the department provides technical assistance on data reporting, NRS guidelines, implementation of Iowa's Assessment Policy Guidelines, best practices, and recommendations.

E. Quarterly Financial Reviews. The IDOE adult education and literacy team examines quarterly claims submitted by local programs to confirm the allowable and allocable use of AEFLA funds. The financial review takes place in the state's online grant management system where providers upload requests for reimbursement and documentation of expenditures. The team also uses this as an opportunity to track the use of state leadership funds for required professional development activities that local entities have described in their application and subsequent status updates. Three levels of approval within the IDOE ensures that the review of claims is complete and accurate.

Actions to Improve Quality: Financial reviews that are out of compliance with state and federal financial rules and regulations are negotiated back to providers for correction. These negotiations include outreach for technical assistance to both the program coordinator and fiscal agent, if necessary. Clarification on expectations is offered along with corrective actions. Due to the layers of approval needed, each level has the ability to negotiate back, if necessary, for correction or additional documentation. Amendments to the budget can be requested in alignment with budget caps for correction and administrative percentages. The IDOE reviews and approves amendments based on the rationale provided by the local entity. Each amendment creates a new budget; however, each previous version of the budget is retained in the grant management system for tracking purposes. Changes in the budget and submission of claims are time stamped to ensure timely response and processing.

A Corrective Action Plan (CAP) is required for any assessment that does not meet the required standard or demonstrate improvement for each negotiated target during the competition and in the continuing program years. Providers develop these plans in partnership with the IDOE to ensure clarity in the actionable elements. With funding tied to performance, programs are incentivized to meet state negotiated benchmarks.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;	Yes
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;	Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;	Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;	Yes
5. A State officer, specified by title in the	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;	
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;	Yes
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and	Yes
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;	Yes

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding the supplement-not-supplant requirement);	Yes
2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;	Yes
3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not "eligible individuals" within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA;	Yes
4. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.	Yes
5. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).	Yes

AUTHORIZING OR CERTIFYING REPRESENTATIVE

APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION	Enter information in this column
Applicant's Organization	Iowa Department of Education
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	**Enter information in this column**
First Name	Alex
Last Name	Harris
Title	State Director for Adult Education and Literacy
Email	alex.harris@iowa.gov

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

The Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) ensures that no barriers exist that could impede equitable access to or participation in the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), Title II of WIOA, in regard to gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. The Department works in partnership with Iowa's Department of Human Rights, the IDOE Equity Review process, and other key stakeholders to ensure equitable access specific to AEFLA at the state and local level, described below and pledges to adhere and devote ongoing attention to each of these areas.

- Gender: The Department ensures that all genders will be equitably recruited and served through AEFLA. The Department will work with providers to ensure strategies are implemented to recruit and serve participants to achieve a proportional representation of male and female participants according to the service area demographics.
- National origin/race/color: The Department requires eligible providers to detail their experience in serving participants from diverse cultures, ethnicities, and backgrounds. Applications and annual status updates from eligible providers ensure a continued commitment to recruit and serve eligible individuals from diverse populations (national origin, race, color) and that all activities, program components and published materials will remain free of bias of national origin, race, and color. Additionally, the Department will ensure at the state and local level that staff, and volunteers are representative of the target population of the participants being served. Guidance and examples of written material that is culturally sensitive and provided in other languages to recruit and serve participants, if needed, to eliminate language barriers that may exist, has been provided by the Department.
- Disability: The Department ensures that eligible providers will ensure equitable access to all AEFLA activities and facilities as detailed by the application process with specific state standards and are reviewed annually, or sooner if there is a significant chance in services. Each eligible provider agrees to assurances to serve participants, regardless of disability. Additionally, the Department will provide professional development to assist providers and staff in developing strategies to ensure that all activities and published materials will be free of bias regarding disabilities. To further ensure equitable access to the program, all eligible providers agrees to assurances to make any reasonable accommodation needed to ensure the full and equitable participation for all individuals in AEFLA activities. In addition to this and in compliance with the GEPA and WIOA Section 188, the Department in partnership with one-stop partners, where applicable, ensures that all physical spaces are designed, constructed and maintained to

be compliant with the American Disability Act requirements, and are totally accessible to individuals with disabilities in order to ensure their equal access in AEFLA activities.

- Age: The Department ensures that all participants of eligible age will be served and have equitable access to participate in all AEFLA activities based on need while ensuring that all programs and published materials will be free of bias regarding age. Additionally, the providers will offer age-appropriate activities and materials, including but not limited to reading materials, for participants.

The Department pledges to operate the AEFLA, Title II, WIOA activities as described above, to ensure equitable access and participation in regards to gender, race, national origin, color, and disability. Furthermore, the Department will ensure that providers will address recruitment, intake, participation, and hiring practices, in compliance with GEPA, in the following manner:

- Recruitment: Funded providers will ensure that AEFLA staff will recruit ALL eligible participants and not discriminate on gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. The local administrator will ensure any promotional material is not bias and is available in alternative format, including languages, as regionally necessary and available to all individuals. Providers of AEFLA services will ensure that their social media accounts are produced and maintained by their respective organization's policy and while the Department does not regularly review content posted, it shall have the right to request the removal of any content that is not aligned with these GEPA standards, a violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws, off-topic, commercial or promotion of organizations or programs not related to or affiliated with WIOA services. Staff outreach to participants with barriers to employment that includes presentations, providing program material and one-on-one meetings should ensure a supportive climate and barrier-free environment. If individuals are in need of assistance to complete an application, staff will provide assistance and if needed, make arrangements for accommodations.

- Intake: The eligible provider will involve staff personnel in the intake process for eligible individuals to provide a human-centered design process. Interviews, advising and assessments will be conducted with all eligible individuals to discuss and assess the educational needs and goals while addressing any questions about the services provided. The eligible provider will use information gained during the intake process to place eligible individuals in appropriate AEFLA activities regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability (in compliance with GEPA).

- Participation: All eligible providers will ensure that the physical facilities are totally accessible to individuals with disabilities to ensure their equal access to the program. All individuals will be able to participate in all AEFLA activities regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

- Hiring Process of Eligible Provider Staff: The Department promotes equal employment opportunities and the fair treatment of employees without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, veteran status, disability, or sexual preference in compliance with federal, state, and local laws. All eligible providers are 228 required to be an equal opportunity employer. In adhering to this, providers will ensure equal opportunity hiring guidelines to ensure equal access in employment to all who apply for a position using AEFLA funds.

The Department is committed to adhering to and monitoring these standards and practices and will make all provisions necessary to ensure that this plan is in compliance with the General Education and Provisions Act (GEPA).

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	51.0%	51.0%	51.0%	51.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	45.0%	45.0%	47.0%	47.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$6,000	$6,400	$6,100	$6,600
Credential Attainment Rate	48.0%	48.0%	49.0%	49.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	46.0%	46.0%	47.0%	47.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL)

A. INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

1. INPUT PROVIDED BY THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, INCLUDING INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPORT, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS PART OF THE COUNCIL'S FUNCTIONS;

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is a governor-appointed council that reviews, evaluates, and advises Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) regarding its programming and effectiveness in the delivery of services and the effect of service provision on the achievement of employment outcomes by individuals with disabilities. It is composed of a variety of individuals including individuals with disabilities, disability groups, VR professionals, service providers, and leaders in the community, including those representing business, industry and labor. The SRC meets on a quarterly basis. The following updates are shared with the SRC:

- Administrator's Report
- Client Assistance Program (CAP) Report
- Developmental Disabilities (DD) Council
- Financial Overview
- Legal
- Policy

- Rehabilitation Services Bureau (RSB)
- State Independent Living Committee Report

Each SRC meeting incorporates discussion of the Unified State Plan and the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), with members as a whole and in smaller breakout groups engaging in thorough discussions surrounding the needs and goals of IVRS. IVRS staff present at meetings as well to share initiatives occurring around the State.

The SRC includes two standing committees:

Outreach Committee: responsible for planning and hosting the SRC Legislative Reception in coordination with IVRS staff; reviewing and submitting the SRC Annual Report; and review of customer satisfaction survey data ensuring integration into State planning.

VR Service Delivery Committee: responsible for review and discussion of the comprehensive statewide needs areas that impact service delivery outcomes and service priorities as required by the Unified State Plan; review and recommendations surrounding IVRS policies and procedures; and providing guidance on identified areas of interest related to committee priorities.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

2022 Narrative:

The VR Service Delivery Committee presented recommendations on areas of focus to IVRS at the August 2019 SRC Meeting. These continue to be the areas of focus for the SRC, to ensure IVRS continues the work it began in these areas. Areas of focus included: Section 511, Outreach & Information, Referral Process, and Review of Service Delivery. The following issues, and how IVRS responded, are included below:

Issue 1:

Section 511 makes it harder for youth to enter subminimum wage employment and creates requirements for VR agencies to provide career counseling and information and referral services to adults working in subminimum wage settings to help them shift from subminimum wage employment to competitive integrated employment.

Recommendation:

Increase efforts to provide career counseling, career exploration and employment support to individuals working in sub-minimum wage settings.

IVRS Response:

Section 511 went into effect in July, 2016. Since that time, IVRS has contracted with the Iowa Coalition for Integration and Employment (ICIE) to provide the career counseling and information and referral required under Section 511 via a video series. According to information received from the US Department of Labor (DOL), by the end of FFY2021, an estimated 400 individuals remain in sheltered employment in the State of Iowa. The ICIE contract has led to a smoother process in the State of Iowa to provide services mandated through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). In PY2021, IVRS initiated a workgroup after conversations with the SRC to determine how this process can be further improved, including potential updated videos designed for the youth population. The workgroup consists of representatives from IVRS, Access for Special Kids (ASK) parent resource group, Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs), and ICIE. Based on the work of this workgroup, the video series may be updated or added to, in order to reflect the

recommendations. IVRS is also working with ICIE to identify whether a different webinar may be helpful to supplement what is currently offered.

IVRS is in communication with the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) to identify the number of individuals currently in day habilitation programs, compare data, and identify steps taken based on data. This is an ongoing project and updates will be provided to the SRC to seek their continued valuable input.

On April 8, 2021, the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) issued the FAQ on Section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act. IVRS has reviewed this information and updated internal policies to reflect the changes in the guidance. Training has also been provided to IVRS staff to ensure understanding. This information was also shared with the SRC so they were aware of the changes and were provided an opportunity to offer suggestions on policy and process. This has led to an easier process for individuals interested in subminimum wage, as requested by the recommendations of the SRC.

Issue 2:

There are 115,000 Iowans receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) – they are automatically eligible to receive VR services, but many have not heard of IVRS or do not know what services are available to them.

Recommendation: Increase the visibility of IVRS by creating opportunities for individuals to learn about VR services. This might include more:

- Panel discussions
- Outreach videos
- Focus groups
- Reverse job fairs
- Video resumes

IVRS Response: All new disability recipients receive information pertaining to Ticket to Work, which includes information on the State VR program. Individuals receiving Social Security disability cash benefits obtain knowledge of employment services through a system in place with Disability Determination Services (DDS). The system identifies youth who are under the age of 18 and receiving benefits to determine whether they are already an IVRS job candidate. Those individuals who are not job candidates of IVRS receive a letter discussing services and program availability.

In 2019, IVRS hired a Benefits Planning Resource Manager, developing a tiered approach to VR Implementation. The following is the tiered approach developed as a result of the SRC recommendations:

Level One:

- All IVRS staff will be knowledgeable of the basics of the Social Security Administration (SSA) disability benefits planning.
- A Benefits Planning Cadre will receive additional training to provide more intensive guidance to field staff. This Cadre consists of at least one member from each IVRS Area Office. Continued training of the Cadre will occur.
- Staff will follow a benefits planning process outlined in internal guidance.
- Releases of information signed by job candidates will be sent to SSA for verification.

Level Two:

- The Benefits Planning Query (BPQY) received from SSA will be analyzed by IVRS staff.
- IVRS staff and job candidates receive training on this information with technical assistance from the IVRS Benefits Planning Resource Manager as applicable.
- A benefits summary will be provided to the job candidate by a Benefits Planning Cadre Member once a job offer is received.

Level Three:

- Benefits Planning Cadre members will continue to act as a resource in the local offices with assistance from the Benefits Planning Resource Manager.
- Higher level of guidance and training is provided to all IVRS staff as applicable by the Benefits Planning Resource Manager. This includes specific job candidate case staffing.
- IVRS will maintain a "no wrong door" approach that provides access to timely, accurate benefits planning provided by IVRS staff, the Benefits Planning Cadre members, and the Benefits Planning Resource Manager.

The Iowa Benefits Planning Network (IBPN) began in April 2021. It is composed of IVRS Benefits Planning Cadre members, Iowa Employment Networks, Iowa*Works* staff, and CRP providers. The IBPN meets monthly to discuss topics related to SSA and other State benefits. The SSA Area Work Incentive Coordinator for the Kansas City SSA Region also attends to assure Iowa is updated on any changes to SSA; the Coordinator also listens to issues Iowa encounters related to Iowans receiving SSA Disability benefits. Resources and knowledge are shared to increase the accuracy of benefits planning provided to Iowans with disabilities as they return to work.

Other activities are being focused on October Disability Awareness, Facebook pages, success stories, Iowa Job Honor Award, video development, Chamber of Commerce partnerships, DD Council, Iowa Department on Aging (IDA), DHS, and the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB).

Issue 3:

IVRS changed the way in which individuals access services and the Committee has received some feedback that we feel warrants some additional attention. There are issues with referrals and the process in which IVRS accepts them.

Recommendation:

Form a work group to review and revise the referral process.

IVRS Response:

IVRS emphasizes engagement starting with the referral process, which continues throughout the flow of services. Emphasis is on creating value, discussion of the dual customer approach, and employment first, and competitive integrated employment. An expedient referral process is a focus.

IVRS has established and implemented standards for the prompt and equitable handling of referrals of individuals for vocational rehabilitation standards, including those referrals made through Iowa's One-Stop service delivery system, as required by WIOA. IVRS is currently involved in two projects to receive referrals or applications through electronic processes. The first initiative is with Iowa Workforce Development (IWD). IVRS staff will be given access to IWD's case management system where it will be possible to send and receive referrals with

other workforce partners. The second initiative is through the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) who is leading the development of a government website where consumers can submit applications for services from respective state agencies. These initiatives will expedite the receipt of referrals and applications and bring efficiencies in these processes across the workforce system.

As part of this process, IVRS policy includes a requirement of IVRS staff to inform individuals of the application requirements and to gather information necessary to initiate an assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services. Any failure of IVRS staff to follow this process does not reflect the viewpoint of IVRS, but instead appears to be a training issue.

Upon receipt of this recommendation, the IVRS Policy Resource Manager utilized the SRC VR Service Delivery Subcommittee to seek additional guidance as to what members would like to see changed within the process. All policies, forms, and associated documents related to referral and application were then added to the IMPACT (Innovation, Mission focused, Policy driven, Action oriented, Customer centered, Transparent leadership) team agenda. This team is composed of IVRS staff from field offices as well as the management team. Additionally, it includes the IVRS Staff Attorney and Iowa's CAP representative. The CAP representative is also a member of the SRC VR Service Delivery Subcommittee and is able to represent the SRC on the IMPACT. Drafts of the referral and application policies, with IMPACT input, were then submitted to the SRC. This process ensures the SRC has the opportunity to review IMPACT recommendations prior to agency implementation. The policies were unanimously passed through and implemented on September 24, 2019. All forms and associated documents were also updated.

IVRS created a Policy Change Request Form in PY2021 that has been posted on the IVRS internet site as well as the internal IVRS staff site. This form allows any IVRS staff, stakeholder, and the general public to request changes to the IVRS policies, procedures, or forms. These requests are shared with the management team and introduced into the policy change process, starting with the IMPACT team. This form ensures IVRS has a mechanism in place that allows anyone to have a voice in policy change.

Additionally, the New Staff Training that all new employees attend has been updated, with a greater emphasis on ensuring policy is followed and staff are expedient with referrals. Training for current staff on the referral process has also been provided as part of monthly statewide staff meetings and during the PY2021 IVRS Staff Conference. Time for questions and answers was incorporated into the sessions that related to referrals.

Issue 4:

There are issues with the flow of services. During the first meeting with an applicant, current pamphlets and questions can give a mixed message. Counselor turnover is costly and causes a negative experience for the candidate. Timelines of interviewing to eligibility needs to be reduced. Counselor/Associate caseloads need to be monitored and measured. Hiring companies should meet your candidates.

Recommendation:

Describe the purpose of VR and the history of the organization with handouts. Consider adding an employment retention program. Have Counselors submit work improvement plans. Reduce eligibility steps and timetables by empowering Counselors to streamline the process. Eliminate hardcopy paperwork by going to cloud-based software as quickly as possible and involve hiring companies to create a team approach with Counselors and Candidates for onboarding successful employment practices.

IVRS Response:

Brochures are provided to applicants to explain the VR program, including the general agency brochure as well as other brochures depending on the demographic and need of the individual. IVRS staff explain these brochures to the individual to ensure understanding. It is also part of IVRS' legal requirement to share the CAP brochure. One issue that IVRS is facing is that CAP has not provided enough brochures to provide one to each applicant. IVRS has requested these brochures regularly, and have received only 50 of them. IVRS has communicated with CAP that more brochures are needed to meet the legal requirement.

IVRS recognizes timeframes can cause frustration for individuals. This includes the time it takes Counselors to complete an individual's eligibility. The regulations allow IVRS Counselors up to 60 days for eligibility determination unless exceptional and unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of IVRS preclude making an eligibility determination within that timeframe and the individual and IVRS agree to a specific extension of time. On average, the time from application to eligibility is 40 days in PY20. Some of the factors that cause delays include: waiting for necessary medical or other documentation of the disability, waiting for necessary signatures on releases of information, the noncategorical education system in Iowa that prevents IVRS from receiving a diagnosis from school districts, and the lack of providers available for testing. The IVRS Benefits Planning Resource Manager has developed relationships with SSA to improve this process for individuals receiving Social Security benefits. This has included a more streamlined process for obtaining BPQY and diagnosis codes that expedite preliminary eligibility determination. IVRS is working on additional strategies to improve effectiveness and timeliness of eligibility decisions.

IVRS utilizes a cloud-based software program to track and monitor caseloads across the state. There are pages built into the system where Counselors can easily see the number of days remaining to determine eligibility, write Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs) and close cases with a successful employment outcome. In addition, the system includes reports that can be generated to show timeliness of the work with required deadlines by counselor, office and for the entire state. These reports are reviewed at least monthly and coaching and counseling is provided to staff who are not meeting the required timeframes. It is the goal of IVRS to eventually go paperless and reduce the need for hard copies of case files and associated materials. The case management system was recently moved to new servers allowing for more storage capacity so we can advance this initiative. A team was convened to develop naming standards for documents uploaded to the system to assure retrievability and efficiency. IVRS will continue to work towards going paperless, but these updates to the system were a major step in achieving that goal. The IVRS Project Management Team meets regularly to identify additional efficiencies that can be developed into the system to meet compliance requirements as well as system improvement. As compared to other state VR systems, IVRS is still one of the leaders in mobile technology and use of cell phones, tablets, and other technology.

IVRS has created innovative practices in the area of staff retention to address the SRC recommendations. Local Supervisors have been provided with more control over their offices. This has allowed Supervisors more involvement in leading their office as well as hiring decisions for positions within their office. A training plan has been developed that is used by Supervisors across the State of Iowa to ensure consistency and support for new hires. New staff have a six-month probationary period during which time they meet regularly with their supervisor to learn the duties and responsibilities of their job. New Counselors are given a small caseload while going through the probationary period to assure they have the time to learn. The caseload increases as the Supervisor identifies the new Counselor is ready to take on additional responsibilities. This approach has resulted in less stress for new staff and the agency has seen that staff are better trained and not as overwhelmed during their probationary period. Permanent staff are evaluated on an annual basis. If an employee does not meet expectations, a developmental plan is written to identify strategies for improvement. Supervisors meet with these staff on a regular basis to provide coaching and counseling and review progress. Through

this process, the ultimate goal is to ensure IVRS is working diligently to improve service delivery for individuals with disabilities.

IVRS has strategies in place to address turnover. These strategies include an emphasis on a positive work culture, engagement, Supervisor leadership, exit surveys, and Bureau Chief and Administrator office visits to hear concerns.

IVRS recognizes that improved outcomes are directly linked to relationships with business partners. To ensure staff have the tools to create partnerships, training is provided monthly. The IVRS Business Services team is working with business partners to serve their needs by learning about their organizations and identifying the skills and experience needed in qualified applicants. The purpose is to increase business intelligence of IVRS staff so they can better prepare job candidates to meet the needs of business partners. IVRS has Business Engagement Specialists whose primary responsibility is to develop relationships with business partners to achieve mutually beneficial employment outcomes.

IVRS collaborates with core partners in the establishment of business work teams located at One-Stop centers. IVRS participates at the state and local level in the Disability Access Committees (DACs) to address physical and programmatic accessibility and provide disability training to improve business service integration for individuals with disabilities.

Issue 5:

Data shows that IVRS is not serving individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing compared to the number of individuals identified with these disabilities across the State of Iowa. Serving individuals with Intellectual Disabilities, Psychiatric Disabilities, Autism Spectrum, and serving minorities are other focus areas recommended.

Recommendation: The Service Delivery Committee recommends an IVRS primary focus on Intellectual Disabilities and Deaf/Hard of Hearing groups.

IVRS Response:

IVRS developed the Deaf Services Team which is designed to support the local efforts in the provision of services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing population. IVRS administration will seek to ensure that the team has the tools, resources and support to be engaged at the local level. Several IVRS staff interested in working with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing population received immersion training to increase knowledge in this area. IVRS also hired a Deaf Services Rehabilitation Counselor and plans to hire additional positions in various locations throughout the state. The expectation for these counselor positions will be to understand the Deaf culture, American Sign Language (ASL), best practices, and coordinate outreach to the Deaf population in Iowa. IVRS has begun discussions on the development of a Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) summer camp specifically designed for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students in Iowa. Additionally, IVRS has collaborated with the University of Iowa to recruit individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing or understand ASL to consider the Rehabilitation Counseling program. Through this program, IVRS hopes to recruit individuals with these skills. From these efforts, IVRS has one internship student with Deaf services knowledge.

IVRS has completed a pilot project to provide customized discovery and job development services for the Intellectual Disabilities population. This project has now been implemented state-wide and is based on a nationally recognized model with specific training methods for IVRS staff and CRPs. IVRS has also developed relationships with comprehensive transition programs such as REACH through the University of Iowa, BUILD through Bethel University, Auggie Access through Saint Augustine, Beyond Limit through Bethany Global University, and NEXT through Northwestern. IVRS provides counseling and guidance as well as financial support towards courses with an employment focus. IVRS supports a number of ProjectSEARCH programs designed for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental disabilities.

For individuals with Psychiatric disabilities, IVRS has coordinated with the University of Iowa Rehabilitation Counselor training program for intern sites with a focus on service delivery including work with this population. IVRS and the Iowa Medicaid Enterprise (IME) have also been involved in three Individual Placement and Support (IPS) pilot projects in collaboration with two CRPs, three community mental health providers, and three Mental Health Disability Services (MHDS) Regions. These pilots implemented IPS in three teams/sites. Due to this collaboration, both IVRS and Medicaid changed their funding structure to better meet the financial needs of the CRPs which allowed the IPS services to continue after the Regional funding ended. This new structure pays for the service portion of the IPS model, but not the initial training, technical assistance, or fidelity reviews for IPS teams/sites, or any "gap" funding to assist the providers until their IPS caseload is full. IPS has been shown to work very well for people with serious mental illness and multiple challenges. IVRS hopes to expand this program statewide.

IVRS is also focused on improving services for individuals with disabilities on the Autism Spectrum. In response to the SRC suggestion and needs assessment information, IVRS has implemented an Autism Advisory Team. The goal of the team is to improve the outreach and the quality of employment services of IVRS to this population. The team shares ideas for IVRS staff working with job candidates on the Autism Spectrum towards successful employment outcomes, and identifies the resources, supports, and therapeutic approaches available in Iowa to help IVRS staff support individuals.

In response to the SRC's recommendations for individuals who are minorities, IVRS has developed a Cultural Diversity Committee. The committee is tasked with addressing engagement with diverse job candidates to improve the IVRS minority rate, rehabilitation rate, and employment outcomes through addressing improved service interactions. The committee also assists the agency in the IVRS affirmative action plan through advice, recommendations and feedback for improved engagement and strategy implementation for staff retention/development. The committee is open to any IVRS staff interested.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

IVRS regularly consults with the SRC regarding development, implementation, and revision of the RSB policies and procedures. Input and recommendations on policy are accepted, unless they directly go against the regulatory guidance or State of Iowa Administrative Code. If this occurs, an explanation is provided to SRC members.

Notes are taken during SRC meetings to provide a record of all suggestions and items. This process helps IVRS to review information and ensure input is implemented. Of the focus areas discussed previously, all SRC input and recommendations regarding those focus areas has been accepted and no recommendations were rejected.

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;

After discussion with RSA during an RSA Quarterly Call on March 8, 2021, it was determined that the Transition Alliance Program (TAP) and ProjectSEARCH are cash match contracts. These contracts may not be provided in all school districts but IVRS and transition services are made available in every district in the State of Iowa. TAP and ProjectSEARCH may be delivered differently but transition services are statewide. As a result, IVRS is not requesting a waiver of statewideness as it is not required with these contracts, per RSA guidance.

Currently, IVRS does not have any contracts that would require a waiver of statewideness. IVRS is exploring options for a contract that provides additional services to the adult reentry population. Should a waiver be needed in the future, IVRS will update the Unified State Plan with this information.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

IVRS agrees to seek a waiver of statewideness for future programs should a waiver be needed, and approve each proposed service before it is put into effect.

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

3. REQUIREMENTS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN WILL APPLY TO THE SERVICES APPROVED UNDER THE WAIVER.

IVRS currently does not require a waiver of statewideness; in the event a waiver is needed, IVRS agrees that the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

C. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

IVRS has been involved in cooperative relationships with many federal, state and local agencies and programs for many years. These include:

Veterans Administration — IVRS has a long-standing agreement with the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This agreement spells out the referral process; which agency will be responsible for specific services; the inclusion of each other's employees in staff development activities; and the identification of key liaison individuals.

Department of Human Services — This is a general agreement between DHS and IVRS, which allows and encourages interaction between the two agencies for individuals with whom both provide services. It relates to referrals, joint planning, office space, shared funding and related activities. An IVRS staff person is a required member of the Iowa Mental Health Planning Council, a group that represents a cross-section of constituencies and interest groups. Over 50 percent of its members must be consumers, family members, advocates, and others who are not state employees or providers. The duties of the Council are to advocate for adults with a serious mental illness and children with a serious emotional disorder and to monitor, review, and evaluate the allocation and adequacy of mental health services within the State.

Developmental Disabilities Council — the IVRS attorney currently serves on the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council. The DD Council's focus is to arm those affected by disability with the information, skills and confidence to stand up and take action; to offer solutions, and be a driving force for the change they want to see.

Future Ready Iowa — is a commitment for collaboration with a variety of stakeholders to help close the skills gap by better aligning our education, economic development and workforce development initiatives. Future Ready Iowa establishes a shared vision and goal that 70 percent of Iowans in the workforce will have education and training beyond high school by 2025. The Future Ready Iowa Alliance helps IVRS accelerate this important work. There is a need for programmatic and messaging alignment. The communication directors of the relevant agencies have begun coordinating on messaging.

Intermediary Networks — were established with funding from IVRS in collaboration with the Department of Education to Community College regions to develop and expand work-based learning opportunities. Funds were used to hire staff to prepare students with disabilities for the workforce by connecting students, the education system, business and the community through relevant, work-based learning activities across all 16-career clusters, with specific emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM). The goal of an Intermediary Network is to work with students with disabilities and align their career interests to post-secondary education, as appropriate. The long-term results are positioning students for successful career attainment and increase work-based learning opportunities for this targeted population.

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) — worked with IVRS to hire an Employment Specialist within the Area Agencies of Aging Centers. This position helps further integrate Iowa Workforce services through Iowa's Skilled Employment Initiative for employment in the Iowa economy focused on the mid-skill areas. The AAAs have been designated as Aging & Disability Resource Centers in each of their regions and bridge the gaps that currently exist for this population of IVRS job candidates. Each Employment Specialist works only with individuals age 55 or older under this contract.

Making the Grade — Making the Grade is an employment program designed to provide students in high school the opportunity to obtain part-time employment after school and during the summer. The program facilitates understanding of the work habits and behaviors necessary to be employed, while obtaining a paid job that can produce references and skill sets to draw upon after high school. Students with disabilities, including students covered under Section 511, who are receiving services from Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services under an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) may participate in the program. The program is about reaching school districts with limited services to assist students in obtaining competitive community employment, and serving those individuals who are already eligible and in need of an employment service due to gaps in the current system. Year-round services are provided after school and in the summer as part of Making the Grade.

Iowa Jobs for America Graduates (iJAG) — A project was developed through Boone Community School District to partner in the provision of pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities utilizing the framework of the iJAG program. Boone Community School District began implementing an innovative learning project focused on a work-based learning continuum of awareness (early years), exploration (middle years) and training (high school) in partnership with a variety of employers and higher education institutions. One hundred percent of the focus of this project is on students with disabilities served through the Boone Community School District who are eligible for services through an IEP or 504 plan. Boone Community School District will provide these services through a sub-contract with the Iowa Jobs for America Graduates Program (iJAG). The staff specialist for the project will track their time through a daily Personnel Allocation Report. IVRS staff are coordinating service delivery efforts and monitoring progress.

Iowa Transportation Coordination Council — IVRS is also a team member on the Iowa Transportation Coordination Council (ITCC). Chaired by staff from the Iowa Department of Transportation's Office of Public Transit, the ITCC meets every other month to discuss such issues as mobility management, accessibility of transportation in Iowa, State Transit Assistance Special Project Proposal applications pertaining to coordination, and the encouragement of state and local agency involvement in the passenger transportation planning process. Having grown considerably from the three original member state departments, the ITCC now boasts membership from statewide organizations, state departments, and federal groups.

LifeLong Links — IVRS established an agreement to serve as a member of Lifelong Links (LLL). The common goal shared by IVRS and LLL is improving the lives of consumers in the aging and disability communities.

Future Ready Iowa — while not a cooperative agreement, IVRS has a commitment for collaboration with a variety of stakeholders to help close the skills gap by better aligning education, economic development and workforce development initiatives. Future Ready Iowa establishes a shared vision and goal that 70 percent of Iowans in the workforce will have education and training beyond high school by 2025. The Future Ready Iowa Alliance helps IVRS accelerate this important work. There continues to be a need for programmatic and messaging alignment. The communication directors of the relevant agencies continue to work on coordinating their messaging.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

IVRS has an agreement with the Easterseals Iowa Assistive Technology Program which is the Implementing Entity for the federal Tech Act Project. The Center for Disabilities and Development (CDD) at the University of Iowa Health Care is the Lead Agency for the Tech Act Project. Easterseals Iowa provides assistive technology services including but not limited to administrating staff training, loaning devices, and demonstrating devices. IVRS and Easterseals collaborate to exchange information, share referrals, and strategies for coordination and collaboration.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

Easterseals Iowa Rural Solutions partners with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and collaborates with IVRS to support Iowa's farm family members with disabilities and individuals with disabilities residing in rural communities.

4. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

IVRS continues to work closely with Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) and the SWDB in coordinating services and support for out-of-school youth. All nine LWDAs in Iowa have Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) and local plans in place incorporating core and required partners, to discuss out-of-school youth services and encourage seamless services. Agencies collaborate to safely exchange data. IVRS collaborates with the Title I WIOA Youth program to facilitate referrals; IVRS also invites this program to participate in local school planning meetings with in-school youth. For youth who are at-risk of dropping out, IVRS makes referrals to the Title I WIOA Youth program.

IVRS has also developed a juvenile re-entry program in collaboration with the Department of Human Rights (DHR) Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (CJJP) that will allow both in-school and out-of-school youth to receive services, including one year of follow along services after being discharged from a participating facility. Data will be collected on this program over the next two years to learn best practices and strategies.

IVRS has also entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (CJJP), State Court Administration (SCA), and Iowa Workforce Work Development (IWD). These entities have agreed to collaborate and cooperate to implement JReS for youth involved in the juvenile justice system and/or placed in a group care setting in Iowa. The MoA specifies the roles and responsibilities of the entities as they work in partnership to provide these youth the services, supports and opportunities needed for successful reintegration into their community.

IVRS has multiple CRP ProjectSEARCH and Occupational Skills Training programs that out-of-school youth can participate in across the state. These programs are not specifically designed for out-of-school youth; however, these individuals still have access to this programming.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

IVRS maintains compliance with state contracting programs and follows the Iowa Department of Administrative Services (DAS) rules for financial bidding and contracting.

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

WIOA requires that 15 percent of the IVRS budget be allocated towards the provision of Pre-ETS. IVRS has developed Local School Plans, policies, and procedures surrounding the provision of Pre-ETS and VR service delivery. IVRS collaborates with every public school district in Iowa to develop a Local School Plan that addresses the following information: the services the school district will provide to students with disabilities, the new and/or expanded services IVRS will provide within the district, services provided by community partners and/or IVRS contracted programs, and any gaps in service delivery. Local School Plans are also developed with private accredited high schools across the state along with some identified alternative educational settings. IVRS staff are assigned to all public and private accredited school districts in Iowa to provide services, including Pre-ETS, as outlined in the Local School Plan. As gaps in services are identified on the Local School Plans, programs have been developed collaboratively with school districts and other community partners across the state. The following IVRS contracted programs have been developed to assist with delivering VR services, including Pre-ETS, in collaboration with school districts across the state:

Innovative Learning Project: These are collaborative projects between IVRS, Boone Community School District, Mount Vernon Community School District and iJAG focused on a work-based learning continuum of awareness, exploration and training in partnership with a variety of employers and higher education institutions. Students in this program participate in various Pre-ETS activities.

IVRS Intermediary Networks: IVRS awarded funding through the Iowa Department of Education (DE)/IowaGrants to regional intermediary networks to develop and expand work-based learning opportunities in selected regions. The program prepares students with disabilities for the workforce by connecting students, the education system, business and the community through relevant, work-based learning activities across all 16 career clusters, with specific emphasis on Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM). The goal is to align students' career interests to appropriate postsecondary education through delivery of Pre-ETS.

Juvenile Reentry System Program: The Iowa DHR CJJP, has been overseeing the Juvenile Reentry Task Force (JRTF) in the development and implementation of the juvenile justice reentry system. Multiple state agency partners, including juvenile placement settings, are assisting with the development of policy, procedure, and structural elements of its JReS. The goal of JReS is the reduction of recidivism rates and to improve other student outcomes through implementation of comprehensive system-wide reforms to juvenile reentry policies and processes, which include: enhanced cross system coordination, utilization of quality and effective programing, data sharing and prioritization of resources. IVRS has been an active partner in this process for implementation of Pre-ETS in these alternative educational settings and a gap in service delivery has been identified for students in this setting. The JReS program has been designed to do the following: improve transition and community integration as students exit and return to the community; connecting students to career pathways and support systems in the community; and reduce recidivism by expanding access in obtaining financial independence through competitive integrated employment.

Making the Grade (MTG): Students with disabilities in this program participate in Pre-ETS activities to teach and reinforce the skill sets and habits necessary to be successful on the job. Students with disabilities in participating high schools are placed in paid work-based learning experiences in the community to assist with skill building necessary for their future career.

ProjectSEARCH: The goal for each student participant is competitive integrated employment. The program provides real-life work-based learning experiences combined with workplace readiness training in employability and independent living skills to assist students with significant disabilities make successful transitions from school to productive adult life.

Transition Alliance Program: TAP is a collaborative program developed between IVRS and school districts. TAP services are provided to students with disabilities through a collaborative service coordination model, which includes Pre-ETS, with the ultimate goal of obtaining competitive integrated employment.

Transitioning to Employment and Advocating for Myself: Transitioning to Employment and Advocating for Myself (TEAM) is a collaboration between Easterseals, IVRS and Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS). The focus of TEAM is on developing and providing Pre-ETS to students with disabilities who are attending all high schools within DMPS, including students covered under Section 511 and students who are potentially eligible (PE) for IVRS, prior to graduation. TEAM staff will work collaboratively with the IVRS Counselors assigned to DMPS and the DMPS Work Experience Coordinators (WECs) in order to provide new or expanded services for students with disabilities in each of the five required activities for Pre-ETS. Year round services will be provided to include activities that occur during the school day and after school, as well as activities throughout the summer.

IVRS staff in collaboration with school staff, AEA staff, IVRS contracted programs and partners assist students by providing services to explore career opportunities, post-secondary training programs available, and to identify supports needed to be successful in the post-secondary setting and in competitive integrated employment. These collaborative activities assist students in determining their long term employment goal so an IPE can be developed in a timely manner. For IVRS eligible students, an IPE needs to be developed, which should align with a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) if applicable, within 90 days after the student is released from the waiting list. While on the waiting list, a student is able to continue to participate in Pre-ETS. Information gathered through participation in Pre-ETS and other school-related transition activities is used to develop the individualized plan. This plan can have a projected post-school employment outcome which assists with timely development of these plans. The student would continue to participate in VR services, including Pre-ETS, in collaboration with school-related transition services available in order to identify the supports needed and a specific employment goal by high school graduation.

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 MoA between the State Education Agency (DE) and IVRS includes a section specifically addressing consultation and technical assistance with all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and Area Education Agencies (AEAs). The following is included in that section of the MoA:

IVRS staff will provide consultation and technical assistance to LEAs and AEAs. These services are intended to benefit students with disabilities as they transition from school to post-secondary life related to an employment outcome. These services are to assist school personnel in developing a seamless system of transition for all students. A vocational rehabilitation counselor or other staff member will work in concert with educational agencies designated by

the DE to provide services for individuals who are receiving special education services under an IEP, or services provided according to Section 504, to provide Pre-ETS to individuals who are PE for IVRS. Services may include, but are not limited to, job exploration counseling, workplace readiness training, work-based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities, self-advocacy instruction and other general services applicable to groups of students with disabilities. All of the above described services are outlined in a Local School Plan with each LEA annually. The Local School Plan will be individualized to meet the needs of each LEA. LEA staff, IVRS staff and other community partners shall be included in the development of each Local School Plan.

Due to staff capacity issues, these services are generally provided with groups of students who are under an IEP or Section 504, but may be delivered individually. Additionally, alternative means for meeting participation (e.g., video conferences and conference calls) may be used for IEP team participation and to assist LEAs in planning for the transition of students with disabilities.

Educators will request consultation and technical assistance services from IVRS when needed to plan for individual transition needs, including development of the individual's course of study. Educators will consult with IVRS regarding the individual's impediments to employment and provide all information available.

In a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), IVRS involvement is directly related to the level of support needed by the student and the point at which IVRS involvement is required.

Additional consultation and technical assistance include the following:

IVRS maintains a close working relationship with the Iowa DE. IVRS has a dedicated Resource Manager position assigned to serve on the Statewide Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP).

The DE has a consultant assigned to the statewide Employment First Leadership Team.

IVRS has a DE official serving on the SRC.

IVRS manages close to $5.2 million dollars in contracted programs focused on transition services. Each of these areas provides constant and consistent channels for communication and technical assistance.

IVRS contracts with ICIE representing over two hundred education, business, community rehabilitation professionals, as well as family members and individuals with disabilities with focused communication on areas pertaining to the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. Meetings occur at a minimum of quarterly with education officials.

IVRS maintains a Transition Action Team (TAT) with representatives of each local area office. TAT meets monthly and serves as another way to share strategies, weaknesses and provide technical assistance to positively impact service delivery.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

The MoA between the State Education Agency (DE) and IVRS includes a section specifically addressing transition planning with all LEAs and Area Education Agencies AEAs. The following is included in that section of the MoA:

Transition planning in the state of Iowa must be in place not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 14, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team. Consideration for eligibility for special education services continues through the year that a student turns 21 years of age, or to the maximum age allowed by Iowa Code section 256B.8.

IVRS counselors and educators are both responsible for the development and completion of the employment component of a student's IEP in concert with the student, the parents, and the IEP team. IVRS involvement in the IEP development and completion will be determined by individual student need, not student age or grade. IEP teams and IVRS counselors will consider four factors to determine when employment preparation should start and the intensity of the services that should be provided:

- Student knowledge and skills;
- Student learning characteristics, including student response to ease of accessibility and accommodations;
- Complexity of support needs; and,
- Number of environments impacted.

The more intense the need for services, the earlier preparation should start and the more people who have specialized knowledge (e.g. work experience counselors, IVRS counselors) should be involved. This involvement may be provided by IVRS as part of the Pre-ETS provided. These services can be conducted in a group setting and will require collaboration to determine the Pre-ETS activities that are needed by that specific LEA and will suit the students in that setting.

Those students who require more intensive services in order to learn, understand and apply the information from Pre-ETS activities will be encouraged to submit an application for IVRS. Intense services may not be provided without the student having been determined eligible and served under an IPE.

IVRS staff will review information for students who submit an application for services and AEAs/LEAs will share existing information which will assist IVRS in determining a student's eligibility. If needed, students will participate in additional assessment(s) to determine eligibility services. The scheduling of these assessment(s) will require collaboration between IVRS, LEA and AEA staff members.

Once an eligibility determination has been made by IVRS, the decision will be shared with the LEA and AEA staff. This information will be considered as part of the student's transition plan within the IEP.

IVRS counselors will develop an IPE for each individual determined to be eligible for IVRS within 90 days of being removed from the IVRS waiting list (refer to the appropriate section of this Unified State Plan for more information on IVRS' order of selection). The student, parents, educators and IVRS counselors will collaborate so that the goals of the IEP and the IPE will be consistent with one another.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the DE both share responsibility to prepare students with disabilities for successful community employment. As referenced, a current MoA defines the responsibilities of both divisions. This MoA is designed to facilitate the integration and coordination of transition services from school to post-secondary education and/or employment for individuals with disabilities who are enrolled in secondary education, and are eligible or PE to receive vocational rehabilitation services. The intent of the MoA is to define the responsibilities of both divisions within a tiers system of support, provide for efficient and effective utilization of agencies' resources; minimize duplication; and delineate a basis for continuous, effective working relationships between the two agencies.

The roles, responsibilities and financial obligations outlined in the MoA for IVRS includes the following:

- Develop the Local School Plan in collaboration with LEA staff, AEA staff and community partners.
- Provide Pre-ETS in collaboration and coordination with the LEA, ensuring that services (including individualized services under an IPE) are not duplicative nor do they supplant existing LEA services.
- Obtain PE documentation and a completed Pre-ETS Agreement.
- Use assessment information provided by education to determine eligibility and services. Securing additional assessment only when necessary and assuming financial responsibility for the cost of the additional information.
- Provide consultation and technical assistance to educators.
- Participate in the development of the employment and related components of the IEP, based on individual need.
- Develop an IPE for students within 90 days of being removed from the waiting list, unless an extension is approved.
- Ensure the IPE goals are consistent with IEP employment goals.
- Provide or arrange for services required by the IPE goal, including assistive technology devices, when the individual has been determined eligible for IVRS services and has an individual employment plan where the services are needed for the student's specific employment outcome. Provide assistance in the purchase of tools, supplies and other job related personal expenses for IVRS eligible students who have demonstrated success in a 4+ career and technical program as it relates to the IPE goal.
- Arrange and pay for the development of a supported short-term paid work experience for the most significantly disabled (MSD) students who require this service.
- Arrange and pay for job development and job coaching needed to serve the MSD students who require supported employment services. If long-term supports are needed after high school, IVRS will assist the LEA in coordinating these services for their final career.
- For students with disabilities seeking subminimum wage, career counseling and information and referral services to federal and state programs to help the individual discover, experience and attain competitive integrated employment will be provided within 30 calendar days.
- Collaborate with DE to provide joint training as needed to ensure AEAs and LEAs understand their responsibilities under the MoA.

The roles, responsibilities and financial obligations outlined in the MoA for DE includes the following:

- Participate in the development of the Local School Plan with IVRS and partners. Participants may include but are not limited to administration, special education teacher(s), school counselor, and/or CTE teachers.
- Assist IVRS in obtaining PE documentation and a completed Pre-ETS Agreement.
- Assist with identifying and connecting PE students to IVRS for Pre-ETS.

- Provide all existing educational assessment and performance information relevant for the determination of IVRS eligibility and services.
- Request consultation and technical assistance from IVRS counselors when needed for planning and implementing transition services.
- Consult with IVRS staff for identification of student's vocational needs and services.
- Develop and complete the employment component of the IEP, based on individual need.
- Ensure IEP employment goals are consistent with IPE goals.
- Work with IVRS staff to identify whether IVRS referral is appropriate and the supports needed to complete the application.
- Pay for all services listed on the IEP, including assistive technology, unless another agency or entity agrees to provide such services.
- Provide and/or pay for job coaching, when needed, as part of the instructional component of the IEP. LEA will provide the instructional training when it is for the student to learn job skills, learn about the world of work, and explore occupations to make an informed decision about a future work goal.
- Provide and/or pay for extended school year supports, as needed
- The DE will encourage each LEA to provide IVRS documentation that the student has completed transition services or received Pre-ETS when seeking subminimum wage employment. Documentation should be provided by the LEA to the IVRS staff assigned to the LEA no later than 30 calendar days after the determination of sub minimum wage has been made.
- The DE and LEAs will not enter into a contract or other arrangement with an entity for the purpose of operating a program under which a student with a disability is engaged in work compensated at a subminimum wage.
- Collaborate with IVRS to provide joint training as needed to ensure AEAs and LEAs understand their responsibilities under the MoA.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

The MoA between DE and IVRS includes a section specifically addressing outreach and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services. The Resource Manager position within IVRS as well as the designated State education agency position discuss the MoA regularly to assure outreach efforts and identification are taking place. The following is included in that section of the MoA:

Outreach efforts are identified in the Local School Plan for each LEA. Some of these activities could include but are not limited to attending an IEP meeting, participating in transition fairs or back to school nights, and other transition planning meetings. Additional outreach efforts include meeting and becoming known to LEA staff (teachers, school nurse, school counselor, administration, etc.) so LEA staff can make referrals to IVRS, as appropriate.

For PE students in need of Pre-ETS, PE documentation and a completed Pre-ETS Agreement is needed for participation in these activities. For students with more intensive needs, who would benefit from individualized VR services, an application for IVRS would be completed to determine eligibility for services.

The determination of eligibility requires that a qualified rehabilitation professional employed by IVRS perform a comprehensive analysis of the disabling conditions, impediments to employment and justification of why the individual requires services from IVRS to be successfully employed. As such, an eligibility justification is a process for the rehabilitation counselor to learn about the individual's presenting disability and gain understanding of the implications. Through a process of analysis, the IVRS counselor must consider the impact of the disabling conditions upon the person's ability to work, and then synthesize the information to determine if the individual can be successful with IVRS by providing technical assistance and consultation to existing systems or if the individual requires intensive services to be successful in employment. A thorough process of developing an understanding from the individual's point of view, analyzing the information and synthesizing it in relationship to IVRS requirements and then determining the priority of service and service needs involves:

- Gather information that describes the individual's disability and the difficulty the individual is having in gaining access to services and supports to be successful in employment;
- Analyze the information in relationship to the individual's ability to prepare for, obtain, maintain and advance in employment and how the individual can access services and supports that exist to more fully understand the implications of the individual's disability upon employment;
- Consider those impediments that have been identified to determine the seriousness on the individual's ability to prepare for, obtain, maintain or advance in employment as well as the timeframe required to successfully complete services and obtain employment that could not otherwise be obtained from other organizations; and,
- Determine the priority for services by examining the seriousness and evaluating if the serious impediment has implications in preparing for, obtaining, maintaining or advancing in employment and the specialized services and supports that are necessary for the individual to be successful.

Services are provided to individuals who have a priority rating consistent with the category (Most Significantly Disabled, Significantly Disabled, Others Eligible) being served. Students on the waiting list may continue to participate in Pre-ETS as long as the student participated in these activities prior to being placed on the waiting list.

As appropriate to the vocational needs of each individual and consistent with each individuals' informed choice, VR must ensure that the appropriate rehabilitation services are available to assist the individual with the disability to prepare for, secure, retain, regain or advance employment. These services should be consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choices. IVRS may determine that a student is no longer eligible for services and close the case if an error in determination was made.

All school personnel, including school nurses, shall share educational information of students with disabilities, including electronic access to IEPs, when appropriate and necessary for IVRS services. This shall include referrals to IVRS. Similarly, the IVRS staff shall share relevant information about students with disabilities when appropriate and necessary to facilitate the integration and coordination of transition services from school to postsecondary education and/or employment.

IVRS staff may have access to relevant special education data and related systems in order to ease provision and documentation of services.

E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

IVRS collaborates with the Iowa DHS to mirror employment support service rates, eliminating the need for cooperative agreements with Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) providers. IVRS monitors programs and expenditures for compliance with existing MoAs, state and federal policies. IVRS also provides coordination efforts with Iowa's Centers for Independent Living Services (CILS) and Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). Independent living services are provided through the Administration for Community Living and have their own state plan. Contracts are used to monitor the 6 CILS and the SILC. IVRS uses authorizations to purchase services with 67 CRP across the state based on the needs of the individual job candidate. These authorizations provide services to adults and students depending on their employment need(s) and the MoAs IVRS developed with the DE and DHS.

F. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

IVRS has a Menu of Services Manual that established responsibilities for the provision of Supported Employment Services (SES) with various CRPs. Agency standards for services must be met for a CRP to be approved to provide services on the Menu of Services including supported employment services. The Menu of Services Manual outlines employment services that IVRS is able to purchase from a CRP on behalf of an IVRS job candidate. The Menu of Services Manual reflects the responsibilities between IVRS and a Community Rehabilitation Provider that ensures the job candidate's needs drive the planning and service delivery process.

MoA's have been written by IVRS with the DE and DHS to outline roles and responsibilities of each entity and to complement service provision. Prior to arranging for SES, the IVRS counselor must identify funding for long-term support(s) required to maintain employment after the IVRS case file is closed. IVRS provides funding for SES through a shared arrangement with the Iowa Medicaid Enterprise System under DHS. Once a determination is made that SES is required, a team meeting occurs to discuss plans for the provision of this service. When the individual being served is an adult and supported employment is a required service, the agreement with the DHS is implemented for funding. If the individual being served is a student, then IVRS supports the student in supported employment in accordance with the agreement with the DE. IVRS does not allow a delay in services, so if the services are unavailable to the individual through DHS, IVRS makes the services available per policy guidelines.

To address workforce shortages in many parts of the state, IVRS expanded partnerships with private vendors for specific employment services including consumer choice options which was made available to address workforce shortages.

G. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

1. VR SERVICES; AND

IVRS has a Business Services team. The mission of this team is to partner for workforce solutions linking talented and qualified individuals with disabilities to private and public businesses by learning the unique culture, skills, and demands of the industry to ensure employment success; additionally providing businesses with workforce resources and support services. There is at least one Business Specialist in every office to help mentor staff and provide a sense of urgency to our business needs. In order to learn business and industry needs, the IVRS Business Services team is working to assist in the creation of pre-screening tools to assist with identifying the most qualified candidates.

Services to businesses were elevated in 2021. An emphasis was placed on staff training, with monthly classes offered to train staff and partners how to interact, develop and maintain relationships with businesses as well as leveraging these partnerships for outcomes. Additionally, IVRS developed, in partnership with business customers, a customer service academy for IVRS job candidates. This is held quarterly and is a virtual classroom to learn the skills necessary to provide customer service. Business partners recognize the value of this

academy and consider the certification to meet the requirement of customer service experience. IVRS has had several job candidates obtain employment from this experience.

IVRS has also held business intelligence sessions, which have provided another opportunity for IVRS to collaborate with external partners, staff and job candidates. During these sessions, businesses discuss their needs and the audience is encouraged to ask questions. Interviews are conducted with the businesses during these sessions.

Due to low participation of individuals with disabilities in apprenticeship programs, IVRS is partnering with Iowa Workforce staff. This partnership will include a pilot project in two IVRS area offices with a goal of increasing the number of individuals with disabilities who achieve competitive integrated employment through participation in an apprenticeship program. In addition to increasing participation in current apprenticeships, IVRS is also focused on developing new apprenticeship opportunities. IVRS staff will utilize the employment goals of job candidates to determine the career area and work with the business apprenticeship marketing specialists to create an apprenticeship in that area. The team meets monthly to discuss referrals and progress. IVRS trains staff on how to discuss apprenticeships with businesses and with job candidates.

The IVRS Business Services team was involved in the Harkin Summit, both on the planning committee and presenting to business and industry. IVRS was also involved with the Autism Speaks Leadership Summit that took place at the State of Iowa capitol. These Summits provided valuable information that the IVRS Business Services team will utilize to continue to identify competitive integrated employment opportunities and career exploration for IVRS job candidates.

The IVRS Business Services team has also focused efforts on providing disability sensitivity training to businesses across Iowa. The IVRS Business Services team was trained on the nationally-known training "Windmills: Changing the Perception of Ability". The team completed this training in conjunction with the Harkin Institute. After receiving this training, IVRS staff collaborated with local businesses to provide this training to their staff.

Emerging business partnerships include:

- Iowa State University Dining (food services sector, 22 employees): IVRS is creating a partnership that includes changing the culture. IVRS will provide disability sensitivity training to all staff. IVRS staff will spend a day learning the duties of the jobs in the bakery and dining hall and go through the hiring and orientation process to better understand the needs of the business. IVRS will identify a single point of contact for referrals and will be referring individuals with significant disabilities to carved positions. Carved positions means whether they will change the time of the shift or the duties to accommodate the individual's barriers to employment. The pay for these positions is $16 an hour plus state benefits for all employees, including part time. IVRS will have a staff member embedded to help with retention of these individuals.

- Grinnell College (food services sector, 280 employees): Grinnell College has hired numerous people on Social Security benefits. Recently the partnership expanded when the college asked for ongoing benefit counseling to help these individuals through pay raises and any changes to their existing Social Security benefits.

- Warren Distribution (manufacturing sector, 550 Iowa employees): Warren Distribution is in the process of going through a multi-series disability sensitivity training to help change their culture. IVRS has a staff member who is embedded there and has placed multiple individuals with disabilities. IVRS is also working on creating customized jobs for IVRS job candidates who have more significant disabilities.

- Lee Container (manufacturing sector, 200 employees in Iowa): Lee Container has completed training with IVRS and is hiring individuals with disabilities. IVRS has staff embedded within this business who assist with placing individuals with disabilities.
- Mercy One Des Moines (healthcare sector, 20,000 employees): Mercy One Des Moines has participated in a multiple-part training on disability sensitivity with their leadership. The IVRS Business Engagement Specialist works closely with the HR department to provide pre-screening prior to referral.
- Sodexo (food services sector, 420,000 employees): Sodexo is a business partner from the National Employment Team who has a footprint in Iowa. IVRS has worked with the company to create a process designated to ensure IVRS applicants receive an interview.
- IVRS has worked with Swiss Colony (customer service sector, 400 new remote work employees) on hiring IVRS job candidates in work-from-home customer service positions. Swiss Colony and IVRS collaborate to provide support to ensure job retention.
- IVRS has worked with Madison County Health (healthcare sector, 200 employees) to develop a prescreening tool. IVRS is also working with this business to find candidates for their openings.

In order to continue working with businesses to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities, the IVRS Business Services team has developed the following goals:

- Create a training library for IVRS staff to provide training to businesses on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), disability sensitivity, reasonable accommodations, and ergonomics.
- Identify strategies to continue to strengthen business partnerships.
- Utilize data to target new businesses and industries.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

The IVRS Business Services team held virtual customer service academy classroom sessions to help prepare youth for employment in the customer service field. Students are also invited to participate in ongoing Career Connections sessions, where businesses discuss their needs and IVRS staff teach relevant job search and job seeking skills necessary to gain employment in those sectors. IVRS is also partnering with the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council to create work based learning opportunities for youth interested in advocacy.

IVRS staff actively engage business when developing and delivering Pre-ETS to students with disabilities throughout the school year and during summer programming. IVRS staff arrange opportunities for students and youth to directly engage with business in order to develop the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in the workplace. IVRS also has contracted programs such as TAP, MTG, ProjectSEARCH, iJAG, TEAM, JReS, and the IVRS INs which focus on delivering Pre-ETS and other transition services to students and youth with disabilities with a focus on business engagement.

H. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

1. THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

IVRS and DHS continue to maintain a MoA outlining collaborative partnering efforts. The MoA established a statewide system of coordinated, cost-efficient vocational/employment services for people with developmental disabilities with minimal overlap of responsibility and maximum utilization of resources between IVRS and DHS. This MoA includes the following provisions:

- A description of the financial responsibility of the State Medicaid program to provide such services;
- Information identifying the terms, conditions, and procedures under which mutual job candidates will be served by IVRS and DHS;
- Information describing procedures for resolving interagency disputes under the agreement; and
- Information describing the policies and procedures for each public entity to determine and identify the interagency coordination responsibilities for purposes of promoting the coordination and timely delivery of employment-related services.

This agreement also clarifies roles and responsibilities of IVRS and DHS in regard to common consumers. Collaborative planning efforts are in place between IVRS and IME to implement Employment First principles. Monthly meetings including IVRS, IME and other stakeholders occur to facilitate competitive integrated employment outcomes.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

The IVRS CRP Resource Manager represents IVRS on the Iowa Mental Health Planning and Advisory Council run by the DHS MHDS. This representation ensures that IVRS and DHS collaborate in providing services for mutual individuals with mental illness and/or developmental disabilities with respect to the MoA between the two agencies. The IVRS CRP Resource Manager shares information regarding initiatives like the IPS program for individuals with severe mental illness and Customized Discovery (CD) service for individuals with developmental disabilities and brings back information to IVRS Administrator regarding updates on the mental health block grants and other DHS initiatives.

An IVRS counselor is currently on the Iowa Developmental Disabilities (DD) Council and the Executive Director is assigned to the leadership team of Employment First which is coordinated through IVRS. Collaborative efforts continue between IVRS and the DD Council that include the following:

- Statewide rollout of the fidelity program for the CD Service for individuals with MSD developmental disabilities which includes:
    - Technical assistance in FFY2022 to 18 new CRPs, 29 employment specialists who underwent the 12 weeks ACRE training with a focus on customized employment, and approximately 30 IVRS staff.
    - Monthly Community of Practice calls to ensure fidelity to CD is followed
- IVRS continues to work with DHS on a crosswalk of CD to make the service available through DHS as well as provide an entity with oversight to providers, ensuring fidelity to CD.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

IVRS and DHS that administers the Title XIX program of the Social Security Act, and who has the primary state level responsibility for overseeing the mental health services in Iowa have entered into a Memorandum of Agreement. This MOA describes the financial responsibilities and the populations served to maximize resources and avoid duplication. IVRS also partners with local CRPs in separate areas of the state to pilot model programs for IPS for individuals diagnosed with a mental illness. This program was expanded over the past year and IVRS continues to support this area and is looking at ways to roll it out to more areas. IVRS is

represented on the Mental Health Planning Council and meets quarterly with this group to discuss service needs and gaps in Iowa, and review legislative initiatives.

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;

IVRS maintains a web-based case management system which provides monthly, quarterly, and annual reports. The reports include job candidate caseload data, which along with budget information, is used to predict resources available for service delivery. An internal executive team meets monthly to review a sustainability model that is used as a foundation for the allocation of agency financial resources. Discussions occur at the management level regarding filling vacancies, justifying hiring decisions, waiting list removal decisions, and setting case expenditure guidelines. The Iowa Department of Administrative Services and the Iowa Department of Management reviews every hiring decision and requires justification to hire. Personnel in the Disability Determination Services Bureau are not reported as they are not covered by the IVRS State Plan.

Positions are targeted to offices based on optimum caseload size, as well as job candidates projected to come off the waiting list and move into active services. Current staffing includes:

- Area Office Supervisors: 13 positions
- Professional Staff: 128 positions
- Paraprofessional Staff: 60 positions

II. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

The current vacancies include:

- Area Office Supervisors: 0 positions needed; all are filled
- Professional Staff: 6 positions needed
- Paraprofessional Staff: 1 position needed

IVRS has currently maintained a short waiting list period for services. As a result, caseloads per professional staff are higher than what would be considered optimal. To continue with maintaining a short waiting list period, IVRS is focused on creating innovative practices with current staffing levels.

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.

Area Office Supervisors and Managers are projected to have one vacancy during the next five years. Professional Staff including Rehabilitation Counselors and Associates, are projected to have 12 vacancies during the next five years. Paraprofessional staff are projected to have 19

vacancies. This is based upon retirement factors and an aging workforce and does not consider other types of turnover that may be experienced.

B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

I. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM;

In the State of Iowa, there are two institutions that provide a post-secondary graduate degree in Rehabilitation Counseling: Drake University, Des Moines; and the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. Both programs offer a degree that allows graduates to work in Rehabilitation Counseling.

Other programs could be considered for employment (i.e. Social Work, Education, Counseling, etc.) however there is no active recruitment from other programs at this time.

II. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND

In the 2021-2022 academic year, the University of Iowa has 11 students enrolled in the Master Degree Rehabilitation Counseling program. This program has an emphasis on service delivery to individuals who are Deaf to support the need through partnership with IVRS. The University of Iowa also has two other programs that could transfer into Rehabilitation Counseling. These programs include: Mental Health with 26 students and School Counseling with 24 students.

In the 2021-2022 academic year, Drake University has 18 students funded by the RSA Scholar Program working towards their Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling. Another six students are enrolled in other counseling programs. Drake has an emphasis on growing their Mental Health Counseling program and IVRS is identifying strategies to promote vocational rehabilitation connections. The IVRS Training Resource Manager presents to students annually at Drake University to share about IVRS opportunities. IVRS also oversees the internship program for students interested in IVRS as an internship site. The IVRS Training Resource Manager will participate on the interviewing team for admission into the Master's program.

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.

The number of graduates in the University of Iowa counseling programs in the 2020-2021 school year were:

- Rehabilitation: 3
- Mental Health: 13
- School: 12

The number of graduates at the University of Iowa in the 2020-2021 school year with a certificate or license were:

- Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC): 2
- National Certified Counselor (NCC): 7
- Professional School Counselor: 12

The number of graduates in the Drake University counseling programs in the 2020-2021 school year were:

- Rehabilitation: 4
- Clinical Rehabilitation/Mental Health: 4

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

The agency actively works with the two Rehabilitation Counseling programs in Iowa and recruits from graduate programs in Minnesota, Illinois, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

IVRS has increased the number of interns and practicum students with a total of seven practicum students in Fall of 2021 and nine interns in Spring of 2022. Internships are now being offered as a paid experience to recruit students to IVRS for their internship experience. IVRS field staff work closely with interns and practicum students to provide them with exposure to IVRS.

IVRS staff mentor students in the University of Iowa Rehabilitation Counseling or School Counseling programs to introduce students early in their program to IVRS. This is a new initiative and IVRS is working to develop a similar initiative with learned best practices at Drake University.

IVRS continues to review Affirmative Action data to determine goals and strategies to improve deficiencies in state employment for individuals from minority backgrounds. IVRS attempts to recruit from a wide variety of sources including the State of Iowa hiring system, Iowa Workforce Development, employee referral and various community newspapers. The screening process is equitable to all applicants. Screening is done strictly on a numeric basis and the top scoring applicants are interviewed. IVRS Workforce Composition data remains stable and does not show significant discrepancies in changes in workforce minority populations. IVRS Affirmative Action goals encourage IVRS to continue reviewing hiring practices to aid in diversifying IVRS agency staff.

IVRS has developed a Cultural Diversity Committee to focus on obtaining staff from diverse backgrounds. The committee also focuses on building knowledge and understanding of staff from diverse backgrounds to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

In order to retain staff, IVRS has begun providing additional onboarding and training through mentorships. IVRS continuously looks for ways to achieve work life balance for staff through telework, flexible schedules and adjusted schedules as needed. IVRS is also reviewing standardization of performance measures and accountability to enhance equity amongst staff expectations.

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

IVRS established personnel standards that are consistent according to state guidelines and are reviewed by the Iowa Department of Administrative Services. The academic degree standard for VR Counselors remains a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, counseling and guidance, or a closely related major emphasis including MBA or MPA.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

For certain positions, the job description determines the skills needed to do the job. In the review of applicants, the agency looks not only at academic degrees held, but the individual's ability to perform the job duties of a specific opening. Some candidates with prior experience in community rehabilitation programs, school systems, or personnel organizations have the desired skills and contacts to place individuals with disabilities into employment. In many rural areas, qualified candidates with a Master's degree are quite limited. In those cases, individuals with related degrees are considered for vacancies. IVRS has a strategic plan emphasizing business involvement with collaborative and unified efforts at integrating a continuum of services with State Core Partners. This is a key part of the WIOA Unified Plan efforts. These strategies help enhance IVRS' ability to have personnel understanding the 21st century employment needs.

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

A. A SYSTEM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS WITHIN THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO ASSESSMENT, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING, JOB PLACEMENT, AND REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING TRAINING IMPLEMENTED IN COORDINATION WITH ENTITIES CARRYING OUT STATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998; AND

IVRS provides and supports ongoing, professional career development training which may be provided either internal or external to the agency. IVRS is certified through the Commission on Rehabilitation Counseling Certification to provide approved continuing education hours for applicable coursework. Training activities focus on knowledge or understanding of rehabilitation topics; customer service, development and demonstration of new levels of skills; ethics, and organizational change projects that enhance the achievement of employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. IVRS staff have the opportunity to participate in workshops and seminars and concentrated training activities to improve skills in working with specific groups of individuals with disabilities, as well as individual or group staff development activities designed to enable staff to acquire special skills. In 2021 the following classes were offered to all employees of IVRS through internal trainings and external presenters:

- Pre-ETS Flexibility
- Training on Delivering Virtual Services
- Benefits Planning Training
- Diversity Trainings
- Sexual Harassment
- New Staff Training
- Dragon Naturally Speaking
- Supported Employment Services
- Collaboration with Case Management
- On the Job Training
- Exceptions to Policy
- IPE Development
- Eligibility
- Financial Policies/Procedures

- Suicidal Prevention
- De-escalation
- Post-Secondary
- Customized Discovery
- Career Index+
- IVRS Systems
- Self-Employment
- Employment First
- Autism Services and Supports
- Poverty Simulation
- Technology Training
- Assistive Technology
- Apprenticeships
- Case note documentation
- Case management
- Business Services
- Local School Planning
- Deaf Services
- Motivational Interviewing
- IVRS Conference

In August of 2020, IVRS held a statewide conference for all contracted and internal staff. This conference provided training on areas recommended by staff in the field. External and internal experts provided evidence-based methods and practices to staff who work directly with job candidates, transition students, and businesses.

Formal staff development sessions also support implementation of goals and priorities in the State Plan with respect to Cultural Diversity, coordination with Workforce partners, services to Deaf and Hard of Hearing job candidates, retention of job candidates to successful rehabilitation, changes in the Supported Employment Services, and services to high school students and youth. Professional development courses were offered to all employees.

Assistive Technology was provided at the statewide staff conference, however, it was determined that this training did not meet the more intensive needs as far as understanding assistive technology. IVRS has been in collaboration with Easterseals who holds the Assistive Technology Grant and they will begin a more collaborative approach with the training of IVRS staff. Starting in February of 2022, Easterseals is scheduled to start an introduction session with all new staff on Easterseals services and will demonstrate assistive technology tools. Trainings will be recorded and available for IVRS staff.

Specific classes are required of new employees and vary depending upon the job classification involved. These required trainings through the professional development series provided by the State of Iowa are:

Supervisors:

- From Interview to Hire
- Fundamentals of Supervision
- Performance Evaluation
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Crucial Conversations
- Discipline, Grievances & the Merit System
- Diversity Training for Managers and Supervisors
- Equal Opportunity / Affirmative Action / Anti-Discrimination
- Investigating Employee Misconduct
- Preventing Sexual Harassment for Supervisors
- Shaping Effective & Engaged Teams
- Strategic Planning & Systems Thinking

All new staff:

- Preventing Sexual Harassment for Employees

Staff have reported during six-month post-hire interviews and exit interviews an increased appreciation for onboarding and training offered by IVRS compared to prior years.

IVRS is updating the New Staff training to be all in person again due to engagement difficulties and struggles learning material in an all virtual platform. We are also working on a recorded module training plan that will cover information on different components of the VR process, policies, and procedures that will allow staff to review when warranted. This will allow new employees a more timely system that is consistent across the service areas.

Continued training will focus on goals within the State Plan and identified needs through the Quality Assurance process. Annual IVRS conferences and Monthly staff meetings will be held to allow for timely and consistent messaging with training when necessary.

B. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS.

The agency routinely uses the latest research and pilot projects to update training programs in areas such as assistive technology, mental illness, learning disabilities, autism, and head injury/traumatic brain injury. IVRS is the lead agency with the Employment First Initiative and both internal staff and IVRS partners have access to a myriad of customized employment training webinars. IVRS also provides training on policy, motivational interviewing, benefits planning, and when new initiatives and issues arise, training is developed, coordinated and/or provided by the IVRS Training Specialist. Recent examples this past year have included external and internal training on Deaf services and motivational interviewing. Standing committees exist to help disseminate information on a regular basis in the areas of Motivational Interviewing, business development and engagement, benefits planning, transition services, and assistive

technology. These committees help to keep field staff informed of best practices and preferred methods for service delivery.

IVRS is actively involved in a yearly Data Summit focusing on internal controls, performance measures, and data validation. These practices are shared with the IVRS leadership team, with promising practices incorporated into the VR service delivery processes. IVRS utilizes the quarterly RSA Data Dashboards and Other Measures That Matter to identify areas of need for targeted staff training. IVRS actively seeks national conferences that lead to the development of innovative practices for the agency. IVRS also participates in CSAVR conferences and regional meetings to discuss best practices with other VR agencies.

5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

IVRS contracts with interpreters to provide communication for individuals who are Deaf. IVRS staff also contract with language interpreters when an individual speaks a language other than English. This may be done through a state agency, through a private agency, as well as the use of CTS Language Link, which is part of the State's Master Agreement. Collaboration continues with the Iowa School for the Deaf on suggestions to improve service delivery for this population. IVRS maintains an agreement with the Iowa Department for the Blind (IDB) to convert training materials into large print or Braille format for trainees with visual impairments and learning disabilities. All training materials are provided in the preferred means of communication, including Braille, large print, disk, or closed caption. IVRS, through the work of the SRC representative and CAP, has made available an orientation video for outreach purposes which is completed in American Sign Language. Staff also use forms that have been translated into Spanish.

6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

IVRS and the Iowa Department of Education have an agreement to provide joint training for staff to receive common information and skill development pertinent to students with disabilities. IVRS staff/management and education agencies (SEA, LEAs and AEAs) engage in conversations on how to collaborate in order to support students with disabilities in transition. In these discussions, planning occurs on how to develop the core competencies of staff, how to expand on staff capacities, and what actions will achieve student outcomes. Often this requires participation locally in training and cross training of staff on language, services, process, etc.

IVRS has a close working relationship with the bureau responsible for Special Education within the Iowa Department of Education. Several joint statewide training and resources have been developed/provided which includes training on WIOA, VR Services, Local School Plans, the Local School Plan Implementation Guide, collaboration, and the DE/LEA/IDB/IVRS Collaboration Frequently Asked Questions.

Over the next two years, additional joint statewide training will be developed/provided on the new IEP system in Iowa (ACHIEVE). This training will be a collaboration between IVRS, DE and the IDB and will provide understanding on the new system, requirements, language and design of the IEP.

IVRS staff also discuss training and personnel development needs during Local School Plan meetings on at least a yearly basis. As part of the development of the Local School Plan, the local school team discusses gaps and training needs which are then identified on the plan. The IVRS Area Office Supervisor reviews this plan and discussions occur on how this joint training will be provided.

Over the next two years, a Local School Plan survey will be implemented that will allow for LEA staff, AEA staff, IVRS staff and other partners to provide feedback on additional training that is

needed across the state so that personnel development can be provided specific to the identified school district or statewide.

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;

In coordination with the SRC, IVRS previously received Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) information through the Iowa Coalition for Integrated Employment (ICIE). In 2022, IVRS will be conducting a Request for Proposal (RFP) to seek vendors to conduct the upcoming CSNA. The results of that CSNA will be used for the next Unified State Plan.

IVRS provides an annual report to the Iowa Legislature on work with Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs), specifically in the area of Supported Employment Services (SES). IVRS has continued efforts to create and maintain partnerships with CRPs in Iowa. IVRS partners with 67 CRPs in PY2021. IVRS has also continued efforts to promote and encourage collaboration by reaching out to CRPs, external vendors, and other service providers. The result of this focus has contributed positively to enhancing partnerships, in addition to maintaining competitive community employment-related options for Iowans with disabilities. IVRS has a dedicated staff position performing the outreach activities in collaboration with CRPs.

A specific focus continues to be on the implementation of Employment First principles. IVRS was the lead agency for the Federal monies received from the Department of Labor's Office of Disability and Employment Policy for the past six years and has collaborated with the Iowa Developmental Disabilities (DD) Council to sustain those efforts during the past two years. Since 2012, Iowa has received technical and financial assistance dollars that were directed to community provider transformation to assist individuals with the most significant disabilities across competitive integrated community employment.

FFY Amount Expended to CRPs and Number of Job Candidates with CRP Services

- 2021 $2,687,266; 1,664 job candidates **IVRS is still expending funds for FFY2021 so these are not final
- 2020 $2,443,891; 1,742 job candidates
- 2019 $3,735,407; 2,266 job candidates
- 2018 $3,737,052; 2,211 job candidates
- 2017 $3,363,602; 2010 job candidates
- 2016 $2,961,365; 1,871 job candidates
- 2015 $2,836,035; 1,432 job candidates
- 2014 $1,845,630; 998 job candidates

The 2021 numbers are not final as authorizations and claims for the FFY21 are not resolved. IVRS has continued to see a slight decrease in the number of services provided to the IVRS adult caseload, primarily due to the attention and focus on transition and Pre-ETS required by WIOA but additional decline due to COVID19 pandemic on service providers and job candidates. In FFY21, IVRS served 13,314 potentially eligible students.

As part of the assessment, IVRS tracks the amount expended, the numbers served, employment outcomes, wages and hours. An annual report card is generated to provide numeric ratings for CRP performance in the areas of wages earned, hours worked, rehabilitation rate, and service timeliness. In FFY2021, annual report cards have not yet been completed as IVRS is still expending funds for CRP services. These report cards have an anticipated completion date of June 2022. The score on past report cards increased from 5.51 in FFY2019 to 7.71 in FFY2020.

Need areas continue to relate to training of CRP employment specialists due to high turnover in their positions, need for increased familiarity and training related to the IVRS Menu of Services, IVRS need to improve review and monitoring of SES quality indicators prior to approving payments, increased coordination needs with Managed Care Organizations, a need for review of the Individual Placement and Supports pilot project for individuals with mental illness, continued training on knowledge related to Discovery and Customized Employment for both CRPs and IVRS staff, as well as the continued need to coordinate long term extended supports and ensure a high level of service through long term providers.

As a result of COVID19, virtual job coaching service is a need that has been identified. IVRS, Department of Human Services (DHS)/Managed Care Organizations (MCO) and CRPs have begun working together to determine how the system can support improved efficiencies with virtual and remote SES programming. Areas that will be focused on include:

- dollars spent
- individuals served
- employment outcomes
- wages
- hours
- rehabilitation rate

IVRS will focus on training staff in this area and the coordination of services with MCOs. IVRS plans on tracking this process to demonstrate impacts on coordination. This will ensure consistency of training for staff and partners.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

In PY2020, IVRS' minority service rate was at 97.7, improved from PY2019 and PY2018 which were 92.2 and 90.6. IVRS, however, served significantly fewer individuals of minority background with the overall total being 588 referrals, down from 843. The 588 did make up 18% of the referrals where in PY 2019, they made up 20%. This is due to the growth and emphasis on transition services versus the adult population and the expansion of services to those students who are PE.

Each IVRS office has an outreach plan specific to individuals with disabilities who are unserved or underserved, including minorities. IVRS staff participate on a number of boards and network with civic organizations and churches in an attempt to reach out to individuals who identify as minorities. IVRS is also involved in working with human rights and international and statewide service organizations; and other agencies or individuals who may be able to assist minority individuals in the rehabilitation process.

Individuals of minority backgrounds continue to have rehabilitation needs that must be addressed with improved understanding from IVRS staff who may have cultural background differences. A need has been identified to provide specific cultural awareness training and in 2020 IVRS initiated the Cultural Diversity Committee. This committee began with conducting training through the University of Iowa Center for Disabilities and Development on Engaging

Diverse Populations & Cultural Responsiveness. The committee is tasked with addressing engagement with diverse job candidates to improve the minority rate, the rehabilitation rate, and employment outcomes through addressing improved service interactions as well as assisting the agency in the agency's affirmative action plan through advice, recommendations and feedback for improved engagement and strategy implementation for staff retention/development. All IVRS staff are encouraged to participate in this Committee.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

The IVRS CSNA identified a need to expand outreach services to address the employment needs of individuals who are Deaf. IVRS has experienced a significant decrease in services to this population due to communication issues and a lack of understanding of the Deaf culture. This information was gathered from area office meetings targeted at receiving feedback from the Deaf community. Specific need areas included improved transition and career service linkages for those students who are Deaf; improved access to Pre-ETS; a need to expand awareness and accessibility of VR staff regarding rehabilitation technology to positively impact services for individuals who are Deaf.

The other area targeted by the SRC was a need area related to services for individuals over the age of 55. VR staff are used to working with and understanding disability-related barriers to issues, but staff struggled with aging resources and the unique adjustments aging causes that combine with disability to expand barriers to employment. IVRS has increased coordination, training and outreach within the Older Workers Employment Program (OWEP).

It was also identified that those individuals requiring benefits planning services were underserved. In 2020, the Benefits Planning Cadre was upgraded to improve access and understanding of how the use of work incentives and benefits planning can improve employment outcomes. IVRS has seen increased training for this population.

The final area resulting in data reflecting individuals that have been underserved within the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment includes individuals who have intellectual disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, and those in the classification of Autism Spectrum disorders. IVRS continues to track the number of referrals, employment outcomes, and IPE participation through a pilot project as well as providing specific training to staff in these areas of rehabilitation needs. The focus continues to be on improving the understanding and uniqueness of barriers to employment related to each of these disability groups. It is hoped that improved awareness and comfort in working with these targeted population groups will result in improved service delivery, growth in referral numbers, and improved employment outcomes.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

The Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment identified a need to align case management systems with the core partners. The new RSA 911 Data Reporting Requirements have been added to the electronic case management system since the development of the last State Plan. There continues to be a need to improve understanding from all partners in the American Job Centers regarding issues such as common application, intake orientation for job seekers, as well as strategies for co-enrollment. Collaborative partnerships are occurring and the Workforce Center in Creston, Iowa serving the SW portion of the state was recognized in national WINTAC webinars for the joint service delivery efforts. IVRS staff were key partners in this effort. WIOA provides IVRS and partners the opportunity to work collaboratively without duplicating services while expanding capacity to provide statewide services. Both IVRS and Workforce Centers are mandated to provide comprehensive services; however not everyone with a disability requires intensive services. IVRS provides guidance and technical assistance, which allows for a continuum of services based on each individual's need. This continuum of service

model propels "disability" into the community-wide experience requiring all organizations and entities to create systems that work to achieve outcomes for all individuals as a result.

During collaborative meetings with local board staff and Iowa Workforce Managers, IVRS staff continue to learn about services available to all individuals, regardless of disability. Cross training occurs regularly to ensure all core partners are familiar with services and can make appropriate referrals. Integration in One-Stop centers and programs allows individuals with disabilities to access all programs, workshops and services. Integration in One-Stops may include joint staff meetings, shared business partners, and technical assistance or evaluation by IVRS. The focus of integration should support a job seeker to achieve employment with available services and supports from a One-Stop team. Involvement in services from IVRS is based on a person's need for intensive services or necessary supports that are not available through Workforce Development. If a job seeker does not have a disability, IVRS is not generally involved; however, there may be questions IVRS is asked related to program and/or building access. IVRS and IWD staff create a braided service that no longer "hands-off" an individual between programs but instead, works together to achieve common outcomes. IVRS connects with Career Pathways training, National Career Readiness Certification, Adult Education and Literacy, etc., and provides technical assistance to these programs as applicable. IVRS coordinates the Individualized Plan for Employment with core partner plans for employment, creating a "short-term" to "long-term" employment plan that creates opportunities for self-sufficiency and middle skills development for an individual.

Training and ongoing service development is essential to a fully integrated system. Providing an integrated service system to access employment opportunities continues to be refined among Iowa systems. Most IVRS supervisors are part of each local workforce development board and participate in community conversations with employers. They become aware of business needs and potential options for employment in local communities, which benefit both Iowa job seekers and employers. IVRS is also represented on the SWDB and the state alignment committee addressing the DOL's concern on the make-up of the boards. This work lead to realignment of geographic areas in a different manner and more effectively utilize the limited dollars available for increasing direct services and decreasing administrative overhead. There are currently nine local workforce development areas in the State of Iowa.

Although not fully implemented, sector partnerships have allowed IVRS job candidates to gain access to information pertaining to in-demand careers. The local Disability Access Committees continue to be expanded. These committees were formed at the local board level through each of the major One Stop Centers. Through guidance from a statewide DAC formed through the SWDB, each local area was asked to develop their own committee. These are chaired by IVRS or IDB staff and include representation from core and required partners in the local area. These committees are tasked with identifying physical accessibility issues, program accessibility issues, disability training, and ways to collaborate and partner together to increase employment outcomes through the One-Stop Center for individuals with disabilities.

Physical accessibility studies have been completed at each of the Centers and reports have been compiled; the workforce center has already begun communication with local managers and property owners in efforts to remedy accessibility issues. At the time of submission of the Unified State Plan in 2020, a survey was sent to all core staff regarding comfort levels in working with individuals with disabilities. 126 responses were received and information was gathered leading to the development of a disability sensitivity training program, which is being implemented across every region through a collaborative partnership with the Disability Access Committees and the Disability Employment Initiative through the workforce centers. After resolving the physical accessibility issues and implementing the disability sensitivity training, efforts continue to be taken to address program accessibility through identifying existing assistive technology resources at the One-Stop Centers and how it relates to reasonable accommodations for job seekers who need assistance. In 2021 the Iowa WIOA Core Partner

Working Group, in collaboration with local workforce development board representatives, presented standards for One-Stop Centers in the areas of continuous improvement, effectiveness, and physical and programmatic accessibility. These standards were presented and approved by the Statewide Workforce Development Board. These standards align with WIOA certification requirements and support continued collaboration amongst partners.

The workforce system provides assistance to individuals who are interested in starting their own businesses. IVRS offers the Iowa Self-Employment (ISE) program to individuals with disabilities working with IVRS. IVRS provides the financial assistance to start a business to job candidates with matching dollars provided by the candidate. Other Titles may also provide resources or contribute funding support to person's involved in ISE.

ISE has proven to be a successful option for employment in both FFYs 16 and 17, with 65 Iowans with disabilities becoming successful entrepreneurs. Iowa Workforce offices may also be involved to support, provide resources or advise IVRS job candidates in business ventures. In response to the need to increase options for business services to IVRS job candidates, IVRS added microenterprise to the services available through ISE. This is a newer program, which has been previously supported by the SRC. The SRC participated in a presentation of ISE and heard a number of success stories involving customized strategies resulting in self-employment. The ISE program changed supervision in 2021, with the team being integrated into the Assistant Bureau Chief who focuses on Quality Assurance, in an effort to develop consistent practices throughout the state as well as prioritizing self-employment options for all candidates through creating awareness and knowledge among professional staff. IVRS has implemented entrepreneurial strategies as part of Pre-ETS for students with disabilities to consider as a potential vocational option.

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

The prior Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment encouraged continued focus on transition services within the State of Iowa. Youth and students with disabilities are a primary focus for IVRS service delivery. Iowa has a Governor-initiated Future Ready Iowa program focused on increasing the number of qualified job candidates receiving post-secondary education to meet the mid-skills gap in the Iowa economy. Future Ready Iowa connects Iowans to the education and training required for good paying jobs and careers to improve lives. The Future Ready Iowa goal is to have 70% of Iowans with education and training beyond high school by 2025.

In the State of Iowa, the minimum age for the provision of transition services is age 14 and the maximum age is 21. IVRS will continue to connect students and youth with disabilities to services in order to provide Pre-ETS, linkages to career business connections, and other direct VR services to improve employment outcomes for these individuals. This will occur through the delivery of a comprehensive Pre-ETS program. Focus areas are:

- Improved family engagement
- Access to needed rehabilitation technology and benefit planning services
- Development of business relationships and engagement of businesses in Pre-ETS activities
- Access to post-secondary education, including participating in CTE and STEM classes for students in secondary education
- Improved awareness of competitive integrated employment opportunities for students and youth with the most significant disabilities

- Coordination of service delivery and employment with LEAs and AEAs
- Ensuring IVRS staff have the capacity and resources necessary to meet the 15% set aside for Pre-ETS, which will provide access and awareness of post-secondary training opportunities and employability skills for students with disabilities
- Alignment of competitive integrated employment service strategies with community partners
- Alignment and capacity building with One Stop Centers to improve career linkages
- Understanding and awareness of accessibility issues across core partners

The following describes how IVRS provides services to students and youth with disabilities:

The IVRS program has been designed to provide a continuum of VR services by offering Pre-ETS to any student with a disability in an educational program receiving special education services under an IEP or who are covered under the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, regardless of whether the student has applied for or been determined eligible for VR services. IVRS counselors are assigned to all public high schools and private accredited high schools in the State of Iowa. Counselors are integrated into the school culture, and collaborate with LEA staff and AEA staff on service delivery. IVRS staff work directly with a variety of school staff, including, but not limited to, Special Education Teachers, School Administration, School Nurses, and School Counselors. Through this collaboration, students who are on an IEP or served under the provision of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are identified and referred for services starting at age 14.

IVRS staff collaborate with LEA staff, AEA staff, IVRS contracted programs and other community partners to provide Pre-ETS services beginning at age 14 until either the student graduates his/her educational program, reaches age 22, or the services are no longer needed. As IVRS staff provide Pre-ETS services in the schools, they are working with PE students and IVRS Eligible students both individually and/or in groups. Students get to know IVRS staff and learn about the strategies to assist them in building their employment skills. The counselor is observing that student to determine whether the student can independently access comparable benefits or services found in the community without supports. If it is apparent through counselor observation or through teacher referral, that the student has a barrier to successfully access employment, training, post-secondary education, or any other employment-related service, the IVRS staff person will meet with the student for an intake and determine eligibility for services, pending agreement by the student and their parent/guardian. IVRS utilizes a workforce model that focuses on a team approach to providing transition services. Utilization of IVRS Counselors, Rehabilitation Associates, and Rehabilitation Assistants allows for increased capacity when serving high schools.

All students who have a barrier to employment are encouraged to apply for vocational rehabilitation services, even if they are still receiving Pre-ETS, and are subject to all relevant requirements for eligibility, order of selection and the development of the IPE. IVRS targets students with IEPs and/or 504 Plans in outreach efforts. IVRS staff are encouraged to reach out to school counselors, school nurses, and other LEA staff in order to reach students with disabilities who have barriers to employment and who are not on an IEP or 504 Plan. AEA, school nurses and school social workers provide outreach to underserved populations or students who may not traditionally be referred for services, but who have significant limitations to employment because of a mental health diagnosis.

Service delivery may look different at each school district depending on what is already being provided in that area and the needs of students at a particular school. IVRS developed an MoA with the DE at the state level to outline roles and responsibilities between IVRS, LEAs and DE. Local School Plans are also developed to outline the services and responsibilities of the LEA,

AEA, IVRS, IDB, IVRS contracted programs and other WIOA and community partners involved in providing Pre-ETS and other transition services within the district. IVRS does not supplant or duplicate the services provided by the LEA, which is clearly outlined in the Local School Plans. Through these partnerships, IVRS is able to streamline service delivery and make referrals when needed, including referrals to WIOA partners such as Iowa*WORKS*.

Through these local school planning meetings and conversations with partners, IVRS has developed several strategies to increase capacity and provide new or expanded services. For example, IVRS has contracted with community colleges to establish an Intermediary Network Position that is solely focused on the provision of Pre-ETS to students with disabilities. IVRS created the IVRS Intermediary Network Program because of the unmet needs for students with disabilities that were not being served by the general program.

Another example is IVRS recognized a need in serving students with disabilities in the largest school district in Iowa and developed a new program called TEAM. TEAM is a collaboration between Easterseals, IVRS and DMPS. The focus of TEAM is on developing and providing Pre-ETS to students with disabilities who are attending all high schools within DMPS. TEAM staff work collaboratively with the IVRS Counselors assigned to DMPS and the DMPS WECs to provide new or expanded services for students with disabilities in each of the five required activities for Pre-ETS. TEAM does not duplicate any class or program already provided by the district. Year-round services are provided to include activities that occur during the school day and after school, as well as activities throughout the summer.

A need has been identified in Iowa for students with disabilities to have access and participate in CTE courses/activities as well as STEM coursework. IVRS is participating on state level teams to improve access and participation in both of these areas and will be a focus for the agency over the next few years.

As additional needs and/or gaps in service delivery are identified, IVRS will continue to partner and coordinate services for students and youth with disabilities with WIOA and other community partners. IVRS will also continue to develop contracted programs in identified districts across the state.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

The prior CSNA identified a continued need to focus on improving relationships with CRPs and improve the IVRS Menu of Employment Services. IVRS has been a leader in the Employment First initiative and as a result, more individuals who may have entered facility-based employment have obtained employment. Throughout the state, many of Iowa's CRPs have shown a commitment to competitive integrated employment (CIE) and helping facilitate an individual's movement towards this goal. CIE is a priority for most of SRC members and has been the driving force behind Iowa's Employment First efforts as well. As a result, there were changes made to the IVRS Menu of Employment Services in partnership with DHS and supported by external service providers. The work in Iowa is done collaboratively and both a representative from DHS and the Executive Director of the Iowa Association of Community Providers remain key members of the Iowa Employment First Leadership Team.

IVRS will continue to participate in Employment First efforts – with its clear focus on helping individuals with the most significant disabilities access CIE. IVRS has been supported by subject matter experts in evidence-based programs such as the IPS program through Westat and the promising practices of Customized Discovery through Griffin Hammis Associates.

The Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council, Disability Rights of Iowa, the Iowa Association of Community Providers, Iowa's Department of Human Rights, Iowa Client Assistance Program and the IVRS SRC are key partners focused on equitable access and participation. As previously

discussed, ICIE and Employment and the Disability Employment Initiative have been collaborative partners in helping IVRS promote Employment First.

Through Iowa's Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Project, IVRS has begun to implement and enhance IPS initiatives in Iowa. Iowa has an established Employment First team, with IVRS serving as a lead role. In 2019, the IPS projects were facilitated through the work of state team members representing DHS, IVRS, and the University of Iowa. In 2021, Iowa received the ASPIRE grant from SAMSHA which provided two Subject Matter Experts to provide direction and support to expand IPS across Iowa. In FFY2022, IVRS, DHS and four Mental Health Regions commenced expansion of the program from three regions to six total regions, with plans to add one to two additional regions on an annual basis until all of Iowa eventually has access to IPS. The original Iowa IPS sites have demonstrated significantly increased collaboration and communication among the team during the delivery of IPS services resulting in improved outcomes for individuals with significant mental illness.

The low response rate from providers across the state to provide IPS indicates ongoing promotional and educational needs regarding the benefits of IPS. There is ongoing need to provide education on Employment First principles and expectations; identify funding streams, and utilize mental health staff who support an individual's need for employment as part of recovery.

Through the support from Iowa DD Council and IVRS's 2021 summer long promotional blitz, Customized Discovery expanded from 10 CRPs covering 5 IVRS regions at the end of FFY21 to 18 CRPs covering all but one IVRS region at the beginning of FFY22. Similar to IPS, increased collaboration and communication among the teams during the delivery of Customized Discovery services resulted in placement for the most significantly disabled job candidates with developmental disabilities who would have been placed into Day Habilitation programs in the past. The high response rate from providers across the state to provide CD indicated readiness and commitment from CRPs as it relates to using CD and the Employment First principles and expectations. There is ongoing need to provide education and training to apply the fidelities of Customized Discovery; identify who would benefit from the use of Customized Discovery; applying Customized Discovery results to customized job development; and to collaborate with DHS using these results.

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

Through Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment information, work with core partners, collaboration with the SRC, and discussion with constituents, it was identified that IVRS was seeing increased needs of individuals with disabilities for transition career services and Pre-ETS. One particular area of focus is on service alignment with apprenticeship and career work-readiness programs. Improved coordination needs were also identified among One Stop partners related to access and improved outreach for students and youth with disabilities to access career-based, work-based learning and apprenticeship programs. Increased exposure needs were also identified as it relates to secondary special education teachers to improve linkages to career services and ensure alignment occurs between the IEP and the IPE. A segment of this population exists in foster care or in the correctional system and it was identified that there was a need for specialized employment services to meet the gaps in the service system. These services are coordinated in many ways, but a few examples follow.

An MoA between IVRS and the DE continues to outline the roles, responsibilities and financial obligations that exist between IVRS and the LEAs, also known as the School District. This MoA was signed by both parties and implementation and education has been provided through joint statewide training and reviewed each year with the local school planning teams. The local IVRS

offices are responsible for developing Local School Plans with the LEAs, AEAs and other partners in their area to assist with further defining services/responsibilities of each entity in alignment with the MoA. These plans outline the services and activities that the LEA will deliver as well as the new and expanded services and activities that IVRS staff will deliver within the schools. Local School Plans are signed by the LEA administrator, AEA Regional Administrator and the IVRS Supervisor. The MoA also specifies how IVRS and DE will work collaboratively to serve students in transition and provide technical assistance, as needed, to local teams. The agreement stipulates when IVRS and the LEA are working together with a student, IVRS and the LEA will jointly deliver Pre-ETS.

The MOA also recognizes the roles and responsibilities of each organization and the financial obligations that have been agreed upon. The LEA and IVRS will collaborate when supports are needed for work-based learning experiences and employment. The LEA will provide or pay for instructional training services when students participate in a Supported Short-Term Paid Work Experience which IVRS funds. Both services are discussed as part of IEP planning in which IVRS staff, school staff and other partners participate in. Because IVRS' expertise is in the knowledge of work, employment services and business relationships, IVRS assumes responsibility for job development and business relationships to assist a student in obtaining employment. Local school plans identify a collaborative approach to transition planning and include additional partners, such as CRPs, IWD, etc., who may be able to assist in facilitating a student's progress so the student can be successfully employed in the community.

A Local School Plan Survey will be implemented in 2022 to receive feedback from IVRS, LEA staff, AEA staff, and other partners providing services to students with disabilities within the school district. The goal of this survey is to assist with the quality of these Local School Plans, gaps in service delivery, and any training needs. The results of this survey will be shared by IVRS staff with the local school team during a spring meeting to assist with planning for the next school year and to update the Local School Plan.

Currently, all local school plan team members receive a copy and anyone who requests a copy will be provided the plan. During an SRC meeting, discussions occurred around how to make these plans more accessible to parents/guardians, so IVRS will be collaborating with parent advocacy groups to determine strategies to make these Local School Plans more accessible to parents/guardians who have students within these school districts.

A need was previously identified for summer Pre-ETS programming, so each IVRS office is expected to provide summer Pre-ETS programming for students with disabilities working in conjunction with schools, IVRS contracted programs, AEAs, business, IWD and other partners. Planning teams work collaboratively and year-round to develop this programming so students receive Pre-ETS during the summer months.

ICIE continues to provide valuable information to IVRS in the area of transition planning as a topic in their meetings, with reporting on progress occurring through the contract they hold with IVRS.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES

In PY19 (July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020) IVRS determined 4,347 individuals eligible for services; in PY20 (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021), IVRS determined 3,295 individuals eligible for services. In PY19, the average caseload IVRS served was 14,539 and in PY20, the average caseload IVRS served was 13,996. The average caseload IVRS anticipates being able to serve up to 13,974 annually per year for PY21 and PY22. The lower projection is due to a decrease in the number of referrals received.

On a weekly basis, IVRS removes all individuals on the MSD waiting list. As of December 2021, IVRS had no individuals with Significant Disabilities and no individuals in the Others Eligible Category on the Waiting list. In November 2020, IVRS opened the Others Eligible Category. Job candidates who are determined to have MSD will move directly into services. Job candidates with Significant Disabilities and Others Eligible will continue to be placed on waiting lists for services. With an increase in PE individuals being served, it is anticipated that IVRS will see a growth in the waiting list numbers. The Executive Team meets on the goals for release of the waiting list on a monthly basis. During this meeting, it is determined which categories will remain open or be opened. Management staff takes a variety of issues into consideration, including the budget sustainability model and the capacity of the RSB.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

Based on current projections, approximately 13,974 individuals will receive services from IVRS in PY22 and in PY23. The numbers are based on the representation in the current caseload.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

IVRS funded supported employment services for 1,071 individuals in PY2019 and PY2020, using both Part B Title VI funds and Part B Title I funds. Total Supported Employment expenditures were $2,014,227 of which $481,254 came from Part B Title VI funds. IVRS estimates that it will serve approximately 1,250 job candidates in Supported Employment during PY2022 and PY2023.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION.

In PY22, IVRS plans to service 7,450 individuals who are Most Significantly Disabled under Title I with an average service cost of $600 per case annually. In PY23, IVRS expects to serve 7,450 individuals who are MSD under Title I with an average service cost of $650 per case annually.

IVRS estimates that 6,280 individuals who are Significantly Disabled will be serviced at an average services cost of $700 annually for PY22. A slight increase is expected in PY22 due to the waiting list and the growth of PE job candidates. In PY23, it is estimated that IVRS will serve 6,300 individuals who are SD at an average services cost of $735 per case annually.

IVRS does anticipate removing all individuals from the Others Eligible category in PY 22 and PY23. IVRS currently has 244 individuals in this category remaining on the caseload, who will be serviced at a service cost of $410 per case.

3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

It is estimated that in PY22 and PY23, IVRS will see an increase in the number of individuals who are eligible for IVRS services, but are placed on a waiting list. For PY22, it is anticipated that the SD list will include 130 individuals, while the Others Eligible list will include 165 individuals. IVRS anticipates continuing to serve those individuals in the Most Significant Disability category. For PY23, a slight increase in the waiting list will occur for both SD and Others Eligible, with estimates being 200 for SD and 180 for Others Eligible.

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.

Individuals who are MSD are served under Title I funds for the year PY22 at an estimated cost of $600 per individual. This total would be estimated at $4,470,000. For PY23, the estimated cost is $4,842,500, or $650 per individual.

For those individuals who are SD, it is anticipated the total cost for PY22 will be $4,396,000, or $700 per case. For PY23, it is estimated to be $4,330,500, or $735 per case.

For those in the Others Eligible category, they have remained on the caseload since PY22 and are estimated to have a cost of $110,040 for PY22. In PY23, it is estimated the cost for 244 Others Eligible will be $110,040, or $410 per case.

L. STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

1. IDENTIFY IF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES WERE JOINTLY DEVELOPED AND AGREED TO BY THE STATE VR AGENCY AND THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, IF THE STATE HAS A COUNCIL, AND JOINTLY AGREED TO ANY REVISIONS

In collaboration with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), IVRS has decided to revise its goals. The SRC provided feedback as a whole committee as well as through the work performed in the SRC VR Service Delivery Subcommittee. Information related to the interest areas of the SRC, the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, and a desire to align with Future Ready Iowa initiatives and WIOA focus areas all contributed to the revision of these goals.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Goal 1: IVRS will contribute to Future Ready Iowa goals for in-demand industries by ensuring at least 59.8% of program participants attain a recognized post-secondary credential, or a secondary school diploma (or its recognized equivalent) and employment, prior to exit.

IVRS aligns with Future Ready Iowa by ensuring that all field staff have a performance plan goal highlighting the Governor's goal of training Iowans for the jobs of tomorrow. IVRS has state level representation on the WIOA Core Partner Working Group which includes providing guidance and templates to assist local workforce development boards in developing plans that are also closely aligned with the goals of Future Ready Iowa. Local plans incorporate cross training on core partner services to ensure a seamless and integrated system where individuals with disabilities can access the education and training programs necessary to achieve competitive integrated employment within in-demand industries. Local board staff are aware of the Future Ready Iowa website with information on program opportunities and the direction of the Governor.

Increased training opportunities is a focus for IVRS for all individuals with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities. IVRS plans to continue focusing on innovative practices and programs that will increase opportunities for the MSD population. Through strategic planning, IVRS will identify ways to work with partners and develop new opportunities for career pathways that can lead to credentials for all individuals with disabilities.

IVRS has a robust Business Services team that supports a dual customer approach and meets the employment needs of businesses through the qualified applicants and support services provided by the VR system. Through the services provided directly to businesses, Iowa businesses partnering with IVRS have access to a pool of qualified applicants and the services through IVRS to support them, access to national employment opportunities and career development resources, and access to a national system for sharing employment resources, best practices, and business connections. IVRS will provide this business intelligence and disability expertise to businesses to ensure the individuals receiving diplomas and credentials are matched with competitive integrated employment opportunities consistent with the individual's unique strengths, abilities, interests and informed choice.

In order to achieve this goal, IVRS management will meet quarterly to review IVRS and quality assurance data and make recommendations to ensure the agency is in alignment with the

targeted percentage. Targeted training will be provided to staff who are not in alignment with this goal. Negotiated rates for Measurable Skills Gains (40.6% in PY2021) will be reviewed and additional performance measures will be considered as negotiated rates are obtained. IVRS is also committed to continued work on the IRSS case management system so that this data will eventually be built into the system and accessed easier. RSA Data Dashboard information will be incorporated into quarterly meetings as well. IVRS plans to incorporate staff training that will increase staff knowledge in not only providing the necessary services to achieve this goal, but also training on how to ensure these services are entered into the IRSS case management system. Training efforts will focus on performance measures, career services, and available programs.

Goal 2: By high school graduation, at least 90% of potentially eligible and IVRS eligible students who need Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) will have received those services.

Pre-ETS are activities intended to provide an early start at job exploration for students with disabilities. IVRS has placed a heightened emphasis on the provision of these services for students to ensure they have meaningful opportunities to receive the training and other services they need to eventually achieve employment outcomes in competitive integrated employment. With this increased focus, IVRS has updated Goal 2 to reflect the importance of ensuring students receive the Pre-ETS required and provide information aligned with increased access to high quality education, training and career opportunities.

IVRS collaborates with every Local Education Agency (LEA) in the State of Iowa to ensure that a Local School Plan is developed. Pre-ETS are outlined within each plan, including how IVRS and the LEA will work collaboratively while also avoiding the supplanting of transition services.

To assess this measure, IVRS will review program year data, identifying all individuals who have graduated within the program year. If the individual's case closure date occurred prior to the start of the program year, the individual will not be incorporated into this measure. Those individuals still participating in services up to graduation will be considered. IVRS will utilize the current rate of 90% of services received as the baseline, with the goal of increasing this percentage in the upcoming two years. While not all students receive Pre-ETS for a number of reasons including informed choice, 100% of students are offered these services. IVRS will continue to focus efforts on moving closer to 100%. The IRSS case management system will continue to be an area of focus as there is currently no mechanism built into the IRSS interface system to allow some transition contracted programs to enter Pre-ETS.

Goal 3: IVRS will collaborate within the workforce and education system to achieve high quality employment outcomes for participants resulting in at least 56.9% of participants maintaining competitive integrated employment in the 2nd quarter after exit and at least 54.3% of participants maintaining competitive integrated employment in the 4th quarter after exit.

IVRS values its core partners and works relentlessly to ensure collaboration and positive relationships are maintained. The spirit of the WIOA legislation is to assist job seekers access employment, education, training and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. This goal is achieved through the continued strengthening and improvement of the workforce system.

IVRS commits to working with core partners as well as within the IVRS agency to focus on the services necessary to equip job candidates with the skills to obtain and maintain quality employment. IVRS provides representation on all local workforce development boards and is co-located in the majority of locations throughout the State of Iowa. This allows IVRS Supervisors to be knowledgeable of the available comparable services and benefits provided by core and required partners.

To accomplish this goal, IVRS will provide continued targeted training to IVRS staff on timely counseling and guidance and other services necessary to job candidates to assist in their rehabilitation. IVRS will combine this training with targeted Quality Assurance (QA) reviews at the individual and area office level. Results of these QA reviews will be reviewed by the management team. Individuals and/or offices who are not demonstrating quality and compliance will receive focused training on these areas.

IVRS will review 2nd and 4th quarter data, median earnings, and other performance measure data to assess progress on this goal. LMI information provided by core partners will be reviewed to review economic trends industries with positive projected growth. A lack of SWIS data will indicate the job candidate is no longer working and can be used as a measurement of post-exit employment status. Employee performance plans will be reviewed and the management team will consider PPE goals and strategies to support this state goal. Contracted programs (i.e. OWEP, IN) have performance measures related to training and employment which ensures contracted staff are focused on these efforts as well.

As stated in the prior goal, IVRS will also continue efforts with a dual-customer approach, incorporating business needs into services and ensuring IVRS assists in providing quality applicants to businesses. By maintaining business relationships, IVRS has a process that allows issues with employment to be resolved before it results in loss of employment.

3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

The goals updated for the modification to the Unified State Plan are based upon the CSNA results from 2019, feedback from stakeholders and staff, collaboration with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), the Governor's initiative in the State of Iowa, and a review of state and federal data.

B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

Section 116 of WIOA establishes performance accountability indicators and performance reporting requirements to assess the effectiveness of States in achieving positive outcomes for individuals served. The performance accountability indicators include:

- Employment Rate - Second Quarter After Exit;
- Employment Rate - Fourth Quarter After Exit;
- Median Earnings - Second Quarter After Exit;
- Credential Attainment;
- Measurable Skill Gains; and
- Effectiveness in Serving Employers

IVRS utilized available data for these measures. The goals are based upon a baseline of this data. RSA information utilized includes the Monitoring and Technical Assistance Guide (MTAG), RSA Other Measures that Matter, and the data tools provided (Pre-ETS data tool, MSG data tool, and Employment Status at Exit and Post-Exit data tool).

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.

IVRS meets quarterly with the SRC to review data, discuss the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), and to discuss the goals of the Unified State Plan. IVRS has collaborated with the SRC in the drafting of the goals and has presented information, including necessary data, to ensure understanding and receive feedback. IVRS received the draft 107 monitoring report information and has reviewed the information thoroughly, with updates incorporated into this Unified State Plan, policy, internal controls, procedures, and the IVRS case management system underway. The draft 107 report was also presented to the SRC with a request for feedback.

Other information utilized in the modification of this plan includes LMI information received from core partners. This information assisted IVRS in identifying in-demand industries, trends in the labor market, and employment projections. Information was also received from Iowa's Department of Education.

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

On a monthly basis, IVRS reviews the Order of Selection and makes a decision based upon input from the IVRS Executive Team. Currently all individuals on the Most Significantly Disabled waiting list are served immediately. As of December 31, 2021, there were no job candidates on the waiting list. This is three less than November 30, 2021, and 450 less than a year ago, December 31, 2020. Individuals are placed on the waiting list at eligibility determination based upon their application date. Individuals are removed from the waiting list based upon eligibility priority with those who are Most Significantly Disabled receiving priority, then those who are Significantly Disabled and the Others Eligible. State Rehabilitation Council members are provided updates on the IVRS waiting list information at quarterly SRC meetings. IVRS staff are updated on waiting list information weekly.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

Currently, IVRS is able to serve all categories on the waiting list. In May of 2012, IVRS opened the waiting list to all individuals who were MSD. At that time, staff were notified of this communication.

IVRS currently releases the names of individuals for whom services could be initiated on a weekly basis. This allows IVRS to become more efficient in caseload management techniques and anticipate service provision. The Executive Team meets on the goals for release on a monthly basis, and the Data Analyst reviews this weekly taking into consideration the Financial Sustainability Model and the Rehabilitation Services Bureau field capacity, which is gathered through discussions occurring at the Executive Team. Decisions are based upon staff capacity and the financial sustainability of the agency.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS

For the Most Significantly Disabled (MSD) priority category, IVRS plans to serve 7,450 individuals. It is estimated that 775 of these individuals will exit with employment after receiving services, and 1,090 will exit without employment after receiving services. The cost of these services will be $4,842,500.

For the Significantly Disabled (SD) priority category, IVRS anticipates that 6,280 individuals will be serviced, with 900 exiting with employment after receiving services. IVRS estimates that 895 will exit without employment after receiving services. The cost of services will be $4,630,500.

For the Others Eligible (OE) priority category, IVRS anticipates 244 individuals will be serviced and 19 will exit with employment after receiving services. IVRS estimates that 117 will exit without employment following service delivery. The cost of services will be $100,040.

The number of closures for each priority category is based on actual numbers from the prior year. The number of individuals IVRS is planning to serve is based on the size of the caseload and the percentage of job candidates within each priority category. The costs of services are based on the projected year case expenditures based on the prior year's actual expenditures. The IVRS Executive Team meets on a monthly basis to discuss case flow projections, budget expenditures, and initiatives influencing service delivery flow.

D. TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER; AND

The time within which goals are to be achieved include:

- MSD priority category: 36.1 months;
- SD priority category: 42.3 months; and
- OE priority category: 32.3 months.

Based on current projections, IVRS believes that approximately 13,974 individuals will receive services from IVRS in the coming year. These numbers are based on the representation in the current caseload. Actual outcomes may vary, as we continue to see change in the way the caseload breaks out in the waiting list categories.

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Vocational Rehabilitation Services is an eligibility program based on the nature and function of the individual's disability as it pertains to preparing for, obtaining, maintaining, and advancing in employment. Only a qualified rehabilitation counselor or a supervisor has the authority to determine if a person is eligible for services and the priority category to which they are assigned. In order to make an accurate decision on eligibility, IVRS requires receipt of medical, psychological, or psychiatric records, and statements from the individual with the disability concerning the disability impact, to provide verification of the disability and the nature and extent of the disability on the individual's ability to prepare for, obtain, maintain, or advance in employment.

According to the Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title I - The Rehabilitation Act, if a state vocational rehabilitation program cannot serve all eligible individuals who apply it must develop a waiting list for services based on the significance of the disability. The following provides definitions of the waiting list categories:

"Individual with a disability" means an individual (i) Who has a physical or mental impairment; (ii) Whose impairment constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment; and (iii) Who can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from the provision of vocational rehabilitation services." (34 CFR 361.5(c)(27))

- An individual who meets this definition and who requires only one service for a duration of six months or less is considered as meeting the priority for services as "Other's Eligible" (OE);

- Individuals who demonstrate to have at least 2 or fewer functional limitations that are serious in nature and who require multiple services over an extended period of time are considered as meeting the priority for services as "Significantly Disabled" (SD);
- Individuals who demonstrate to have at least 3 or more functional limitations that are serious in nature and who require multiple services over an extended period of time are considered as meeting the priority for services as "Most Significantly Disabled" (MSD).
- Services over an extended period of time is defined as by nature and extent of the service, not due to lack of action or time delay by the VR agency or staff.

The Executive Team meets on the goals for release of the waiting list on a monthly basis. During this meeting, it is determined which categories will remain open or be opened. The agency's case management system manages the waiting list release. The Data Resource Manager identifies the number of cases to be released in each category in waiting status and releases the cases on a weekly basis. Currently, the Most Significantly Disabled waiting list category is open and cases are released into service upon eligibility determination. Once all individuals are released from the Most Significantly Disabled waiting list, then IVRS moves to the Significantly Disabled waiting list to release individuals. Then, once all Significantly Disabled individuals are released, IVRS moves to the Others Eligible waiting list to remove individuals.

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

IVRS has elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of the order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment. The process is identified in policy for job retention services. Through analysis of the situation, if it is determined that an individual with a disability is gainfully employed, but at immediate risk of losing their position, then IVRS can provide the agreed upon services in an effort to save the job. If additional services are later identified or requested, then the Order of Selection criteria would be followed.

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

IVRS funded supported employment services for 1,582 individuals in PY2019 and PY2020, using both Part B Title VI funds and Part B Title I funds. Total Supported Employment expenditures were $3,196,417 of which $481,254 came from Part B Title VI funds. IVRS estimates that it will serve approximately 1,250 job candidates in Supported Employment during PY22 and PY23. Funding will come from the IVRS general budget as it is anticipated with community partnerships and collaborative efforts. This will continue to increase with Iowa's philosophy of Employment First.

In PY2021, IVRS made 1,856 referrals for SES programming, resulting in $2,930,616 authorized to be spent. The employment outcomes for individuals receiving SES through community rehabilitation providers decreased from 352 successful employment outcomes to 342. Goals for 2022 are 2,130 referrals, expending $3,600,000, with 345 employment outcomes. For 2023, the estimates are 2,150 referrals, expending $3,650,000, with 370 employment outcomes.

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

An individual under age 25 who requires Supported Employment Services may not be receiving services from a waiver, or may be on a waiting list for waiver services at the time they become

eligible for IVRS. In these cases, IVRS staff provide extended services as needed on an individualized basis. This would only occur after the individual reaches stabilization in the job. This may be funded up to 8 units (2 hours) per month for a period not to exceed four years, until the individual reaches age 25, or is approved for Waiver services. If additional hours of extended services were needed beyond the eight hours, it requires an exception. The purpose of this exception is intended to facilitate a youth's transition to work and attainment of natural supports that should occur in the work environment. All of these efforts are designed to help sustain their employment in SES.

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.

IVRS recognizes that Title VI, Part B funds supplement the regular Title I funds. By the end of the first quarter of the fiscal year IVRS typically exhausts its Title VI, Part B dollars and spends Title I dollars for extended supports. IVRS continues its effort to collaborate with various government entities including the Iowa Department of Human Services Medicaid Waiver program to ensure that adequate funding will be available to pay for extended services. Efforts to align funding, as well as establish uniform payment systems among state partners continues to be viewed as IVRS priority areas going forward. The MoA with Medicaid Providers clearly identifies a priority by IVRS to serve youth with disabilities. The leveraged funding between state systems has provided flexibility in determining funding streams when waiver services are unavailable.

O. STATE'S STRATEGIES

1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Below are some of the strategies that have been implemented to improve services at IVRS:

- ProjectSEARCH programs
- Expansion of Occupational Skills Training programs
- Provided trainings to partners on Competitive Integrated Employment and how to better serve individuals with disabilities
- Increased partnerships with core partners including requirements related to One-Stops and the implementation of the Disability Access Committees
- Motivational Interviewing cadre
- Expanded Transition Alliance Programs
- Communication regarding CRP accountability for timely services
- Expanded CRP partnerships to provide more services to the MSD population including the implementation of a Customized Discovery process
- Implementation of a pilot program focused on IPS for individuals with mental health, including psychiatric disabilities
- Provide summer camps for Transition Students that include bringing in employers to better educate students on employer needs
- Community of Practice webinars for staff and partners to view and learn about Employment First services
- Making the Grade contracts enhancing school to work for transition students

- JReS contract focused on youth involved with the juvenile justice system
- More involvement with Business Service Reps from Workforce and aligning with them more with business networking
- Reverse job fairs
- Connecting to the Sector Boards
- Z-Space
- Collaboration with the School for the Deaf
- Chamber memberships
- Older Worker Employment Program
- Hired specialized staff to focus on identified areas of need including business, assistive technology, transition, Deaf services, and benefits planning

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

Part of the Unified State Plan strategy has been to provide workers with the skills, work-based learning opportunities, resources, accommodations and supports needed to secure and maintain, sustain employment so that all Iowans work to their fullest potential. Towards this end, IVRS employs an Assistive Technology Counselor Specialist who works with local offices in identifying assistive technology that can enhance an individual's ability to live and work. The IVRS Assistive Technology Counselor Specialist is available to consult with staff when job candidates require more intensive assistive technology services. This role also includes an emphasis on developing working relationships that contribute to the referral process for individuals with disabilities to programs or activities. In addition, IVRS expectations require that this role involve a continual exploration of new and innovative technologies that become available to help in service to customers. Primary assistive technology expenditures include Computer parts, Glasses, Hearing Aids, Home Modifications, Rehabilitation Technology Devices/Services, and Vehicle Modifications. IVRS collaborates with the Easterseals of Iowa Assistive Technology Program with a specific focus on assistive technology needs of rural job candidates. There is a Joint Statement of Cooperation between Easterseals Iowa Assistive Technology Program. The Iowa Program for Assistive Technology – Center for Disabilities and Development University of Iowa Health Care and IVRS establishing relationships for providing assistive technology devices and services for Iowans with disabilities.

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

IVRS supervisors participate on a number of boards in their local areas and network with civic organizations and community partners in an attempt to not only identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, but also to identify support systems to enhance and assist the individual in their rehabilitation process. This includes networking opportunities that would typically be available in Chamber of Commerce events. IVRS has a collaborative working relationship with the Iowa School for the Deaf, which focuses on services for that population. Previous goals were developed because of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and outlined strategies to increase the representation of clients with Deafness and hearing loss, as well as Work Group members developing best practices for this population to serve as a model for the rest of the state. This continues to be a targeted area. Additional communication is

occurring with VR supervisors on services to individuals who are minorities. The IVRS caseload statistics indicate that minority representation at IVRS exceeds minority representation in the population. IVRS met the currently identified standards and indicators from RSA including the service ratio for individuals with disabilities who are minorities. This will continue to be a focus of service efforts. Opportunities will be developed to identify strategies for minority groups in high school through service delivery to PE and students under Pre-Employment Transition Services.

Some offices are providing outreach to refugee agencies and groups within their local area. In other offices, there are action groups composed of core partners (county teams in others) that provide presentations about various services available within that county. Area offices will continue to identify opportunities to bring in speakers or resources to expand staff's awareness of cultural differences for targeted minority groups in their region. This would occur periodically through scheduled staff meetings to meet local outreach needs. IVRS implemented strategies in partnership with the Omaha Indian Tribe Nebraska. This has been an underserved population and IVRS now has an agreement outlining collaborative ways to collaborate with Native Americans from the Omaha Tribe who have disabilities. The Omaha Tribe of Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation Project (Omaha Tribe VR) was the recipient of the federal Section 121 Grant under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, of 1973 as amended. The Omaha Tribe, IVRS and the Iowa Department for the Blind have a responsibility to provide quality vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians with disabilities within the State of Iowa to assist such individuals to become economically self-sufficient (or more self-sufficient) by assisting consumers obtain meaningful and gainful work.

The purposes of these joint efforts are to:

- Coordinate VR programming for eligible American Indians with disabilities residing within, or near, the Iowa boundaries of the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska and Iowa reservation;
- Provide and coordinate technical assistance in mutual areas of interest;
- Provide and coordinate training opportunities between IVRS, IDB, and the Omaha Tribe VR staff; and
- Provide and coordinate reciprocal training to IVRS and IDB from Omaha Tribe when cultural sensitivity training is available.

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)

The purpose of the Local School Plan is to outline the responsibilities of the LEA, AEA, IVRS, IDB and other partners involved in providing Pre-ETS and other transition services within a school district. Part of this planning process includes identifying gaps in service delivery in order to improve transition services for students with disabilities across the state. As gaps are identified for each school district, discussions occur on how to meet these needs. Strategies that may be implemented include new and expanded services being provided through IVRS or the development of a new IVRS contracted program. The following are additional coordination efforts to improve and expand IVRS services for students with disabilities:

- Development of trainings for parents, educators, and rehabilitation professionals on effective practices

- Development of Local School Plans and MoA to maximize resources and minimize duplication
- Coordination of services within WIOA partnerships to expand opportunities for students/youth with disabilities
- Expansion of contracted programs to create a seamless system of services and supports

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE

This remains a priority of the State Rehabilitation Council, and has been the driving force behind Iowa Employment First. IVRS has established a commitment to continuing partnerships with the Iowa Association of Community Providers member network and their CEO and TA Coordinator presented at the 2022 SRC Legislative Reception. IVRS also continues to collaborate with the Iowa Department of Human Services Iowa Medicaid System to ensure coordination in rates and service delivery. IVRS continues to offer joint training with CRP partners, MCO case managers and IWD staff to promote the braiding of services and to keep staff updated in best practice approaches in service delivery. Listed below are the following topics that have been offered through the IVRS Community of Practice topics:

- Assistive Technologies
- Implicit Bias
- Iowa Job Corps
- Seizure First Aid Course that resulted in a Seizure First Aid Certification
- Get Agile & Lean in the New Year
- Day Habilitation & A Pathway to Employment
- The Art of Community Building
- Unpacking Competitive, Integrated Employment: A Public Policy Roadmap to Achieving Employment First
- Benefits Planning topics: Overview, PASS Plan, Benefits & Transition, Subsidies & Special Conditions
- Employment Planning Meetings

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) requires core agencies to develop an integrated system that can be used as a common application for services across the workforce delivery system as well as a tool for common data reporting. Although these new reporting requirements significantly expand the amount of data collection required by the agency, they also provide an opportunity for Iowa Workforce Development, Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Department for the Blind, and Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services to identify ways to collaborate and provide a seamless system to Iowa citizens. The goal is to allow anyone to access information about services available through the core programs, and be able to begin the application process from any electronic device connected to the internet. IVRS technology staff continue to assess the current data system and analyze its effectiveness in data collection, case management and reporting. Changes to the RSA-911 due to WIOA, as well as proposed data collection and retention for common performance accountability requirements have dominated

internal case management system development and require much collaboration with IT staff in the other core programs. Significant reporting requirements include:

- Reporting quarterly on open and closed cases rather annually on closed cases
- Collection of data related Pre-Employment Transition Services for PE students
- Compilation of financial data to assure Title I and Title IV expenditures meet the provisions of WIOA
- Data collection and reporting after the date of exit
- Development of a common application for all core WIOA programs including upload and download of common data
- Determination of what data can be collected from other core WIOA programs through a common data dashboard and data elements that need to be added to IRSS or maintained outside of IRSS and imported through batch processes

Another initiative underway to minimize the burden of data collection across core agencies includes development of an integrated system among the core programs. Members of the Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation IRSS Project Management Team and Information Technology Department have met with representatives in similar positions in other core programs to begin discussions on a common data collection and common application system. Discussions centered on common data already collected in the current systems as well as the development of structures to move toward a common system. IVRS was the first VR program in the country to submit their fall 911 report. Efforts are continuing to revamp the internal processing system to gather the required future information and remain at the forefront for transparent service delivery. Continued communication is occurring with core partner agencies in efforts to integrate shared data to the extent the systems will allow.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

IVRS and Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act core partners have continued to build towards a shared vision for an integrated, job-driven workforce system that meets the needs of both business and job seekers. Legislation no longer segregates disability and as such, all organizations are working toward full and comprehensive inclusion in the provision of services to persons with disabilities. Instead of recruiting individuals early just because they “have a disability,” IVRS staff assists organizations and businesses on how to meet their legal responsibilities by providing expertise to them in a manner that actually achieves a seamless system of service. Throughout the State of Iowa, IVRS is co-located with IWD in most locations. The management of both IWD and IVRS work collaboratively on creating a solid partnership that will advance the vision of the integration model described above. Integration in the One-Stop programmatically allows individuals with disabilities to access all programs, workshops, and services with IWD staff. The work of the state workforce board and the regional disability access committees are key resources and a strategy for implementation to positively impact all partners at the One-Stop Center as partners work together to prepare a Future Ready Iowa workforce that is inclusive of all Iowans.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

Goal 1: IVRS will contribute to Future Ready Iowa goals for in-demand industries by ensuring at least 59.8% of program participants attain a recognized post-secondary credential, or a secondary school diploma (or its recognized equivalent) and employment, prior to exit.

The following are examples of how to achieve goals and priorities, consistent with the comprehensive statewide needs assessment:

- Review field office employee performance plans to assess performance towards their goal: these plans highlight the Governor's Future Ready Iowa goal of training Iowans for the jobs of tomorrow.
- Regularly discuss and review local service plans: these plans are developed with the local One-Stops in each region; by reviewing them we are able to identify whether cross training is occurring and increase awareness of the Future Ready Iowa website.
- Communicate with IVRS supervisors regularly to allow discussion of continuance of technical assistance to One-Stop centers and partners and that assure collaboration continues to occur.
- Through the IVRS Quality Assurance process, Individualized Plans for Employment and case notes are reviewed to assure all necessary services are provided to individuals with disabilities: this allows IVRS to identify whether IVRS staff are focusing on offering and when applicable, providing individuals with the services and supports necessary to become future ready and to provide training to staff when this is found to not be a focus.
- Through the regional business services teams and sector boards, focus on State plan goals regularly to assure integration continues: continue with joint outreach to business, responding to requests for services by staff who have expertise, integrated county teams to address needs of businesses in a county where specific sector boards do not exist, participation on sector boards jointly planned events, opportunities for job candidates to interact individually with business representatives, jointly planned reverse job fairs, development of pipelines through corporate development, staff internships and externships, embedded staff, center-wide staffing of job-ready cases, coordination of multi-agency job readiness services, joint representation to businesses for job development and placement, and follow-up.

Goal 2: By high school graduation, at least 90% of potentially eligible and IVRS eligible students who need Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) will have received those services.

The following are examples of how to achieve goals and priorities, consistent with the comprehensive statewide needs assessment:

- Regularly review the MoA between the SEA and IVRS: both the SEA and IVRS provide internal training on this MoA which assures the items within are followed by all staff.
- Maintain collaborative partnerships with LEAs and AEAs: continued joint training both at the State and local level, and utilization of local plans to assure the collaboration at the local level is understood and in place; working jointly on summer transition programming as well.
- Continued communication with community college partners and discussions on intermediary network initiatives to increase capacity for Pre-ETS.
- Through the Transition Assistant Bureau Chief position, continued focus on IVRS initiatives for various occupational skill training programs, STEM camps, simulators, computer-based virtual work, etc. as well as developing new programs and identifying ways to be innovative and collaborative to find new ways to expand services for youth.
- Development and implementation of Local School Plans.

- Continued review of resources developed: school-to-work programs are monitored regularly to assess program effectiveness for youth.

Goal 3: IVRS will collaborate within the workforce and education system to achieve high quality employment outcomes for participants resulting in at least 56.9% of participants maintaining competitive integrated employment in the 2nd quarter after exit and at least 54.3% of participants maintaining competitive integrated employment in the 4th quarter after exit.

The following are examples of how to achieve goals and priorities, consistent with the comprehensive statewide needs assessment:

- Development of the collaborative system through partner cross-trainings in every region: continued focus on Disability Access Committees including regular discussion with supervisors who are representatives on the regional and local Disability Access Committees and associated discussions.
- Continued efforts to spearhead the Integration Continuum efforts: continued focus on cross-training with staff from each program, and continued tracking of referrals.
- Regular review of customer surveys and discussion of focus group findings to identify accessibility issues and discuss solutions with partners.
- Communication with local IVRS area offices to continue discussion on local center processes for responding to requests of reasonable accommodations.
- Regular meetings of the local business teams to continue focus on outreach strategies with businesses.
- Continued meetings with Workforce Development with a focus on continuing discussions of the electronic case management system and sharing of data; and reviewing the common application form for identification of how information is being shared across programs and addressing duplication and gaps.
- Maintaining partnerships with Workforce partners: regular discussions and training from IVRS to partners on disability-related issues which assures individuals with disabilities have access to services with all partners.
- Continued use of Assistive Technology specialist: work with local offices to identify AT and/or accommodation needs.
- Through the Quality Assurance process, IVRS will be able to identify whether accommodations for an individual were needed and whether the AT specialist was involved; when this should occur but does not, the Quality Assurance process will allow IVRS to identify this and provide training.
- Benefits planning occurs for individuals who receive SSI/SSDI and are handed off to an Employment Network for follow along services after case closure.
- Regular discussions with AT specialist: this will assure focus on business is maintained and that technical expertise is provided to businesses when needed.
- Staff meetings: IVRS offices are encouraged to invite partners and local agencies to staff meetings to assure IVRS staff are familiar with services available in the community and to share the IVRS mission, vision, guiding principles and state goals of IVRS with those agencies/partners.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

Taking into consideration the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities, which was tasked to review ways to increase employment for individuals with disabilities, IVRS has prioritized service areas relating to expansion of early work experiences, establishing high expectations, and a focus on business driven demand needs. Communication is continuing in coordination efforts within waiver programs to increase effectiveness. IVRS will review emerging practices and identify ways to integrate recommended practices and strategies into service delivery. IVRS has utilized expanded practices in implementing the Employment First effort, in expanding contract use as well as in supporting partnership with the Independent Living Centers in expanding support and resources for individuals with the most significant disabilities in supported employment.

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.

IVRS continues to maintain a collaborative working relationship with the Client Assistance Program and Disability Rights Iowa for working through identified barriers for access and participation in needed programming for individuals with disabilities.

IVRS has a Customer Satisfaction Survey allowing individuals to express issues or concerns in the receipt of IVRS services. Additionally, IVRS has made available a form on the website for participants and stakeholders to express concern or suggestions for improvement over IVRS' policies, procedures and forms.

To overcome physical and programmatic accessibility issues, IVRS has collaborated with the State Workforce Development Board to initiate the Disability Access Committees. This state level committee provides oversight to the Disability Access Committees located within each of the nine local workforce development areas. The local committees work to ensure that all centers are accessible for all customers, including individuals with disabilities. They also provide training on disability so all staff have an understanding of disability to ensure a seamless integration of services among all core and required partners.

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

GOAL: Improve referrals and employment outcomes through utilization of Supported Employment Services (SES).

EFFORTS: IVRS has continued efforts to create and maintain partnerships with 69 Iowa Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) in 2019. IVRS continued efforts to promote and encourage collaboration by reaching out to CRPs, external vendors and other service providers. The result of this focus has contributed positively to enhancing partnerships, in addition to maintaining competitive community employment-related options for Iowans with disabilities. IVRS has a staff position dedicated to performing outreach activities in collaboration with CRPs.

A specific focus has been on the implementation and continuation of Employment First principles. IVRS was the lead agency for the Federal monies received from the Department of Labor's Office of Disability and Employment Policy for the past six years. IVRS has collaborated with the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council to sustain those efforts during the past two years. Since 2012, Iowa has received technical and financial assistance dollars focused on

community provider transformation to assist individuals with the most significant disabilities access competitive integrated community employment.

The 2019 numbers are not final as authorizations and claims for the FFY19 are not fully resolved. IVRS has continued to see a slight decrease in the number of services provided to the adult caseload, primarily due to the attention and focus on transition and Pre-Employment Transition Services required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). IVRS is now serving close to 9,000 more PE students than ever before with the change in Federal legislation.

The employment outcomes for individuals receiving SES through the CRPs increased from 332 successful employment outcomes to 346 successful employment outcomes. One of the priority areas reviewed is the transition from sheltered workshops at subminimum wage to competitive integrated employment. IVRS is tracking Section 511 data and the provision of Information and Referral services to inform all individuals of the value of competitive integrated employment. A statewide reduction of facility-based programming has occurred. Unfortunately, a growth in those attending adult day habilitation programs has also been witnessed. Strategies continue to focus on working with the Department of Human Services and Medicaid, which are the funders of these programs.

IVRS provided financial support to 44 different Occupational Skills training programs, authorizing services for 240 job candidates, totaling $688,144.66 for FFY19. Iowa's CRPs are integral to the success of these training efforts to meet the business skill gap.

IVRS implemented a variety of in-service, webinar, on-site, and video conference training opportunities available to CRPs throughout the year, as well as providing performance data specific to each partner. IVRS shares vendor data on an annual basis with providers to stimulate conversations with partners, ensure consistent business practices, promote transparency for purchased services, and provide a statewide basis for comparisons and quality assurance improvement. IVRS included additional data points related to time in supported employment, the rehabilitation rate, hours worked, and dollars earned. Data was shared across systems to provide an opportunity to review outcome quality to set standards and review the effectiveness of IVRS area office and CRP collaboration. The data measures are the same standards IVRS is held accountable to with Federal reporting. All CRP providers were contacted and received specific communication and outreach from IVRS staff. The initial results were positive, indicating an improvement from 2018-19 in mean score.

IVRS will continue to collaborate and proactively respond to the demands of an ever-changing job market to fulfill the IVRS mission and effectively provide the necessary services to assist individuals with disabilities achieve full integration into community employment. Towards this end, IVRS has put forth a dedicated effort to expand opportunities to collaborate, innovate, network with entities and align resources with community partners. With implementation of the Federal legislation, WIOA, it is vital to align service delivery efforts, avoid duplication, and leverage funding to maximize the capacity of all employment service providers to meet the needs of Iowans with disabilities.

GOAL: Evaluate effectiveness of Discovery and Customized Employment services to enhance employment outcomes.

EFFORTS: Communication is provided by IVRS to agencies under contract with IVRS in the provision of SES. Community provider organizations participated in initial SES pilots that involve new service delivery options such as Discovery and Customized Employment. Initially, IVRS had a focus on provider transformation. This past year, the focus has moved towards capacity building. The Employment First philosophy helped to provide a framework to build upon and establish a common purpose to unite forces in Iowa.

IVRS participated in two pilot project programs related to the expansion of Customized Employment and Discovery services. These services were supported through a collaborative grant provided by the Iowa Council for Developmental Disabilities. A review of strategies and results occurred from the Employment First projects participating in the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and Iowa Developmental Disabilities (DD) Council technical assistance project during the past two years. The participating providers and IVRS staff received Technical Assistance from approximately November 2017 through September 2018. This year featured the TEAM (transition contract with Des Moines Public Schools) staff from the Des Moines area office and providers in Cedar Rapids and Des Moines. A second group with a few carryovers occurred, from December 2018 through September 2019. The second year focus was on the Ames area office. IVRS is now in the third project which began October 1, 2019 and will run through September 30, 2020. This year has a combined focus on Ames, Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, and Dubuque.

The following was reported in the May 2019 review:

22 job candidates, 4 closed in status 28 (closed after plan initiated), 4 were hired and working.

The December 4, 2019 review (of all job candidates participating in the past two years with Technical Assistance) reported:

32 total job candidates, 16 in progress, 1 status 30 (closed before plan initiated), 5 status 28 (closed after plan initiated), 10 working with 1 status 26 (closed rehabilitated).

Patterns Observed:

- No urgency in service
- Problems with communication across partners, families, job candidates
- Could not see from VR case documentation how individuals were applying and what they learned from Discovery in furthering employment services
- Case documentation in VR case notes often would not reflect essential information regarding job title, place of employment, hours worked or dollars earned, and key contact names
- Case documentation in VR case notes often would not reflect the value of Discovery, progressive employment strategies or linkage to past Issues, Decisions or Next Steps
- CRPs would easily fall into past behavior and refer to the next Menu Service involving assessment, work readiness or occupational skill training; several entries noted what the next step was going to be and they had not finished or were only partially started with the Discovery service
- CRPs want to assess work readiness and employment preparation leading to occupational skill training. Successes identified appear mostly related to business relationships resulting from workplace introductions from Menu of Service options - not from Discover and Customized Employment. Although Customized Employment and business discussion, awareness of skills and abilities of relationship with job candidates were evident when used appropriately did result in employment. Best success came from work experience leading to employment offers. In majority of cases, Discover did not lead to placement - led to a bunch of other exploratory programs, typically related to Job Shadow, work readiness assessment. This was most likely due to how IVRS communicated the Discovery process and users did not see it being integrated and infused in the Menu of Service, but just as a separate fee option that would lead to other fee services.

Findings:

Subject matter experts made a number of recommendations based upon their observations and from feedback gathered during the past two years. Several cases were noted to reflect positive results and observations from the Discovery efforts, but these were in the minority and dependent upon which CRP or VR staff were involved. Service delivery work from the provider employment specialists were often noted to be positive and case notes would reflect meaningful engagement when the Subject Matter Experts were directly involved. When the providers were left to their own procedures, they would often default to old practices. This was not true with all providers, but case notes would clearly support the majority of cases like this and the same was true for VR Counselor involvement.

- Need to involve senior management from CRP and VR to obtain buy-in and ownership
- There should be no gaps in service delivery
- CRP and VR are not finding ways to integrate Menu of Services and seamless service delivery into Discovery
- Discovery is seen as a standalone service and not being integrated into a seamless system
- Need to review sustainability expectations from IVRS
- Need to adjust payment points
- Need more structure regarding expectations for CRP
- VR needs to hold them accountable and be a collaborative partner
- TEAM involvement was not successful in applying Discover. Leave TEAM out for future involvement - was not successful. TEAM: 6 participants, 1 closed unsuccessful, 1 in job development, 4 in STEP

END REPORT

These findings provided the foundation for what IVRS is implementing in 2020 in Dubuque with participants in Ames, Cedar Rapids, and Des Moines. There will be new referrals and job candidates participating in a pilot project, with new funding and service expectations, operating under a national Fidelity Scale provided through Griffin-Hammis. All participating providers and IVRS staff will participate in Discovery Training with the new protocols and expectations established to a national fidelity scale. All management provider staff and VR staff will also participate in separate Fidelity Training. TA will continue to be provided by Subject Matter Experts and IVRS will continue to identify and track individual progress as well as collective system impact.

As part of the State plan with core partners, IVRS had a number of strategies previously identified to SES for individuals with the most significant disabilities. The following is a summary of those efforts:

GOAL: IVRS will support integration and coordination of services between IVRS and Workforce Development offices through a collaborative approach.

EFFORTS: IVRS has provided expertise to Workforce partners so that individuals can access services and achieve success without the need of IVRS intensive services. The work of the Disability Access Committees is focused on building capacity and aligning applicable services to ensure all individuals can access (both physically and through service programs) the necessary employment services to assist them through the One Stop Centers. The Disability Access Committees are led by IVRS supervisors per regional area and are focused not only on

accessibility, but also on the integration of a continuum of assessment model. Specific needs were addressed from 2019, resulting in goal areas being set for 2020 related to how each regional committee is prioritizing and moving forward with action steps to positively impact the areas of: Case Management, Business Engagement, Career Services, Outreach and Intake, Assessment, and Career Pathways.

IVRS employs an Assistive Technology Specialist who works with local offices in identifying assistive technologies and/or accommodations that enhance an individual's ability to live and work. This position can assist in developing Iowa systems to ensure their accessibility, provide support to individuals with disabilities, and provide technical expertise to business and industry in hiring people with disabilities. IVRS also partners with Easterseals of Iowa's Assistive Technology Program, with a specific focus on the AT needs for rural job candidates.

IVRS is a collaborative partner in the development of the Iowa Unified Plan and provides support to work groups in moving towards common definitions and measures for meeting the achievement of agreed-upon goals. IVRS uses a data metrics system for analysis as well as measuring the success of a number of innovative projects that have been underway. Some of these projects include:

- Assistive Technology Specialist expansion
- Employment Services Contract with Iowa Department of Aging
- Intermediary Network contracts
- Making the Grade contracts
- Medicaid aligned funding agreement
- Pre-ETS and the PE student population
- Regional Board Career Pathway/Sector Board strategies

With regard to technology, IVRS has invested in efforts to expand the effectiveness of work for staff and increase capacity for service delivery. This includes the use of remote technology such as iPhones, video technology, laptops, tablets, and iPads. It also includes the use of Dragon Naturally Speaking software, which provides opportunities to allocate staff positions from a central typing pool to field offices where they have an opportunity to provide increased clerical and office support. These strategies have been implemented to continue with service delivery improvement in light of IVRS' inability to replace existing staff unless approved by the Iowa Department of Management. IVRS is investigating further ways to utilize electronic signatures as the agency gradually transitions to a less paper-intensified system.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Communication across all systems and stakeholders, variance in federal rule regulations, expectations of constituents and stakeholder groups that are sometimes competing goals, staff capacity, training, and financial resources all impact effective, quality service implementation. As an agency, IVRS has a strategic plan that is coordinated with our state plan, and integrated into Iowa’s Unified Plan. Communication and collaborative engagement with partners has enhanced service delivery and expanded options for people with disabilities, although remains an ongoing need. We also continue to prioritize the use of technology in various modes in efforts to develop effective case management strategies and improve access to services. Common data collection systems focused on program goals and measures take time and take resources away from service delivery. IVRS staff continue to experience difficulties in the field; especially in remote areas of the state making data entry and case management burdensome. In addition, two other variables have negatively impacted IVRS priorities. These include the agency's

inability to hire and retain adequate developers to manage our Information System (IRSS), along with the increased amount of data IVRS staff are required to collect due to federal changes. This negatively impacts field capacity for service delivery. Efforts to streamline and align systems between IVRS and Iowa Workface need continued refinement. In the meantime, both agencies have collaborated to provide information on: Disability Etiquette, Reasonable Accommodations, the Americans with Disabilities Act, WIOA requirements, Assistive Technology, Work incentives and available resources at IVRS. Additionally, staff and partners of IVRS need to increase their knowledge and ability to deliver services in the areas of Discovery services and Customized Employment strategies. Expertise in these areas have required using funds to support training from two Subject Matter Experts in order to fully develop staff and partner knowledge of these services.

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

Outcomes for Supported Employment services are analyzed by IVRS annually. Expenditures on this service is tracked, along with recidivism rates, and closure information including hours worked and rates of pay. Alignment with Medicaid waiver funding occurred and system consistency has been enhanced. There has been a need for IVRS to provide ongoing training to address program changes and resolve issues created with Iowa's new system of Managed Care. Implementation of new payment points and the development of Customized Employment and Supported Short-Term Paid Work Experience services have expanded employment options to individuals and students who are Most Significantly Disabled. Competitive integrated employment remains the ultimate goal for individuals accessing IVRS.

When considering the reason for IVRS recidivism rates, an interdisciplinary team analyzed SES and recognized that a significant lack of formalized training affected outcomes. As such, a focus emerged to enhance training of professionals and job candidates alike. Supported Employment Service outcomes have continued to increase over the last three years as staff and partners work more cohesively with each other to engage Iowa businesses. Vendor data is shared annually in a Report Out provided by IVRS to internal staff and Community Rehabilitation Program staff (CRPs). The intent of this Report Out is to stimulate conversations with partners, ensure consistent business practices, promote transparency for purchased services, and provide a statewide basis for comparisons. Report Out data is provided to Iowa CRPs that shows:

- The number of IVRS job candidates who received services;
- The dollar amount of services IVRS purchased from CRPs;
- The number of successful employment outcomes obtained from the individuals provided a service;
- The number of case closures not resulting in an employment outcome from the individuals provided a service;
- The average hours worked;
- The average hourly rate earned from the successful employment outcomes;
- The financial costs of services for cases closed;
- An average cost per successful employment outcome; and
- Recidivism rates for job candidates who return to IVRS for services.

Report Out information also compares state averages from all community partners, along with the SOC (Standard Occupational Classification) category related to the successful employment outcomes. Report Out conversations are encouraged between IVRS staff and partners to solicit ideas and perceptions that can help influence service delivery and contribute to improved outcomes for employment success at the local regional level.

The Iowa Coalition for Integrated Employment is a current initiative that brings together a diverse set of stakeholders representing all levels of service and interest in employment options for Iowans with disabilities. ICIE is the result of a five-year grant awarded by the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. ICIE includes a base consortium of representatives from the Development Disabilities Council, the Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Disability Rights Iowa, the Iowa Department of Human Rights, and the Department of Human Services to improve systems so that Iowa youth with disabilities have fully integrated and competitive work opportunities. The overall goal of ICIE has been to improve systems so that individuals with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities, have fully integrated, competitive work, regardless of where they live in the state. ICIE has been a key collaborator with innovative braiding of funding to expand financial and technical assistance areas specifically related to Employment First and the delivery of supported employment services in Iowa.

The Disability and Employment Initiative through IWD/DOL has also been a key collaborator and partner in increasing employment outcomes. The DEI project has enhanced communication and awareness through their local projects with an Integrated Resource Team, financial literacy strategies and benefits planning. The Rehabilitation Services Bureau (RSB) is continuing work with the Department of Education to educate parents, teachers, Department of Education Administrators and others on Section 511. RSB is working on webinars and other materials for staff and educators to focus on competitive integrated employment so they are prepared for provisions of Section 511. Additional strategies to help IVRS in goal achievement included using the Rehabilitation Administration's technical assistance provider (WINTAC) in the use of Career Index and labor market information.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Factors impeding achievement of goals include staff turnover issues experienced by a variety of Community Rehabilitation Programs; adjustment to a system of Managed Care which began in Iowa in 2016; difficulties in establishing or maintaining ongoing and/or long-term supports; secondary school transition programming that does not always support competitive integrated employment; expectations of family, students, and service providers; financial disincentives for employment; transportation access; lack of wrap-around supports to meet all needs of job candidates; and capacity of staff to serve all who need services.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

The following information was shared by IVRS to the State Rehabilitation Council to explain WIOA Performance Measures:

The primary performance indicators include (including both IVRS and IDB):

Program Year	Qtr 2 Employment Rate Number	Qtr 2 Employment Rate Rate	Qtr 4 Employment Rate Number	Qtr 4 Employment Rate Rate	Median Earnings	Credential Rate Number	Credential Rate Rate	Measurable Skill Gains Number	Measurable Skill Gains Rate	Negotiated Measurable Skill Gains Rate

Program Year	Qtr 2 Employment Rate Number	Qtr 2 Employment Rate Rate	Qtr 4 Employment Rate Number	Qtr 4 Employment Rate Rate	Median Earnings	Credential Rate Number	Credential Rate Rate	Measurable Skill Gains Number	Measurable Skill Gains Rate	Negotiated Measurable Skill Gains Rate
2020	2,198	56.1%	2,266	53.6%	4,022	1,182	59.8%	2,869	39.4%	38.7%
2019	2,526	59.5%	2,304	54.1%	3,598	1,199	54.8%	3,010	34.6%	
2018	2,221	52.0%			$4,291			3,133	35.2%	
2017								2,054	22.0%	

Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit: the percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

Program Year	Qtr 2 Employment Rate Number	Qtr 2 Employment Rate Rate	Negotiated Qtr 2 Employment Rate
2020	2,198	56.1%	Baseline
2019	2,526	59.5%	Baseline
2018	2,221	52.0%	Baseline
2017			

Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit: the percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.

Program Year	Qtr 4 Employment Rate Number	Qtr 4 Employment Rate Rate	Negotiated Qtr 4 Employment Rate
2020	2,266	53.6%	Baseline
2019	2,304	54.1%	Baseline
2018			
2017			

Median Earnings in the 2nd Quarter after Exit: the median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program. Median is the number that is in the middle of a series of numbers and is not the same as the mean or the average of all numbers in the data set.

Program Year	Median Earnings	Negotiated Median Earnings
2020	$4,022	Baseline
2019	$3,598	Baseline
2018	$4,291	Baseline
2017		

Credential Attainment Rate: a credential is a secondary school diploma or the equivalent, a recognized post-secondary credential, an industry recognized certificate/certification, an

apprenticeship, a State or Federal-recognized licensure, or an associate, baccalaureate, or postgraduate degree. A credential does not include work readiness certificates, workforce development board certificates, or health/safety certificates.

Program Year	Credential Rate Number	Credential Rate Rate	Negotiated Credential Rate
2020	1,182	59.8%	Baseline
2019	1,199	54.8%	Baseline
2018			
2017			

- The credential indicator is the percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in OJT and customized training) who attended a recognized post-secondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent. The credential must be obtained during participation in or within one year after exit.
- Those individuals included are participants who exit a post-secondary program or those in secondary education without a secondary diploma or equivalent. To be included in the calculations for determining levels of performance with respect to the credential attainment indicator, the participant must be employed or enrolled in a program leading to a post-secondary credential within one year after exit from the program.

Measurable Skill Gains: the percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skills gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment. Included in the indicator are VR participants with education or a training program that leads to a recognized secondary or post-secondary credential on the individual's IPE. Depending on the type of educational or training program, documented progress is defined as one of the following:

Program Year	Measurable Skill Gains Number	Measurable Skill Gains Rate	Negotiated Measurable Skill Gains Rate
2020	2,869	39.4%	38.7%
2019	3,010	34.6%	Baseline
2018	3,133	35.2%	Baseline
2017	2,054	22.0%	Baseline

- Documented achievement of at least one education functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary education level.
    - Comparison of the participant's initial educational functioning level, as measured by a pre-test, with the participant's educational functioning level, as measured by a post-test;
    - Credits or Carnegie Units awarded by an adult high school program that leads to a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
    - Exit from a basic education program and enrollment in post-secondary education and training during the same program year.

- Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- Secondary or postsecondary transcript or report card for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards.
    - For secondary education, this gain may be documented through receipt of a secondary transcript or report card for one semester showing that the participant is achieving the State unit's policies for academic standards.
    - For postsecondary education, this gain must demonstrate a sufficient number of credit hours—which is at least 12 hours per semester or, for part-time students, a total of at least 12 hours over the course of two completed consecutive semesters during the program year—that shows a participant is achieving the State unit's academic standards (or the equivalent for other than credit hour programs).
- Satisfactory or better progress report, towards established milestones, such as completion of OJT or completion of one year on an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training; or
- Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupation skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks such as knowledge-based exams.

Effectiveness in Serving Employers: includes two ways of measuring the level of performance. There is a shared outcome across all six core programs for the State of Iowa. The two measures include:

- Repeat Business Customers – the percentage of employers who receive services that used core program services within the previous three years. This approach is useful in core program services within the previous three years. This approach is useful in determining whether employers who receive services are satisfied and become repeat customers. It also assesses whether the workforce system is developing and maintaining strong relationships with employers over an extended period of time.
- Employer Penetration Rate – the percentage of employers using services out of all employers in the state. Services are not necessarily on behalf of or for a participant. All services to a business or employees of a business are counted. Services are recorded in the Business Services Web Application located at: http://laborsurvey2.iowaworkforce.org/Checkbox/WIOA-BusinessServices-Entry.aspx.

Performance accountability continues to be addressed by capturing data specific to program services, as well as review of previously discussed strategic plan objectives. Six performance measures are currently being assessed by core partners. These include:

Second and Fourth quarter wages: IVRS is working towards collecting the wages from our workforce center to start reporting available post-exit wages for PY2017 as of March 31, 2018.

Median earnings: IVRS is working towards collecting the wages from our workforce center to start reporting available post-exit wages for PY2017 as of March 31, 2018.

Credential Attainment: IVRS has started collecting credential attainment and reporting since PY2017.

Measurable Skill Gains: IVRS has started collecting measurable skill gain and reporting since PY2017.

Services to Business: IVRS has started collecting the data with our workforce center since PY2017.

Negotiated Rates for PY22:

Indicator	PY2022 Expected Level	PY2022 Proposed Negotiated Level	PY2023 Expected Level	PY2023 Proposed Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	56.9%	57.0%	56.9%	58.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	54.3%	54.3%	54.3%	55.3%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$4,022	$4,256	$4,022	$4,419
Credential Attainment Rate	59.7%	60.0%	59.7%	61.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	38.7%	40.0%	40.6%	42.0%

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED

IVRS does not track a separate line item for funding of Innovation and Expansion activities. IVRS has not set a percentage dedicated to that line item. IVRS dollars are allocated through a budget forecasting system based upon a general funding account, Supported Employment allocations and Pre-Employment Transition Services set aside. Through strategic planning, the IVRS Planning and Development Team, and through monthly executive council meetings, IVRS identifies new strategies to expand service delivery and improve quality. An example of those efforts during the past two years include:

- Expansion of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) through partnership with the Iowa Coalition for Integration and Employment (ICIE) to improve communication, visibility and awareness of statewide needs related to employment. This contract is for $58,847).
- Expansion of TAP to expand connections with students with disabilities and to improve collaboration with local school districts. These contracts total $354,888.
- Expansion of Innovation Learning Project Services (iJAG) to expand connections and services to students with disabilities. The contract extension total was $104,717.
- Creation of JReS contract with Department of Human Rights to increase connections to transition age youth in the Iowa juvenile court system. This newly created partnership contract is $250,000 annually.
- Increase of dollars available to the Statewide Independent Living Council to support cost of living allowances for staff services related to Independent Living. This contract totals $155,930.

- Continued increase use of mobile technology for agency staff in the areas of tablets and cell phones (245 staff estimate is $1,750 tablet and accessories - $428,750 and $9,000/month for cell phone).

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

IVRS continues to focus on ways to increase referral numbers and purchase services and support from community rehabilitation providers. Data reflects an expanded array of services being provided with an increase in numbers of job candidates being served.

Quality benchmarks such as length of time in service and outcome measures are being collected through the CRP Annual Report, which is provided by IVRS to all partners. This information also influences informed choice options as job candidates make decisions on which providers they want to work with. IVRS' involvement with Employment First efforts and the leveraged resources working with the Iowa Coalition for Integrated Employment (ICIE) and the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) enhanced the scope and outreach of program efforts. Significant changes have occurred with the alignment of funding and the Menu of Services that have expanded to reflect the services needed for enhanced customized and supported employment services.

With the support of SME, starting FFY22 IVRS began implementing Customized Discovery in place of Discovery. This changed the outcome from receiving a detailed report with tools that a job candidate is able to use to including a person-centered approach that leads to a competitive, integrated employment outcome. Customized Discovery is appropriate for job candidates who are most significantly disabled, haven't worked, worked primarily in segregated settings, or had little vocational success. Candidates who know their vocational goal are not appropriate for Customized Discovery. The results from each process of Customized Discovery are used to generate information by identifying a job candidate's skills, interests, abilities, conditions, contributions, and support needed for employment to design a pathway to a career that focuses on the individual's interest, talents, and contributions (not limitations); to customize a job in the community that does not exist if needed based on the information identified; and provide consultative support to ensure the candidate is successful. Process and procedures for students and youth will be outlined in the upcoming year.

IVRS is struggling with how to integrate SES programming into a quality assurance program that assess quality beyond just outcome measures of jobs, hours and wages. IVRS provides a customer satisfaction survey to all job candidates, but it is difficult to glean specific information specific to SES. IVRS will also continue to reach out to RSA and TA centers for further consultation on quality measurements and programs as it pertains to SES programming and will further this conversation for this plan. Training for IVRS staff will be created based on RSA and/or TA center consultation and use of the CRP Annual Report.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES

The process for extended services is outlined in the MoA developed with Iowa's Medicaid partners and is specified at the time of agreement within the IPE. Training on these services has occurred with community rehabilitation providers, VR staff and case managers in efforts to have a smooth, seamless collaborative system and ensure comparable services and benefits are considered. Efforts with staff across systems is ongoing. Iowa's system of Managed Care has influenced long-term services in some cases and has created gaps in extended services. IVRS has revised forms to complement the current system of handing off job candidates from VR's short-term service system to the Waiver's longer-term system of support. IVRS will continue to

provide opportunities for communication and identification of system change that is needed to improve the timing of extended service delivery.

The IVRS CRP Resource Manager, Managed Care Organization (MCO) Employment Directors from both Iowa Total Care and Amerigroup, and the Iowa*Works* TTW Coordinator hold joint training sessions for IVRS staff, DHS/IME case managers and CRPs. This training is provided twice a year to help teams braid services which includes communication on the timing for the long term support needs.

IVRS policies and procedures regarding extended services are in alignment with applicable legislative, regulatory, and administrative code guidance and are reviewed regularly to ensure they are current and appropriate.

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

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

2. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES, THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY)[16] AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[17] , THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[18] , POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER SECTION 111 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

3. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[19] , THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[20] , POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER TITLE VI ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

4. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND/OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO PERFORM THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE REGARDING THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

5. THE STATE LEGALLY MAY CARRY OUT EACH PROVISION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

6. ALL PROVISIONS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT ARE CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW.

7. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO RECEIVE, HOLD, AND DISBURSE FEDERAL FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Daniel Tallon

8. THE (ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND THE SUPPLEMENT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Administrator

9. THE AGENCY THAT SUBMITS THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT HAS ADOPTED OR OTHERWISE FORMALLY APPROVED THE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

FOOTNOTES

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

Signatory information	Enter Signatory information in this column
Name of Signatory	Brandy McOmber
Title of Signatory	Resource Manager
Date Signed	3/7/2022

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	

The State Plan must include	Include
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. Statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State	No

The State Plan must include	Include
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	
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	

The State Plan must include	Include
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	

The State Plan must include	Include
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 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	

The State Plan must include	Include
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)	56.9%	57.0%	56.9%	58.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	54.3%	54.3%	54.3%	55.3%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$4,022	$4,256	$4,022	$4,419
Credential Attainment Rate	59.7%	60.0%	59.7%	61.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	38.7%	40.0%	40.6%	42.0%

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

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 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 Iowa Department for the Blind is an independent consumer-controlled commission; there is no State Rehabilitation Council.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

Not applicable.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

Not applicable.

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;

The Iowa Department for the Blind is not requesting a waiver of statewideness.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

Not applicable.

3. REQUIREMENTS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN WILL APPLY TO THE SERVICES APPROVED UNDER THE WAIVER.

Not applicable.

C. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

The Iowa Department for the Blind cooperates with regional and community agencies and organizations that are not required partners of the statewide Workforce Investment system. Many of these regional and community agencies have entered into Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with the Workforce Investment partners, including the Department.

Cooperative activities include providing and receiving training regarding eligibility and services; making and receiving referrals and providing follow-up; and sharing applicable information regarding mutual clients. In addition, the Department participates in the following efforts:

- Ticket to Work. The Department participates in the Ticket to Work program and utilizes the reimbursement process for recipients of Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance who are vocational rehabilitation clients seeking employment.

- Iowa Coalition for Integration and Employment (ICIE). The Iowa Coalition for Integration and Employment (ICIE) is an initiative to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders that represent all levels of service and interest. The goal of the Coalition is to improve existing state systems so that Iowa youth with disabilities have increased opportunities and resources for fully integrated, competitive employment, regardless of where they live in the state. The Department's Vocational Rehabilitation Program administrator represents the Department on the Coalition.

- National Library Service. The Iowa Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped has a cooperative agreement to serve as a regional library from the National Library Service. The service allows access to print and book materials not available to Iowans who are blind or have low vision through their local, school, or college libraries.

- NFB—NEWSLINE. The Department contracts with the National Federation of the Blind of Iowa to make more than 330 local and national newspapers (including the Des Moines Register) available to Iowans through a telephone-based interface with a computerized system. This project provides ready access to local and national job listings, magazines, TV listings, and information from government agencies and organizations of and for the blind.

- Iowa Radio Reading Information Service for the Blind and Print Handicapped (IRIS). The Department partners with IRIS to assist Iowans who cannot access print information. This service allows access to a number of resources including information about career topics, employment opportunities and training events available from newspapers, magazines, and other sources by radio.

- Interlibrary Loan Programs. The library has cooperative agreement with the State Library of Iowa and Iowa libraries to participate in the statewide Interlibrary Loan program, borrowing and lending books. The library also maintains cooperative agreements with libraries and Instructional Materials Centers around the country to participate in an Interlibrary Loan program, borrowing and lending books.

- Institutions of Higher Education. The Department continues the memoranda of understanding (MOU) with Board of Regents institutions of higher education and in the State. This MOU provides for the coordination of services for clients of the Department who are students at one of the universities. It addresses the responsibilities of each

party under the laws that address services for each. It states that the Board of Regents Universities is responsible for the provision of reasonable accommodations that allow access to the classroom and university programs, and that the Department is responsible for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services. The agreement addresses financial responsibilities of the parties and dispute resolution methods. The Department has similar agreements with community colleges within the state.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

IDB has developed a cooperative agreement with state programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. The Iowa Program for Assistive Technology is funded under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Community Living. IPAT, the statewide assistive technology program for Iowans, is a program of the Center for Disabilities and Development at the University of Iowa Children's Hospital. The Easter Seals Iowa Assistive Technology Center receives funding through a grant from the Iowa Program for Assistive Technology, based out of the University of Iowa. This program also has provided information, referral, and assistive technology for Iowans with disabilities, including Iowan's who are blind or have low vision. IDB will continue to refer individuals to the IPAT program and to the Easter Seals Iowa Assistive Technology Center when services needed are outside of the scope of services IDB can provide. IDB will also continue to collaborate with Easter Seals Iowa Assistive Technology Center to provide devices for individuals, including students, with disabilities to try when participating in IDB programs. IDB will continue to collaborate with these programs to provide assistive technology services to clients.

The Iowa Department for the Blind maintains a team of rehabilitation technology specialists who are trained in blindness and low vision assistive technology and provide training, assessment, and purchasing recommendations. The Iowa Department for the Blind also has a team of vocational rehabilitation teachers who provide training in the use of blindness and low vision rehabilitation technology as well as other types of disability related skills training to vocational rehabilitation clients across the state. In addition, IDB has independent living rehabilitation teachers who are trained in assistive technology to assist and individual to meet their independent living needs. IDB does collaborate to provide trainings and events about assistive technology to Iowans who are blind or have low vision and to trainers of assistive technology devices. The IDB partners with IVRS to ensure clients being served have access to information and training on assistive technologies.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

The USDA Rural Development office in Iowa administers business-cooperative, housing, and community programs. These programs provide grants, loans, and technical assistance to rural residents and businesses targeting rural communities. These programs are aimed at creating or preserving jobs; promoting a clean rural environment; improving access to decent housing and community facilities; and ensuring essential community facilities are available to rural residents, such as health care clinics, fire and rescue facilities, and more. As part of their technical assistance efforts, the Iowa Rural Development office provides information to disabled Iowans. The Department will provide technical assistance to the Rural Development staff in Iowa as necessary.

4. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

The Iowa Department for the Blind is working with Iowa's Regional Workforce Development Boards and the Iowa Workforce Development Board in the provision of services to out-of-school

youth. The IDB refers individuals to Iowa Workforce Development for information regarding benefits planning, labor market information, assessment information, in addition to trainings, assistance with job search activities and a variety of other services available through the local one-stop centers. IDB is working with each region to provide information, training, and technical assistance to our one-stop partners to become accessible to individuals who are blind or have low vision. IDB will continue to partner with each local one-stop to ensure out-of-school youth who are blind or low vision are able to access their services. The IDB is participating in the development and implementation of local and state level agreements with our workforce partners who are serving out-of-school youth.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

IDB maintains compliance with state contracting programs and follows the Iowa Department of Administrative rules for financial bidding and contracting.

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 Iowa Department for the Blind (IDB), the Iowa Braille School (Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired — IESBVI), and the Iowa Department of Education (DE) have been working collaboratively under the Statewide System for Vision Services since 2006. This system ensures collaboration in service delivery to children and youth who are blind or low vision, including students with the most significant disabilities. Through this system, staff can exchange information about their services and approaches in order to create effective working relationships which will enhance educational and transition outcomes.

The IDB collaborates with the DE, local education agencies, and area education agencies, in addition to IESBVI to provide any or all of the five pre-employment transition services required activities to students with documented disabilities (ages 14-21) as defined under §361.5(c)(51), based on individual need, once a student requests or is recommended for one or more pre-employment transition services. In the state of Iowa, pre-employment transition services are provided to a student with a disability is one who meets all of the following criteria: 1) is at least 14 but no more than 21 years of age (has not yet reached 22nd birthday); has a disability that would make them eligible or potentially eligible for IDB's vocational rehabilitation services, and has submitted the required qualifying medical documentation signed by a medical provider or a copy of an IEP or 504 plan; and has documentation confirming enrollment as a student in an educational program.

IDB collaborates with stakeholders such as educators, parents, and other service providers on an ongoing basis, to assure that students who are blind or have low vision will receive high quality education and rehabilitation services. IDB assists stakeholders in the transition process to coordinate and improve transition services and to increase pre-employment transition services throughout Iowa, especially in unserved and underserved areas of the state. IDB collaborates with individuals and entities statewide to provide services that meet the transition needs of students who are blind, deaf-blind, or low vision with and without additional disabilities. IDB connects with the IESBVI administrators; the Iowa Department of Education; the ASK Family Resource Center; the Special Education Advisory Panel; the Deaf-Blind Advisory Committee; teachers of the visually impaired (TVI); orientation and mobility specialists (OMS); educators in local school districts and area education agencies; Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) and students and their families or guardians. Finally, the IDB plans to work

closely with local education agencies throughout Iowa to improve and increase the delivery of pre–employment transition services to students with disabilities. This will be accomplished primarily through VR counselors who serve the LEAs within their service territories.

The Director of the IDB is a standing member of both the Management Team for Blind Services and Leadership Team for Deaf and Blind Services. These committees were formed to facilitate communication and cooperation between the Iowa Department of Education, Area Education Agencies, IESBVI, IDB, and IVRS. The purpose of the Management Team is to provide direction for the development and implementation of work plans and provide oversight in order to maintain and improve the statewide system of educational services for blind, low vision and deaf-blind students. The purpose of the Leadership Team for Deaf and Blind Services is to provide a forum for the Executive and Management Teams to work together to gather information, solve problems, and to provide feedback on work plans and issues that are of a common interest as well as support collaboration and build cohesion in the statewide system of services for deaf and hard of hearing, blind and low vision, and deaf-blind students.

The IDB Vocational Rehabilitation program administrator is a member of the State of Iowa's Special Education Advisory Panel and the Deaf-Blind Advisory Committee which informs Iowa's Deaf-Blind Project. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and Vocational Rehabilitation Teachers, Rehabilitation Technology Specialists, Instructional Materials Center staff and other IDB employees reach out to Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs), Orientation and Mobility Specialists (OMS), and other teachers and school personnel with a focus of building partnerships and collaboration. IDB staff connect with TVIs and OMS in group settings, present at IESBVI training events, and communicate on an individual basis with educators.

In addition, IDB employees are active team members at Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings at school districts throughout Iowa. IDB staff attend IEP meetings at the request of the team and consult with special education teachers to help them come up with solutions to classroom access barriers. They provide information about the IDB so that students and their families understand the vocational rehabilitation process and can make informed choices when applying for vocational rehabilitation services and making decisions about training and career options following high school completion. They also provide information about IDB programs and resources that can benefit students' learning both during high school and after. IDB vocational rehabilitation counselors and teachers also support potentially eligible students and eligible students with disabilities and their IEP teams with consultation and training services.

IDB staff participate regularly with Vision Discipline meetings in each area education agency region. At these meetings stakeholders review common caseloads, discuss common potentially eligible and eligible students with disabilities and coordinate services. Ongoing collaboration and communication amongst IDB, IESBVI, local educators, parents, and students are important strengths to the overall transition efforts in Iowa. IDB staff and administrators will continue a process of training educators and service providers about the services the Department provides to students who are blind or have low vision.

Referrals. The commitment to collaboration and partnership resulted in the development of a standard statewide referral procedure. In Iowa, Area Education Agencies (AEAs) coordinate services for students with disabilities. AEA personnel and local school district personnel participate in developing Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for students with disabilities and in providing the specialized services those students require. Itinerant Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI) provide vision-related IEP services to those students who are blind or low vision. TVIs submit completed statewide referral forms for all students, starting as early as age 14 and who are receiving vision-related services. Upon the receipt of a referral form, the IDB intake specialist will follow up with the student and his/her family to gather additional information and will then assign the student to a VR counselor.

IDB staff encourage transition-age youth and their families to apply for services as early as age 14 as established by IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act. Once an application is complete, eligibility must be determined by the VR Counselor within 60 days. The next step is to partner with the eligible student to determine his/her goals and develop a plan (IPE — Individual Plan for Employment) identifying the services needed to reach those goals. The plan is developed within 90 days of eligibility determination for VR services. The Department coordinates its services with the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (IESBVI), AEAs and LEAs to provide seamless transition from school, where all services are provided by the educational agencies (AEAs and local school districts), to vocational rehabilitation.

VR counselors coordinate with other members of the IEP team to ensure that students participate in work-based learning experiences and paid work experiences prior to high school graduation. Experiences take place in integrated settings in the community; settings that are in segregated environments are discouraged and avoided.

IDB offers a wide range and expanding menu of assistive technology services to transition age youth and educators of transition age youth. IDB technology specialists provide technology assessments and one-on-one and small group assistive technology training to transition age youth at school or at home. VR counselors and teachers consult with families and educators on strategies for helping students increase their independence and take a more active role in their education. VR teachers provide one-on-one and small-group instruction in areas including braille, orientation and mobility and independent living skills. VR counselors and teachers also provide instruction in job readiness skills such as interview techniques and money management.

IDB counseling staff works with Regional Workforce Investment Boards and Transition Advisory Committees to inform them of the program and to develop work experience and career exploration opportunities for the transition students in integrated settings.

The Instructional Materials Center (IMC) within the Library serves students in two principal ways. Its primary function is to provide textbooks and educational materials to students from pre-kindergarten through college. Its secondary function is to help students find resources for research projects. Itinerant vision teachers or other school personnel contact the IMC with requests for materials for students in grades Pre-K-12. The IMC will produce the materials in-house or secure a vendor to produce the needed material. The IMC can provide recorded materials and electronic text files to reading disabled students. These requests can be made by students, parents, teachers, or Area Education Agency personnel. College students or vocational trainees may also request course materials from the IMC. Both students and educational staff have access to the library's collection. The library has created a special online portal for teachers, students, and paraprofessionals. This interface makes searching for existing accessible learning materials faster and easier. It also encourages teachers to incorporate universal design principals into lesson planning to better include blind and low vision students in classroom activities. The library's Accessible Media Specialist works with teachers, TVIs, paras, and LEA staff to improve access to learning management systems for the students we serve. Often accessibility is not a consideration when acquiring a system and inability to access a learning management system puts a student at a considerable educational disadvantage. Blind and low vision youth need the same level of access and skill with technology as their sighted peers in order to become truly job ready. The Accessible Media Specialist and the Youth Services Librarian partner with agencies such as the Governor's STEM Council to create opportunities for blind and low vision youth to actively engage in STEM learning and consider STEM related occupations. Many blind and low vision youth are passively and/or actively discouraged from considering STEM related professions, however, blind people can and do successfully work in these high demand fields. Exposure to accessible STEM curricula and activities will help blind youth build self-confidence and expand their view of what careers are possible. Because of this, STEM activities have been integrated into the youth library space we

are creating. The youth library encourages braille literacy and inspire a passion for reading and learning. A recent study has shown that daily use of braille is one of the three significant factors that lead to employment success in blind adults. IDB's Youth Services Librarian creates programming that helps blind and low vision youth to build this crucial competency as well as increase access and inclusion of blind and low vision youth in library programming in their local libraries. These programs have included a monthly STEM Makerspace program, Braille Babies for children birth to 4 years, and a books for kids program that makes sure youth have leisure reading books at home and at school.

The IDB library continues to develop a College and Career Commons. The College and Career Commons provides physical and virtual access to career exploration resources and information pertaining to post-secondary enrollment. In addition, accessible materials related to common career pathways identified by our Title II partners will be available. Most importantly, assistance in understanding and using the vast amounts of information available will be provided. Often the sheer volume of information regarding the many career options available leaves clients feeling overwhelmed. Our librarians' talent for curating and navigating the sea of available resources will help clients to move beyond feeling overwhelmed and help them make informed choices that lead to their employment plans. They can feel excited about pursuing activities.

The Library has a contract with the Iowa Department of Education to assist Iowa in meeting the NIMAS (National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standards) requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The Library provides training to TVIs and other school personnel regarding accessible formats, Braille and use of accessible technology for reading. The Library provides resources and training in braille literacy for educators, parents and students through its in-person and online trainings.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires IDB and other vocational rehabilitation agencies to provide five Pre-Employment Transition Services. The services include: job exploration-counseling, work-based learning and work experiences in competitive integrated employment, counseling on post-secondary educational opportunities, workplace readiness training, and instruction in self-advocacy. The expected outcome of all IDB sponsored programs is employment in integrated competitive employment.

IDB-Sponsored Programs. The Iowa Department for the Blind LEAP Program is dedicated to providing meaningful and high quality vocational rehabilitation services to blind and low vision transition-age youth from across the state. The Program provides many opportunities for blind and low vision Iowa youth to develop the confidence and skills necessary for seamless transitions to life after high school. The focus of LEAP is to motivate and assist youth to: learn skills for independence and workplace readiness; explore careers and educational opportunities; and learn to advocate and take charge of their future.

The Summer LEAP Academy is a nine-week residential program that provides training to blind and low vision youth in independent living skills and non-visual techniques in the areas of technology, cane travel, Braille, home and personal management, career exploration and money management. There is a focus on self-advocacy and other life skills as well as job readiness and career-related topics. In addition to the classes, students participate in fun and challenging activities to develop positive attitudes about blindness and equip them with the confidence to believe in themselves and their abilities.

IDB LEAP Weekend Retreats (Friday evenings through Sunday afternoons) are held six times per school year. Blind and low vision high school students from across Iowa participate in the theme-based retreats and work on building disability-related skills as well as skills in areas such as job readiness, job interviewing, communication, orientation and mobility, technology, team-work, time-management, social behavior, advocacy, peer interaction, problem solving, etc. The

retreats also provide a means for students to step out of their comfort zones to increase confidence and positive attitudes about blindness.

The Young Adult Transition Program is a schoolyear based residential program for blind and low vision youth ages 17-21. Students in the program are typically high school students who have completed their academic requirements for graduation but have unmet goals on the Individualized Education Program (IEP) in the areas of living, learning and working needed to continue on to future education or employment. Common IEP goal areas include Independent Living Skills, Orientation and Mobility, Braille, and workplace-readiness behaviors. Students also work on goals related to their Individual Plans for Employment, in particular career exploration, work-based learning experiences, money management and self-advocacy. All five required Pre-ETS activities are available to Pre-ETS eligible students. The program is significantly individualized to meet the needs of each enrolled student, and the combination of education and VR services helps students make the transition from K-12 education to the adult/VR world.

The Braille Challenge is an annual event sponsored by the IDB and IESBVI. It provides opportunities for students in grades 1 to 12+ to test their Braille skills in reading, writing, spelling and comprehension. Top finishers in the various age brackets may have the opportunity to advance to a national competition. The Challenge brings students and families together from across the state of Iowa where new connections and friends are made every year. The competition inspires many blind and low vision students to work to improve their Braille skills. Program staff take this opportunity to provide outreach and training to parents, students, and support systems about the importance of students developing workplace readiness, self-advocacy and blindness skills.

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 Department has a formal interagency agreement with the Iowa Department of Education (DE). Both agencies collaborated to develop the interagency agreement and provide training to staff. Within the agreement, IDB outlines the provision of consultation and technical assistance to assist in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities in the following ways:

- Providing consultation and technical assistance to assist local education agencies (LEAs) and are education agencies (AEAs) in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including vocational rehabilitation services, IDB, along with the DE and local school districts assist in planning for the transition of students who are blind or have vision loss from school to post-school employment-related activities, pre-employment transitions services, competitive, integrated employment. IDB provide consultation and technical assistance to the DE and AEA's to assist in transition planning for students who are blind or have vision loss from school to post-secondary employment or education-related activities, pre-employment transition services, and competitive, integrated employment. The consultations and technical assistance provided by the IDB can be provided through alternative means, such as conference calls, video conferences as well as shared in-person training opportunities. Examples include sharing conference opportunities, being strong partners in delivery of technical assistance through recognized partnerships such as the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC), the Youth Technical Assistance Center (YTAC) and the National Technical Assistance Center of Transition (NTACT).

- IDB staff attend and participate in regularly scheduled vision discipline meetings in each of the area education agencies, transition planning meetings, and department meetings when invited and as resources are available. Students, clients and other stakeholders are also encouraged to contact the IDB staff person they are working with to directly request consultation or technical assistance services.
- Upon request from school district staff, and with the parent's, guardian's or adult student's written consent, IDB staff are able to distribute general information related to services, provide consultation and TA, attend transition fairs and other forums to provide information about Pre-ETS and VR services to parents and school personnel, attend IEP meetings, provide pre-employment transition services, and provide referrals to VR services.
- IDB staff provide support for transition planning to LEAs, AEAs, and stakeholders for students with disabilities including the development and completion of their individualized education programs (IEPs) under section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDB staff work with individuals to develop an individualized plan for employment (IPE) for each IDB eligible individual prior to the individual's graduation. The individual, parents, educators and IDB staff collaborate so that the goals of the IEP and the IPE will be consistent with each other. The individual's preferences, interests and skills serve as the basis of employment goals.
- Coordination to ensure that transition services are provided by qualified personnel as defined in Iowa Administrative Code 281-41.8(256B, 34 CFR 300), Iowa Administrative Code 111-2.1(216(B)), and other relevant state requirements.
- IDB provides support for early outreach to an identification of students with disabilities who are in need of transition services. Outreach efforts include a description of the purpose of the vocational rehabilitation program, eligibility requirements, application procedures, and the scope of services that may be provided to eligible individuals. The DE, LEA, IESBVI and other stakeholders all assist in the dissemination of written materials developed by IDB. Outreach to students who are blind or have low vision occurs as early as possible during the transition planning process. The Department continues to review and revise agreements with the Iowa Department of Education to develop procedures and mechanisms to meet the needs of students who are blind or have low vision.

All of the Iowa Department for the Blind's programs for students who are blind or have low vision, including students who are deaf-blind and those who have the most significant disabilities, continue to be reviewed in efforts to meet the needs of current clients and potentially eligible individuals. Programs are designed so that all youth who want to attend are able to attend, including providing necessary supports to allow equal opportunity and engagement in activities.

The Department is working to develop a mechanism to track the provision, coordination, arrangement and purchase of pre-employment transition services provided by the Iowa Department for the Blind.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

School personnel make every effort to provide adequate notice to IDB VR counselors regarding upcoming IEP meetings for potentially eligible and eligible students with disabilities. VR counselors make every effort to attend all IEP meetings for their clients and potentially eligible students. At the IEP meetings, VR counselors and school personnel work together to identify

necessary services that will both help the student with a disability complete their secondary education goals and also prepare the students for post–secondary work or school. As a result of these coordination efforts, IDB develops, aligns or revises an Individualized Plan for Employment to address the needs of each transition student. VR counselors coordinate with other members of the IEP team to ensure that students participate in work-based learning experiences and paid work experiences prior to high school graduation. Experiences take place in integrated settings in the community; settings that are in segregated environments are discouraged and avoided.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

IDB and the Iowa Department of Education both share responsibility to prepare students with disabilities for successful community employment. A Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) defines the responsibilities of both departments. This MoA is designed to facilitate the integration and coordination of transition services from school to post-secondary education and/or employment for individuals with disabilities who are enrolled in secondary education, and are eligible or potentially eligible to receive vocational rehabilitation services.

Both departments collaborate in providing consultation and technical assistance to local education agencies and area education agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including vocational rehabilitation services. The departments collaborate to support transition planning efforts for students with disabilities and ensure that the transition services provided are done by qualified personnel. Both entities are responsible for the costs they occur in carrying out the agreement.

The MoA defines the Roles & Responsibilities of both agencies in the following way:

The IDB-VR and the DE agree on the following roles and responsibilities of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition and pre-employment transition services:

IDB-VR-Vocational Rehabilitation will serve as the lead agency in Iowa for carrying out Federal and State policies related to the program under the Rehabilitation Act, including:

- Upon request from school district staff, and with the parent's, guardian's or adult student's written consent, distribution of general information related to services, consultation and TA, attend transition fairs and other forums to provide information about pre-employment transition services and VR services to parents and school personnel, attend IEP meetings, provide Pre-employment transition services, provide referrals to VR for services, eligibility determination, IPE development and VR services, pursuant to 34 C.F.R. §300.321(b)(3).
- Accepting referrals of students who are blind or have vision loss during the transition planning process for the provision of pre-employment transition services.
- IDB-VR will consult with school district staff on transition planning to prepare a student who is blind or has vision loss to move from school to work or post-secondary education in accordance with the student's unique needs, strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, capabilities, interests and abilities and informed choice as determined through the IEP process and provision of pre-employment transition services.
- IDB-VR will provide students who are eligible for vocational rehabilitation wit the services necessary and appropriate in order to obtain a successful employment outcome. These services may include assessment, disability related skills training,

educational and vocational training, rehabilitation technology, and job seeking skills training and job placement services.

- IDB-VR will use an assessment process to assist a client in developing an individualized plan for employment (IPE) which will prepare the student for competitive integrated employment within 90 days of IDB-VR eligibility determination, unless an appropriate extension is agreed upon by the student, counselor and parent or legal guardian.
- IDB-VR will provide consultation to the LEAs to assist in the identification of eligible and potentially eligible students who are blind or have vision loss and assessment of their individual needs for pre-employment transition services.
- IDB-VR will provide or arrange for the provision of pre-employment transition services to potentially eligible students, and for services required by the IPE goal, when the student has been determined eligible for VR and the services are specific to his/her employment outcome, and are not services customarily provided to the student by the LEA under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- IDB-VR will provide information and outreach to parents and/or guardian(s), student/clients regarding VR eligibility, vocational assessment for employment and postsecondary planning and Client Assistance Program (CAP).
- IDB-VR will obtain written consent for the release of confidential information, pursuant to VR policy and procedures, federal and state laws and regulations regarding confidentiality.
- IDB-VR will provide contact information to the schools of VR staff including counselors, employment specialists, rehabilitation technology specialists and rehabilitation teachers.
- IDB-VR will identify a single point of contact who will coordinate transition services for students. This point of contact will be the IDB-VR counselor assigned to the school district.
- IDB-VR will share information to the DE on referrals and employment outcomes of students who are blind or have vision loss as requested and as the law and IDB-VR policies allow.
- IDB-VR will engage with employers to assist in the development of work-based learning opportunities for students who are blind or have vision loss.
- IDB-VR will participate with the DE on joint training of LEAs and VR staff regarding new federal requirements or state identified initiatives as resources allow and mutually agreed upon by entities involved.
- IDB-VR will participate with the DE to provide joint training regarding the role of VR and new regulations/procedures for students with disabilities exiting school to be referred to VR prior to entering subminimum wage work with a 14c certificate holder as resources allow and mutually agreed upon by entities involved.
- IDB-VR will provide auxiliary aids or services for a student with a disability if the device or service is required for the student to access or participate in any of the pre-employment transition services specified in section 113(b) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.48(a)(2) of its implementing regulations, if no other public entity is required to provide such aid or service.

The Iowa Department of Education (DE) serves as the lead agency responsible for assuring that eligible students with disabilities, including students who are blind or have vision loss, receive a

free and appropriate public education (FAPE). The DE will provide technical assistance, training, training reference materials regarding WIOA to school districts or AEAs and other stakeholders identified by the DE including parents, families, guardians and students relating to the provision of pre-employment transition services and other transition services to address needs as determined by the DE.

- The DE will share this MOU with DE, AEA, and LEA practitioners in secondary special education.
- Through coordination with the FEP, ASK, and AEA contacts, ongoing outreach, training, and communication will be shared with parents about transition services and opportunities.
- The DE collects data related to Secondary Transition on Indicators 1 (graduation rates), 2 (dropout rates), 13 (IEP components) and 14 (outcomes in education/training and employment). These data, along with tools and resources for continuous improvement, are shared with districts through the IDEA Differentiated Accountability process.
- The DE will collaborate with IDB to provide joint training as needed to ensure AEAs and LEAs understand their responsibilities in serving students who are blind or have vision loss.
- The Department of Education will collaborate with IDB to provide joint training to provide all existing educational assessment and performance information relevant for the determination of eligibility for IDB-VR services.
- For purposes related to section 511, neither the DE nor LEAs 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, including a youth who is blind or has vision loss, is engaged in work at a subminimum wage.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

The Department of Education and IDB collaborate to support early outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who are in need of transition services. Outreach efforts include a description of the purpose of the vocational rehabilitation program, eligibility requirements, application procedures, and the scope of services that may be provided to eligible individuals. The DE assists in the dissemination of written materials developed by IDB. Outreach to students who are blind or have low vision occurs as early as possible during the transition planning process.

E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

The Department does not have long-term cooperative agreements in place with private non-profit VR service providers. However, the Department has utilized such entities on a case-by-case basis. For instance, BLIND, Inc. in Minneapolis, MN, the Colorado Center for the Blind in Littleton, CO and the Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) in New York have provided orientation and adjustment training and job search services to clients. While the Department has its own Orientation Center, the needs of some clients may be better addressed at an alternative center; this decision is based on client informed choice.

Because the number of blind and low vision Iowans who utilize services from Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) is both small and widely dispersed, the Department collaborates with Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) to define potential services, outcomes, and costs. By working together, the Department and IVRS ensure that CRPs receive consistent information and direction from the VR agencies in Iowa. IDB works collaboratively

with CRPs when the service is necessary for the client to meet their training and employment goals. Agreements entered into with any organization will require that assessment and career development activities occur in integrated work settings in the community.

In these cases, agreements are developed with the identified CRP to deliver the necessary service. The client and VR Counselor may identify a private provider that best addresses his or her specific VR needs. In these instances, the Counselor issues an authorization for the services. The provider is required to submit periodic reports on progress to the Counselor. The Counselor may continue to authorize for services until the services have been completed, the provider demonstrates progress is not being made, or the client finds that services are not addressing needs.

F. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Because the number of blind and low vision Iowans who utilize services from Community Rehabilitation Programs is both small and widely dispersed, the Department collaborates with Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) to define supported employment services, outcomes, and costs. The Department enters into agreements with providers of supported employment when specific clients are identified as needing those services. When appropriate, supported employment services and extended services are paid for through county services under the Medicaid Waiver programs. By working together, the Department and IVRS ensure that CRPs receive consistent information and direction from the VR agencies in Iowa.

The Department may also make arrangements with other private entities to provide supported employment and extended services as the need arises. Other private entities may include employers, family members, and individuals contracted to provide these services. Natural supports and county services are the most often used services for extended support services.

The Department is adjusting the service delivery system to allocate 50 percent of the supported employment grant allotment for the provision of pre-employment transition services to youth with the most significant disabilities. In addition, these funds may be used to provide extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities for a period of up to four years.

G. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

1. VR SERVICES; AND

IDB has established a Business Relations and Services Initiative which focuses on engaging with the business community to enable the development of work-based learning for students and youth with disabilities and employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities. As a part of this initiative, IDB policy was created to ensure that IDB staff engage with business and provide our business partners with services that include but are not limited to:

- training that communicates the capabilities of individuals who are blind or have low vision;
- accessibility and accommodation related technical assistance;
- assistive technology consultation; and
- quality candidates to meet business hiring needs.

As all IDB work units participate in business engagement, the implementation of this initiative is inclusive of all IDB work units. All IDB staff are expected to use established procedures for documenting business services provided and work with the Business Relations Specialist to coordinate delivery of service provision. The BRS acts as a single point of contact and

communicates and coordinates business engagement activities across the agency and creates a positive and simplified experience for our business partners.

It is IDB's goal to have an expansive number of employer relationships throughout the state of Iowa in order to increase our ability to provide quality career development, job search and job placement services to our clients. Through the successful development and management of employer relationships, IDB is better able to meet the employment needs of our clients. IDB focuses attention on strategic employer development in order to provide services and benefit to both employers and IDB clients. The IDB employs one Business Relations Specialist (BRS) whose primary customers are employers across Iowa. The BRS's key role is to engage employers and cultivate mutually beneficial relationships through strategic employer development. IDB recognizes that high quality relationships will increase effectiveness at assisting clients in reaching their employment goals while at the same time meet the needs of employers. The Business Relations Specialist and IDB VR counselors develop and deliver services that are based upon the various identified needs of businesses including: applicant screening and assessment, job analyses, job accommodations, on-the-job training plans, and onboarding/training/and follow-up assistance as needed. In addition, delivering diversity awareness trainings and interpreting and explaining policies, rules, regulations, and laws. In particular, the BRS provides assistance in addressing employers' needs through compliance in meeting the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 503 and other workplace requirements, employer incentives and worksite modifications; these services are specifically designed to support business growth and increase employment opportunity for persons with disabilities, including persons with the most significant disabilities. The BRS and other VR staff are engaged with the WIOA state and local boards, are members of employer groups, and participate in business networking and human resource organizations as available in their area.

The Department Rehabilitation Technology Specialists provide systems accessibility evaluation and equipment setup services for various employers and organizations across the state, such as Nationwide Insurance, Unity Point, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and CenturyLink. We work with clients on the job site and assist during onboarding training sessions. Specialists are able to demonstrate assistive technology, answer questions related to blindness and accommodations, and provide resources and information to assist the employer in meeting their business needs.

The IDB Library provides services to employers by producing accessible materials needed by employers for current staff, onboarding new employees, and the public. The Library's Accessible Media Specialist and Instructional Materials Center staff provide employers and businesses with information and resources with their accessibility needs through trainings and accessible materials. The library's programming focusing on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) careers provides employers and individuals a way to connect and discuss STEM careers. Youth and adults are able to be involved in career exploration and employers are able to receive training in accessibility and meet potential employees.

The IDB Library also provides training to community public libraries and other stakeholders to assist in serving those within their communities who need accessible materials and information. The library is collaborating with the State Library of Iowa and other community partners to provide continuing education trainings through monthly webinars and self-paced courses to public, school and academic librarians throughout the state. The Library is working to develop trainings and continuing education opportunities for Iowa's schools and community partners in the areas of accessibility information, accessible materials information and accessible programming development.

IDB connects with employers on a national level through involvement in the National Employment Team (NET). Participation in NET allows IDB staff to learn about employment opportunities and career development resources, in addition to addressing employer hiring

needs, providing information regarding disability awareness, retention assistance, accommodations, and other support services.

Employers and hiring staff are invited to tour the Iowa Department for the Blind; having the opportunity to learn about the resources available, understand the capabilities of persons who are blind, and see demonstrations of potential accommodations and techniques a person who is blind may use in an employment setting. The Adult Orientation and Adjustment Center provides prevocational, nonvisual adjustment-to-blindness training to vocational rehabilitation clients. Students participating in this training learn nonvisual techniques, develop a positive attitude about blindness, and build self-confidence. Through tours given by center students, employers see the techniques blind people use for traveling with the long, white cane, taking and reading Braille notes, using computers with speech, cooking, and operating power tools, in addition to being able to ask questions about blindness. Students also participate in a jobs class where they work toward their chosen careers, which can include informational interviewing, job shadowing, submitting applications for employment, determining accommodations for a job and networking with employers in the community.

The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) works with eligible individuals who are interested in self-employment to manage their own businesses--operating vending machines, road side vending sites, and/or snack bars/catering services. Entrepreneurs are provided with a considerable amount of training before they manage a business. This is supplemented by ongoing training to promote independent entrepreneurship in all business areas including hiring and managing employees, inventory control, ordering, pricing, scheduling, maintaining and repairing equipment, payroll, and business accounting.

The IDB partners with Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) on the Iowa Self Employment program which is available to clients of both agencies. The program assists individuals to explore the option of becoming self-sufficient through the self-employment. Business Development Specialists provide technical assistance to clients to assist them in reaching this goal if determined appropriate. Through the program, clients can access Iowa Economic Development, Iowa Small Business Development Centers, Iowa Job Centers and the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) and the Iowa Workforce Development to gain additional training or assistance in developing their business plans. The Department encourages and assists clients to develop connections and mentors with other individuals, including individuals who are blind or have low vision, who have established successful businesses.

IDB is partnering with Iowa Workforce Development on an apprenticeship pilot program with the support of the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC). The goal of the pilot is to increase the number of individuals who are blind who are participating in and completing apprenticeship programs resulting in employment that meets the individuals career goal and provides self-sustaining wages. IWD and IDB are partnering on outreach, technical assistance and training to employers and clients in this region to explore apprenticeships.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

The Department begins working with students at the age of 14 to provide necessary services. An essential goal is for all transition students to have paid work experience in competitive integrated employment prior to graduating high school. In an effort to meet this goal, IDB works with employers to align job training programs and work-based learning experiences, in addition to assisting with necessary accommodations. Counselors focus on developing relationships with employers for the purpose of creating work experience opportunities, including on-the-job trainings, internships, and paid work experiences. These relationships are also beneficial in providing employers with an understanding and experience of hiring individuals who are blind. The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) provides pre-employment

transition services to youth by facilitating opportunities for job shadowing, work experience, work assessment and on-the-job training opportunities.

H. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

1. THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

The Iowa Department for the Blind will collaborate with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment. The Department will develop an agreement with DHS to clarify roles and responsibilities for IDB and DHS staff in serving individuals who are blind or have low vision in addition to having a developmental disability. In addition, the Department will work with DHS to identify resources and financial responsibilities, opportunities for collaboration and cross-training, develop procedures for clients served by both programs, as well as identifying additional collaborative efforts in an effort to best meet the needs of the individuals we jointly serve. IDB has taken steps to reach out to DHS partners to begin the development of a formal agreement to establish collaborative efforts and to reduce duplication of services.

The Department for the Blind will continue to participate in activities with other partner agencies as well as involve community partners, families and education in implementing an Employment First approach. The IDB has also worked with Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services to develop an agreement to identify collaborative efforts and to reduce duplication of services. Both agencies agree to share resources, discuss strategies, provide training and technical assistance and provide referral and information services, while also coordinating cases that are shared between the two agencies.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

The Department collaborates with stakeholders to identify potential clients, coordinate service plans and share funding for those individuals with developmental disabilities who are described as blind and low vision. While the Department of Human Services (DHS) and IDB have not developed a separate formal agreement, IDB has taken steps to begin this process to establish collaborative efforts and to reduce duplication of services and better meet the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities. IDB plans to have an agreement in place in 2022.

The Center for Disabilities and Development (CDD) in Iowa is part of the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities network. IDB's VR program administrator represents IDB on the CDD's Community Partnership Advisory Council (UCEDD CPAC). The CPAC is engaged in addressing priority issues affecting the lives of individuals with disabilities and identifying opportunities to increase the independence, productivity and community participation for persons with disabilities.

The IDB has also worked with Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services to develop an agreement to identify collaborative efforts and to reduce duplication of services. Both agencies agree to share resources, discuss strategies, provide training and technical assistance and provide referral and information services, while also coordinating cases that are shared between the two agencies.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

The Department collaborates to identify potential clients, coordinate service plans and share funding for those individuals who are described as blind and low vision and require mental health services. Mental health services are provided statewide by various entities. Department counselors cooperate with those providers to ensure that mutual clients, or persons who may need both VR and mental health services, are adequately and appropriately served.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) and IDB have not developed a separate formal agreement at this time. IDB has taken steps to reach out to DHS partners to begin the development of a formal agreement to establish collaborative efforts and to reduce duplication of services. The IDB has also worked with Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services to develop an agreement to identify collaborative efforts and to reduce duplication of services. Both agencies agree to share resources, discuss strategies, provide training and technical assistance and provide referral and information services, while also coordinating cases that are shared between the two agencies.

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 Iowa Department for the Blind has in place a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ascertain and meet the training needs of its professional and paraprofessional staff, as well as new employees. The Iowa Department for the Blind management staff collects and compiles data to review personnel needs and to plan training and development activities for all staff. Managers review monthly reports that identify caseload activity related to referrals, applications, services, cases open and closed, and employer contacts. Management staff use these reports to predict caseload activity and personnel needs. By rule, all employees are to receive an annual performance evaluation from their supervisor. Training needs are discussed then, and the employee is encouraged to offer recommendations and address concerns. All new employees must go through training in the orientation center for the blind. Employees develop non-visual skills that their clients will need and use for employment and independence. However, more importantly, this training addresses the misconceptions held by most of society to raise the expectations of blind people and provides an understanding of the positive attitude about blindness that governs the entire agency. Annual surveys are conducted with staff to ascertain their training needs. The Department-wide survey provided the opportunity for staff to express needs for training and development opportunities. Responses identified needs for training related on a broad range of topics, including training related to meeting the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities. IDB will continue to assess the needs of staff and provide training to ensure that the needs of clients are met. IDB endeavors to maintain caseload sizes of between 50 and 65 cases per counselor. To ensure the ratio of one counselor to 50 – 65 clients, the Department employs 10 vocational rehabilitation counselors. The Department serves approximately 525 VR clients at any one time. The Department's list of functional position titles, (Full–time Equivalents), current vacancies, and the number of staff expected to retire in the next five years for each is provided below:

- Director: 1, 0, 0
- Executive Secretary: 1, 0, 0
- Accountant Supervisor (CFO): 1, 0, 0
- Program Administrators: 6, 0, 0
- Counselor Lead Worker / Quality Assurance Specialist (SSSB1): 1, 1, 0
- Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (SSSB1): 10, 0, 1

- Business Counselors: 2, 0, 0
- Business Relations Specialist: 1, 0, 0
- Activity Specialist 1: 1, 1, 0
- Vocational Rehabilitation Teachers: 7, 1, 0
- Senior Independent Living Teachers: 3, 0, 1
- Independent Living Teachers: 3, 0, 0
- Center Instructors: 6, 0, 0
- Rehabilitation Technology Specialists: 5, 1, 0
- Technology Specialists: 2, 0, 0
- 1 Intake Specialist: 1, 0, 0
- Secretary 1: 3, 1, 0
- Secretary 2: 1, 0, 0
- Patron Services Librarians: 2, 0, 1
- Special Services Librarian: 1, 0, 0
- Electronic Resources and Discovery Librarian: 1, 0, 0
- Youth Services Librarian: 1, 0, 0
- Accessible Media Specialist: 1, 0, 0
- Digital Recording Specialist/Studio Manager: 1, 0, 0
- Audio Production Librarian: 1, 0, 1
- Braille Coordinator: 1, 0, 0
- Instructional Materials Center Librarians: 2, 0, 0
- Braille Transcribers: 1, 1, 0
- Accounting Techs 2: 2, 1, 1
- Accounting Clerk 1: 1, 0, 0
- Facilities Engineer: 1, 0, 0
- Maintenance Repairer: 1, 0, 0
- Custodians: 3, 0, 0

Projections of staff needs in five years based upon current client trends would require the continued employment of ten vocational rehabilitation counselors to maintain the present ratio of one counselor for every 50 to 65 cases. IDB will maintain the present ratio of one counselor for every 50 to 65 cases in order to assure optimum services to clients. IDB is serving all clients that are referred for services, and it is not anticipated that there will be significant increases in the number of clients receiving services.

II. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

Please refer to Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development A. Qualified Personnel Needs, section i.1.A.i. above.

III. PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY, WHO WILL BE NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES IN 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.

Please refer to Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development A. Qualified Personnel Needs, section i.1.A.i. above.

B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

I. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM;

The University of Iowa (Iowa City, Iowa) and Drake University (Des Moines, Iowa) both offer graduate degree programs in Rehabilitation Counseling. Both programs offer graduates the ability to work in the field of rehabilitation counseling and/or in mental health counseling.

II. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND

Drake University reported that during the 2021-2022 school year, there are 19 RSA students enrolled in the Masters Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling Program, with an additional 6 students participating in other counseling programs.

The University of Iowa reported that during the 2021-2022 school year, there are 11 students enrolled in the Masters Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling Program. In addition, there are 26 students enrolled in the Mental Health Program and 24 students enrolled in the School Counseling Program.

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.

During the 2020-2021 school year, Drake University shared that as of May 2021, 7 students have graduated with degrees in Counseling. Of these students, four graduated with degrees from the Rehabilitation Counseling Program and 3 graduated from the Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling Program.

During the 2020-2021 school year, the University of Iowa had 3 students graduate from their Rehabilitation Counseling Program. They also had 13 students graduate from the Mental Health Program and 12 students graduate from the School Counseling Program. Of these graduates, 2 achieved the status of Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC). In addition, 7 of the graduates from the Mental Health Counseling Program achieved the National Certified Counselor (NCC) and 12 students earned the Professional School Counselor state licensure.

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

The Department's plan for recruitment and training of qualified personnel is based on the highest standards in the state for VR counselors serving individuals who are blind or have low vision. The Department actively recruits persons who are blind or have a disability, and persons from minority backgrounds. Recruitment efforts include: employment announcements posted on Iowa's state employment opportunities web site; promotion of experienced and qualified personnel from within the agency, including personnel who are blind; and participation in internship opportunities for students of rehabilitation counseling and placement. The Department's plan for retention of qualified personnel includes ongoing training opportunities for all staff; provision and support of assistive technology for staff who are blind or have disabilities; encouragement and support for personnel desiring advanced degrees; and opportunities for advancement within the department. The Department does not discriminate in any way in its recruitment and hiring practices or in its administration and supervision practices against individuals who are from minority backgrounds or who have 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

In accordance with 34 CFR 361.18(c) of the Act, the Department for the Blind has defined and implemented personnel standards for vocational rehabilitation counselors based on state approved and recognized certification requirements promulgated under the Iowa Administrative Procedure Act.

The following standards for VR counselors are based on the highest entry-level degree needed under the existing state certification requirements codified in subrule 111-2.1, Iowa Administrative Code: 2.1(2) service specialist for the blind 2 and senior service specialist for the blind 1 (vocational rehabilitation counselor). Certification shall be required of all vocational rehabilitation counselors employed by the Department:

a. At the time of hire into the position, an individual holding at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and one year of work experience shall be granted provisional certification. Exceptions regarding education and experience can only be made by the Commission for the Blind upon the recommendation of the director. Provisional certification shall be recognized for a maximum period of 18 months.

b. An individual may obtain full certification as a vocational rehabilitation counselor by demonstrating competency in the following areas:

1. Knowledge, understanding, and implementation of the Department's positive philosophy of blindness.

2. Knowledge of the Department's programs.

3. Skills in career planning and development.

4. Knowledge of placement techniques and practices.

5. Knowledge of occupational information, job site evaluation, and job analysis.

6. Knowledge and development of alternative techniques of blindness.

7. Knowledge of rehabilitation technology services.

8. Knowledge of disability and related issues.

9. Advocacy.

10. Case management.

11. Adjustment to blindness counseling.

12. Assessment of consumer needs.

13. Public education and outreach.

14. Teamwork and problem solving.

c. An individual holding at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, who has been employed by the Department as a service specialist for the blind 2 or senior service specialist for the blind 1 (vocational rehabilitation counselor) for a minimum of six months on the date this rule is finalized, shall be considered to be a fully certified vocational rehabilitation counselor, as long as the individual maintains unbroken employment with the Department in that classification.

These standards, which are the highest in the state, ensure that the professional personnel needed within the Department to carry out the vocational rehabilitation program are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained. All of the professional staff at the Department meet, or are working toward meeting, these standards. To maintain standards, personnel must participate in ongoing training through the Department.

Plan to Retrain or Hire Personnel to Meet Standards:

Evaluation of recruitment practices is based on the Department's ability to hire and train qualified personnel. These practices will continue to be evaluated as additional hiring becomes necessary. Since all staff currently meet the highest standards within the state, no retraining program is in place.

As a general practice, the Department does not hire individuals who do not meet the established personnel standards for the services specialist for the blind 2 or senior service specialist for the blind 1 (vocational rehabilitation counselor) positions. In the event an individual is hired who does not meet the Department's personnel standards that individual would be expected to meet those standards within an established time period. The Department would devise a schedule by which the individual must report on progress and by which time period he or she must meet the standards. Failure to meet the standards within the established time period would result in termination or reassignment.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

Because providing quality services to blind Iowans is a priority of the Iowa Department for the Blind, provide a number of trainings to staff. IDB provides staff with additional education and training opportunities to ensure that they are able to work effectively with individuals who are blind and to assist them in their goals to achieve competitive integrated employment. All IDB staff participate in an immersion training through the Iowa Blindness Empowerment and Independence Center in which staff are able to learn alternative skills of blindness in addition to developing an awareness and confidence in the nonvisual skills and assistive technology available to clients. In addition to nonvisual skills training, staff participate in philosophy trainings to assist them in understanding the needs of individuals who are blind or have low vision. This training assists staff in understanding the functional limitations of clients who are blind, have low vision, are deaf-blind, in addition to clients who experience additional functional

limitations due to addition disabilities. These trainings assist counselors to understand the implications of the functional limitations on employment for clients we serve. IDB also participates in additional collaborations such as the Brain Injury Advisory Council, the Iowa Coalition for Integration and Employment, and the DeafBlind Advisory Team to further understand the functional limitations and vocational implications of the functional limitations on employment. In addition, all IDB staff participate in a new staff seminar and complete observations of staff in different work units to understand the roles and responsibilities of each unit. In addition, staff are expected to participate in continuing education requirements annually.

Counselors attend the Iowa Workforce Development business engagement meetings at least monthly to learn about employer needs in that specific territory. IDB began an apprenticeship pilot project with Iowa Workforce; IDB continues to receive updates regarding apprenticeship opportunities across the state. Additionally, counselors are able to attend the introduction to apprenticeship class offered at IWD for job seekers. Counselors have received ongoing training regarding where to find labor market information such as The Career Index Plus, Onet, and Future Ready Iowa. They have had the opportunity to try out various LMI platforms and identify which one works best for them when working with clients. Counselors maintain a professional relationship with their local partners such as IVRS and IWD which has resulted in learning about employer needs and labor market in their area as well. Two IDB staff are participating in the Innovative Guided Rehabilitation Employer Engagement Training to further knowledge related to employer engagement, including a better understanding of effective strategies to build and maintain relationships with employers.

IDB continues to be committed to providing staff with training opportunities to support the Department's mission and goals to assist clients with achieving successful competitive integrated employment. In order to continue to offer these opportunities and in effort to increase the knowledge and skills of our IDB staff, IDB has committed to partner with the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Employment. Through this partnership, counselors and other IDB staff and community rehabilitation partners will receive training and technical assistance for a variety of areas to include employer outreach, employer support, serving Veterans, work-based learning and on-the-job training, customized training, customized employment, self-employment and supported employment services. IDB will plan to begin this partnership in 2022.

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

A. A SYSTEM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS WITHIN THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO ASSESSMENT, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING, JOB PLACEMENT, AND REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING TRAINING IMPLEMENTED IN COORDINATION WITH ENTITIES CARRYING OUT STATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998; AND

The Department actively assesses the training needs of all employees. The employee performance evaluation document is used to review an employee's performance and to identify training needs. In addition to annual individual performance reviews, the Department surveys the staff annually to determine the training or resources they require to perform their duties more efficiently and effectively. Vocational rehabilitation employees have participated in the following training activities: Quarterly in-service training activities focus on improving knowledge and understanding of rehabilitation topics, development and demonstration of new skill levels and organizational change projects that enhance achievement of employment outcomes for blind individuals. Performance and Development Solutions (PDS) courses are

provided by the Iowa Department of Administrative Services / Human Resources Enterprise on a wide range of general topics and transferable job skills. In-house training in classroom settings and one-on-one training is made available to all employees depending upon the need. Retention of qualified personnel is addressed through CEU credit for staff training, as well as opportunities for expanding skills and knowledge in a variety of areas. Leadership development and capacity-building opportunities are offered through personnel development seminars available to staff including management certifications and continuous quality improvement certification courses. Some management employees have attended the National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute. Employees are encouraged to participate in professional organizations such as the National Rehabilitation Association and National Council of State Agencies for the Blind in leadership roles.

B. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS.

Employees acquire information about current research by participating in professional conferences, attending training on a variety of topics, and through professional publications, such as the Journal of Rehabilitation, the Journal of Visual Impairments and Blindness, and Institute on Rehabilitation Issues (IRI) publications. Employees are asked to submit reports on conference findings to the Department's training grant administrator and their supervisor. These reports include summaries of significant issues or findings, assessments of the conference's information to their work, and an evaluation of the value of conference to other staff. Further, employees who have attended conferences or training sessions provide updates on results of research or new information to others at the in-service meetings.

5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

The Department contracts with qualified interpreters for individuals who are not proficient in English or who use sign language. Employees are routinely counseled on how to locate qualified interpreters. Independent contracts are established as needed to obtain services from individuals who are able to communicate in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals. Contracts have included, but are not limited to the following languages: American Sign Language, including Tactile Signing for Deaf-Blind individuals, Spanish, Vietnamese, Burmese, Swahili and others according to the needs of applicants and eligible individuals. IDB, through the work of our vocational rehabilitation program administrator and the Iowa Client Assistance Program, has made available an orientation video for outreach purposes which is completed in American Sign Language.

The Department's Accessible Media Specialist and Instructional Materials Center staff provide individuals, educators, partners, employers and businesses with information and resources to meet accessibility needs through trainings and accessible materials. Training materials are provided in the eligible individual's preferred means of communication, including Braille, large print, or electronic formats. Braille is an integral part of the training that all of IDB's professional personnel receive.

6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

The Department pursues the following activities to coordinate the system of personnel development with personnel development activities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):

Maintains an interagency agreement with the Iowa Department of Education (DE) which defines the roles and responsibilities of both agencies regarding transition activities. Through this

agreement, the agencies provide technical assistance and training for staff providing services to students who are blind or have low vision.

The Iowa Department for the Blind (IDB), the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (IESBVI), and the Iowa Department of Education (DE) work collaboratively under the Statewide System for Vision Services. This system ensures collaboration in service delivery to children and youth who are blind or have low vision. Under this system, employees exchange information about their services and approaches in order to create effective working relationships. A standard referral procedure was developed as a result of this collaboration.

Area education agencies (AEAs) personnel and local school district personnel participate in developing individual education plans (IEPs) for students with disabilities and in providing the specialized services those students require. Itinerant teachers of the visually impaired (TVI) provide vision-related IEP services to those students who are blind or have low vision. The TVI must refer all students who are receiving vision-related services to one of two statewide vision system's regional directors prior to the development of the student's transition IEP or no later than age fourteen. Through this collaborative effort and referral system, the Department is able to effectively coordinate its services with IESBVI and the AEAs to provide seamless transition from school, where all services are provided by the educational agencies (AEAs and local school districts), to vocational rehabilitation. IDB's VR counselors participate in IEP meetings. Pre-Employment Transition Services are made available to potentially eligible students and eligible students with disabilities. IESBVI and IDB collaborate on a number of programs throughout the year to meet the needs of students who are blind or have low vision.

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;

The data collected in the most recent statewide needs assessment indicates that the rate of applicants for IDB services that were classified as having a visual impairment other than blindness decreased significantly from 2016 to 2018. Conversely, the rate of applicants classified as having blindness increased proportionately. The percent of all clients served by disability type remained relatively steady for each group from 2016 to 2018, with the rate of individuals with blindness constituting 75 percent or more of all clients each year. The number of plans developed, number of clients in training by type, and number of cases closed rehabilitated by type reflect a similar ratio of 25 percent for those with visual impairments to 75 percent for those with blindness. The average length of time for an open case that was closed either successfully or unsuccessfully was twice or three times as long for an individual with blindness as opposed to an individual with a visual impairment.

There are a number of individuals, especially among youth, that are on the Autism spectrum, and need supported employment services. IDB is serving an increasing number of individuals with mental health impairments and other disabilities in addition to blindness and low vision. This change in the demographic of the typical IDB client results in several needs that were identified numerous times during this assessment. These include: improved coordination with mental health service providers; increased capacity of IDB counselors to effectively serve individuals with multiple disabilities; an increase need for training of IDB staff; a need for more community resources to serve individuals with mental health impairments, especially those in crisis; the development of service providers that are able to effectively serve individuals with multiple disabilities; and the need to develop customized employment as a service option for IDB clients. Multiple participants in the recent needs assessment indicated that there is a very

long waiting list for Medicaid waiver services in Iowa, as long as 800 days, which significantly impacts the ability of IDB and the IVRS to identify an extended services provider for individuals that need supported employment services.

IDB has identified that over the last two years, there has been a decrease in the number of providers able to provide employment related services. In addition, there are a number of community rehabilitation providers who are experiencing turnover of job placement specialists and job coaches. Also identified is a need for community rehabilitation providers to better understand the needs of individuals who are blind or have low vision. In addition, IDB has identified a need for community rehabilitation providers to understand assistive technology, nonvisual skills and transportation options for individuals who are blind or have low vision, including individuals who have additional disabilities.

IDB also identified that virtual services were a need as a result of COVID-19. IDB staff determined methods and developed programs to be provided virtually or over the phone to clients who were not able to meet in person, including individuals with the most significant needs. IDB will continue to develop virtual and remote solutions in providing individuals with services.

IDB has continued to recognize the need for disability related skills in the area of nonvisual techniques and assistive technology and the need for self-advocacy skills for individuals with the most significant disabilities. IDB has been able to partner with community providers to ensure that these providers are also provided training to support clients in residential and employment settings. Additional training to our community partners continues to be a need for IDB's clients.

Transportation has also continued to be a need for Iowans who are blind or have low vision and have the most significant disabilities. There are many parts of the State where transportation options are limited, and this limits the opportunities for individuals with blindness and low vision.

IDB is partnering with the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University to complete its triennial comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA). IDB will complete the CSNA in 2022. In addition, IDB will be partnering with the VR Technical Assistance Center - Quality Employment to provide training to both IDB staff and community partners in efforts to address the needs identified above, in addition to join trainings in the areas of customized training, customized employment and supported employment services to IDB clients.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

During the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment, the rehabilitation needs of individuals with blindness and low vision that are minorities did not differ from the needs of other individuals with blindness and low vision with the exception of language interpreter needs. There were participants in the most recent needs assessment who indicated that it may be difficult to find culturally competent staff to serve individuals who are blind or have low vision in Iowa. The Department is reviewing its processes and materials to more effectively reach persons with diverse backgrounds who might be eligible for services. The efforts to date have been focused on increasing outcomes to all Iowans who are blind or have vision loss. These efforts will continue, along with a continued review of barriers that inhibit participation in services.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

Individuals that are Deaf-Blind were identified as potentially underserved by IDB. Although there were no specific racial or ethnic groups identified as underserved by IDB in the most recent needs assessment, there were participants that indicated any race where English is a second language may have difficulty finding culturally competent staff at IDB. The very rural

areas of Iowa were identified as potentially underserved by IDB primarily due to the lack of transportation, which restricts access to IDB offices, and makes travel times lengthy and time consuming for Rehabilitation.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

The most recent statewide needs assessment identified several themes related to the services of individuals who are blind or have low vision being served through other components of the statewide workforce development system. Currently, the Iowa*WORKS* Centers are not seen as effectively meeting the service needs of individuals with blindness and low vision throughout the State. The relationship between IDB and the Iowa*WORKS* Centers remains primarily one of referral. IDB and other core partners need to develop a method to effectively track and report co-enrollment of IDB and other core partner clients. One area of concern that continues to be identified is that Iowa*WORKS* needs to improve programmatic accessibility across the state.

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

The relationship and communication between IESBVI and IDB is critical in the transition process for students and youth with blindness and low vision. The five required pre-employment transition services represent significant needs of students with blindness and low vision in Iowa. Work experience and soft skill development have been identified as the most important services that prepare students for the world of work, but all of the five required services are important and meaningful. Many of the students and youth served by IDB are individuals with multiple disabilities in addition to blindness or low vision. Consequently, there is a need to ensure that staff and service providers are trained and capable of addressing the multiple needs presented by these youth as they prepare for postsecondary education and/or employment. There is a need to develop high expectations for students and youth with blindness and low vision in Iowa. Transportation to and from school, work experiences, and full-time work is a significant barrier to employment for youth with blindness and low vision, especially in the rural areas. Because of the number of youth that are being served by IDB with multiple and complex disabilities, there is a need to enhance the development of supported employment, including the development of customized employment as a service option for youth.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

During IDB's previous needs assessment, it was identified that there is a need to develop and improve the services provided by Iowa's supported employment providers. IDB has recognized that clients need to have providers that are experienced in working with individuals with blindness and low vision. Interview and survey participants in the most recent needs assessment indicated that there is a need for more providers in the rural areas of Iowa. Needs assessment interview participants also indicated that there is a need for more employment services providers in the State. IDB partners with a wide range of community partners statewide to develop and improve services provided by community rehabilitation partners. Department staff work with community rehabilitation providers and independent living centers to coordinate services and meet the needs of Iowans who are blind and have low vision, including those who have multiple disabilities.

IDB is partnering with the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University to complete its triennial comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA). IDB will complete the CSNA in 2022. In addition, IDB will be partnering with the VR Technical Assistance Center - Quality Employment to provide training to both IDB staff and community partners in efforts to address

the training needs of Iowa's community rehabilitation providers. As a part of this training, both IDB staff and community rehabilitation providers will participate in joint trainings in the areas of customized training, customized employment and supported employment services.

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

The statewide needs assessment identified the need to improve the skills of students and youth who are blind and have low vision. These services include the following: job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary educational programs at institutions of higher education, workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living and instruction in self-advocacy, which may include peer mentoring. Each of the pre-employment transition services was noted as a need for students who are blind or have low vision, with work-based learning experiences being most frequently mentioned and considered the most valuable in terms of preparing youth for employment. Soft skill development and self-advocacy were the two other pre-employment transition services noted as a need by both IDB staff and partners in Iowa.

Through IDB, students are able to participate in trainings and to have opportunities that will allow them to more fully participate in the career development process and to develop meaningful employment plans. IDB offers opportunities and resources in assistive technology, career exploration, work-based learning experiences, attitude and adjustment to blindness training, and access to peer mentoring to assist students to develop the skills, positive attitude and confidence they need to move successfully into post-secondary environments.

Several of the IDB transition programs are designed to support the student's IEP with regard to the Expanded Core Curriculum. For example, a summer program for transition clients focuses on career exploration and development by having participants talk with a Human Resources supervisor, tour different businesses, and learn job-seeking skills, such as appropriate appearance for the workplace. A program on college preparation will have clients residing on a college campus and learning how to hire drivers and readers, work with the registrar's office and disability services, order books in alternative media, and more. Students who are blind or low vision also have the opportunity to participate in specialized IDB programs for children and youth. IDB collaborates with educators to develop programs based on the needs of clients.

IDB offers a variety of assistive technology services to transition age youth and educators of transition age youth. IDB technology specialists provide technology assessments and one-on-one assistive technology training to transition age youth at school or at home. IDB staff attend IEP meetings at the request of the team and consult with special education teachers to help them come up with solutions to classroom access barriers.

The Iowa Department for the Blind LEAP Program is dedicated to providing meaningful and high-quality vocational rehabilitation services to blind and low vision transition-age youth from across the state. The Program provides many opportunities for blind and low vision Iowa youth to develop the confidence and skills necessary for seamless transitions to life after high school. The focus of LEAP is to motivate and assist students in high school to: learn skills for independence and workplace readiness; explore careers and educational opportunities; learn to advocate and take charge of their future, and; prepare for the future through work-based learning experiences in integrated settings. The expected outcome of all IDB sponsored programs is employment in integrated competitive employment. The pre-employment transition services were the basis for the development of the IDB LEAP concept.

The Summer LEAP Academy is a multi-week residential program that provides training to blind and low vision high school students with regard to independent living skills and specific non-visual techniques in the areas of technology, cane travel, Braille and other communication, home management and industrial arts. There is a focus on self–advocacy and other life skills as well as job readiness and career-related topics. In addition to the classes, students participate in fun and challenging activities to develop positive attitudes about blindness and vision loss and equip them with the confidence to believe in themselves and their abilities.

IDB LEAP Weekend Retreats (Friday evenings through Sunday afternoons) are offered during the school year. Blind and low vision high school students from across Iowa participate in the theme-based retreats and work on building disability-related skills as well as skills in areas such as job readiness, job interviewing, communication, orientation and mobility, technology, team-work, time-management, social behavior, advocacy, peer interaction, problem solving, etc. The retreats also provide a means for students to step out of their comfort zones to increase confidence and positive attitudes about blindness.

The Braille Challenge is an annual event sponsored by the IDB and IESBVI, provides opportunities for students in grades 1 to 12 to test their Braille skills in reading, writing, spelling and comprehension. Top finishers in the various age brackets advance to other competitions. The Challenge brings students and families together from across the state of Iowa where new connections and friends are made every year. The competition inspires many blind and low vision students to work to improve their Braille skills. Program staff take this opportunity to provide outreach and training to parents, students, and support systems about the importance of students developing workplace readiness, self–advocacy and blindness skills.

The importance of pre-employment transition services brought forth an opportunity for IDB to develop the Youth Employment Services Team. This is a cross-agency group of individuals that focuses on the provision of pre-employment transition services and the development and implementation of related programs. IDB ensures the statewide provision of services in the five required activities. To ensure that students are able to fully access all of the pre-employment transition services, IDB will purchase and provide interpreters, readers, and appropriate accommodations and auxiliary aids so students have the supports they need to access the pre-employment transition services.

Participants in the statewide needs assessment indicate that transition career services and pre-employment transition services are not sufficiently coordinated with school IEPs and students who are blind or have low vision are not prepared to transition to adult services. Several participants indicated that there is a need to develop high expectations for students and youth with blindness and low vision in Iowa. Several participants in the assessment reported that there are low expectations about the future school and work possibilities for young people transitioning from secondary school, and that families, school staff and service providers need to encourage these young people to focus on achievement. Related to the need to develop high expectations for youth is the impact of the receipt of SSI on the pursuit of work at the self-sufficiency level. Multiple participants across all groups indicated that youth that are receiving SSI are only interested in pursuing employment at a level that ensures they are able to keep their SSI benefits, especially their medical benefits.

Participants also identified that youth that are transitioning to postsecondary education need to receive further training in the use of assistive technology prior to beginning college or vocational training so that they do not fall behind at the beginning of their programs. While the provision of assistive technology was not cited as a challenge, the training in the use of the technology was a recurring rehabilitation need.

Several partner participants indicated that there is a growing substance abuse problem with Iowa's youth, which adversely affects the ability of young people to prepare for and enter employment. According to the Iowa Department of Public Health, the number of deaths related

to opioid overdose has more than tripled since 2005, and the number of individuals treated for opioid dependency has almost quadrupled in that same time frame. While these statistics do not refer solely to youth, the participants in this study indicated that it is common for them to work with youth that have a history of substance abuse.

The State of Iowa has established a robust continuum of services for children and youth with blindness and visual impairments that includes services provided by the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (IESBVI), formerly known as the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School. The relationship and communication between IESBVI and IDB is considered critical in the transition process for students and youth with blindness and low vision. IESBVI and IDB at times have different approaches to teaching and training youth to utilize assistive technology and to live and function independently. Frequent and regular communication between the staff of both organizations is recognized as a need to having a positive working relationship is cultivated. IESBVI and IDB have established quarterly coordination meetings in the different areas of the State to help improve communication.

Transportation to and from school, work experiences, and full-time work is a significant barrier to employment for youth with blindness and low vision. This is especially true in the rural areas. The availability of ride-sharing services like Uber and Lyft have helped, but there is still a need to develop public transportation options in many parts of the State.

IDB provides pre-employment transition services directly and through contracted service providers. They rely heavily on summer youth programs for workplace readiness skills and work-based experiences. Many of the students and youth served by IDB are individuals with multiple disabilities in addition to blindness or low vision. Consequently, there is a need to ensure that staff and service providers are trained and capable of addressing the multiple needs presented by these youth as they prepare for postsecondary education and/or employment. Because of the number of youth that are being served by IDB with multiple and complex disabilities, there is a need to enhance the development of supported employment, including the development of customized employment as a service option for youth. IDB needs to develop their internal capacity and the capacity of their service provider network to deliver CE.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES

In reviewing past data and current trends, IDB projects the number of individuals in Iowa who will receive services to be 525 annually in both FFY 2022 and FFY 2023.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

Using current projections, IDB plans to serve approximately 525 clients in both FFY 2022 and FFY 2023.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

The number of individuals that IDB estimates will be eligible for supported employment services is approximately 125 individuals annually in FFY 2022 and FFY 2023. This projection is a subset of all VR clients estimated to be eligible for services identified in k.2.A.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION.

Not applicable, IDB is not 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

Not applicable, IDB is not under an order of selection.

4. THE COST OF SERVICES FOR THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ESTIMATED TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES. IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION, IDENTIFY THE COST OF SERVICES FOR EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY.

In FFY 2022, IDB estimates the cost of services for the number of individuals eligible for services is $4,583,708 or $8,731 per individual. In FFY 2023 IDB projects that the cost of services for the number of individuals eligible for services will be $4,812,893 or $9,167 per individual. IDB is not under an order of selection. The costs of services are based on the prior year's actual expenditures.

L. STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

1. IDENTIFY IF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES WERE JOINTLY DEVELOPED AND AGREED TO BY THE STATE VR AGENCY AND THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, IF THE STATE HAS A COUNCIL, AND JOINTLY AGREED TO ANY REVISIONS

Through participation in workgroups related to the development of the Unified State Plan, the Iowa Department for the Blind has collaborated with other core partners to jointly develop the State's vision and goals. Iowa's Unified State Plan Vision is that Iowa's workforce delivery system partners will collaborate to build a Future Ready Iowa. The system will provide the training and education needed to develop a pipeline of skilled workers who are prepared to meet the workforce needs of Iowa's current and emerging industries. Iowa employers will have access to the skilled workforce needed to prosper in today's global economy. This vision was jointly developed by Iowa's WIOA core partner and approved by the State Workforce Board.

The goals developed by Iowa's core partners and approved by the State Workforce Board are as follows:

Goal I - Iowa's employers will have access to skilled, diverse and Future Ready workers.

Goal II - All Iowans will be provided access to a continuum of high quality education, training, and career opportunities.

Goal III - Iowa's workforce delivery system will align all programs and services in an accessible, seamless and integrated manner.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

The Iowa Department for the Blind (IDB) is an independent consumer-controlled commission; there is no State Rehabilitation Council. A Board of Commissioners governs IDB and works together with the agency Director to develop and agree to annual goals and priorities. The mission of IDB is to empower blind Iowans to be gainfully employed and live independently. The Department recognizes the need to improve services to Iowans who are blind and have low vision across all agencies and organizations in the state. The responsibility of the Department's vocational rehabilitation program is to assist individuals who are blind or have low vision, including those with the most significant disabilities, to achieve high quality, competitive integrated employment.

The Department's primary priority is to assist Iowans who are blind and have low vision, including those who also have multiple disabilities to achieve the goals outlined in their individualized plans for employment, including supported employment. The Department will continue to work with Iowa's workforce system to increase the employment of such individuals in the competitive labor market through participation in job-driven training and provision of necessary supports. A second priority is a continued focus on increasing services to students with disabilities, including students who are eligible and potentially eligible for vocational

rehabilitation services. The Department's third priority is to improve the quality assurance program as we integrate a new case management system.

3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

The Iowa Department for the Blind's goals and priorities are based on factors identified through an analysis of the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment, ongoing monthly forums, community conversations and staff and stakeholder input.

B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

The Iowa Department for the Blind's performance will be based on the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA as those are negotiated and determined.

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.

IDB's goals are based on information gathered through the comprehensive statewide needs assessment, results of federal and state reports, and stakeholder input. The operation and effectiveness of the Department's vocational rehabilitation program is reviewed by the Department's Commission for the Blind on a quarterly basis.

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

At present, the Iowa Department for the Blind is not implementing an Order of Selection. Policy and procedures continue to be reviewed should it ever be imminent.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

Not applicable.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS

Not applicable.

D. TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER; AND

Not applicable.

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Not applicable, the IDB is not 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

Not applicable, the IDB is not under an order of selection.

N. GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS

1. SPECIFY THE STATE'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The Department's supported employment goal is that all blind and low vision Iowans who require supported employment services after placement in competitive integrated employment receive them. The funds received under section 603 are intended to be used solely for supported employment services, including extended services for youth. Supported employment title VI funds are used after job placement in supported employment. Prior to job placement, Title I funds are used to provide VR services on an IPE to support the goal of supported employment. Funds will be distributed according to the needs of eligible individuals for whom supported employment services are deemed to be appropriate.

Supported employment services will be purchased on an individual basis and customized for each individual's situation. When supported employment service funding requirements exceed the funds allocated for them under title VI, part B, funds from title I will be used to supplement the costs of supported employment services that are listed on an individual's supported employment individualized plan for employment (IPE). A lack of title VI, part B funds will not restrict or prohibit the inclusion of supported employment services on an IPE or the purchase or delivery of such services when they are needed.

The Department continues to develop relationships with community rehabilitation providers and educational partners to obtain referrals for career exploration and vocational rehabilitation services to individuals. The Department promotes competitive and integrated employment for individuals receiving supported employment services. The Department allows for the provision of extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities for up to 4 years after transitioning from supported employment services, which may be provided for up to 24 months, or longer, if needed, after an individual with a most significant disability has been placed in employment. Customized Employment has been added as a vocational rehabilitation service option.

As part of the State Plan, IDB completed the mandatory Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) to determine the current needs of Iowans with disabilities, as well as assess the services provided by Community Rehabilitation Programs. The Department has found that Community Rehabilitation programs are often unaware of the alternative techniques a person who is blind may use in accomplishing a job task. This lack of information and training can lead to a lack of appropriate placements in competitive and integrated employment.

During the timeframe that this state plan covers, the Department will monitor the number of individuals receiving supported employment services, taking into consideration the WIOA requirements to expend 50 percent of the total grant on youth with most significant disabilities. The Department is also exploring Customized Employment and work based learning opportunities. The Department will partner with Community Rehabilitation Organizations to generate referrals for individuals who can benefit from competitive integrated employment in their communities. The Department will also provide training and resources to community rehabilitation programs to assist them in meeting and understanding the needs and capabilities of individuals who are blind and have low vision.

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 Department allows for the provision of extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities for up to 4 years after transitioning from supported employment services, which may be provided for up to 24 months, or longer, if needed, after an individual with a most significant disability has been placed in employment.

During the timeframe that this state plan covers, the Department will monitor the number of individuals receiving supported employment services, taking into consideration the WIOA requirements to expend 50 percent of the total grant on youth with most significant disabilities.

The Department plans to provide additional training to IDB staff and community rehabilitation providers beginning in 2022. The focus of these trainings will focus on customized training, customized employment and work-based learning opportunities. In addition, IDB has developed a position focused providing technical assistance and monitoring services provided by IDB staff and community rehabilitation providers. This position will also work with providers in providing trainings to better meet the needs and capabilities of individuals who are blind and have low vision.

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.

When supported employment service funding requirements exceed the funds allocated for them under title VI, part B, funds from title I will be used to supplement the costs of supported employment services that are listed on an individual's supported employment individualized plan for employment (IPE). A lack of title VI, part B funds will not restrict or prohibit the inclusion of supported employment services on an IPE or the purchase or delivery of such services when they are needed.

In efforts to increase resources for extended services and expand supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities, the Department has coordinated with other stakeholders, including the Department of Human Services Medicaid Waiver program. We will continue to collaborate and work with partners to ensure these youth who are blind are receiving the services they need to be successful. IDB has had success in partnering with the individual and other stakeholders through use of Integrated Resource Teams and will continue using this strategy. Through these collaborations, we have been able to leverage funds and increase resources for the individual to have additional opportunities and supports.

IDB is focused on services being provided in the community, in integrated and competitive environments. The Department for the Blind participates in activities with other Partner agencies to cooperate as well as involve community partners, families and education in implementing an Employment First approach. The Department has also worked with Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services to develop an agreement to identify collaborative efforts and to reduce duplication of services. By working together, the Department and IVRS ensure that CRPs receive consistent information and direction from the VR agencies in Iowa.

In addition to collaborating to leverage funds, the Department believes in the importance of providing training to stakeholders, including providers of extended services. IDB provides training on a variety of topics including services, assistive technology, nonvisual techniques, and accommodations. Through these trainings and collaborations, IDB will continue to work to increase opportunities and expectations for youth with the most significant disabilities so that they are able to work successfully in competitive and integrated employment settings.

O. STATE'S STRATEGIES

1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The Iowa Department for the Blind works to increase the number and percentage of clients achieving competitive integrated employment outcomes; build awareness of IDB services; and to improve the quality assurance system. IDB uses strategies identified in the sections above and in WIOA to achieve these goals and priorities and to overcome barriers to accessing IDB's vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs. IDB maintains one state office and uses telework methods, allowing counseling staff to work in regions across the state. Vocational Rehabilitation staff work in teams and travel their assigned regions to meet with referrals and clients, to educate the general public, including employers, and to reach out to individuals who may need our services.

Goal I - Iowa's employers will have access to skilled, diverse and Future Ready workers. IDB works to increase Iowa's employers awareness of IDB's services and the pool of advanced, skilled and future ready workers of which the department can provide access.

Strategies to address Goal I: The Department will collaborate with core partner programs and local workforce development boards to provide and gather information from local employers by developing effective relationships between the local workforce system and sector partnerships as a means to engage directly with industry across traditional barriers. IDB counselors, employment specialist, rehabilitation technology specialists and other staff will provide training, information and resources to Iowa's employers, educators and partners. The Department will continue to work to create a workforce with the attitudes, learning habits, problem-solving skills needed for upward mobility within industries. The Department will collaborate with sector partnerships and Iowa employers to enhance work-based learning opportunities for all Iowans, including those who are blind or have vision loss.

Goal II - All Iowans will be provided access to a continuum of high quality education, training, and career opportunities. The Department will work to ensure all Iowans, including those who are blind or have low vision will be provided with access to a continuum of high quality education, training, and career opportunities.

Strategies to address Goal II: IDB will work with core partners to develop and promote accessible career pathways to all Iowans. IDB clients will receive the vocational rehabilitation services they need to obtain, maintain, and advance in employment. IDB will actively engage the community to increase awareness of the mission, vision, and services available to Iowans who are blind or have low vision and how to access them. IDB will outreach to potentially eligible students and their support systems to enhance awareness of, and the opportunities to receive IDB services. IDB will work with all eligible individuals to have well-developed and supported individualized plans for employment that provide them with the education and training plans needed to achieve their career goal. IDB will advocate that all eligible or potentially eligible youth will have well-developed individualized education plans that align with their career goals. IDB will also assist all youth who are blind or have vision loss in their career path navigation by offering a variety of options supporting the transition from school to work. IDB will engage Iowa's students and youth who are blind and have low vision in the career path development process using creative, progressive, and self-directed techniques in the delivery of career services. All individuals who are successfully closed employed will have found employment that aligns with their knowledge, skills, and abilities, and places them on their desired career pathway. IDB will ensure IPE goals reflect the clients' knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests and the activities they engage in will align with career pathway. IDB will promote participation in career pathways to meet business sector and consumer employment needs. IDB will collaborate with other agencies to develop relationships with employers to increase opportunities for individuals to become employed in integrated and competitive environments.

Goal III - Iowa's workforce delivery system will align all programs and services in an accessible, seamless and integrated manner. The Iowa Department for the Blind will collaborate with Iowa's workforce delivery system to identify and reduce barriers to accessible, seamless and integrated services for individuals who are blind or have low vision.

Strategies to address Goal III: IDB will collect ongoing satisfaction data from counselors and clients on access to and participation in Iowa's workforce delivery system. IDB will work in partnership with other agencies to develop relationships with employers to increase opportunities for individuals to become employed in integrated and competitive environments. IDB will build mutually beneficial partnerships with entities in the community that provide or could provide services to Iowans who are blind or have low vision. IDB will conduct outreach to community rehabilitation providers and provide them with trainings to assist them in the provision of services to individuals who are blind or have low vision. IDB will continue to use an integrated resource team (IRT) approach in meeting the needs of clients. Strategies associated with this goal will be measured through the number of co-enrollments and the percentage of growth in the number of participants utilizing an Integrated Resource Team (IRT). IDB will also work with core partners to align workforce programs and initiatives to improve service delivery and outcomes for all Iowans. We will work to blend and braid resources to the extent possible to maximize benefits for Iowans who are blind and have vision loss. We will work to ensure seamless access to programs and services of the workforce delivery system to all Iowans. IDB will continue to provide technical assistance and training to partners, programs, communities and employers to ensure clients have access to services they need to reach their employment and life goals. IDB will work with core partners on the continuous improvement of the system to ensure no programmatic or physical barriers exist to accessing programs and services. IDB will continue to participate in the state and local Disability Access Committees work in improving physical, technology and program accessibility for Iowans.

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 Department for the Blind provides assistive technology services and assistive technology devices to its clients as the needs are identified through each stage of the rehabilitation process. Through provision of services outlined in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), IDB provides intensive training to individuals in the area of assistive technology including the use of screen magnification, screen-reading software, audio software and devices so that individuals who experience blindness or low vision can quickly be prepared to be able to participate in experiences and gain skills and credentials needed to obtain and maintain self-sustaining employment. IDB will work with core partners to pilot an Assistive Technology Lab in a local workforce office to provide access to assistive technology to individuals accessing workforce programs and to provide training on assistive technology to individuals in their home communities. IDB will continue to work with state agencies including Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the Department of Education and Iowa*WORKS* to provide consultation and access to assistive technology and trainings to Iowans who are blind and have vision loss to be able to access their services and employment.

IDB Rehabilitation Technology Specialists work collaboratively with clients, training providers, partner agencies, and employers to identify and implement any technology needed for the individual to be able to participate in experiences or gain skills or credentials necessary to obtain and maintain self-sustaining employment. IDB is working to increase the number of technology trainers to ensure that the agency can respond statewide in a timely manner to critical assistive technology skill development needs to enable clients to be job-ready. The IDB Accessibility Media Specialist, through the Department's Assistive Technology Lab, will provide resources, trainings and opportunities for hands on learning of assistive technology.

The Iowa Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped's College and Career Commons will provide technology, equipment and software to assist individuals as they prepare for employment and to gain and maintain skills and credentials they need for employment. The S.O.A.R. (Success, Opportunities, Aspirations and Reading) Programs will continue to provide opportunities for parents and students to receive assistive technology training and information. The Library's creation of a Youth Library space will give individuals and families the opportunity for hands-on experience with assistive technology and resources within the space.

The Easter Seals Iowa Assistive Technology Center receives funding through a grant from the Iowa Program for Assistive Technology, based out of the University of Iowa. This program has provided information, referral, and assistive technology for Iowans with disabilities, including Iowan's who are blind or visually impaired. IDB will continue to refer individuals to the IPAT program and to the Easter Seals Iowa Assistive Technology Center when services needed are outside of the scope of services IDB can provide. IDB will continue to partner with Easter Seals Iowa Assistive Technology Center to provide devices for individuals, including students, with disabilities to try when participating in IDB programs.

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

Self-referral is the most commonly recorded referral source. Many applicants have heard about the Department through community organizations and family or friends who have attended a presentation or previously received services. Outreach activities include traditional approaches such as open house events, community based trainings, print and radio interviews, distribution of informational materials, tours of the Department, and presentations to employers, community services organizations, schools, self-help groups, and more. In addition to these traditional outreach approaches, the Department utilizes social media such as its web site, blogs, Twitter, and Facebook to promote its services and philosophy of blindness, maintain contact with constituents in the field, and communicate with community partners. With the addition of a dedicated intake specialist to the IDB team, all referrals are processed efficiently through a common gateway back to the Department.

In addition to direct contact with the public, we utilize other providers throughout the state to assist us in promoting the Department. Through its involvement with statewide Workforce System partnerships, the Department has established a network of referral sources to tap into populations who may not be directly contacted by the Department or may not initially believe or realize the Department is a resource for them.

The Easter Seals Iowa Assistive Technology Center receives funding through a grant from the Iowa Program for Assistive Technology, based out of the University of Iowa. This program also has provided information, referral, and assistive technology for Iowans with disabilities, including Iowan's who are blind or have low vision. IDB will continue to refer individuals to the IPAT program and to the Easter Seals Iowa Assistive Technology Center when services needed are outside of the scope of services IDB can provide. IDB will also continue to partner with Easter Seals Iowa Assistive Technology Center to provide devices for individuals, including students, with disabilities to try when participating in IDB programs. IDB will continue to partner with these programs to provide assistive technology services to clients.

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)

The Iowa Department for the Blind continues to work with school districts and the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (IESBVI) to increase and expand services for students. The Department is working with the IESBVI to increase referrals of students at the age of 14. Ninety days prior to the transition IEP (no later than age 14) students are informed about Vocational Rehabilitation services available through the IDB by an IESBVI representative. Releases to share information are also gathered. The Department receives the referral and begins attempting to contact the family and student to assist them in the application process. The emphasis to serve youth and students with disabilities increases the need to collaborate with community rehabilitation providers in the provision of pre-employment transition services in order to increase the competitive integrated employment outcomes. Ongoing collaboration and communication amongst IDB, IESBVI, local educators, parents, and students are important to the overall transition efforts in Iowa. IDB staff and program administrators will continue a process of training educators and service providers about the services the Department provides to students who are blind or have low vision. One area of need often identified with students is a lack of understanding and ability to use assistive technologies. In effort to meet this need, the IDB offers a wide range and expanding menu of assistive technology services to transition age youth and educators of transition age youth. IDB technology specialists provide technology assessments and one-on-one assistive technology training to transition age youth at school or at home. IDB staff attend IEP meetings and consult with special education teachers to help them come up with solutions to classroom access barriers.

IDB and IESBVI are working together to provide information and training to K-12 students and their families at annual Spring Vision Conferences. In addition, each entity is providing the other with training. The Department continues to work to build relationships within communities across the state in efforts to connect students in high school with VR services. IDB counseling staff works with Regional Workforce Investment Boards and Transition Advisory Committees to inform them of the program and to develop work experience and career exploration opportunities for the transition students in integrated settings. IDB has developed several programs to expand the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services, including pre-employment transition services, to students who are blind or have low vision. Over the next four years, IDB will explore ways to build a 4+ program to serve Iowa's secondary students. Through provision of pre-employment transition services and other services, this program will work with local school districts to assist students with disabilities to develop skills needed for post-secondary environments.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE

The Department utilizes CRPs throughout Iowa when necessary for job coaching, assessments, training, or placement in supported employment. As the Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment demonstrated, a small percentage of the Department's clients access services from the CRPs. Our small pool of clients makes it difficult to build models of on-going collaboration. Developing individualized services with the CRP as the need arises is the approach the Department has found works best for the client and the CRPs. Also, because few CRP personnel have extensive experience in working with blind individuals, the Department works closely with CRP staff as necessary to ensure the client receives training and other services that appropriately addresses any additional impairment the client may have as well as the client's blindness or vision loss.

The IDB participates as a core member of the Iowa Coalition for Integration and Employment whose activities are designed to enhance employment services for Iowans with disabilities, including Iowans who are blind and have low vision. This partnership engages in systems-change initiatives that impact the coordination of employment services to Iowans with disabilities. IDB participates in these efforts to ensure that the employment of individuals who

are blind or visually impaired, including those individuals who have the most significant disabilities have the opportunity to work in integrated, community-based, competitive employment settings.

IDB recognizes that we must assist CRPs in the state to increase their knowledge and skills in the provision of services to individuals who are blind and have low vision. IDB will build mutually beneficial partnerships with entities in the community that provide or could provide services to Iowans who are blind or have low vision. We will conduct outreach to community rehabilitation providers throughout the state of Iowa. IDB staff will provide trainings to community rehabilitation providers in the provision of services to individuals who are blind or have low vision.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

The Department for the Blind has worked with core partners to develop an integrated data collection system across partner programs. At this time, current reporting and data collection processes are time consuming for both field staff and data analysts. IDB has made efforts to streamline data collection for counselors and other field staff to allow them more time to work with their clients and partners. IDB is planning to post a request for proposals for the development of a new case management system to allow for better tracking of requirements under WIOA. IDB is also exploring partnerships with other partner programs in the collection of common data elements. IDB is collaborating with Iowa Workforce Development and other core partners to have access to the IowaWORKS data management system. Once this is completed, our business engagement activities across core partners will be captured in a single case management system, improving the coordination of services and reporting of employer data. We are also working with partners to track referrals within the same system so that individuals are able to receive the services they need to be successful. In using such a system, we will be able to improves our ability to track co-enrollment and increase the effectiveness of integrated resource teams. Core partners will assess policies, both joint and individual, that can align to performance outcomes. They will assess programs for duplication and work to align those programs across the partners for a more streamlined integrated approach. Partners will also inventory resources to look for cohesive ways in balancing those resources across the system to better impact outcomes for customers.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Various strategies enable IDB to assist other components of the statewide workforce development system to assist individuals with disabilities, including those who are blind or have low vision to access services and expand opportunities to those who are, or who may become, eligible for services of the Vocational Rehabilitation or the Supported Employment program. The Iowa Department for the Blind continues to participate with the state's One-Stop System partners on the strategic planning for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, including developing strategies to improve access to individuals participating in programs and trainings through Iowa*WORKS* offices and partner agencies. The Department collaborates with other community agencies to ensure that their programs are accessible to clients who are blind or have low vision. IDB collaborates with Iowa's workforce delivery system partners to identify and reduce barriers to accessible, seamless and integrated services for individuals who are blind or have low vision. IDB collaborates with WIOA partners to ensure Iowa's employers have ready access to advanced, skilled, diverse, and future ready workers. IDB works to build intra-agency collaboration that strengthens the agency's ability aid employers in the ability to provide accommodations and supports. IDB partners with other agencies to develop relationships with employers to increase opportunities for individuals to become employed in integrated and competitive environments. The Iowa Department for the Blind collaborates with Iowa's workforce delivery system to identify and reduce barriers to accessible, seamless and

integrated services for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Community Based Trainings for clients will continue as they have been effective in expanding and improving efforts to provide blindness skills, job readiness skills and job search assistance to clients. These trainings have also allowed for the delivery of pre-employment services clients require to be ready for employment and have supplemented the work done on an individual basis with rehabilitation counselors, teachers, and rehabilitation technology specialists. The Department's website and social media is updated and provides information to the public about available services and resources available to clients, partners, employers and other stakeholders.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

In 2019, IDB completed its formal comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA). In to the CSNA, IDB holds monthly Director's forums with the public by telephone and electronic avenues to allow for consumer input regarding the services and plans for services to be provided to meet the needs of clients. The Department has also held community conversation to gather input from stakeholders about the Departments goals and plans for providing services to Iowans who are blind and have vision loss. The Department's Commission for the Blind holds public meetings on a quarterly basis in which clients and other stakeholders are encouraged to provide comments and suggestions about IDB programs and services. Clients and stakeholders are provided with information related to the IDB State Plan through a variety of methods including posting it to our website, sharing it through social media, and providing copies in formats accessible to the individual. The information gathered through our needs assessment, public forums and methods for collecting public input provided consistent information and have allowed IDB to develop the strategies listed in previous sections to achieve the goals and priorities of the Department for the Blind.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

The Department will utilize the following strategies in the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve VR services Iowans who are blind or have low vision under the State Plan and for the support of the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). The purpose of the SILC is to strengthen the voice of Iowans with disabilities on issues affecting their lives, to build a statewide network of centers for independent living, and to collaborate with our partners in advancing the independence, productivity, and full inclusion of Iowans with disabilities. The Iowa Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) is an independent nonprofit corporation whose Council Members are appointed by the Governor, and a majority of whom are persons with disabilities. Under the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the SILC has the responsibility to plan for the coordination and expansion of independent living services in Iowa, and to promote the development of a statewide network of Centers for Independent Living (CILs). Centers for Independent Living and the Department work in collaboration in many ways. Collaborate in many ways to include heading up system change; that is help to organize people with disabilities to demand their civil rights, and fight against discrimination. Many of the freedoms and physical accommodations that people with and without disabilities enjoy today would not otherwise exist such as curb cuts, lifts on buses, elevators at metro transit stations, the passage of 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. At the Department, they work in collaboration with us to get information out regarding our Community-Based Trainings and they refer individuals with severe vision loss or who are blind. Overall, we collaborate to promote advocacy, independent living, and changing systems that negatively impact people with any kind of disability.

The Iowa Self Employment program for Persons with Disabilities is a collaborative effort between IVRS and the Department. The Iowa Self-Employment program exists to provide quality, expert, client-centered services to Iowans with disabilities that embrace diversity,

promote successful business ownership and result in self-sufficiency and economic development. This program partners with the Iowa Department for the Blind and its clients to offer entrepreneurial assessment, market feasibility assessment, business plan development, business financial and technical consultation as well as business augmentation support. While self-employment is not for everyone, for those who have an entrepreneurial spirit, ability to analyze markets and make good decisions, and where needed financial stability in order to access financing if that is necessary, this program is one to consider as a source to facilitating an individual from under or unemployment to gainful employment.

Over the next four years, Innovation and Expansion funds will be used on the integration of a new case management system and to provide training on a new data management system. Data management collected will assist IDB to analyze the effectiveness of our programs, services and progress toward achieving goals, while also assisting in identifying potential barriers and challenges so that we can overcome them as we work to provide quality services to Iowans who are blind or have low vision.

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.

Primary barriers that have been identified that relate to the equitable access to and participation of individuals who are blind and visually impaired in the IDB VR program and the IDB Supported Employment Services Program include transportation, technology, and availability. The Department for the Blind reviewed current staffing levels in efforts to increase the presence of the Iowa Department for the Blind in local communities. We now have ten counselors in the field serving clients across the state. The Department has been strategically domiciling positions throughout the state, to increase our presence and availability of staff to provide and coordinate VR services.

IDB Vocational Rehabilitation clients have historically not used the one-stop centers due to inaccessibility of technology and programs. The programs identified as inaccessible were computer training, resume writing, and assessments to assist in determining skill level and career options. Technology used in the one-stop centers was not accessible to persons needing magnification or screen reading software. Staff would provide reader service in some locations; however, this minimized an individual's ability to be independent in their job search. Community partners have indicated a lack of knowledge on how to assist individuals in accessing services. One-stop center staff have shared that they needed training on how to provide services specific to individuals who are blind or visually impaired, including those with most significant disabilities (cognitive disabilities, mental illness, physical disabilities, deaf-blindness).

The Department is working with our local one-stop partners and other training providers, in addition to employers and community service providers to increase access to individuals who are blind and have low vision. IDB has been conducting accessibility consultations with a variety of these entities to assist them in becoming more accessible. IDB also provides technical assistance, training and resources to these entities. IDB plans to refer to our workforce and other partners more as we move forward in improving the delivery of VR services.

Transportation was identified as the primary need for individuals who are blind or have low vision in Iowa. The regional transit systems are not available in every area, have limited availability, and are expensive. The lack of transportation services creates a dependence on others and is a major cause of concern for the participants whose goal is to be independent in their community. The Department is working with local agencies to identify transportation options. The Department is also working to develop trainings that can be conducted through technology such as webinars. IDB does often meet with clients in their home due to transportation barriers. When these barriers are addressed, rehabilitation teachers are also

introduced to the client to assist them in learning alternative techniques related to orientation and mobility and methods for accessing transportation. IDB will continue to assist clients in addressing their transportation needs and in discovering methods of overcoming that barrier to accessing VR services.

Finally, IDB has experienced a number of changes in our staff over the last few years. We are continuously assessing the need for additional training regarding WIOA requirements, delivery of services, understanding of supported employment services, and increased levels of partnerships and agreements with our partners. The need for additional training in the delivery of services to individuals with the most significant needs has also been identified by staff and we are working with community partners to provide additional training to our staff. In doing this, we have found new opportunity to provide cross-training to various community partners as well, increasing not only ability for our partners to serve clients, but a greater awareness of the needs of individuals who are blind or have low vision.

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

Goal 1: Iowa employers will become more aware of the Iowa Department for the Blind and the pool of advanced, skilled, diverse, and future ready workers the department can provide access to.

Strategies that contributed to the achievement of Goal 1: IDB worked to develop mutually beneficial partnerships with Iowa businesses. IDB worked to establish business engagement staff within the Department for the Blind. IDB also collaborated with WIOA partners to assist Iowa's employers have ready access to advanced, skilled, diverse, and future ready workers. IDB also built intra-agency collaboration to strengthens the our ability aid employers in the ability to provide accommodations and supports, IDB began participating in regional Business Services teams and regularly provides training to our core partner agencies at their bi-annual trainings. IDB also started the work on a pilot program focused on increasing the number of clients participating in apprenticeship programs with a goal to increase employer awareness of the abilities of Iowans who are blind or have low vision.

Goal 2: All Iowans who are blind or have vision loss and require VR services to obtain, maintain, or advance in employment receive them.

Strategies that contributed to the achievement of Goal 2: IDB has continued to engage the community to increase awareness of the mission, vision, and services available to Iowans who are blind or have low vision and how to access them. IDB annually conducts marketing and outreach to increase awareness of and referrals to the Department. The Iowa Department for the Blind hosted a number of events that provide information about services offered by the Department. These events include the annual Braille Challenge, the legislative open house, and community based training events. The Department emphasized the vocational rehabilitation program and the youth transition programs at these events, ensuring individuals are aware of the importance of early involvement in vocational rehabilitation services and the programs offered through the Department. The Department continued to conduct a number of outreach events throughout the state, with staff presenting information about IDB services. Events such as community based trainings, participation in transition fairs and events, and corporate and local government fairs and resource fairs provided an opportunity for IDB staff to share a wide array of information about services. At these events, feedback was sought from attendees for follow-up and possible referrals. Department staff continued to welcome potential clients, interested professionals, and the general public to the IDB for tours that highlight available

services. IDB also completed outreach to potentially eligible students and their support systems to enhance awareness of, and the opportunities to receive IDB services. IDB is participating as a member of the Vision Discipline Teams with staff from Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired, in which referrals are reviewed and followed up on; this has assisted IDB counselors in getting in front of parents of students who are blind or have low vision to discuss IDB services. IDB has also worked to ensure all eligible individuals have well-developed and supported individualized plans for employment that provide them with the education & training plans needed to achieve their career goal. IDB staff have been trained on strategies to incorporate labor market information and to use systems like the Career Index Plus to engage clients in developing plans for employment. IDB staff also advocated that all eligible or potentially eligible students have well-developed individualized education plans that aligned with their career goals. IDB staff also worked to provide pre-employment transition series, including paid work experience to students in high school. IDB provided work-based learning experiences and job seeking seminars designed specifically for clients attending post-secondary school. The Department has had and met a goal to have 75% of clients participate in work experiences prior to graduation. The Department firmly believes that access to work-based learning experiences increases an individual's likelihood of success in reaching his or her employment goals. IDB partnered with local education and workforce partners to achieve this goal.

IDB Goal 3: All individuals who are successfully closed employed will have found employment that aligns with their knowledge, skills, and abilities, and places them on their desired career pathway.

Strategies that contributed to the achievement of Goal 3: IDB worked to ensure IPE goals reflect the clients' knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests and that the activities they engaged in align with a career pathway. IDB also promoted participation in career pathways to meet business sector and consumer employment needs. IDB has seen an increase in the number of individuals achieving measurable skills gains and continues to work with staff to address this goal. IDB also partnered with other agencies to develop relationships with employers to increase opportunities for individuals to become employed in integrated and competitive environments. IDB provided a longer period for job stabilization before closure in cases where a client is working toward achieving more hours, and requires additional documentation for cases closing in employment at less than twenty hours per week. IDB worked with clients who are in employment to increase knowledge and skills so that they can pursue careers along their chose career paths. IDB provided clients receiving Social Security Disability Insurance and/or Supplemental Security Income the opportunity to receive individualized benefits counseling from a certified Benefits Planner.

IDB Goal 4: The Iowa Department for the Blind will collaborate with Iowa's workforce delivery system to identify and reduce barriers to accessible, seamless and integrated services for individuals who are blind or have low vision.

Strategies that contributed to the achievement of Goal 4: IDB worked with core partners to collect surveys and conduct focus groups to measure satisfaction in receiving services through Iowa's workforce delivery system. IDB also partnered with other agencies to develop relationships with employers to increase opportunities for individuals to become employed in integrated and competitive environments. IDB also developed a collection of four vignettes titled "Hello. Is Anybody Here?" in collaboration with the Workforce Innovation and Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC), to engage service professionals in discussions that support improving customer service to individuals who are blind. This approach has been used in regions across the state in an effort to increase the comfort and ability of our colleagues in fully including individuals who are blind in the career services and career pathway models of American Job Centers. In practice, each of the four vignettes have been presented "live" in staff training sessions with a Department for the Blind staff member facilitator. IDB also developed a

Facilitator's Guide to use with the videos so that others could host similar discussions at their own offices. The objectives of the discussions and videos are as follows: 1. Recognize the customer service experiences in American Job Centers for blind customers; 2. Promote service design that achieves full inclusion; 3. Increase understanding of what "program access" really means; 4. Build the comfort level of American Job Center staff in working with blind consumers; and 5. Increase staff understanding of some of the particular challenges faced by blind job seekers. These training vignettes have been well-received and IDB continues to get requests for this training. IDB also worked with the WINTAC to provide training on Integrated Resource Teams to core partners. IDB has found success in using this strategy to identify and provide and services to clients. IDB is also working on a pilot program focused on apprenticeships. Through this pilot, core partners have been engaged in a number of discussions and opportunities to identify barriers to current system processes for individuals who are blind. IDB and core partners continue to work together to address system, programmatic and physical barriers to individuals who are blind and have low vision.

IDB Goal 5: Build mutually beneficial partnerships with entities in the community that provide or could provide services to Iowans who are blind or have low vision.

Strategies that contributed to the achievement of Goal 5: IDB conducted outreach to community rehabilitation providers and provided trainings to these providers in the provision of services to individuals who are blind or have low vision. IDB has used the "Hello. Is Anybody Here?" series, in addition to providing hands on training with individual providers, based on the needs of clients. IDB continues to look for way to increase capacity of community providers to provide services to Iowans who are blind or have low vision.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

One factor that has impeded the achievement of the Department's goals has been late application for vocational rehabilitation services by high school students who are blind or have low vision. These students are sometimes served through other programs who do not have the knowledge or resources to effectively serve individuals who are blind or have low vision. Another reason is due to parent or family member preference that the student not pursue employment during high school and rather focus on education requirements. Counselors work with schools and the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired to refer students at an earlier age so that career exploration, work experiences, work readiness skills, independence skills and advocacy skills can be developed prior to exit from secondary schools. Outreach and trainings to parents, schools and educators are developed to work toward this goal. Counselors and other department staff have identified a need for increased training and education in working with persons with multiple disabilities; in particular persons with cognitive disabilities, mental illness, and brain injuries. Counselors are also working to identify community providers who are competent in working with persons who are blind and have low vision, including individuals with the most significant disabilities. IDB staff work with community providers to provide consultation and technical assistance so that they are better able to provide services to clients with the most significant disabilities.

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

The Department's goal is that all Iowans who are blind or have low vision and require supported employment services to obtain or retain competitive employment receive them. The Department will continue to review procedures for managing supported employment cases and develop a strategic plan for supported employment services. Individuals the IDB closed who

were receiving supported employment services worked 20 hours or less in integrated competitive employment settings.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

IDB continuously provides outreach to educational and community rehabilitation providers, however are often met with resistance to working with the Department to serve clients with the most significant disabilities. This is often due to a lack of awareness that the IDB is the entity responsible for providing supported employment and vocational rehabilitation services to individuals who are blind, including those with the most significant disabilities. Individuals are often referred to IVRS, Iowa's general agency who may refer the individual to the Department. Lack of understanding about the services IDB can provide combined with low expectations of the individuals being served also contributes to the lack of referrals of clients who may be eligible for supported employment services. IDB will continue to work to educate community rehabilitation and educational providers regarding services for individuals who may qualify for supported employment.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

The Iowa Department for the Blind uses the following performance accountability indicators: the percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program; the percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program; the median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit; credential attainment rate; measurable skill gain; and effectiveness in serving employers.

The Iowa Department for the Blind and Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services jointly reported on the following primary performance indicators:

Employment Rate in the 2nd Quarter after Exit: The percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

Program Year	Participant Number	Rate	Negotiated Target
2020	2,198	56.1%	Baseline
2019	2,526	59.5%	Baseline
2018	2,221	52.0%	Baseline
2017			Baseline

Employment Rate in the 4th Quarter after Exit: The percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.

Program Year	Participant Number	Rate	Negotiated Target
2020	2,266	53.6%	Baseline
2019	2,304	54.1%	Baseline
2018			Baseline
2017			Baseline

Median Earnings in the 2nd Quarter after Exit: The median earnings of those participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

Program Year	Median Earnings	Negotiated Target	
2020	$4,022	Baseline	
2019	$3,598	Baseline	
2018	$4,291	Baseline	
2017		Baseline	

Credential Attainment (CA) Rate: The percentage of participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding on-the-job training and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or diploma or equivalent during participation in, or within one year of exit from the program.

Program Year	Participant Number	Rate	Negotiated Target
2020	1,182	59.8%	Baseline
2019	1,199	54.8%	Baseline
2018			Baseline
2017			Baseline

Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Rate: The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment.

Program Year	Participant Number	Rate	Negotiated Target
2020	2,869	39.4%	38.7%
2019	3,010	34.6%	Baseline
2018	3,133	35.2%	Baseline
2017	2,054	22.0%	Baseline

Effectiveness in Serving Employers: This performance indicator is measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within the State of Iowa and is designed to gauge three critical workforce needs of the business community:

1. Providing employers with skilled workers;
2. Providing quality engagement and services to employers and sectors and establishing productive relationships with employers and sectors over extended periods of time; and
3. Providing quality engagement and services to all employers and sectors within Iowa and local economy.

Iowa is using two approaches to measure effectiveness in serving employers:

1. Repeat Business Customer Rate: the percentage of employers who receive services that used core program services within the previous three years. This approach is useful in determining whether employers who receive services are satisfied and become repeat customers.

2. Employer Penetration Rate: the percentage of employers using services out of all employers in the state.

Effectiveness in Serving Employers is currently a pilot measure, and states were not required to submit an expected level of performance for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, the Department for the Blind and other core programs have partnered with Iowa Workforce Development to collect and report data, including VR data, in this indicator since Program Year 2017.

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED

The Department utilized the following strategies in the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve VR services to blind and low vision Iowans under the State Plan and for the support of the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). In FFY19, IDB provided $9,000 of Title 1 funds to the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC).

The purpose of the SILC is to strengthen the voice of Iowans with disabilities on issues affecting their lives, to build a statewide network of centers for independent living, and to collaborate with our partners in advancing the independence, productivity, and full inclusion of Iowans with disabilities. Centers for Independent Living and the Department collaborated in many ways to include heading up system change; that is help to organize people with disabilities to demand their civil rights, and fight against discrimination. At the Department, they worked in collaboration with us when we hosted Vision Loss Resource Fairs, they helped to get information out regarding our Community-Based Trainings, and they referred individuals who are blind and have low vision to IDB. Overall, we collaborated to promote advocacy, independent living, and changing systems that negatively impact people with any kind of disability, including individuals who are blind or have low vision.

Q. QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

1. THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES

The Department provides supported employment services to an eligible individual with a most significant disability, including youth with the most significant disabilities, for whom competitive and integrated employment has not traditionally occurred, or for whom competitive and integrated employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability. Supported employment is competitive employment in an integrated setting consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individuals with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. The eligible individual, the counselor, and when appropriate, other extended service providers will jointly plan supported employment services. Extended supported employment services shall be provided by other agencies, organizations, employers, or other available sources with whom cooperative arrangements will be made. Comparable services and benefits will be used to the maximum extent appropriate. Services will be provided in the most integrated setting possible consistent with the individual's informed choice. Supported employment services means ongoing support services, including customized employment, and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, in supported employment that are—(i) Organized and made available, singly or in combination, in such a way as to assist an eligible individual to achieve competitive integrated employment; (ii) Based on a determination of the needs of an eligible individual, as specified in an individualized plan for employment; (iii) Provided by the designated State unit for a period of time not to exceed 24 months, unless under special circumstances the eligible individual and the

rehabilitation counselor jointly agree to extend the time to achieve the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment; and (iv) Following transition, as post-employment services that are unavailable from an extended services provider and that are necessary to maintain or regain the job placement or advance in employment.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES

The Department provides supported employment services for a period of time that will not exceed twenty-four (24) months, except for special circumstances when the counselor and the eligible individual jointly agree to extend the time to achieve the employment outcome identified in the Individualized Plan for Employment. Vocational rehabilitation counselors closely monitor the quality of services throughout the duration of their provision to insure that services are appropriate, timely, cost-effective, and of the same quality as those services provided under Title I. IDB provides ongoing support services using funds under the Supported Employment program and/or the VR program from the time of job placement until the transition to extended services. When a client is ready to transition to extended services, IDB partners with clients, community rehabilitation providers, and in most cases, the Medicaid Waiver program for a seamless transfer. IDB continues to work with partners to improve this transition through trainings and discussions in efforts to improve this process.

IDB may provide extended services to youth with a most significant disability for a period not to exceed four years, or at such time that a youth reaches age 25 and no longer meets the definition of a youth with a disability, whichever occurs first. IDB is not able to provide extended services to an individual with a most significant disability who is not a youth with a most significant disability. IDB will work with the individual to identify other sources of extended services to ensure that there is no interruption of services.

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

Iowa Department for the Blind

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

Iowa Department for the Blind

3. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES

PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[19] , THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[20] , POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER TITLE VI ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

4. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND/OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO PERFORM THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE REGARDING THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

5. THE STATE LEGALLY MAY CARRY OUT EACH PROVISION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

6. ALL PROVISIONS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT ARE CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW.

7. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO RECEIVE, HOLD, AND DISBURSE FEDERAL FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Emily Wharton

8. THE (ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND THE SUPPLEMENT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Director

9. THE AGENCY THAT SUBMITS THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT HAS ADOPTED OR OTHERWISE FORMALLY APPROVED THE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

FOOTNOTES

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

Signatory information	Enter Signatory information in this column
Name of Signatory	Emily Wharton
Title of Signatory	Director
Date Signed	3/8/2022

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 State Plan must include	Include
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)	Yes
3.b.(B) “has established a State Rehabilitation Council” (Yes/No)	No
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	No

The State Plan must include	Include
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)	
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	
4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State	

The State Plan must include	Include
unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:	
4.a. Comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.b. Impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.c. Provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act? (Yes/No)	Yes
4.d. Determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.e. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.f. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.g. Provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.h. Comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by section 101(a)(14)of the 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,	

The State Plan must include	Include
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	

The State Plan must include	Include
supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act	
6.b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act	
7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:	Yes
7.a. The Designated State Agency Assures That it Will Provide Supported Employment Services as Defined in Section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act	
7.b. The designated State agency assures that:	
7.b.i. The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act	
7.b.ii. An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act	

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	56.9%	57.0%	56.9%	58.0%

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	54.3%	54.3%	54.3%	55.3%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$4,022	$4,256	$4,022	$4,419
Credential Attainment Rate	59.7%	60.0%	59.7%	61.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	38.7%	40.0%	40.6%	42.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

[1]

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR APPENDIX

ALL WIOA CORE PROGRAMS

All WIOA Core Programs

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable[1]	Not Applicable[1]	Not Applicable[1]	Not Applicable[1]

[1] "Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

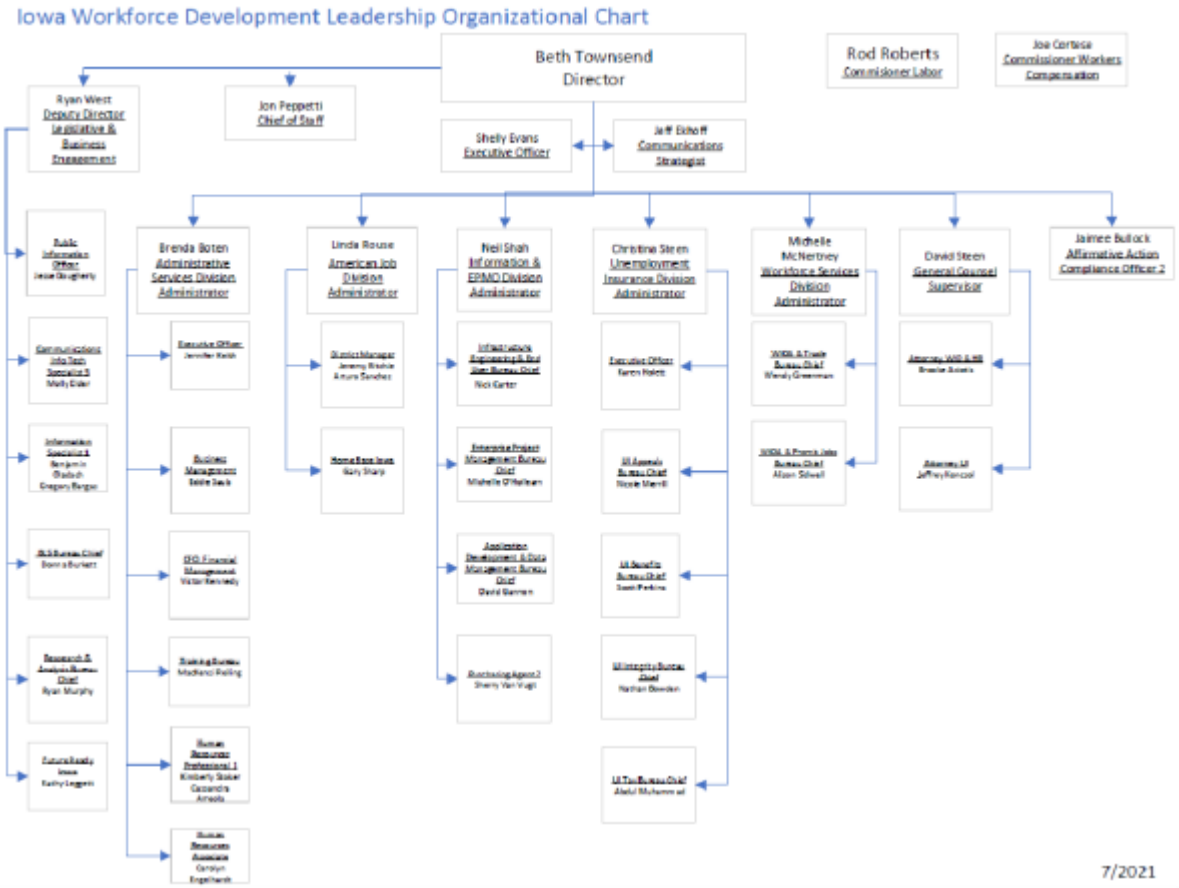
ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

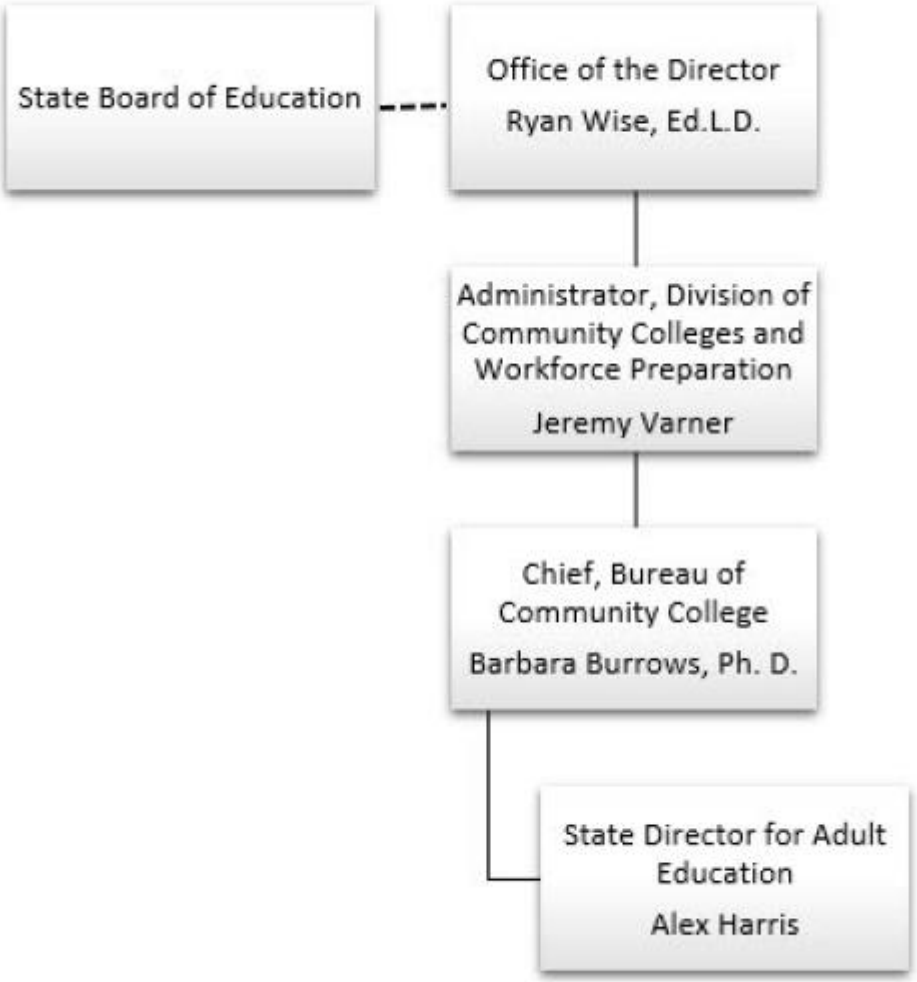
Additional Indicators of Performance
None at this time.

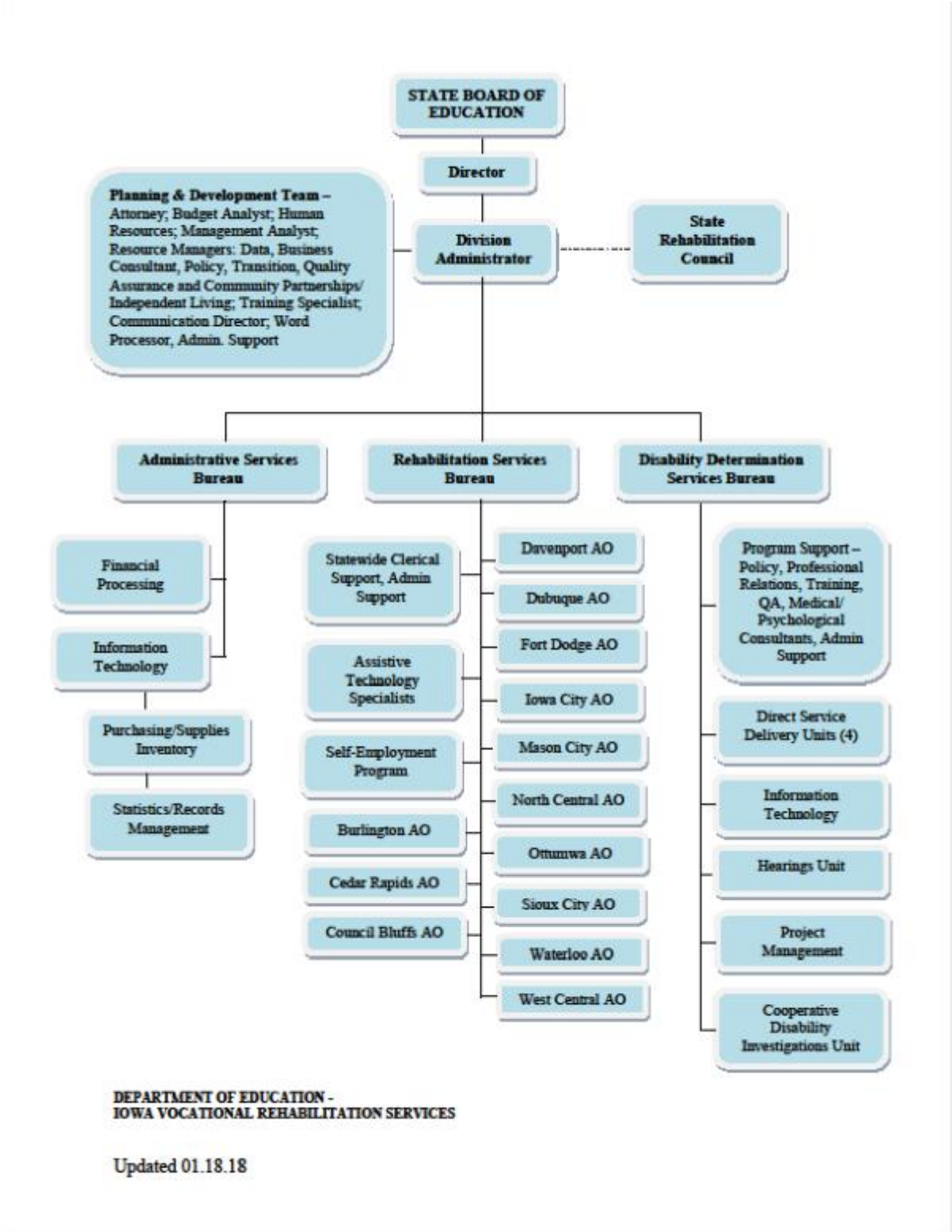
OTHER APPENDICES

Appendix 2. Other State Attachments (Optional)

Appendix 2: Organizational Charts for Core Partners




State Board of Education
Office of the Director
Ryan Wise, Ed.L.D.
Administrator, Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation
Jeremy Varner
Chief, Bureau of Community College
Barbara Burrows, Ph. D.
State Director for Adult Education
Alex Harris



Iowa Department for the Blind Organizational Chart

<u>Iowa Commission for the Blind</u>

Sandra Ryan, Chair

Geneva Jacobsen, Commissioner

Ryan Brems, Commissioner

Direct Reports:

- Director

Emily Wharton, Director

Direct Reports:

- 1 Executive Secretary
- 1 Accountant Supervisor (CFO)
- 4 Program Administrators

Sarah Willeford, Library Director

Direct Reports:

- 1 Access Services Librarian
- 1 Special Services Librarian
- 1 Youth Services Librarian
- 1 Accessible Media Specialist
- 1 Digital Recording Specialist/Studio Manager
- 1 Audio Production Librarian
- 1 Braille Coordinator
- 1 Instructional Materials Center Librarian
- 1 Instructional Materials Center Service Specialist
- 2 Braille Transcribers
- 1 Technology Specialist
- 1 Facilities Engineer
- 2 Custodians

Helen Stevens, CTO / Education & Training ProgramAdministrator

Direct Reports:

- 8 Vocational Rehabilitation Teachers (Senior Service Specialist for the Blind 1)
- 4 Rehabilitation Technology Specialists
- 2 Technology Specialists (Senior Service Specialist for the Blind 2)
- 1 Secretary 1
- 3 Vocational Rehabilitation Teachers 4 Plus (Senior Service Specialist for the Blind 1)

- 5 Youth Service Workers

Keri Osterhaus, Vocational Rehabilitation ProgramAdministrator

Direct Reports:

- 10 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (SSSB1)
- 2 Specialists (SSSB1)
- 1 Counselor Lead Worker / Quality Assurance Specialist (SSSB1)
- 1 Secretary 1
- 2Secretary 2
- 1 Executive Officer (Business Enterprise Program Administrator)
- 2 Business Counselors (SSB1)

Karly Prinds , Orientation Center Program Administrator

Direct Reports:

- 1 Rehabilitation Technology Specialist
- 5Center Instructors (SSSB1)

Kim Barber, Independent Living ProgramAdministrator

Direct Reports:

- 2 Senior Independent Living Teachers (SSSB1)
- 5 Independent Living Teachers (SSB2)
- 1 Secretary 1

1 Resource Specialist (SSB2)

Cheri Myers, Chief Financial Officer CFO

Direct Reports:

- 1 Accounting Technician 3
- 1 Accounting Tech 2
- 1 Accounting Clerk 1
- 1 Accounting Clerk 1 - temporary