NEW MEXICO

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Combined State Plan
Program Years 2020-2023
Contents

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OVERVIEW

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Governor of each State must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor that outlines a four-year strategy for the State's workforce development system. The publicly-funded workforce development system is a national network of Federal, State, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services and supports to help all job-seekers secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. States must have approved Unified or Combined State Plans in place to receive funding for core programs. WIOA reforms planning requirements, previously governed by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), to foster better alignment of Federal investments in job training, to integrate service delivery across programs and improve efficiency in service delivery, and to ensure that the workforce system is job-driven and matches employers with skilled individuals. One of WIOA's principal areas of reform is to require States to plan across core programs and include this planning process in the Unified or Combined State Plans. This reform promotes a shared understanding of the workforce needs within each State and fosters development of more comprehensive and integrated approaches, such as career pathways and sector strategies, for addressing the needs of businesses and workers. Successful implementation of many of these approaches called for within WIOA requires robust relationships across programs. WIOA requires States and local areas to enhance coordination and partnerships with local entities and supportive service agencies for strengthened service delivery, including through Unified or Combined State Plans.

OPTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A STATE PLAN

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

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

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

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

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

Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))

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

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

Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)

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

Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development

Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.)) ¹

Reintegration of Ex-Offenders program (programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))

[1] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

HOW STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS ARE ORGANIZED

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

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

- State Strategy Implementation,
- State Operating Systems and Policies,
- Assurances,
- Program-Specific Requirements for the Core Programs, and
- Program-Specific Requirements for the Combined State Plan partner programs. (These requirements are available in a separate supplemental document, Supplement to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements. The Departments are not seeking comments on these particular requirements).

When responding to Unified or Combined State Plan requirements, States must identify specific strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations. States must develop strategies that look beyond strategies for the general population and develop approaches that also address the needs of target populations.

**Paperwork Reduction Act:** The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) provides that an agency may not conduct, and no person is required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated to be 86 hours per state; including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Responding to this collection is required to obtain or retain the Federal grant benefit. In addition, responses to this information collection are public, and the agencies offer no assurances of confidentiality. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Workforce Investment, and reference OMB control number 1205-0522. Note: Please do not return the completed plan to this address.

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

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**A. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE**

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

**Unified State Plan.** This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs.
**Combined State Plan.** This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs, as well as one or more of the optional Combined State Plan partner programs identified below.

This is a combined plan

**COMBINED PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM(S)**

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


No

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

Yes

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

No

Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))

No

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

No

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

Yes

Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)

No

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

Yes

Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development

No

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

No
B. PLAN INTRODUCTION OR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Unified or Combined State Plan may include an introduction or executive summary. This element is optional.

New Mexico’s State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) led the development of NM’s Combined Plan. The SWDB charged the Department of Workforce Solutions to facilitate a series of workgroups with core and required partners to craft required sections of NM’s plan and to work together to ensure the vision and goals established by Governor Lujan Grisham provided the base for the strategies, activities and services outlined in the plan.

The foundation of NM’s plan is built upon data, partnerships and resources to implement strategies that support operations in providing services to job seekers and employers. NM is committed to changing and/or adjusting its work to meet the state’s workforce needs. NM’s core and required partners have maintained a strong working partnership since the inception of WIOA and over the span of the last four years met at least quarterly to review policy, performance and practice. This plan reflects upon lessons learned over the last four years and ideas for innovating the workforce system even further.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) reforms planning requirements to foster better alignment of federal investments in job training, integrate service delivery across programs, improve efficiency in service delivery, and ensure that the workforce system is job-driven and matches employers with skilled individuals. Under WIOA, the State Plan communicates the State’s vision for the New Mexico workforce system and serves as a vehicle for aligning and integrating this system across federal programs. This strategic plan accomplishes one of WIOA’s principal areas of reform which is to plan across core programs. As such, the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions submits this Combined State Plan, as modified, under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to the U.S. Secretary of Labor outlining a four-year workforce development strategy for New Mexico’s workforce development system. The Combined Plan includes the six core programs plus five Combined Plan partner programs, as listed below.

- Adult Program (WIOA Title I)
- Dislocated Worker Program (WIOA Title I)
- Youth Program (WIOA Title I)
- Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program (WIOA Title II)
- Wagner-Peyser Act Program (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Program (Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV)
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (Programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)
Senior Community Service Employment Program (Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965)

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF)

Employment and Training Programs under the Supplemental and Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Program

Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor of the State of New Mexico has shared a vision for the state workforce development system which incorporates six specific goals to create a more resilient, responsive, and results-oriented workforce development system that moves New Mexicans toward greater economic prosperity.

The workforce system in New Mexico is a network of state, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services and supports to help all jobseekers, including those with barriers to employment, secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

New Mexico’s workforce service delivery system provides services to jobseeker and business customers throughout thirty-three counties covering 121,298.2 square mile radius, fifth largest land mass in the nation, where an estimated 2,085,572 people call New Mexico home. The designated four regional Workforce Development Areas in New Mexico include Central, Eastern, Northern and Southwestern. Each Workforce Development Area has a Local Workforce Development Board that administers employment and training programs through the Workforce Connection Centers, which are proud partners of the American Job Center Network. Service integration involves co-location of partners, where appropriate; collaborative partnerships in which service integration eliminates duplication and improves efficiency; functional alignment where staff are organized by function not funding stream for seamless service delivery within each center. These centers serve as the central point for WIOA partners, and their unique programs and cross training of employees in many programs enhances customer service and provides both job seekers and employers with easy access to information.

Through this Combined State Plan, New Mexico aims to share understanding of the workforce needs across the state and enhance more comprehensive and integrated approaches for addressing the needs of businesses and workers, including individuals with barriers to employment. Focused on meeting the objectives and priorities for the development of a competitive workforce, core partners and various stakeholders came together to prioritize, strategize and assemble a plan for meeting federal and state goals for creating this plan. In addition, the State Workforce Board is working to convene committees, as appropriate, to guide ongoing strategic planning. As such, this plan reflects an enhancement in coordination and partnerships with local entities and supportive service agencies for strengthened service delivery to the state’s various populations. The strategies in this WIOA Combined State Plan are
based on an analysis of the economic, workforce, and workforce development for New Mexico and its regions.

In an effort to solicit public response, the New Mexico WIOA Combined State Plan was posted on the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions’ website and distributed electronically to the State and Local Workforce Development Boards for review and comment. Additionally, both unified and combined state partners shared distribution lists, and New Mexico First sent coordinated communications from November-February to solicit public engagement in both written feedback as well as participation in 4 public forums held in the north/central and southern parts of New Mexico. The Department of Workforce solutions did targeted outreach to youth serving organizations, schools, and youth development programs to engage youth perspectives. New Mexico First also leveraged their data base of over 16,000 contacts, website, and social media to encourage public comment. The New Mexico Association of Commerce and Industry, the State Economic Development Department, local Chambers of Commerce, and other statewide organizations also helped to spread information about the multiple opportunities for public comment.

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions hosted four community input sessions in the northern/central part of New Mexico and in southern NM, facilitated by New Mexico First. In each location, a session was designed for the general public and for youth specific input into New Mexico’s plan. On February 21, 2020, 187 people attended from the general public in Albuquerque. 28 youth attended the general session in Albuquerque. On February 27, 2020, 79 people attended from the general public and 14 people attended the youth session.

Accommodations were made to increase inclusion and reduce barriers to participation in the outreach and implementation of these community input sessions. Closed captioning and ASL were provided and materials were disseminated in advance. Participants represented middle, high school, and college students, K-12 and higher education, AmeriCorp members, for profit and non-profit employers and employees, health and social service providers, attorneys, entrepreneurs, job developers, and state and regional Department of Workforce Solution’s staff and contractors. There were 12 types of businesses/organizations.

At the community input meetings, participants engaged in a combination of shared learning with an introductory overview of the plan, small group discussions comprised of diverse stakeholders, and large group discussion and reporting out of themes from the small group table discussions. Tables were each provided with a written conversation guide to systematically explore concerns, suggestions, and areas of support for the draft state plan. Notes were documented, collected, and transcribed from the small group discussions. A transcript of the large group discussion was also created as a public record of community input. This data was analyzed and organized by question topic and across themes in the responses by New Mexico First, a non-profit organization with 33+ years of experiencing in facilitating deliberative consensus-building efforts related to a broad range of public policy areas.
II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

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

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

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

1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

A. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

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

I. EXISTING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

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

II. EMERGING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

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

III. EMPLOYERS’ EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in (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.
Online job openings data is a tool to measure existing demand industry sectors and occupations. Online job openings data are extracted from the Workforce Connection Online System (WCOS) and count openings posted online either internally or through external sites. An internal job opening is submitted directly to the WCOS System, while external openings are gathered from outside sites (“spidered”) and placed into the system.

As seen in Exhibit 1, the number of online job openings reached a peak in July 2019, hitting 70,103 postings. The number of job postings per unemployed persons are the lowest since the Great recession, reaching 0.8 in November 2018.
General medical and surgical hospitals was the detailed industry that posted the most openings (4,922) (Exhibit 2), followed by elementary and secondary schools and colleges, universities, and professional schools. The occupations posting the most openings were registered nurses and retail salespersons. The number of job openings in New Mexico for registered nurses has been over 2,660 per month since January 2012 (Exhibit 3), signifying there is high demand and low supply for registered nurses in New Mexico.

### 2. Online Job Postings for Top Industries & Occupations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Industries Posting Jobs in November 2019</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Medical &amp; Surgical Hospitals</td>
<td>4,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary &amp; Secondary Schools</td>
<td>1,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleges, Universities, &amp; Professional Schools</td>
<td>1,853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Bodies</td>
<td>1,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatric &amp; Substance Abuse Hospitals</td>
<td>1,358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R&amp;D in the Social Sciences &amp; Humanities</td>
<td>1,144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering Services</td>
<td>872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Systems Design &amp; Related Services</td>
<td>773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels (except Casino Hotels) &amp; Motels</td>
<td>686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Outpatient Care Centers</td>
<td>618</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Occupations Posting Jobs in November 2019</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registered Nurses</td>
<td>4,413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Salespersons</td>
<td>760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service Representatives</td>
<td>694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Preparation &amp; Serving Workers Supervisors</td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Guards</td>
<td>543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Assistants</td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physicians and Surgeons, All Other</td>
<td>522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers &amp; Freight, Stock, &amp; Material Movers, Hand</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Therapists</td>
<td>453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NM Department of Workforce Solutions
Rounded job postings from the Workforce Connection Online System
(ii) Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions' (NMDWS) Economic Research and Analysis Bureau (ER&A) produces long-term industry and occupational employment projections every two years. Data are produced in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) and are available for New Mexico, its four metropolitan statistical areas (Albuquerque, Farmington, Las Cruces, and Santa Fe), and four workforce regions (Central, Northern, Eastern, and Southwestern, as defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and referred to as "regions"). The recently released data project employment across the ten-year period of 2016 to 2026 and are available for over 90 industry subsectors and close to 800 detailed occupations at the state and substate levels.
Overview of Employment Growth

New Mexico’s 2016 employment of 861,820 is projected to grow to 919,400 by 2026. This increase represents an additional 57,580 jobs and 6.7 percent growth. (Estimates, projection, and numeric growth are rounded.) As shown in Exhibit 1, of the state’s four workforce regions, the Southwestern Region is projected to experience the highest percentage growth (7.0 percent). Growth in the Las Cruces MSA (7.3 percent) is anticipated to be the primary driver of that region’s growth. The MSA also has the highest projected percentage growth of the state’s four MSAs. The largest numeric growth is, unsurprisingly, anticipated to occur in the state’s most populated region (Central) and MSA (Albuquerque). Percentage growth in Central, Northern, and Eastern regions is either equal or nearly equal to growth statewide (ranging from 6.6 percent in Central to 6.8 percent in Eastern). Within the Northern Region, growth in the Farmington MSA of 7.1 percent is projected to exceed growth in the Santa Fe MSA of 5.9 percent.
As illustrated in Exhibit 3, about two-thirds of all projected employment growth is anticipated to occur in just three industry sectors—health care and social assistance (25,960 jobs, or 19.5 percent growth), accommodation and food services (7,120 jobs, or 7.9 percent growth), and professional, scientific, and technical services (6,090 jobs, or 11.2 percent growth). The percentage growth of these three sectors exceeds the all-industry average of 6.7 percent. Two other sectors have percentage growth above the all-industry average, including mining and oil and gas extraction (3,090 jobs, or 15.6 percent) and administrative and waste management (3,930 jobs, or 9.5 percent). Three sectors are projected to see a decline in employment. Losses in information (50 jobs, or 0.4 percent) and wholesale trade (120 jobs, or 0.5 percent) are projected to be measurably smaller than losses in manufacturing (1,750 jobs, or 6.5 percent).
The top three industry sectors projected to grow the most and the top three projected to grow the fastest are, for the most part, the same across all four regions and MSAs. Health care and social assistance and accommodation and food services are among the three sectors to grow the most in all substate areas. Health care and social assistance is joined by professional and technical services to be among the three fastest-growing industry sectors in all substate areas. Mining and oil and gas extraction is projected to grow faster than most sectors in the Eastern and Northern Regions, as well as the Farmington and Las Cruces MSAs, while the administrative and waste management sector is projected to grow more quickly in the Central and Southwestern Regions, as well as the Albuquerque and Santa Fe MSAs.

Additional highlights of regional industry sector growth:

- Mining and oil and gas extraction employment growth is projected to primarily occur in the Eastern Region. In the north, however, sector growth in the Farmington MSA is expected to be strong, comprising nearly all sector growth for the Northern Region and playing a significant role in the MSAs overall projected employment growth.

- Growth in the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector is expected to be concentrated in urban areas (MSAs), particularly in the Albuquerque and Santa Fe MSAs. Growth in Santa Fe is significant for that MSA's overall projected employment growth.

- Growth in the finance and insurance and management of companies sectors is also projected to primarily occur in urban areas, particularly in the Albuquerque MSA.

- While the agriculture sector is not projected to grow by much statewide (90 jobs), growth is expected to be concentrated in the Southwestern Region and primarily in the Las Cruces MSA. (75 percent of the Southwestern Region's agriculture growth is projected to occur in the MSA). Agriculture is projected to decline in the Eastern Region.

- Employment losses in manufacturing are expected to occur in every substate area, but the majority of losses are anticipated for urban areas, particularly the Albuquerque MSA.
• The more rural areas (non-MSA areas) of the Southwestern Region are projected to see employment gains in government that are significantly larger than gains in any other area of the state.

• Employment in wholesale trade is projected to drop in all substate areas, with no one substate area seeing significantly larger losses.

• The information sector is projected to shrink in all substate areas, with losses in the Santa Fe MSA being comparatively significant for that area's overall projected employment change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectors with the Most and Fastest Employment Growth</th>
<th>MSAs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MOST GROWTH</td>
<td>FASTEST GROWTH (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care &amp; Social Asst.</td>
<td>12,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof., Scientific &amp; Technical Svcs</td>
<td>3,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation &amp; Food Svcs</td>
<td>3,260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Albuquerque</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care &amp; Social Asst.</td>
<td>1,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining &amp; Oil &amp; Gas Extraction</td>
<td>730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation &amp; Food Svcs</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farmington</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care &amp; Social Asst.</td>
<td>3,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation &amp; Food Svcs</td>
<td>640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Services</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Las Cruces</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care &amp; Social Asst.</td>
<td>1,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof., Scientific &amp; Technical Svcs</td>
<td>690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Santa Fe</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Albuquerque MSA is the same as Central Region. *** represents data that are suppressed. Numeric growth is rounded.
Projected Growth by Industry SubSector

Projections are prepared for 91 industry subsectors in New Mexico. Exhibit 6 provides the top 20 subsectors projected to grow the most and the top 20 projected to grow the fastest. Ambulatory health care services is expected to see more new jobs over the ten-year period than any other subsector, with employment projected to grow by 13,970 jobs, representing nearly one-quarter of total projected employment growth for the state. The social assistance subsector is projected to see 8,000 new jobs by 2026, while the food services and drinking places and professional, scientific, and technical services subsectors are expected to crack 6,000 new jobs over the projection period.

Ambulatory health care services and social assistance are both within the top three fastest-growing subsectors, with rates of 27.4 and 26.4 percent, respectively. Warehousing and storage, however, is projected to grow faster than all other subsectors, at a rate of 27.7 percent (420 jobs). Support activities for mining and other information services are the only other subsectors with projected growth of more than 20 percent, with rates of 26.2 and 20.4 percent, respectively.

While numeric employment growth indicates strong demand and many new job opportunities, percentage growth is an indicator of growing demand, even if new job opportunities aren’t as large. In other words, percentage growth can help identify subsectors with an increasingly bright outlook and role in the industrial composition of an area.
Exhibit 7 lists New Mexico's fast-growth subsectors, or those with percentage growth above the all-industry average of 6.7 percent. Five subsectors listed under "Fastest Growth" in Exhibit 6 are projected to grow quickly, even if their numeric growth is not comparatively large. These are led by other information services, with an increase of 70 jobs but percentage growth of 20.4 percent. Museums, historical sites, and similar institutions are projected to grow by 120 jobs, or 16.4 percent, while beverage and tobacco product manufacturing is also projected to grow by 120 jobs, with percentage growth of 13.3 percent. Growth of 150 jobs, or 6.9 percent, in rail transportation and 10 jobs, or 6.8 percent, in scenic and sightseeing transportation rounds out these five fast-growing subsectors.

The top growth subsectors for the state and substate areas are extremely similar. Only a few exceptions exist, such as large growth in local government in the Southwestern Region and large growth in the oil and gas extraction and support activities for mining sectors in the Eastern Region and Farmington MSA. There is even less variation when looking at fastest-growing subsectors.
Projected Employment Growth by major occupational Group

Exhibit 1 illustrates projected employment growth by major occupational group in New Mexico. Employment growth is defined as the number of positions that are completely new and have not been filled previously by a worker who left the occupation. Employment growth in personal care and service is projected to grow the most, by 11,380 jobs, making up nearly one-fifth of total statewide growth. Personal care and service also has the fastest growth, at 25.1 percent, a rate nearly four times that of the statewide average of 6.7 percent. Employment growth in healthcare support, at 21.2 percent, is expected to be the second fastest in the state, with jobs increasing by 5,790. Two other major occupational groups with large growth include food preparation and serving related (7,390 jobs) and healthcare practitioners and technical (6,270 jobs).

Employment in the occupational groups of farming, fishing, and forestry and production is projected to decline by a combined 550 jobs by 2026. Office and administrative support is expected to decline as well, but with current employment the largest of any other occupational group in the state (about 124,230 in 2016), the decline of 880 jobs amounts to a small rate decrease of 0.7 percent.
Projected employment Growth by detailed occupational group

Exhibit 2 lists the detailed occupations with the most and fastest projected employment growth in New Mexico from 2016 to 2026. As expected, several large occupations are projected to have the most growth. Personal care aides, with employment of 25,090 in 2016, the second largest in the state, are expected to grow by 10,090 jobs. The occupation is also the third-fastest growing occupation, expected to increase by 40.2 percent. Home health aides is another occupation expected to increase by a large number (3,030) and a high rate (36.5 percent). Combined food preparation and serving workers (ranked fifth largest in total employment in 2016) are projected to increase by 3,550 jobs.

While numeric employment growth indicates strong demand and many new job opportunities, percentage growth is an indicator of growing demand, even if new job opportunities aren’t as large. Employment for solar photovoltaic installers, the detailed occupation with the fastest
projected growth, was about 110 in 2016 but is expected to more than double by 2026. Wind turbine service technicians, with employment of about 80 in 2016, are expected to increase by 57.5 percent. Of the occupations listed as having the fastest growth, only four had 2016 employment of over 1,000—personal care aides (25,090); home health aides (8,290); roustabouts, oil and gas (2,020); and physical therapists (1,470). There were only about 60 mathematicians working in New Mexico in 2016, but this detailed occupational group is expected to increase by about one-third.

The top three detailed occupations projected to grow the most and the top three projected to grow the fastest are, with some exceptions, the same across all four regions and MSAs (Exhibits 3 and 4). Employment for personal care aides is expected to have the most growth in all substate areas. Combined food preparation and serving workers are also expected to have large growth in all areas of New Mexico. There are some exceptions to the commonality across the substate areas. Exceptions include roustabouts, oil and gas, with employment expected to increase by 380 jobs in the Eastern Region; registered nurses, expected to increase by 110 jobs in the Farmington MSA and 420 in the Northern Region; and waiters and waitresses, projected to increase by 150 jobs in the Santa Fe MSA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Detailed Occupations With the Most and Fastest Projected Employment Growth</th>
<th>MSAs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MOST GROWTH</strong></td>
<td><strong>FASTEST GROWTH</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALBUQUERQUE</strong></td>
<td><strong>Solar Photovoltaic Installers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care Aides</td>
<td>3,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Prep. &amp; Serving</td>
<td>1,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Health Aides</td>
<td>1,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FARMINGTON</strong></td>
<td><strong>Home Health Aides</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care Aides</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Prep. &amp; Serving</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Nurses</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LAS CRUCES</strong></td>
<td><strong>Information Security Analysts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care Aides</td>
<td>1,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Health Aides</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Prep. &amp; Serving</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SANTA FE</strong></td>
<td><strong>Physician Assistants</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care Aides</td>
<td>740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Prep. &amp; Serving</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiters &amp; Waitresses</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
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</table>

* Albuquerque MSA is the same as Central Region. Numeric growth is rounded. Occupations with 2016 employment of less than 30 are excluded from this list.

Employment of personal care aides and home health aides is expected to have the fastest growth in nearly all areas. Employment of solar photovoltaic installers is projected to grow faster than most other detailed occupations in the Central and Northern regions, as well as the Albuquerque and Santa Fe MSAs. In some substate areas but not others include mathematicians (Central Region and Albuquerque MSA, with growth of 38.1 percent); wind turbine service technicians (Southwestern Region, with growth of 88.2 percent); software developers, applications (Farmington MSA, expected to grow at 36.7 percent); information security analysts (Las Cruces MSA, expected to grow by 34.3 percent); and physician assistants (Santa Fe MSA, expected to increase by 39.2 percent).
ANNUAL JOB OPENINGS

Not only are employment opportunities created by growth, but job openings also arise when workers need to be replaced because they leave the occupation to enter a different occupation (also called transfers) or because workers leave the occupation and exit the labor force (also called exits). The total annual number of job openings equal the sum of growth, transfers, and exits. (For more information on the methodology visit https://www.dws.state.nm.us/Labor-Market-Information/Data-Statistics-Dashboards/Employment-Projections.)

Exhibit 5 provides total annual job openings for New Mexico. There will be about 103,580 total annual job openings in the state. Only 5,760 of these, or 5.6 percent of total annual job openings, are from growth (newly created positions that had not been filled previously by a worker who left the occupation). Transfer openings, which count the number of positions available due to workers leaving an occupation and transferring to a different one, is the largest component, equaling 55,380 jobs per year and accounting for more than half of total annual job openings. Exit openings, defined as the number of positions available due to workers leaving the labor force and, consequently, the occupation, equal about 42,440.
As seen in Exhibit 6, the food preparation and serving related major occupational group is projected to have the most annual job openings in the state due to transfers and exits (14,470 jobs). When this figure is combined with growth openings, the food preparation and serving related major occupational group will have the most total annual job openings (15,210 jobs). Although negative job growth is expected in office and administrative support, this occupational group will have the second-largest number of total annual job openings (13,690 jobs) because of the large number of openings due to workers leaving the occupation (17,780). Other occupational groups expected to have negative job growth, such as production and farming, fishing, and forestry, will still have large numbers of total annual job openings to replace workers that transferred to other occupations or left the labor force. Legal is expected to have the least number of job openings due to transfers and exits (420 jobs).
As seen in Exhibit 7, the detailed occupation of personal care aides is expected to have the most total annual job openings in New Mexico (5,230 jobs). About 4,220 of these openings, or four out of five jobs, are due to workers who transferred to other occupations or left the labor force. Other occupations with many job openings due to workers leaving the occupation include combined food preparation and serving workers (4,080 jobs); cashiers (3,980 jobs); retail salespersons (3,930 jobs); and waiters and waitresses (3,180 jobs). These occupations have a wage less than the 2017 state median of $33,450 and typically require a high school diploma or equivalent or little to no formal education credential to enter the position. General and operations managers was the only detailed occupation listed in Exhibit 7 that typically requires a bachelor’s degree. The median 2017 wage for general and operations managers was $82,840.
Occupations with lower educational requirements have the largest number of job openings due to transfers and exits. As seen in Exhibit 8, occupations that typically do not require a formal educational credential have an annual average of 327 openings due to transfers and exits per occupation. Conversely, occupations that typically require a doctoral or professional degree have an annual average of 21 job opportunities due to workers leaving that occupation. Occupations that typically require a high level of education, and a large amount of time and financial investment, have lower levels of transfers and exits, since the education and skills needed to do the job may not be easily transferrable to other occupations.

The occupations with the most annual job openings due to workers leaving the occupation are extremely similar for the state, regions, and MSAs. Because of these similarities, annual job openings at the substate level are not summarized here.

Table 1 Employers’ Employment Needs provides an assessment of the employment needs of employers for the occupations listed in sections i. (Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations) and ii. (Employers’ Employment Needs). Occupations listed are those that either have 1) the most projected annual job openings; 2) are a STAR occupation, defined as those occupations with a high demand and high wage (see footnote at bottom of table 1); and/or 3) have a high number of online job postings. Included in the table are whether a license is required; typical education and experience required; length of on-the-job training; ONET job zone; and STAR level.

(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.

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<th>SOC</th>
<th>Occupation Title</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>License</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>OJT</th>
<th>Job Zone</th>
<th>STAR</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>353031</td>
<td>Waiters &amp; Waitresses</td>
<td>Most projected annual job</td>
<td>Y if serving alcohol</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short-term</td>
<td>1 No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Employment Needs</td>
<td>Most Projected Annual Job Openings</td>
<td>Minimum Job Openings</td>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Short-Term</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>372011</td>
<td>Janitors &amp; Cleaners, Ex. Maids &amp; Housekeeping Cleaners</td>
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<td>Most projected annual job openings</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short-term 2</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>372012</td>
<td>Maids &amp; Housekeeping Cleaners</td>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short-term 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>412011</td>
<td>Cashiers</td>
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<td>Most projected annual job openings</td>
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<tr>
<td>412031</td>
<td>Retail Salespersons</td>
<td>OJP</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short-term 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>472061</td>
<td>Construction Laborers</td>
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<td>Most projected annual job openings</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short-term 2</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>475011</td>
<td>Derrick Operators, Oil &amp; Gas</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short-term 1</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>475013</td>
<td>Service Unit Operators, Oil, Gas &amp; Mining</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Moderate-term 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>475071</td>
<td>Roustabouts, Oil &amp; Gas</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>537062</td>
<td>Laborers &amp; Freight, Stock, &amp; Material Movers</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short-term 2</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Training/Experience</td>
<td>Yrs</td>
<td>Job Outlook</td>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>311011</td>
<td>Home Health Aides</td>
<td>Most projected annual job openings</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short-term</td>
<td>2 No</td>
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<tr>
<td>399031</td>
<td>Fitness Trainers &amp; Aerobics Instructors</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short-term</td>
<td>3 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>413021</td>
<td>Insurance Sales Agents</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Moderate-term</td>
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<tr>
<td>471011</td>
<td>First-Line Supervisors/Construction &amp; Extraction Workers</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>5 years or more</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>3 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>472152</td>
<td>Plumbers, Pipefitters &amp; Steamfitters</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
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<td>119051</td>
<td>Food Service Managers</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2 4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>119141</td>
<td>Property, Real Estate &amp; Community Assoc. Mgrs</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>4 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>339032</td>
<td>Security Guards</td>
<td>OJP</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short-term</td>
<td>2 No</td>
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<tr>
<td>351012</td>
<td>Food Preparation &amp; Serving Workers Supervisors</td>
<td>OJP</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2 No</td>
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<tr>
<td>371011</td>
<td>First-Line Supervisors/Housekeeping &amp; Janitorial Workers</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>371012</td>
<td>First-Line Supervisors/Landscaping &amp; Groundskeeping Workers</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>3 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>391021</td>
<td>First-Line Supervisors of Personal Service Workers</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>3 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOC Code</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Employer Needs</td>
<td>Most projected annual job openings</td>
<td>OJT</td>
<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>Moderate-term</td>
<td>Long-term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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<tr>
<td>399021</td>
<td>Personal Care Aides</td>
<td>Most projected annual job openings</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short-term</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>411011</td>
<td>First-Line Supervisors/Retail Sales Workers</td>
<td>OJP</td>
<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>433021</td>
<td>Billing &amp; Posting Clerks</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Moderate-term</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>434051</td>
<td>Customer Service Representatives</td>
<td>OJP</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short-term</td>
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<tr>
<td>435081</td>
<td>Stock Clerks &amp; Order Fillers</td>
<td>Most projected annual job openings</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short-term</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>436014</td>
<td>Secretaries &amp; Admin. Assist., Ex. Legal, Medical &amp; Executive</td>
<td>Most projected annual job openings</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Short-term</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>475081</td>
<td>Helpers--Extraction Workers</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Moderate-term</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>493031</td>
<td>Bus &amp; Truck Mechanics &amp; Diesel Engine Specialists</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Long-term</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>531021</td>
<td>First-Line Supervisors/Helpers, Laborers &amp; Material Movers</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Postsecondary Non-Degree Award or Some College, No Degree**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOC Code</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Employer Needs</th>
<th>Most projected annual job openings</th>
<th>OJT</th>
<th>Less than 5 years</th>
<th>Moderate-term</th>
<th>Long-term</th>
<th>3-5</th>
<th>1-2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>292061</td>
<td>Licensed Practical &amp; Licensed Vocational Nurses</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Table 1: Employer's Employment Needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>319091 Dental Assistants</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>499021 Heating, Air Conditioning &amp; Refrigeration Mech, Installers</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>151151 Computer User Support Specialists</td>
<td>STAR</td>
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<td>None</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>292071 Medical Records &amp; Health Information Technicians</td>
<td>STAR</td>
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<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>311014 Nursing Assistants</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Associate's degree</strong></td>
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<td>151152 Computer Network Support Specialists</td>
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<td>232011 Paralegals &amp; Legal Assistants</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td><strong>Bachelor's degree</strong></td>
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<td>119111 Medical &amp; Health Services Managers</td>
<td>STAR</td>
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<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>None</td>
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<td>132072 Loan Officers</td>
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<td>None</td>
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<td>172051 Civil Engineers</td>
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<td>Y</td>
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<td>None</td>
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<td>211011 Substance Abuse &amp; Behavioral Disorder Counselors</td>
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<td>Y</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>211021 Child, Family &amp; School Social Workers</td>
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<td>None</td>
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<td>291141 Registered Nurses</td>
<td>OJP &amp; STAR</td>
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<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>113011 Administrative Services Managers</td>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>Y for Nursing Homes only</td>
<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>111021 General &amp; Operations Managers</td>
<td>STAR</td>
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<td>5 years or more</td>
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<td>5 years or more</td>
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<td>4-5</td>
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<td>113031</td>
<td>Financial Managers</td>
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<td>STAR</td>
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<td>131151</td>
<td>Training &amp; Development Specialists</td>
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<tr>
<td>131161</td>
<td>Market Research Analysts &amp; Marketing Specialists</td>
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<td>151121</td>
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<td>151132</td>
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<td>STAR</td>
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<tr>
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<td>151142</td>
<td>Network &amp; Computer Systems Administrators</td>
<td>STAR</td>
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<td>192041</td>
<td>Environmental Scientists &amp; Specialists, Incl. Health</td>
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<td>None</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>414011</td>
<td>Sales Reps, Wholesale &amp; Mfg, Tech &amp; Scientific Products</td>
<td>STAR</td>
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<td>None</td>
<td>Moderate-term</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

**Master's degree**

| 211012   | Educational, Guidance, School & Vocational Counselors | STAR | Y | None | None | 5   | 3 |
| 211014   | Mental Health Counselors             | STAR | Y | None | Internship/residency | 5   | 3 |
| 211022   | Healthcare Social Workers            | STAR | Y | None | Internship/residency | 5   | 3 |
| 211023   | Mental Health & Substance Abuse Social Workers | STAR | Y | None | Internship/residency | 5   | 3 |

**Doctoral or professional degree**

<p>| 291069   | Physicians &amp; Surgeons, All Other | OJP  | Y | None | Internship/residency | 5   | No |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Employer's Employment Needs</th>
<th>OJP &amp; STAR</th>
<th>Y</th>
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<th>None</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
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<tr>
<td>291123</td>
<td>Physical Therapists</td>
<td>OJP &amp; STAR</td>
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<td>192012</td>
<td>Physicists</td>
<td>STAR</td>
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<td>251071</td>
<td>Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary</td>
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<td>Less than 5 years</td>
<td>None</td>
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</table>

Job Zone Definitions: 1: Little or no preparation: May require a high school diploma or GED and usually requires little or no previous work-related skill/knowledge/experience. Workers usually need a few days to a few months of on-the-job training.
2: Some preparation: Typically requires a high school diploma or equivalent and some previous work-related skills/knowledge/experience. Workers need a few months to one year of working with experienced employees on the job.
3: Medium preparation: Typically requires training in vocational schools, related on-the-job experience, and/or an associate's degree. Workers typically need previous work-related skills/knowledge/experience and one or two years of experience and informal training with experienced workers on the job.
4: Considerable preparation: Usually requires a four-year bachelor's degree and a considerable amount of work-related skill/knowledge/experience. Workers usually need several years of experience and vocational or on-the-job training.
5: Extensive preparation: Usually requires a graduate degree and extensive work-related
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Employer's Employment Needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>skill/knowledge/experience (often 5+ years). Workers sometimes need on-the-job training, but it is typically assumed he/she already has what is needed to perform the job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>Some preparation to considerable preparation: May require anywhere from a high school diploma or equivalent to a four-year bachelor's degree; some to a considerable amount of previous work-related skills/knowledge/experience; and a few months to several years of experience and vocational on-the-job training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>Medium to considerable preparation: May require anywhere from training in a vocational school or an associate's degree to a four-year bachelor's degree; some to a considerable amount of previous work-related skills/knowledge/experience; and one to several years of experience and vocational on-the-job training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>Medium to extensive preparation: May require anywhere from training in a vocational school or an associate's degree to a graduate degree; some to extensive (usually 5+ years) work-related skills/knowledge/experience; and one to several years of on-the-job training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>Considerable to extensive preparation: Usually requires anywhere from a four-year bachelor's degree to a graduate degree; considerable to extensive work-related skill/knowledge/experience; and several years or more of on-the-job training, although it is sometimes assumed the worker already has</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 1 Employer’s Employment Needs</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what is needed to perform the job. Source: ONET Online</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>STAR Occupation Definitions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: This occupation is either in demand or in high demand. It also has wage that is either high compared to all other occupations or high compared to occupations that require the same typical minimum education.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: This occupation is either in demand or in high demand. It also has wage that is high compared to all other occupations and, in some cases, occupations that require the same typical minimum education.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: This occupation is in high demand and has a wage that is high compared to all other occupations and those that require the same typical minimum education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Licensing Information: <a href="https://www.dws.state.nm.us/en-us/Job-Seekers/Job-Preparation/Licensed-Occupations">https://www.dws.state.nm.us/en-us/Job-Seekers/Job-Preparation/Licensed-Occupations</a>. OJP = Online Job Postings</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education, Experience, OJT, and STEM is from BLS: <a href="https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/occupational-projections-and-characteristics.htm">https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/occupational-projections-and-characteristics.htm</a></td>
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</table>

In May 2016, the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) initiated a survey to gather information on job vacancies within the state. Referred to as the “Job Vacancy Survey,” or JVS, the survey was conducted to research potential workforce shortages and recruiting difficulties in New Mexico. While traditional data on the labor market, such as unemployment rates and employment growth, serve as indicators of economic strength (or weakness), they don’t provide detailed insight into the alignment of supply and demand in the labor market. They also do not identify variables that are driving labor market inefficiencies. That’s why a survey like the JVS can be particularly useful.
Every employer in the state was solicited to complete the JVS. The survey was made available on
the NMDWS website between May 11 and June 30. A letter was sent to employers on May 11 to
request that they participate, with the option to respond online or by phone, email, or mail.
NMDWS received 4,665 usable responses that were used to analyze job vacancies across the
state. Over 600 detailed industries were represented in the responses, and vacant positions
spanned over 350 detailed occupations.

Listed below is a subset of the final study as it applies to helping identify employers’
employment needs. For a complete analysis please see: https://www.dws.state.nm.us/Portals/0/DM/LMI/NM_JVS_.pdf and
https://www.dws.state.nm.us/Portals/0/DM/LMI/NM_JVS_Hiring_Diff.pdf. Reported Reasons for Hiring Difficulties

A lack of applicants was the most common perceived reason positions were difficult to fill,
followed by skills-based reasons and then demand-based reasons. Nearly two-thirds (66.4
percent) of all difficult-to-fill positions were identified as at least partially difficult to fill because
there was a lack of applicants for the position. The most common skills-based reason perceived
to cause hiring difficulties was lack of experience of job candidates; employers identified this as
a reason for 40.7 percent of difficult-to-fill positions. Employers listed lack of other skills or
qualifications as a reason for hiring difficulty for 28.9 percent of difficult-to-fill positions,
followed by lack of education, for 13.3 percent, and lack of required certification, for 13.0
percent. Just over 5 percent of positions were reported as difficult to fill due to other skills-
based reasons.

On the demand-based side, low wages was the most common perceived reason positions were
difficult to fill, having been identified for 8.8 percent of difficult-to-fill positions. Low wages was
followed by commuting distance, at 4.7 percent of difficult-to-fill positions, and undesirable
working conditions, at 2.3 percent. An “other” demand-based reason was identified for 4.6
percent of difficult-to-fill positions. (See Exhibit 11.)
Reported Reasons for Hiring Difficulties by Major Industry Sector

Lack of applicants, lack of experience, and lack of skills or qualifications were among the top three perceived reasons positions were difficult to fill for nearly all major industry sectors. When other reasons were listed amongst the top three, they typically superseded lack of other skills and qualifications. Positions in the agriculture and educational services industry sectors appeared to be at least partially difficult to fill due to a lack of education of candidates. Employers in the utilities, mining, transportation and warehousing, and public administration industry sectors reported lack of a required certification as a major reason positions were difficult to fill. Low wages seemed to be more significant barriers for employers looking to attract candidates within the utilities and arts, entertainment, and recreation industry sectors, while the ability of applicants to pass screenings, most often drug tests, was noted as a major hiring difficulty in mining. (See Exhibit 12.)

Other notable reasons listed as contributing to hiring difficulties varied by industry (as identified as difficulty reasons beyond the top three but that still were reported for 7 percent or more of positions). Both agriculture and utilities reported substantial demand-based barriers, with commuting distance, undesirable working conditions, and location of employment being listed as reasons for one or both industry sectors. Wholesale trade, health care and social assistance, and educational services employers reported measurable hiring difficulties related
to low wages. Lack of education and lack of required certification were common issues that employers across multiple industry sectors perceived as impacting the ability to fill positions.

Reported Reasons for Hiring Difficulties by Major Occupational Group

As with industry sectors, lack of applicants, lack of experience, and lack of skills or qualifications were among the top three perceived reasons positions were difficult to fill for nearly all major occupational groups. Several occupational groups faced greater hiring difficulties due to a lack of required certification than lack of skills or qualifications, including healthcare practitioners and technical; healthcare support; protective service; and transportation and material moving. Surveyed employers seeking to fill healthcare occupations (practitioners and technical as well as support occupations) also reported facing greater challenges from low wages, which could include wages that are comparatively low based on geography and/or occupation. (Notable reasons beyond the top three were identified as those reported for 8 percent or more of positions.) Community and social service occupations were also reported to be difficult to fill due in part to low wages. Education, training, and library and healthcare practitioners and technical positions, which generally require higher levels of education, were reported to be more difficult to fill because candidates lacked education. Both occupational groups were joined by several others that often require more education, such as management, business and
financial operations, computer and mathematical, and architecture and engineering. (See Exhibit 13.)

B. WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA. This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups identified by the State. This includes—

[4] 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; 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.

[5] Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

I. EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

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

II. LABOR MARKET TRENDS

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

III. EDUCATION AND SKILL LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE

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

IV. SKILL GAPS

Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.
New Mexico’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for October 2019 was 4.8 percent, down from 4.9 percent in September 2019, and down from 5.0 percent in October 2018. The U.S. rate for October 2019 was 3.6 percent, up from 3.5 percent in September 2019, and down from 3.8 percent a year earlier. Among states, Alaska, at 6.2 percent, posted the highest unemployment rate for October 2019, with Mississippi’s 5.5 percent ranking second, followed by Washington D.C. at 5.4 percent. New Mexico, Arizona, and West Virginia were tied for the fourth highest unemployment rate at 4.8 percent.
Within the southwestern United States, New Mexico and Arizona had the highest unemployment rate (see Exhibit 1).

When looking at annual averages, the unemployment rate in New Mexico in 2018 was 4.9 percent, 1.0 percentage point higher than the U.S. rate (Exhibit 2). Although New Mexico’s 2018 unemployment rate was the lowest annual rate since 2008, it has been declining more slowly than the U.S. rate. Between 2014 and 2018, the state’s rate fell by 1.8 percentage points, while the nation’s rate fell by 2.3 percentage points.

At 8.3 percent, Luna County had New Mexico’s highest (not seasonally adjusted) unemployment rate in October 2019, followed by McKinley County (6.6 percent) and Catron County (6.4 percent) (Exhibit 3).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Unemployment Rates for the U.S. and N.M.</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>Percentage Point Difference</th>
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<td>United States</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>-2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>-1.8</td>
</tr>
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<td>Bernalillo</td>
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<td>4.5</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catron</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaves</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cibola</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>-2.3</td>
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<td>4.9</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
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<td>4.1</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>De Baca</td>
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<td>Doña Ana</td>
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<td>5.7</td>
<td>-1.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eddy</td>
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<td>3.3</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
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<td>4.9</td>
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<td>Guadalupe</td>
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<td>-2.2</td>
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<td>-3.7</td>
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<td>3.8</td>
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<td>Lea</td>
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<td>Lincoln</td>
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<td>4.6</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
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<td>Los Alamos</td>
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<td>Luna</td>
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<td>-3.6</td>
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<td>Roosevelt</td>
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<td>4.3</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
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<td>San Juan</td>
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<td>5.8</td>
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<td>5.9</td>
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<td>Santa Fe</td>
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<td>4.1</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las Cruces MSA</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>-1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe MSA</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Workforce Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>-1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwestern</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>-2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: LAUS program*
Los Alamos and Eddy Counties tied for the lowest October 2019 unemployment rate in the state with 3.1 percent each. Union County had an unemployment rate of 3.3 percent, the third lowest in the state. The county with the largest over-the-year decrease was Torrance County (1.1 percentage points), while Socorro County had the largest over-the-year increase (0.5 percentage point), followed by Hidalgo County (0.2 percentage point).

When comparing annual averages, all counties in New Mexico, except one, had unemployment rates that fell between 2014 and 2018 (Exhibit 4). Luna County dropped the most (6.2 percentage points) but its 2018 rate was still nearly two and a half times the rate of the state as a whole. Only one county (Harding) experienced an increase in unemployment rate between 2014 and 2018. The scale of Harding’s rate increase was at least partially related to the small population and labor force of that county.

The unemployment rates of all four of New Mexico’s MSAs and the state’s workforce regions fell over the same four-year time frame. The Albuquerque MSA unemployment rate fell the most (1.8 percentage points) while the unemployment rate for the Farmington MSA fell the least (0.8 percentage point). Although the Southwestern Workforce Region had the biggest decrease, its 2018 unemployment rate remained high at 6.1 percent. The Eastern Workforce Region had the lowest unemployment rate in 2018 (4.3 percent).

**Employment**

Since the end of the Great Recession, New Mexico’s employment has grown slower than the nation as a whole. Exhibit 5 shows total nonagricultural payroll employment, normalized to 1.0 in December 2007. It has taken the state until May 2019, a full 137 months, to reach the December 2007 employment high of 855,400.

Exhibit 6 shows year-over-year employment percent change for the four New Mexico Workforce Regions. Employment is the most volatile in the Eastern region, an area of the state highly dependent on the oil industry. Employment in the Southwestern region rebounded from the Great Recession rather quickly but growth somewhat stabilized until 2017. The Central
Region, the state’s most populous region, only showed employment growth of over one percent starting in 2015.

Only recently has New Mexico’s private employment growth outpaced many other states in the nation. Total nonagricultural payroll employment in New Mexico grew by 17,800 jobs, or 2.1 percent, between October 2018 and October 2019. Most of the gains came from the private sector, which was up 16,200 jobs, or 2.5 percent. New Mexico was ranked 6th (jointly with Nevada) at 2.5 percent for over-the-year not seasonally adjusted private job growth, up from 2.4 percent in September (revised). The national private over-the-year job growth rate was 1.5 percent, down from 1.6 percent in September. Utah posted the highest rate of 3.7 percent. Michigan posted the lowest rate (-0.3 percent).

Exhibit 7 displays employment change, by New Mexico county, MSA, and Workforce Region, for 2014 and 2018. Fifteen counties lost employment, 17 gained employment, and one (Catron County) had no change in employment. San Juan County lost the most jobs (2,934), followed by Lea (1,571) and Colfax (599). Harding County lost the greatest percent (19.4), which only totaled 39 jobs. Bernalillo County gained the most jobs (15,355) and the county with the greatest percentage increase was Valencia, increasing 15.1 percent for a total of 1,975 jobs. Consequently, the area with the strongest employment growth was the Albuquerque MS/Central Workforce Region. The Farmington MSA lost employment of 2,550, or 4.9 percent, while the Northern Workforce Region saw the slowest employment growth of all regions in the state (employment increase of 1,162, or 0.6 percent).
### Employment for the U.S. and N.M., 2014–2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>145,305,000</td>
<td>165,761,000</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>869,568</td>
<td>893,823</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernalillo</td>
<td>302,055</td>
<td>314,530</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catron</td>
<td>1,095</td>
<td>1,045</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>(50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaves</td>
<td>26,576</td>
<td>26,818</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cibola</td>
<td>6,337</td>
<td>8,366</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colfax</td>
<td>5,794</td>
<td>5,209</td>
<td>-10.1%</td>
<td>(585)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curry</td>
<td>20,699</td>
<td>20,751</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Baca</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>-8.9%</td>
<td>(72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doña Ana</td>
<td>87,556</td>
<td>91,299</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3,743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddy</td>
<td>27,904</td>
<td>30,331</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>2,427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>11,752</td>
<td>11,647</td>
<td>-0.9%</td>
<td>(105)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guadalupe</td>
<td>1,498</td>
<td>1,534</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harding</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>-11.0%</td>
<td>(36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidalgo</td>
<td>2,005</td>
<td>2,106</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lea</td>
<td>29,516</td>
<td>28,642</td>
<td>-3.0%</td>
<td>(874)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>8,319</td>
<td>8,306</td>
<td>-0.2%</td>
<td>(13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Alamos</td>
<td>8,153</td>
<td>8,790</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luna</td>
<td>9,362</td>
<td>8,904</td>
<td>-4.9%</td>
<td>(458)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKinley</td>
<td>21,632</td>
<td>22,111</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mora</td>
<td>2,026</td>
<td>2,127</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otero</td>
<td>23,320</td>
<td>23,398</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quay</td>
<td>3,103</td>
<td>3,047</td>
<td>-1.8%</td>
<td>(56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio Arriba</td>
<td>15,141</td>
<td>15,802</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>7,714</td>
<td>7,533</td>
<td>-2.3%</td>
<td>(131)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Juan</td>
<td>52,058</td>
<td>49,508</td>
<td>-4.9%</td>
<td>(2,550)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Miguel</td>
<td>10,168</td>
<td>10,239</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandoval</td>
<td>57,119</td>
<td>61,416</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>4,297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe</td>
<td>69,048</td>
<td>70,909</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>1,861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>3,506</td>
<td>3,608</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socorro</td>
<td>6,031</td>
<td>6,112</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taos</td>
<td>13,612</td>
<td>14,010</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torrance</td>
<td>5,054</td>
<td>5,176</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td>1,825</td>
<td>1,714</td>
<td>-5.1%</td>
<td>(111)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valencia</td>
<td>27,385</td>
<td>28,534</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>1,199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MSA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MSA</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albuquerque MSA</td>
<td>391,613</td>
<td>409,706</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>18,093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmington MSA</td>
<td>52,058</td>
<td>49,508</td>
<td>-4.9%</td>
<td>(2,550)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las Cruces MSA</td>
<td>87,556</td>
<td>91,299</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3,743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe MSA</td>
<td>69,048</td>
<td>70,909</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>1,861</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Workforce Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>391,613</td>
<td>409,706</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>18,093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>150,582</td>
<td>162,075</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1,493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>205,959</td>
<td>207,121</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>1,162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwestern</td>
<td>121,407</td>
<td>124,921</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>3,514</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: LAUS program
As of 2018, 57.6 percent of New Mexico's population 16 and older participated in the labor force (Exhibit 6). This rate was 5.3 percentage points lower than the U.S. rate of 62.9 percent. Labor force participation rates nationwide have generally been falling since the late 1990s. From 2014 to 2018, New Mexico's rate fell 0.4 percentage point, from 58.0 percent to 57.6. During that same period, the U.S. rate held steady at 62.9 percent, with the rate seeing a slight decrease in 2015 and 2016.

The labor force participation rates by county for 2018 are shown in Exhibit 9. The rates vary from a high of 67.4 percent in Los Alamos County to a low of 26.4 percent in Catron County. Only eight counties (Bernalillo, Curry, Eddy, Lea, Los Alamos, Roosevelt, Sandoval, and Santa Fe) had a higher labor force participation rate than the statewide average of 58.8 percent (please note that the source of the state rate differ than that found in the previous section). Labor force participation rates are used for evaluating the health of an area's economy. Typically, higher labor force participation rates point towards a strong economy that is providing employment opportunities for the population.
Individuals with Barriers to Employment

Single Parents

New Mexico has a higher proportion of single-parent families than the national average. In 2018, 19.0 percent of all households, or 151,126 households in New Mexico were headed by a single parent with no spouse present, a rate higher than the national rate of 17.3 percent. Of those New Mexican households that were headed by a single parent, 50.5 percent had children under the age of 18 living in the household, a rate slightly higher than the national rate of 49.9 percent. As seen in the exhibit 10, the percent of all households headed by a single parent with their own children under the age of 18 years old has been historically higher in New Mexico than the U.S.
Compared to the U.S., New Mexico also has a higher rate of households that are headed by grandparents who were responsible for taking care of their under-18 year old grandchildren. In 2018, one out of every two households in which a New Mexican grandparent lived with their under 18-year old grandchildren, the grandparent was responsible for their upbringing. This totaled 26,125 households. The national rate was 33.7 percent, or 1 in 3 households.

Men had the highest labor force participation rates in the U.S. and New Mexico in 2018 (Exhibit 11). Women with children who were less than six years old had the lowest labor force participation rates among all men and women with or without children. Females with children between the ages of six and 17 had the highest labor force participation rate and lowest unemployment rates among all women.
Low Income & Poverty

12. Labor Force Participation and Unemployment Rates of Persons Living in Poverty

2018

Percentage in the Labor Force

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>New Mexico</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income at or Above Poverty Level</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Below Poverty Level</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2018, persons living below the poverty level in New Mexico participated in the labor force at a much lower rate (40.7 percent) than persons not living in poverty (62.7 percent) (Exhibit 12). This trend held true at the national level as well, with 41.5 percent of the population in poverty participating in the labor force versus 67.7 percent of the population not living in poverty.

13 New Mexico Poverty Rate by Age Group, 2015–2018

Source: ACS 1-Yr Estimates, Table S17005

Source: ACS 1-Yr Estimates, Table S1701
Persons struggling with poverty also experienced much higher unemployment rates. In New Mexico, the unemployment rate for those in poverty was 22.3 percent, 17.5 percentage points higher than the rate for those not in poverty (5.0 percent). Nationally, the unemployment rate of the population in poverty was 22.9 percent, 18.6 percentage points higher than the rate for those not in poverty.

New Mexico has had a higher poverty rate than the national average in 2018 and had the second-highest poverty rate in the country (19.5 percent), with about 399,496 persons living in poverty. The national rate was 13.1 percent. Over one in four New Mexican children less than five years of age (28.4 percent, or about 32,985 children) lived in poverty in 2018 (Exhibit 13). Slightly more than one in four New Mexican children (25.7 percent) between the ages of five and 17 lived in poverty, while the national average was 17.5 percent. About 48,423 New Mexicans 65 years and over lived in poverty in 2018; the poverty rate for persons in this age group was 13.3 percent, the second highest in the country and 3.9 percentage points higher than the national average of 9.4 percent.
The U.S. Census Bureau also recently released poverty rates by county using data from the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) Program. As seen in Exhibit 14, Los Alamos County had the lowest overall poverty rate in the state (3.9 percent) and the lowest poverty rate for children less than 18 years of age (3.1 percent). At 32.3 percent, McKinley County had the highest rate of poverty in the state. Although the rate decreased from last year’s rate of 37.8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>2018 Poverty Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernalillo</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catron</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaves</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cibola</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colfax</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curry</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Baca</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doña Ana</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddy</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guadalupe</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harding</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidalgo</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lea</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Alamos</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luna</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKinley</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mora</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otero</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quay</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio Arriba</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Juan</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Miguel</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandoval</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socorro</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taos</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torrance</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valencia</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2018 5-Year ACS Estimates, Table S1602
percent, both rates were within each other’s margin of error. McKinley County also had the highest rate of school-age children living in poverty (42.8 percent).

English Language Learners

In 2018, 5.3 percent of households (41,207 households) in New Mexico were limited-English speaking, compared to 4.4 percent for the country as a whole (Exhibit 15). According to the Census Department, a “limited English-speaking household” is one in which no member 14 years and over speaks only English or speaks a non-English language and speaks English “very well.” In other words, all members 14 years and over have at least some difficulty with English. San Miguel County had the highest rate of households that were limited English speakers (13.7 percent), while Sierra County had the lowest (1.0 percent). S1602 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Long-Term Unemployed

In 2018 the median unemployment duration was 10.6 weeks, compared to 9.3 weeks for the U.S. But when looking at the average, the unemployment duration for New Mexico was 26.2 weeks, compared to the U.S. mean of 22.7 weeks (Exhibit 16). The large differences between the average and median unemployment duration means that there are persons that are long-term unemployed.

Looking at the data, about 12,000 New Mexicans, or slightly more than one in four unemployed persons (26.7 percent), were unemployed 27 weeks or more. In the U.S., slightly more than one in five unemployed persons (21.4 percent) were unemployed 27 weeks or more. In New Mexico, of those that were unemployed 27 weeks or more, 7,000 of them, or 58.4 percent, were unemployed 52 weeks or more.
In 2018, the number of New Mexicans who were of the American Indian and Alaska Native race or a combination of one or more other races (including American Indian and Alaska Native) was 224,547, or 10.7 percent of the entire population, much higher than the national average of 1.7 percent (Exhibit 17). The only state with a higher percentage of American Indians and Alaskan Natives was Alaska, at 19.7 percent. The New Mexico county with the highest rate of American Indians was San Juan County, of which part is included in the Navajo Nation.
In 2018, the labor force participation rate for each racial/ethnic group in New Mexico was equal to or higher than the all-race/ethnicity average (58.0 percent), except for that of American Indians (55.3 percent, 3.0 percentage points lower than the New Mexico average) (Exhibit 18). Rates that fell at or above the average ranged between 58.0 percent (persons identifying as White) and 63.7 percent (persons identifying as Asian).

American Indians not only had the lowest labor force participation in 2018, they also experienced the highest unemployment rate (15.1 percent), over twice the unemployment rate for all-race/ethnicity average (7.2 percent). Other rates ranged from 5.1 percent (persons identifying as Asian) and 8.9 percent (persons identifying as Black/African American). The unemployment rates for persons identifying as Asian and persons identifying as White alone were the only rates that fell below the all-race/ethnicity average of 7.2 percent.

18. Labor Force Participation and Unemployment Rates by Race and Ethnicity, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Races &amp; Ethnicities</th>
<th>UR</th>
<th>7.2%</th>
<th>LFP</th>
<th>58.0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td>58.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td>60.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td></td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td>55.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td>63.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Race</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td>59.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two/More Races</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>59.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino (All Races)</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td>60.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2018 5-Year Estimates Table S2301
Youth

Slightly more than half of New Mexico youth aged 16–19 who were not enrolled in school were either unemployed or not in the labor force, higher than the national rate of 47.5 percent (Exhibit 19). (This figure includes high school graduates, including equivalency, and those that did not receive a diploma.) Two New Mexico counties had rates of 100 percent–Mora and Catron–mostly due to the low population in those counties.

The labor force participation rate of New Mexicans aged 20–24 in 2018 was 73.1 percent, lower than the national average of 74.6 percent. Harding County had the highest labor force participation rate (100 percent) while Mora County had the lowest (29.5 percent). In 2018, about one in eight New Mexicans aged 20–24 were unemployed. At 73.2 percent, Mora County had the largest unemployment rate for workers in this age group. Those counties that reported an unemployment rate of zero have low population and high margins of error.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Labor Force Participation Rate</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>74.6%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>73.1%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernalillo</td>
<td>77.2%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catron</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaves</td>
<td>71.1%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cibola</td>
<td>69.5%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colfax</td>
<td>86.2%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curry</td>
<td>87.0%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Baca</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doña Ana</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddy</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>80.2%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guadalupe</td>
<td>59.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harding</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidalgo</td>
<td>69.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lea</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Alamos</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luna</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKinley</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mora</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otero</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quay</td>
<td>66.4%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio Arriba</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>79.8%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Juan</td>
<td>67.8%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Miguel</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandoval</td>
<td>68.9%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>83.5%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socorro</td>
<td>65.9%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taos</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torrance</td>
<td>65.6%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valencia</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates Table S2301
19. Percentage of Out-of-School Youth Ages 16-19 Who Were Unemployed or Not in the Labor Force, 2018

San Juan 54.0
Rio Arriba NA
Los Alamos 0.0
Taos 64.3
Colfax 18.1
Union 0.0
Mora 100.0
Harding 0.0
Quay 40.6
Curry 44.8
Roosevelt 52.8
Guadalupe 0.0
De Baca 0.0
Chaves 40.9
Lea 39.1
Otero 42.8
Eddy 52.4
Dona Ana 60.8
Luna 55.1
Hidalgo 70.4
Sierra 88.1
Socorro 65.9
Bernalillo 43.0
Valencia 61.1
Torrance 71.9
Lincoln 39.7

U.S. 47.5 percent
New Mexico: 51.0 percent

Source: 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates Table B14005
Out-of-school youth are defined as those not enrolled in school, regardless of graduation status
In 2018 there were approximately 148,264 veterans living in New Mexico, representing 9.3 percent of the state’s population 16 years old and over. New Mexico was tied with Nevada and Oklahoma South Carolina for ninth in the nation for concentration of veterans.

In 2018, 45.7 percent of New Mexico’s military veterans participated in the labor force, a rate that was 15.4 percentage points lower than the rate for non-veterans (61.1 percent) (Exhibit 21). Veterans nationwide had a lower participation rate than non-veterans (49.2 percent versus 65.5 percent, respectively).

While veterans were less likely to participate in the labor force as of 2018, those that were participating were less likely to be unemployed. In New Mexico, the unemployment rate for the veteran population was 4.5 percent, 0.1 percentage points lower than the rate for the non-veteran population. New Mexico’s veterans had a comparatively lower unemployment rate than veterans nationwide. The average unemployment rate for veterans across the country was 3.5 percent, 0.3 percentage point lower than the rate for non-veterans in New Mexico.

Veterans are almost more than twice as likely to have a disability compared to non-veterans. As of 2018, 31.5 percent of New Mexico veterans reported having a disability, either service-related or not, compared to 17.4 percent of non-veterans. Fortunately, veterans are less likely to live in poverty compared to the rest of the population. In the United States, the percentage of veterans living below the poverty line in 2018 was 6.9 percent, compared to 12.9 percent of non-veterans. In New Mexico, 8.7 percent of veterans lived below the poverty line, compared to 18.5 percent for non-veterans. Additionally, the median annual income of New Mexico veterans was $39,890. This was higher that the median annual income of New Mexico non-veterans ($24,178) by $15,712.

The concentration of veterans in New Mexico’s counties ranged from 4.8 percent (Lea) to 17.3 percent (De Baca) (Exhibit 22). The veteran population exceeded 10.0 percent of the total
population in 15 counties and equaled or exceeded 15.0 percent in four counties. White Sands Missile Range and Holloman Air Force Base, both located in Otero County, likely contributed to that county’s large concentration of veterans, which was the second highest (16.9 percent). Curry County is the home of Canon Air Force Base which likely explains the large concentration of veterans in the county (14.2 percent). De Baca and Sierra counties are large retirement communities, relatively near military facilities, which may explain their large veteran communities. Harding’s large concentration was, in part, due to its small total population.

22. Veterans as a Percentage of Total Population, 2018
Individuals with Disabilities

23. Labor Force Participation and Unemployment Rates of the Population Living With A Disability
2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage in the Labor Force</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>New Mexico</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81.1%</td>
<td>77.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41.6%</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unemployment Rate</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>New Mexico</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimate Table C16120

In 2018, persons living in New Mexico who reported having a disability participated in the labor force at a much lower rate (37.6 percent) than persons without a disability (77.1 percent) (Exhibit 23). This trend held true at the national level as well, with 41.6 percent of the population with a disability participating in the labor force versus 81.1 percent of the population without a disability.

Unemployment rates for the population with a disability were also much higher than the rates for the population without a disability. In New Mexico, the unemployment rate for persons with a disability was 14.9 percent, 8.3 percentage points higher than the rate for persons without a disability. At the national level, the rate for those with a disability was 13.0 percent, 7.6 percentage points higher than the rate for those without a disability.
In 2018, more than one in two disabled Americans, or 58.4 percent, were not in the labor force (Exhibit 24). This rate was four percentage points higher in New Mexico. The county with the highest rate of the disabled not in the labor force was Guadalupe at 85.3 percent, while the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>24. Percent of Population With a Disability, by Employment Status</th>
<th>Not in labor force</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernalillo</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catron</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaves</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cibola</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colfax</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curry</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Baca</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doña Ana</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddy</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guadalupe</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harding</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidalgo</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lea</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Alamos</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luna</td>
<td>25.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKinley</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mora</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otero</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quay</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio Arriba</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Juan</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Miguel</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandoval</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe</td>
<td>38.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socorro</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taos</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torrance</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valencia</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: 2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates table C18120*

*Data for Rio Arriba County was not available.*
county with the highest rate of the disabled who were employed was Los Alamos at 43.9 percent. Cibola County had the highest rate of the disabled that were also unemployed.

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

Industry Trends for the State

More than 40 percent of the growth in private sector employment from October 2018 to October 2019 came from the mining and construction industry. Within mining and construction, construction was up 5,300 jobs, or 11.2 percent. Mining added 1,400 jobs, which represented over-the-year growth of 5.6 percent. Other industries that increased include leisure and hospitality (up 5,400 jobs, or 5.5 percent) and professional and business services (up 1,600 jobs, or 1.5 percent.)

Between 2014 through 2018, the major industry sector that experienced the largest numeric and percentage growth in New Mexico was education and health services (Exhibit 1). With an increase of 3,025 jobs, the industry’s employment grew by 2.4 percent. The industry’s employment growth rate in New Mexico was only 0.2 percentage points less than that reported in the nation as a whole. Other industries with percentage growth of 1.0 percent or more included leisure and hospitality (1.9 percent) and professional and business services (1.8 percent).

Four major industry sectors reported a decline in employment over the five-year period, with the largest percentage loss occurring in information (-1.2 percent). Manufacturing; government; and trade, transportation, and utilities all reported employment losses as well. Nationally, no major industry sector reported losses over the period. The mining and construction sector saw the biggest disparity between New Mexico’s growth rate and the nation as a whole. The industry reported the fastest growth in the nation between 2014 and 2018, 3.5 percent, while in New Mexico the industry’s employment grew by only 0.4 percent. This disparity falls mainly on the construction subsector. Employment in the mining subsector shrank both in the U.S. and in New Mexico, but at a faster rate nationally. The construction subsector grew in both geographies, but growth nationally was much more robust than in New Mexico.
The location quotient (LQ) is a measure used to identify industry specialization. An LQ is essentially a ratio of ratios that measures the concentration of an industry’s employment against the concentration of that industry’s employment in a larger reference area (e.g., the state or nation). If an LQ is equal to 1, the industry has the same share of its area employment as it does in the larger reference area. An LQ greater than 1 indicates an industry with a greater share of the local area employment than is the case in the larger reference area. An LQ less than 1 indicates an industry with a lesser share of the local area employment than is the case in the larger reference area.

### 2. Private Industry Employment and Location Quotients

**2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>LQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Mexico</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining, Oil &amp; Gas Extraction</td>
<td>24,554</td>
<td>6.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>11,266</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>4,313</td>
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<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>47,252</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accomodation &amp; Food Serv</td>
<td>97,749</td>
<td>1.13</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Central</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mgmt of Companies</td>
<td>3,698</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>16,023</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin &amp; Waste Serv</td>
<td>24,703</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance &amp; Insurance</td>
<td>12,439</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eastern</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining, Oil &amp; Gas Extraction</td>
<td>15,382</td>
<td>3.79</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
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<td>Transp. &amp; Warehousing</td>
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<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>1,104</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northern</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Entert &amp; Recreation</td>
<td>2,960</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Technical</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Services</td>
<td>2,552</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services</td>
<td>5664</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Southwestern</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>4,699</td>
<td>3.42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Care &amp; Social Asst</td>
<td>18,553</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomodation &amp; Food Serv</td>
<td>10,293</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: QCEW & author's calculations
** Data not available

There are several major private-sector industries in which the share of employment in New Mexico was notably greater than the share in the nation as of 2018 (Exhibit 2). The mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction industry in New Mexico had an LQ of 6.49, making it the industry with the largest LQ in the state. New Mexico was the fourth highest producer of crude
oil in 2018, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Agriculture had an LQ of 1.59 as of 2018, the second largest LQ of all industries.

Industries with the lowest LQs in New Mexico in 2018, indicating comparatively smaller concentrations of employment in the state than in the nation, included manufacturing and management of companies. Each industry had an LQ in 2018 of less than 0.50.

New Mexico’s four workforce regions each have their own unique industry concentrations, and LQs, calculated by comparing regional industry employment share to state industry employment share.

The private sector industries with employment concentrations that were larger in the Central Region than in the state as of 2018 included management of companies and enterprises (1.43), manufacturing (1.28), and information (1.27). The Eastern Region had comparatively large concentrations of employment in the mining and oil and gas extraction industry. The Eastern and Southwestern Regions both had comparatively large concentrations of employment in agriculture. Utilities had a large LQ in the Northern, Eastern, and Southwestern Regions. Industries with high LQs that were unique to a region included transportation and warehousing (Eastern); arts, entertainment, and recreation, and educational services (Northern); and health care and social assistance (Southwestern).

Occupation Trends

In 2018, employment was estimated for over 750 detailed occupations in New Mexico. As seen in Exhibit 3, about one in every eight jobs in New Mexico were for secretaries and administrative assistants (except legal, medical, and executive), personal care aides, retail salespersons, and combined food preparation and serving workers (including fast food). No detailed occupation had employment that exceed 3.4 percent of total employment.
Twelve detailed occupations had employment of more than 10,000 as of 2018. Of these occupations, just four had a median wage above the all-occupation median ($34,120). Those three included general and operations managers ($85,950); registered nurses ($71,310); supervisors of office and administrative support workers ($50,800); and heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers ($41,310).

Exhibit 4 shows the three largest occupations in the U.S., New Mexico, and four New Mexico Workforce Region for 2010 and 2018. The decline in the share of retail salespersons throughout all areas reflects the increase of automation and the increase use of online retail establishments. The increase in the share of personal care aides reflects the growing number of older people in the population.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median Wage</strong></td>
<td><strong>#1</strong></td>
<td><strong>#2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>U.S.</strong></td>
<td>$31,560</td>
<td>$31,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Mexico</strong></td>
<td>$30,116</td>
<td>Cashiers 2.4%, $18,392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central</strong></td>
<td>$33,245</td>
<td>Cashiers 2.1%, $15,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eastern</strong></td>
<td>$27,449</td>
<td>Secretaries &amp; Admin. Asst. 3.4%, $20,671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northern</strong></td>
<td>$31,607</td>
<td>Cashiers 2.8%, $18,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Southwestern</strong></td>
<td>$27,071</td>
<td>Retail Salesperson 3.0%, $19,414</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Combined Food Prep & Serving Workers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Median Wage</strong></th>
<th><strong>#1</strong></th>
<th><strong>#2</strong></th>
<th><strong>#3</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>U.S.</strong></td>
<td>$14,446</td>
<td>$14,120</td>
<td>Secretaries &amp; Admin. Asst. 3.4%, $19,330</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>New Mexico</strong></td>
<td>$13,272</td>
<td>Secretaries &amp; Admin. Asst. 3.4%, $19,910</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central</strong></td>
<td>$14,130</td>
<td>Retail Salesperson 3.4%, $23,170</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eastern</strong></td>
<td>$13,106</td>
<td>Secretaries &amp; Admin. Asst. 3.3%, $20,771</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northern</strong></td>
<td>$14,162</td>
<td>Secretaries &amp; Admin. Asst. 3.3%, $14,441</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Southwestern</strong></td>
<td>$14,526</td>
<td>Personal Care Aides 4.5%, $19,048</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** DES
(iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce. Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

1. Population by Educational Attainment Level (% of Total) 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>New Mexico</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate or Professional Degree</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s Degree</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College, No Degree</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate (or Equiv.)</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th to 12th, No Diploma</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Than 9th Grade</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Change in New Mexico Population by Educational Attainment Level (Percentage Point) 2014–2018

- Graduate or Professional Degree: +0.5
- Bachelor’s Degree: +0.5
- Associate’s Degree: +0.5
- Some College, No Degree: -0.4
- High School Graduate (or Equiv.): +0.1
- 9th to 12th, No Diploma: -0.4
- Less Than 9th Grade: -0.3

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates Table S1501

The share of the New Mexico population that had not completed high school as of 2018 was 14.7 percent, a share that was 2.3 percentage points higher than the U.S. share of 12.4 percent (Exhibit 1). About 26.4 percent of the state’s population 25 years and over had completed high school as of 2018, while 27.1 percent of the U.S. population had completed high school. The
share of the New Mexico population that had attained a mid-level of education (some college or an associate's degree, at 31.7 percent) was 2.6 percentage points higher than the share of the U.S. population (29.1 percent). Persons with a bachelor’s degree or more comprised 27.1 percent of the state's population, a share that was 4.4 percentage points lower than the U.S. share of 31.5 percent.

The education level attained by New Mexico's population has increased in recent years. Between 2014 and 2018, the share of the New Mexico population with an associate’s, bachelor’s, and graduate or professional degree increased by 0.5 percentage point each. The share of the New Mexico population with an educational attainment of some college but no degree or less decreased by 0.4 percent over the same time period.
# Educational Attainment for the Population 25 Years Old and Over, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>12th Grade or Less, No Diploma</th>
<th>High School Grad or Eqv.</th>
<th>Some College, No Degree</th>
<th>Associate’s or Higher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>U.S.</strong></td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>39.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NM</strong></td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernalillo</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catron</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaves</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cibola</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colfax</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curry</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Baca</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doña Ana</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddy</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>36.0%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guadalupe</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harding</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidalgo</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lea</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Alamos</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>74.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luna</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKinlay</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mora</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otero</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quay</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio Arriba</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandoval</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Juan</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Miguel</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>39.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socorro</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taos</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torrance</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
<td>42.1%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valencia</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates Table S1501
Los Alamos county, at 74.9 percent, had the highest rate of the population 25 years and over with an associate’s degree or higher, while De Baca, at 1.7 percent, had the lowest (Exhibit 2). In Los Alamos County, only 2.1 percent of the population 25 years and over did not have a high school diploma or equivalent, compared to 31.4 percent in Luna County, with 31.4 percent of the population did not have a high school diploma or equivalent.

The New Mexico Public Education Department tracks graduation rates on an annual basis. As of 2018, 73.9 percent of New Mexico’s high school students graduated from a public school district (Exhibit 3). This was an increase of 4.6 percentage point from 2014.

Some subgroups of the student population face greater challenges when it comes to completing high school. About 70.6 percent of New Mexico’s male students who were enrolled in a public school district graduated in 2018, compared to 77.2 percent of female students. While the graduation rate for Asian students reached 86.0 percent, the graduation rate for the state’s Native American students reached just 65.8 percent. Of students who were economically disadvantaged, had a disability or disabilities, were learning English, or were homeless, it was students who were homeless that had the lowest graduation rate (52.5 percent).

Graduation rates for all racial/ethnic groups increased between 2014 and 2018 (2014 graduation rates for homeless students are not available). The largest increase in graduation rates (5.5 percentage points) occurred for Hispanic students. The lowest increase in graduation rates (0.6 percentage points) occurred for Asian students. Looking at the three non-race/ethnicity categories that were measured in both 2014 and 2018, the largest increase (8.2 percentage points) occurred for students with disabilities.
### 3. Graduation Rates (% of 4-Year Cohort) 2014–2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>69.3</td>
<td>73.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>77.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td>70.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>79.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>69.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>67.6</td>
<td>73.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>85.4</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>65.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students With Disabilities</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>65.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Learners</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>71.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless</td>
<td></td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data not available for 2014

Source: New Mexico Public Education Department, 4-Year Graduation Rates, [http://web.nmped.state.nm.us/bureaus/accountability/graduation/](http://web.nmped.state.nm.us/bureaus/accountability/graduation/)

Schools are counted only if they have at least one grade combination between the ninth and twelfth grades (cohort). Rates are not calculated for schools with fewer than four student records. District rates include locally-authorized schools and non-school locations.

---

Skill Gaps. Describe apparent ‘skill gaps’.

Job Vacancy Results
### 1. Computers and Internet Use, for the U.S., NM & NM County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total number of households</th>
<th>Percent of households with a computer</th>
<th>Percent of households with broadband internet subscription</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. *</td>
<td>121,520,138</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
<td>85.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM</td>
<td>794,093</td>
<td>87.9%</td>
<td>76.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernalillo *</td>
<td>270,655</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td>82.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catron</td>
<td>1,433</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
<td>55.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaves *</td>
<td>22,616</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
<td>71.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cibola</td>
<td>9,068</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colfax</td>
<td>5,591</td>
<td>74.9%</td>
<td>62.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curry</td>
<td>18,470</td>
<td>85.4%</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Baca</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>77.0%</td>
<td>64.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doña Ana *</td>
<td>80,409</td>
<td>87.3%</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddy</td>
<td>21,273</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
<td>76.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>11,879</td>
<td>80.5%</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guadalupe</td>
<td>1,253</td>
<td>43.7%</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harding</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>57.6%</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidalgo</td>
<td>1,761</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lea *</td>
<td>23,215</td>
<td>90.7%</td>
<td>80.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lea</td>
<td>22,029</td>
<td>82.2%</td>
<td>73.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>7,902</td>
<td>78.2%</td>
<td>64.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Alamos</td>
<td>7,525</td>
<td>91.9%</td>
<td>86.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luna</td>
<td>9,088</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
<td>51.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKinley *</td>
<td>21,449</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mora</td>
<td>1,513</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otero *</td>
<td>23,747</td>
<td>92.0%</td>
<td>81.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quay</td>
<td>3,885</td>
<td>67.9%</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio Arriba</td>
<td>12,852</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>49.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>7,125</td>
<td>81.5%</td>
<td>71.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Juan *</td>
<td>43,707</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Miguel</td>
<td>11,041</td>
<td>64.9%</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandoval *</td>
<td>53,996</td>
<td>89.3%</td>
<td>86.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe *</td>
<td>62,707</td>
<td>87.9%</td>
<td>83.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>5,400</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socorro</td>
<td>4,698</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>53.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taos</td>
<td>12,603</td>
<td>74.7%</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torrance</td>
<td>5,398</td>
<td>79.1%</td>
<td>59.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td>1,424</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td>55.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valencia *</td>
<td>28,379</td>
<td>88.1%</td>
<td>75.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Job Vacancy Survey analyses produced from the 2016 survey, several high-level findings were identified. The first analysis found that misalignment between specific employer requirements of education and experience and standard requirements was likely contributing to labor market inefficiencies, although the degree to which that was the case is not measured in this analysis. (Note that the first analysis discussed other important considerations related to the measured misalignment in more depth.) The second analysis found that a large percentage of surveyed employers were having difficulty filling vacant positions, and those employers reported a variety of hiring difficulties related to supply-, skill-, and demand-based issues. Surveyed employers saw a lack of applicants across nearly all industries and occupational groups, particularly for low-skill and high-skill positions.

Hiring difficulties related to candidates lacking skills and qualifications and experience were also widespread across most industries, occupations, and skill levels, albeit to a lesser degree than difficulties related to a lack of candidates. Beyond these reasons (and lack of candidates), the perceived causes of hiring difficulties varied by industry and occupational group and often correlated to specific characteristics of those industries and occupations (e.g., jobs with utilities employers are often in remote or rural areas, generating more difficulty due to job location). An analysis of hiring difficulties by skill level illuminated interesting trends. High-skill positions were perceived as more difficult to fill due to candidates lacking the required education and, to some degree, required certifications. Middle-skill positions were perceived as more difficult to fill due to a lack of required certifications. Employers seeking to fill low-skill positions reported low wages and a lack of soft skills and the ability for candidates to pass screenings as more common reasons for hiring difficulties.

**Computer & Internet Access**

*Exhibit 1 shows the percent of households with a computer and the percent of households with a broadband Internet subscription. The rates for New Mexican households are below the national average by 3.9 percentage points and 8.2 percentage points, respectively. This is a gap in technological and informational access. It could also signal a skills gap since persons living in households that do not have a computer with broadband Internet subscription may not be as computer literate as those with a computer with broadband Internet.*

**WorkKeys**

*In calendar year 2019, over 12,000 WorkKeys assessments were taken by both employed and unemployed individuals. A skills gap can be identified by comparing the recommended median skill level for the occupations listed in Table 2 to the results of the WorkKeys assessments.*

For example, Registered Nurses, which typically requires a bachelor’s degree, recommends a median test score of 3 in Business Writing; however, one test taker received a score of 2. This difference identifies a skills gap. All assessments that do not meet the median test score of at least one occupation listed in Table 2 is highlighted in yellow.
Table 2. ACT WorkKeys Skill Profile for Occupations Listed in Table 1 Employers’ Employment Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOC</th>
<th>Occupation Title</th>
<th>Applied Tech</th>
<th>Business Writing</th>
<th>Applied Math</th>
<th>Graphic Literacy</th>
<th>Workplace Doc.</th>
<th>Workplace Obs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35303</td>
<td>Waiters &amp; Waitresses</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37201</td>
<td>Janitors &amp; Cleaners, Ex. Maids &amp; Housekeeping Cleaners</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37201</td>
<td>Maids &amp; Housekeeping Cleaners</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41201</td>
<td>Cashiers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41203</td>
<td>Retail Salespersons</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47206</td>
<td>Construction Laborers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47501</td>
<td>Derrick Operators, Oil &amp; Gas</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47501</td>
<td>Service Unit Operators, Oil, Gas &amp; Mining</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47507</td>
<td>Roustabouts, Oil &amp; Gas</td>
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No formal educational credential

High school diploma or eqv.
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Table 2. ACT WorkKeys Skill Profile for Occupations Listed in Table 1 Employers' Employment Needs

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Employers' Employment Needs

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Master's degree
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Table 3. WorkKeys Assessment Results

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Math</td>
</tr>
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Table 3. WorkKeys Assessment Results

| Grand Total | 28 | 22 | 45 | 113 | 232 | 212 | 150 | 49 | 851 |

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2. Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in (a)(1)(B)(iii) above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in (a)(1)(A)(iii) above. This must include an analysis of—

A. THE STATE’S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Provide an analysis of the State’s workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop delivery system partners.\(^6\)

[6] 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.

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

C. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

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

A. The State’s Workforce Development Activities

Developing a workforce prepared for current and emerging occupations is critical to the state’s economic well-being. NM’s Governor Lujan Grisham is committed to growing economic sectors to focus attention and resources on emerging industries, foster collaboration, improve the quality of outcomes for our citizens and business. To this end, the Governor has brought together business, labor, education, and community and government leaders from around the state to facilitate and foster the development of a positive environment that is supportive of innovation, entrepreneurship and growth. New Mexico’s business sector is driven by small and medium sized businesses, who are well position to be an anchor in the changing economy.

New Mexico must diversity its economy to grow new industries and to create new jobs. Developing a workforce prepared for current and emerging occupations is critical to the state’s overall economic well-being. Ultimately, a sector approach will help us create a high-wage economy, grow and attract new businesses and investments to help our state turn the corner. Specific actions outlined by Governor Lujan Grisham to grow public-private partnership strategies include:

1. Harness the potential of our labs, military bases and universities to grow NM’s economy. We need to make NM the go-to state for innovation in bioscience, energy, agriculture, cybersecurity, and other technologies.

2. Foster public private partnerships to help enterprising farmers enter new markets and explore ways to enhance their products and value. With business incubators and access to broadband internet, our farmers can continue their professional development and reach new markets with their goods. Whether they want to learn about exporting their pecans, using new technologies to improve their yield or how market value-added products, farmers can benefit from a lifelong learning network.

3. Stop New Mexico’s brain drain. People are leaving NM and that means trouble for many of the families left behind. New Mexico is taking aggressive steps to retain and attract recent graduates and keep more working age adults (30-59) in state through targeted investments in people an education as well as businesses that commit to hiring New Mexicans. Building incentives for workers staying our state and employer who hire them, coupled with bolstered education and training – NM will develop a pipeline for students, young professional and career changers to our local businesses to reduce brain drain and achieve targeted growth in our most promising industries.

4. Innovate, modernize and make state government customer friendly to assure there is broader partnership across agencies and programs – removing inefficiencies and bureaucracies often described as hurdles and put the needs of those we serve first.
5. Bolster our entrepreneurial ecosystem to ensure that our state is a place to start a business. Ensuring our Small Business and SIC Private Equity programs are accessible to and utilized by as many local NM businesses as possible.

The post-secondary landscape in the state includes eight universities and nine two-year institutions (i.e., community and junior colleges), each with satellite campuses throughout the state. There are also a handful of private for-profit institutions, and institutions specifically designated by tribal communities for Native American residents. Collectively, these institutions provide a diverse and broad array of credit and non-credit educational offerings that prepare NM’s adults with credentials, certificates and licenses for work. The education systems is guided by the New Mexico Higher Education Department and works in partnership with business community and economic development to guide their programming and curriculum development.

Four Centers of Excellence at our universities have been developed to support growing economic sectors. The Centers include:

1. University of New Mexico: Bioscience. This center will establish a center of excellence for bioscience research and innovation both in the state and nationally and create a stronger focus on the Health Science Center regarding the strategy of the newly created public private Bioscience Authority.

2. New Mexico Technical University: Cybersecurity. NM Tech is ranked 2nd in the nation for its cybersecurity program in 2015, and was first certified as a Center for Academic Excellence for Information Assurance Education in 2003 by the Department of Homeland Security and NSA. The goal is to prioritize the longevity of the school’s CyberCorp program and explore ways to mirror this partnership with the federal government on a private level in the state and expand other public-private partnerships like Computational Analysis and Network Enterprise Solutions.

3. New Mexico State University: Agriculture. We will leverage the university’s Agriculture Experiment Station – a system of research facilities and faculty located throughout the state that operates with stakeholders on the state level, as well as local farmers and ranchers – and foster partnerships with private innovators in the sustainable agriculture industry.

4. San Juan College: Sustainable and Renewable Energy. We will reboot the Renewable Energy Program at this college, which was ranked 20th on Successful Student’s list of the best sustainable and renewable energy programs in the national when it was open. The program is situated in an area that is primary for solar research and development.

The following is a description of the core programs and combined partner agencies who comprise NM’s workforce development system partners:
NMDWS receives and administers Title I - Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth funds. These funds are passed through to four local workforce development boards (LWDBs) to provide direct case management services and to fund training and employment services and supports for eligible individuals who have barriers to employment. WIOA career services are provided, based on the needs of the customer and may consist of:

- Screening and eligibility determination for WIOA programs;
- Referral to WIOA adult, dislocated worker and youth programs and services;
- Referrals to programs and activities carried out by one-stop partners;
- Coaching on labor market trends and career exploration activities;
- Individualized career counseling and planning;
- Development of an individual employment plan;
- Access to group and individual work-search and job readiness workshops and information;
- Screening participants for work-based learning opportunities;
- Comprehensive and specialized assessments;
- Short-term pre-vocational services and other workforce preparation activities;
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs;
- Supportive services that help remove barriers to employment; and
- Training services.

Services coordinated and presented to businesses by the LWDBs are intended to be customized and based on the express needs of business, instead of being agency siloed or menu-driven. Business services include:

- Job postings, and assistance writing job descriptions;
- Applicant screening and referral of qualified applicants;
- Provision of labor law and hiring practices information;
- Coordinating and recruiting for hiring events and job fairs, providing a work-space for hiring events;
- Classroom training;
- Work-based learning opportunities to train incumbent and future workers;
- Sharing workforce intelligence with businesses for more informed decision making (i.e., hiring trends, talent pool development, competitive wages and benefits, etc...);
- Coordination with businesses on alignment of sector strategies, critical occupations, skill gaps, and in-demand occupations and
- Coordination of programs and services with partner agencies and community resources

LWDBs also provide operational management of the twenty-three Workforce Connection Centers (WCCs) located across the state. Activities include organizing “one-stop” delivery by aligning services and supports with the core programs and combined partners. LWDBs are responsible for design, delivery and evaluation of effective workforce readiness activities to meet the needs of job seekers and employers. The LWDBs, in consultation with their Chief Elected Officials, determine location of comprehensive, affiliate or satellite offices that are needed to serve the community both online and in-person. Required core programs, along with other employment and training partners that carry out their program in a local area, are required to share infrastructure costs and LWDBs are required to develop and agree upon a Memorandum of Understanding as a requirement of WIOA to share these costs. As such, the LWDBs convene with core program and partner agencies meet consistently to address continuous quality improvement by addressing challenges, removing barriers and enhancing the experience for both job seekers and businesses.

**Title II - Adult Education and Family Literacy Program**

Adult Education plays a vital role in New Mexico’s workforce development system by providing foundational education necessary for individuals to participate and thrive in all critical spheres of their lives, including the workplace. Nationwide, 92 percent of business leaders say U.S. workers lack necessary skills, and New Mexico is no exception. Accordingly, Adult Education can be meaningfully characterized as one of the state’s most important workforce development activities.

The Adult Education Division of the New Mexico Higher Education Department oversees the provision of targeted educational services outlined by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), Title II of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. At present, the New Mexico Adult Education system includes a network of 24 local program providers in every workforce region of the state who offer free instruction and training to eligible adults, including employed, underemployed, and unemployed adults and out-of-school youth ages 16-18 who are functioning below the postsecondary level. Most Adult Education program providers in New Mexico are postsecondary institutions, primarily community colleges and branch campuses. All Adult Education program participants need core skill development; most lack a high school diploma or equivalent and have additional barriers to supporting themselves and their families.

Adult Education provides opportunities for strengthening basic literacy skills, including numeracy and digital literacy; obtaining a High School Equivalency (HSE) credential; English Language Acquisition (ELA) and civics instruction; enrolling in post-secondary education and training programs; and placement and retention in employment and workplace programs. Family literacy and workplace preparation are heavily emphasized in Adult Education programs, along with preparation for postsecondary education and training with an emphasis on career pathways that lead to jobs with family-sustaining wages and opportunities.
for advancement. Within these fixed frameworks, adult educators and participants co-create individual learning plans that correspond to the personal needs and goals of each student. This individualization is a critical element of Adult Education, since participants bring a wide array of educational, employment, and other life experiences to the program table. Most Adult Education services are provided on site at local provider locations via one-to-one instruction, computer-aided instruction, and both small and large group formats. Many providers offer hybrid face-to-face/distance classes using various technology platforms.

Supported by WIOA legislation and the resulting enhanced collaboration among core and community partners, local Adult Education programs are increasingly working with community agencies and One Stops to strengthen service support and referral connections for the benefit of all clients. Similarly, local Adult Education providers and partners are increasingly collaborating with local industry and trade associations to develop meaningful workforce preparation activities, student apprenticeships, and onsite workplace programs and courses, including those utilizing integrated education and training models.

**Title III – Wagner Peyser Funds**

NMDWS receives and administered Title III – Wagner-Peyser funds, also referred to as Employment Services. These funds are used to support state merit staff based through the state in Workforce Connection Centers (WCCs) to deliver basic career services. Whether a job seeker is in the beginning phases of choosing a career or needs assistance to find and keep a better job, WCCs offer an array of online and in-house services. Services found in the WCCs includes:

- Career planning
- Job readiness
- Job matching
- Online portal for job search
- Business development and Sector Strategy Partnership engagement
- Economic data and labor market information

A key role of this program is to improve the state’s economic vitality by matching employers with career ready individuals. Employment Services staff work collaboratively with the Local Workforce Development Boards, secondary and post-secondary institutions, businesses, state and local stakeholders and partners. The “One-Stop” Workforce Connection Centers’ goal is to provide universal access to basic career services to an array of employers, jobseekers, including youth, veterans and individuals with disabilities. The delivery approach includes self-service, staff-assisted services, and involves a number of other tools and resources coordinated in partnership with the core partners and combined programs including:

- Orientation to the Workforce Connection Online System, which provides job listings and job matching for qualified candidates. The system also allows for career exploration, resume development, and access to labor market information.
• Case management to support evaluation of skills and abilities, job search assistance and career readiness development, access to reemployment services for those receiving unemployment insurance benefits; referrals to core programs and combined partners for paid training, on-the-job-training and supportive services.

• Business outreach and engagement to facilitate job listings, employer support for recruitment and hiring, coordination of hiring events and coordination of sector strategy and apprenticeship development.

Title IV – Vocational rehabilitation (DVR)

New Mexico has two vocational rehabilitation programs – (1) The Commission for the Blind (Commission) is an independent state agency that serves individuals who are blind or visually impaired; and (2) The New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (NMDVR) which is housed within the New Mexico Public Education Department and serves individuals with all other disabilities. Both programs focus on preparing their respective participants for suitable work. NMDVR serves all eligible New Mexicans with disabilities other than participants in vocational rehabilitation through the Commission. These programs provide guidance and counseling, transition services, job search and placement, assistive technology and equipment, as well as other services tailored to the specific needs of their respective clients. NMDVR and the Commission occasionally provide service to mutual participants, and work together to avoid duplication of services. Both agencies provide intensive technical assistance and training to the LWDBs to promote disability awareness to ensure ADA compliance of the WCCs, to support the unique business engagement strategies needed to promote employment of individuals with disabilities. A representative from vocational rehabilitation is a member on each of the four LWDBs. Vocational rehabilitation is also co-located in each of the comprehensive centers statewide.

New Mexico Commission for the Blind

The Commission for the Blind recognizes that New Mexico possesses numerous factors that create a positive environment for business and career development. The state has a diverse and talented workforce, strong universities and community colleges, and a thriving technology sector that helps drive innovation and expansion. However, New Mexico also has numerous socioeconomic barriers that must be addressed for persons who are blind or visually impaired to successfully transition into employment, including in the areas of “health, aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture, sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education, and international trade.”

The barriers that exist are compounded by the highly rural nature of the state, and the disparities that exist in educational outcomes and poverty levels between persons from minority and non-minority backgrounds. These barriers are especially significant for youth who need to transition from poverty into employment. New Mexico has one of the highest levels of poverty in the nation, with 25.9 percent of the state’s children living in poverty. Of those children living in poverty, 54 percent are living in a single-parent household. New Mexico also
ranks significantly below the national average for reading and math scores, with 71 percent of the state’s 4th graders not proficient in math, 76 percent of 4th graders not proficient in reading, 79 percent of 8th graders not proficient in math, and 77 percent of 8th graders not proficient in reading. New Mexico also has a serious teen substance abuse problem. The Centers for Disease Control Youth Risk Behavior Survey ranks New Mexico second in the nation for teens who have smoked marijuana in the last month, who have tried cocaine and who have used ecstasy. The survey ranks the state fifth for teens who have used methamphetamine, and eighth for those who have tried heroin. The state also has the seventh highest teen birth rate in the nation, with 29.8 births for every 1000 teen women age 15 to 19. New Mexico ranks lowest in the nation for overall child well-being, according to a report published by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, which combined 2016 reports on economic well-being, education, health, and family. The presence of a disability significantly increases the negative impact of these statistics, and most especially in the case of individuals who are blind, Deaf, or Deaf-blind.

The recovery of oil prices and expanded drilling for gas and oil have significantly increased state revenues, and New Mexico is now experiencing large budget surpluses. The prior decrease in oil prices had previously resulted in state budget deficits and a reduction in the Commission’s state general fund appropriation. In addition, the federal requirement to reserve and spend 15 percent of the Vocational Rehabilitation grant on Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) has reduced the amount of federal vocational rehabilitation funds that are available to serve the Commission’s adult vocational rehabilitation consumers. Across the nation, the 15 percent reserve has forced many Vocational Rehabilitation agencies to implement waiting lists for adult services due to a lack of funding for those services. This was an unintentional consequence of the Pre-ETS reserve. However, the Commission for the Blind is providing the full range of vocational rehabilitation services to all eligible individuals, and has also forecasted the ability to provide all of the nine "authorized" Pre-ETS services in addition to the 5 "required" Pre-ETS services.

The Commission is seeing a dramatic increase in the number of consumers with Optic Nerve Hypoplasia. Optic Nerve Hypoplasia (ONH) has increased significantly over the last thirty years, and ONH is now the leading cause of blindness in children. There is also a significant increase in the rate of diabetes in children. According to the National Institutes of Health, from 2002 to 2012, there was an annual increase of type 1 diabetes in youth of 1.8 percent, and an increase in youth of 4.8 percent for type 2 diabetes. The increasing prevalence of diabetes in children will likely result in a growing number of consumers with blindness due to diabetic retinopathy. These consumers will likely have other diabetic complications that will need to be addressed. The rate of blindness due to prematurity continues to be a concern, and infants born prematurely have higher rates of disabilities in addition to blindness.

The reduction in Braille proficiency is resulting in a corresponding decrease in overall reading skills and literacy, as well as decreased skills in Braille math. Persons who have strong Braille skills have also been shown to have a better chance of becoming successfully employed. This trend is primarily due to decreased use of residential schools for the blind, the trend within local schools to mainstream blind students, the shortage of qualified teachers of the visually impaired, and the use of audio books, magnification, or other reading methods which are sometimes substituted inappropriately for Braille. The Commission will need to provide these
students with additional support and training for them to achieve a successful employment outcome.

The Commission is also seeing a greater number of young persons who are delayed in their social skills and maturation, and who lack academic, soft, and independent living skills. Some of this is due to the increased prevalence of conditions that include multiple impairments, and some of it is due to the national “failure to launch” trend that applies to many young persons in general, it is resulting in greater numbers of Commission consumers who are less prepared to participate in their vocational rehabilitation programs.

To a large extent, the trends that are seen in the area of transition services will very much shape the face of the vocational rehabilitation services that will be provided over the next four years to adults. The most significant of these is probably the increasing rate of Optic Nerve Hypoplasia, which will result in an increasing number of consumers needing greater amounts of vocational rehabilitation services. Another factor is the increasing prevalence of diabetes. The lifetime risk of diabetes has doubled in the last 20 years, with males born in 2000 having a 32.8 percent lifetime chance of developing diabetes, and females born in 2000 having a 38.5 percent lifetime chance of developing diabetes. For Hispanics born in 2000, the lifetime risk for males is 45.4 percent, and 52.5 percent for females. The increasing prevalence of diabetes will likely result in a growing number of consumers with blindness due to diabetic retinopathy.

The “graying of the population” is resulting in increased numbers of persons electing or needing to remain employed beyond the traditional retirement age of 65. Approximately 20 percent of persons 65 and older are currently working. According to an Associated Press poll, 23 percent of persons say that they will never retire, and approximately 25 percent say that they expect to work beyond the age of 65. There is a strong correlation between age and blindness, and the Commission can expect that many of these older workers will require vocational rehabilitation services.

COMBINED PARTNER PROGRAMS

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TNAF)

TANF is a new workforce system partner. TANF individuals are required to complete a profile utilizing the Workforce Connection On-Line System to support basic career services such as, career readiness tools, resume development and job search. The TANF Works provider utilizes this information augment one-on-one case management services aimed at alleviating barriers to help prepare qualified individuals for job placement. TANF Works Program providers coordinate service delivery with the Workforce Connection Center staff, including referral to training programs, co-management of individual training plans and supportive services. Typical services available to TANF recipients include:
• Basic Career Services (ie, career exploration, resume writing, interview skills development, job search and job placement.)

• Referral to Adult Education and Family Literacy for high school equivalency completion and basic literacy and numeracy.

• Referral to Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs for individual training plan support, work-based learning and on-the-job training.

• Coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation to coordinate support services for individuals with disabilities.

• Coordination with Senior Community Service Employment Program to address poverty and wage gaps for older workers.

Trade Adjustment Activities (TAA)

The TAA program is a federal program that provides a path for employment growth and opportunity through aid to U.S. workers who have lost their jobs as a result of foreign trade. A petition must be filed with the U.S. Department of Labor by or on behalf of a group of workers who have lost or may lose their jobs or experienced a reduction in wages as a result of foreign trade. After the USDOL Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance investigates the facts behind the petition, it applies statutory criteria to determine whether foreign trade was an important cause of the threatened or actual job loss or wage reduction. The TAA Program seeks to provide adversely affected workers with opportunities to obtain the skills, credentials, resources, and support necessary to build skills for future jobs. Any member of a worker group certified by the Department may be eligible to receive the following benefits and services at a Workforce Connection Center: training, employment and case management services, job search allowances, relocation allowances, and income support in the form of Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA). Reemployment TAA (RTAA) and Alternative TAA (ATAA), which provide wage supplements for reemployed older workers whose reemployment resulted in lower wages. TAA Case Managers offer a variety of benefits and services to support workers in their search for reemployment, including opportunities to obtain the skills, resources, and support they need to become reemployed. The program benefits and services available to individual workers are administered by the State. Program eligibility, technical assistance, and oversight are conducted by state merit staff.

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (JVSG)

NMDWS receives federal formula funding to administer the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program. Funds are used to hire staff to provide individualized career and training – related services to veterans and eligible persons with significant barriers to employment and to assist employers fill their workforce needs with job-seeking veterans. The JVSG program supports the Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist position, Local Veterans’ Employment Representative (LVER) staff, and Consolidated Position staff. DVOP specialists provide individualized career services to veterans with significant barriers to employment, with the maximum emphasis directed toward serving veterans who are economically or
educationally disadvantaged. Veterans with barriers include homeless veterans and vocational rehabilitation clients. Local Veterans’ Employment Representatives conduct outreach to employers and business associations and engage in advocacy efforts with hiring executives to increase employment opportunities for veterans and encourage the hiring of disabled veterans.

**Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)**

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) provides on-the-job assignments with non-profit and government agencies. These assignments are half-time, minimum wage positions designed to provide training and skills acquisition to workers over 55 years of age with barriers to employment. In addition, the program may provide other training in classrooms or other venues.

**Other Partner Agencies:**

**New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED)**- Public secondary education (K-12) is a vital partner in meeting the state's overall education and training objectives. Educating children prepares them for post-secondary education and the workforce. There are total of 146 schools districts and approximately 100 charter schools statewide. NMPED receives Carl D. Perkins funds to support Career Technical Education to local school districts and community colleges; as well as training and technical assistance for academic and career advisors who provide career exploration and job readiness to high school and community college students statewide. NMPED also oversees Advanced Placement and Concurrent Enrollment or dual credit programming statewide. Students enrolled in these programs have the opportunity to take college-level courses while attending high school both on-site and at universities/community colleges. Course offerings are aligned by industry clusters. Students enrolled in these courses can earn college credits as well as certificates and credentials for specific industries.

**Indian and Native American Programs (INA)** are funded to support employment and training activities for pueblo and tribal communities. Funded communities in NM include, Alamo Navajo School Board, Eight Northern Indian Pueblo Council, Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos, Jicarilla Apache Tribe, Mescalero Apache Tribe, National Indian Youth Council, Ohkay Owingeh, Pueblo of Acoma, Pueblo of Isleta, Pueblo of Laguna, Pueblo of Taos, Pueblo of Zuni, Ramah Navajo School Board, Santo Domingo Tribe, and Navajo Nation. NMDWS, as the SAE, is working collaboratively with these entities to align workforce system development activities within their regions. Specific partnership activities include, technical assistance and training, coordination of economic development activities, specifically sector strategies assure their community members are engaged and provided opportunities for employment and training services. NMDWS met with the programs and conducted an analysis of strengths, weaknesses and opportunities to engage more effectively. NMDWS plans to convene with the programs quarterly to share resources, tools, address challenges and engage in joint strategic planning and evaluation to align work more comprehensively with the state plan.
Job Corps, a USDOL vocational training program for disadvantaged youth and young adults, is a required partner in the one-stop delivery system. Job Corps participants receive social, academic, career and technical education, and service-learning opportunities, primarily in a residential setting. Program objectives focus on participants obtaining secondary school diplomas or recognized credentials leading to careers in high-demand industries or occupations. Job Corps representatives sit on local boards, the boards outreach to potential program participants through their Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth providers, and referrals are received from Workforce Connection Center partner programs.

The AmeriCorps program, which is administratively housed within the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, is guided by a bipartisan board of Commissioners, appointed by the Governor, that provide oversight and accountability for grants that lead to volunteer initiatives throughout the state. The funding provides for opportunities for adult individuals with a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate to make an intensive commitment to a service project for a minimum of two years. Per a report published by the Corporation for National and Community Service, community service helps individuals gain increased social connections, and increased skills and experience that lead to potential future job opportunities and employment. For instance, AmeriCorps Members have a 27 percent higher likelihood of finding a job after being out of work than non-volunteers. Four things workforce system partners can do to promote AmeriCorps service are:

- Learn more about how community service can be helpful to jobseekers;
- Promote community service as a strategy for finding work on state and local board websites, newsletters, and other materials provided through Workforce Connection Centers;
- Help clients emphasize their community and/or volunteer service in terms of work experience;
- Explore ways to use and work with the AmeriCorps program to connect people to job opportunities.

In addition, most AmeriCorps members receive student loan deferment, and training, and may receive a living allowance and health insurance. Program completers can receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award to help pay for college, graduate school, or vocational training or to repay student loans. Finally, USDOL acknowledges in guidance to states, Unemployment Insurance Program Letter 16-12 issued April 19, 2012, that volunteerism can be a viable and successful strategy to support reemployment and does not need to interfere with unemployment compensation recipients’ responsibilities to be able and available for work and actively seeking work.

B. The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

New Mexico has many advantages going into this second state plan process. Our workforce development is stronger because of the commitment of partnership among the core programs and combined partner agencies. Additionally, under the leadership of the governor and state legislature, all agencies are expected to work more collaboratively and comprehensively.
Communication and information sharing has been strengthened and there is much more intentionality in assuring workforce policies, programs and practices are linked in meaningful and productive ways. The following are strengths and weaknesses at a state level:

**Strengths include:**

- Ongoing commitment to design, planning and implementation among core programs and combined partner agencies to enhance and strengthen the workforce system. NMDWS hosts a monthly “Workforce Partner” meeting that includes key decision makers and program staff dedicated to continuous improvement.

- Enhanced integration of programs and services within each workforce region. All four local boards are facilitating ongoing meetings to design and implement services and business engagement. Current efforts include sector strategy partnerships that includes coordination with all the required partners.

- Successful development of a Common Unique Identifier across core programs, including Unemployment Insurance (UI), Wagner-Peyser and TANF/SNAP, to guide and inform service delivery and enhance coordination. Currently, UI information is being shared with local workforce boards to provide outreach and support for individuals receiving benefits. Plans underway to share TANF/SNAP data with Wagner-Peyser staff to coordinate basic career services and business outreach.

- NMDWS successful implementation of 24/7 online access to workforce development resources and tools for job seekers and business; including a career exploration program specifically designed for youth and young adults.

- Shared partnership with the public education department to increase access to work-based learning opportunities for youth enrolled in Career Technical Education statewide.

- Growing expertise at the operational level via the core partners’ staffs, which, along with the commitment to help people, provides a strong base to build and support partnerships with training providers, youth serving organizations and agencies and Tribal communities, which will lead to greater and improved access to services.

- Partnership with Core Programs and Combined Partners to host an annual Workforce Development Conference designed for front line staff. Conferences focus on best and promising practices in career advisement and planning, sector strategy development, career pathway programming, and strategies for coordination of services at local level.

- A Governor with a clear vision for workforce development. The path has been clearly articulated, which helps to facilitate coordination and organization among the various core programs and combined partners agencies.

**Weaknesses and/or Challenges include:**

- Policy and programmatic limitations as a result of state and/or federal mandates. While the core programs and combined partners are committed to integration of services, tools and resources, limitations imposed by competing rules and regulations slows progress. Issues such as co-enrollment and shared data are hampered by competing program reporting requirements that oftentimes do not match across programs.
• New Mexico has four regional workforce areas, each with unique concerns and challenges in relationship to geography (ie, urban, rural and frontier), employment opportunities, culture and language needs that span highly concentrated Native American populations to border communities, transportation challenges, and limited child care – these unique needs present challenges in program design, planning and implementation.

• Insufficient funding to address the unique needs across the state. New Mexico is facing an imminent closure of coal fired plants impacting the Northern Area of the state where funding for workforce development is limited and overall training options and job placement opportunities are scarce.

• Lack of diverse opportunities at the service delivery level to offer job seekers in rural/frontier areas of the state. (statement here of NM geography)

• Maintaining consistent and stable staff across core programs and combined partner agencies; for instance, low salary scheduled for state employees, impacting recruitment and hiring for both Wagner-Peyser and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation staff.

Additional Strengths and Weaknesses/Challenges identified by Programs:

TITLE II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Program

According to statistics provided by the Coalition on Adult Basic Education, one out of every six adults in the U.S. lack basic reading skills. That means that 36 million people can’t read a job application, understand basic written instructions, or effectively sort through information on the Internet. Two out of every six adults in the U.S. struggle with basic numerical calculations and tasks like working a cash register or understanding a transit schedule. And 28 million lack the basic digital skills they need to use a computer, even though many are using computers almost every day on the job. Since the United States consistently scores below the international average for modern problem-solving skills, it is no surprise these skills are among the many “soft skills” that industry leaders consistently claim are lacking in their employees.

New Mexico is plagued by these basic skill deficiencies, and they have serious social and economic consequences. As compared with their higher-skilled counterparts, low-skilled adults are:

• 2x more likely to be unemployed
• 3x more likely to be in poverty
• 4x more likely to be in poor health
• 8x more likely to be incarcerated

On the flip side, the benefits of education are well documented. A mother’s education level is the greatest determinant of her children’s academic success. Education levels have more impact on lifetime earnings than any other demographic factor, including race, gender, or ethnic origin. The higher an individual’s level of education, the higher their average annual earnings. Participation education programs is strongly correlated with recidivism reduction for incarcerated individuals. And the list goes on, illustrating why Adult Education and literacy programs are recognized nationwide as both an important public service and a robust economic catalyst. Regardless of how we measure return on investment, Adult Education is cost
effective. For every dollar invested in Adult Education, a community receives an estimated $60 back in increased income, property taxes, and savings on welfare and legal system expenses. During fiscal year 2019, the New Mexico Adult Education system served a total of 10,960 students. State expenditure per Adult Education student was $477.73. Conservatively calculated without including public assistance savings or increased tax revenue, the state received a 580% return on this investment.

Furthermore, nearly half the U.S. workforce (about 88 million of 188 million adults aged 18-64) has only a high school education or less, and/or low English proficiency. By 2024, 48 percent of job openings will be middle-skill and 32 percent will be high-skill. This means that just five years from now, nearly 80 percent of all job openings will require more than a high school credential. We already have a problem filling labor market need. Because this trend is only expected to worsen, it is critical to recognize Adult Education as the golden opportunity it is to help bridge the workforce supply and demand gap. This is particularly true in New Mexico, where the labor force has significantly lower levels of educational attainment than in most other states. Of the 1.3 million adults ages 18-64 in New Mexico, 69 percent are without any postsecondary degree, and 15 percent have no high school diploma or equivalent. Many who do have a high school credential are nonetheless basic skills deficient, as evidenced by the fact, for example, that nearly 40 percent of New Mexico’s new college and university students need remedial math and/or English classes.

Upskilling adults with demonstrated efficacy and in a cost-effective manner is the great strength of Adult Education. To the extent that the Adult Education system can reach people to provide these services, it is a highly effective workforce development strategy. Unfortunately, most people eligible for Adult Education services in New Mexico are not receiving them. The United States Department of Education estimates that nationwide, the Adult Education system is able to serve less than five (5) percent of those who are eligible. In New Mexico, it is less than three (3) percent. Limited resource allocation has historically played a large role creating and maintaining this service gap, but funding alone will not eliminate it. While it is certainly true that local providers have limited capacity to serve the large numbers of those in need, it is equally true that a host of challenging barriers that likely contributed to creating the skills gap in the first place are still at play, now compounded by the inherent challenge faced by working adults with multiple life demands and limited time and resources to meet them.

This is especially true for adults with families living in poverty, as well as for those living rural areas with limited access to service centers, transportation, and technology. Incarcerated and other justice-involved individuals have additional challenges. Language barriers and cultural differences contribute significantly to the service gap, as does the stigma of being “a dropout” or “low skilled.” Learning disabilities, mental health and substance abuse issues, bureaucratic hurdles and agency silos, and even political climate all factor into the gulf between who Adult Education serves and who they might serve.

In addition to offering adults a valuable “second chance” opportunity to reach postsecondary skill levels and attain a high school credential, and in addition to helping non-native English speakers strengthen their English language skills to enable them to function more effectively in the workplace and to engage more fully in their communities, Adult Education in New Mexico offers yet another layer of strength to the workforce development system: Bridges to valuable postsecondary education and training. Because most local Adult Education providers are postsecondary institutions, Adult Education students benefit from being exposed to postsecondary culture, and hence to become comfortable with it and positively influenced by it. Adult Education students are programmatically introduced to education and training

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opportunities and career pathways that they might not otherwise learn about. Local Adult Education program providers work hard to build student confidence and to offer ample support and resources to enable students to pursue these pathways, including warm handoffs to institutional support services and programmatic access points. Equally important are partnerships with community-based organizations and One Stop centers, since these partners provide additional layers of support and opportunity. Research clearly shows that providing adequate wrap-around supports for Adult Education students is key in terms of both persistence and measurable success outcomes.

As local Adult Education program providers work with partners and students to manage busy schedules and juggle myriad needs, they are challenged to serve students with a wide variety of skill levels, ranging from those who struggle to read and perform basic arithmetic to those who are almost college ready. Doing this with a large percentage of part time instructors who are sometimes marginally compensated makes an already difficult task even more difficult. In addition to affecting quality of instruction and teacher retention, such staffing patterns make forming and managing effective agency, community, and industry partnerships more challenging. Another example of such a challenge is reflected in the following scenario: A local business asks a local Adult Education program to partner in a joint effort to upskill its employees. While the Adult Education program may be eager and theoretically able to honor this request, they may not have the staff resources to expand beyond existing program structure. Others may face institutional policy and other logistical restrictions that could pose a challenge for the more agile business. Institutional culture and policy may also affect Adult Education student matriculation and entry into existing college career pathway tracks, tracks research demonstrate can positively affect persistence and completion rates.

Challenges of this nature are essentially systemic. Additional systemic challenges have included lack of a streamlined referral system among core WIOA partner programs and the lack of a shared data system to enable more efficient and effective communication and tracking. Central planning and coordination at the state level to create a strong network of industry-responsive career pathway training options—especially those open to Adult Education students—is slowly taking shape, but in early stages. This is also true of sector strategy work. Core partners are currently working together to tackle these issues, which all recognize as large system weaknesses.

In summary, for adults with low literacy levels, securing meaningful employment with a family-sustaining wage, career advancement, effectively participating in their children’s education, accessing community services, and informed civic engagement can be a struggle. In collaboration with core partners, Adult Education works to address these needs for the benefit of all New Mexicans. The fact that Adult Education and the people it serves increasingly benefit from meaningful collaboration with core WIOA partners—and vice versa—deserves repeating. All titles serve high-need individuals, and all bring different strengths to the table. Adult Education’s strength is in its name, which reflects its core mission: To educate. For this reason, Adult Education programs are arguably best characterized as education programs that fundamentally support workforce development, rather than as “workforce programs” per se.

As Governor Lujan Grisham noted in her 2018 Workforce Training and Development manifesto, a research report produced by the nonpartisan public policy organization New Mexico First (“Economic Security and Vitality for New Mexico”) indicates that some employers hesitate to relocate to New Mexico because they worry about finding qualified employees. Local businesses struggle to find the ideal employee, and many educated New Mexicans leave the
state for work elsewhere. While nobody would argue that investing in New Mexico’s youth is essential, we cannot afford to focus exclusively on the youth of our state to solve the workforce supply and demand crisis. The gap between available and needed skilled workers is already too large, and it is growing. Here’s the good news: Thousands of adults with undeveloped skills and untapped potential are hiding in plain sight, ready and willing to help themselves, their children, and their communities thrive – right here in New Mexico.

**TITLE III – Wagner – Peyser Employment Services**

**Strengths**

**Data Collection**

The current capacity for data collection, reporting and case management documentation is surely a strength of the Employment Services Division. This gives us the ability to truly evaluate services provided and their impact on wages and employment rates. Data is being used to develop a Career Ready service delivery model that provides job seekers with robust wrap around services. Data has also assisted with identifying service overlaps with partner agencies that provide similar services. This has led to discussions about co-locating SNAP and TANF staff within AJCs across the state.

**Responsiveness and Agility**

ES division has demonstrated strength in quickly responding to the needs of employers, job seekers and partner organizations. This capacity allows for temporarily shifting staff from one office to another or bringing together multiple offices to assist with large statewide or regional events. Recent example includes the statewide rapid hire initiative which yielded more than 3,000 job interviews over four days. Each regional office participated in a coordinated remote interview process that allowed local job seekers access to hundreds of state agency jobs.

**Partnerships**

Relationships with other state agencies who offer similar services has been an emerging strength. Examples include a project to utilize Rapid Response dollars in partnership with the State’s Economic Development Department. The partnership includes co-funding specialists who can assess business vulnerabilities and provide services as a layoff aversion strategy. A partnership with the Child Support Enforcement Division provides non-custodial parents with services that help them find a good job and fulfill child support obligations. Staff from NM’s SNAP program are working with ES leadership to co-fund staff that will be placed in AJCs across the state.

**Established Communication Practices**

Nearly a year ago the ES division implemented a statewide communication strategy that connects 18 one-stop offices to each other and the agency’s leadership. The plan incorporates strategies for enhancing communicating with WIOA partners including SAE staff, local board...
staff and contractors within the one-stop offices. The plan has facilitated the exchange of emerging best practices, statewide strategic planning and consistency in service delivery.

**Established Leadership and Onboarding**

ES division leadership at the local and state level is robust and provides stability to the system. Together, ES managers offer more than 30 years of experience with the agency. This experience and historical knowledge provide for sound and reflective decision making. Together with the agency’s training staff, ES management have developed a robust training program for career consultants, DVOPs and LVERs.

**Opportunities**

**Career Ready**

Data reviews show the need for a more robust service delivery model that 1) provides job seekers with wrap-around services and 2) builds confidence in employers that the agency is effective in preparing applicants before making referrals. The ES division is working on a model that accomplishes the following:

- Initial assessments and triage that ensure job seeker critical needs – food, utility assistance, shelter, safety, etc.—are met before job search assistance is provided
- Immediate placements that provide unemployed job seeker with employment
- Training programs that addresses the essential competencies and skills sought by employers
- Advancement to a higher wage job that provides a sustainable wage

**Integration of Statewide Services**

At the request of the Governor, the agency is building strategies for better integrating health and human services within the workforce system. This includes exploring the colocation of WIO partners with human services and CYFD staff across the state.

**Rebranding the One-Stop**

Data on historical service delivery show that AJCs across the state predominantly assist employers fill low-wage vacancies. The average number of applicants for jobs that pay less than $25,000 annually far exceeds the number of applicants per high-wage jobs. This suggests the need to rebrand our commitment to under-employed individuals. AJCs are in need of physical upgrades that would contribute to a more professional setting. An intentional communication strategy would also better market the mission of the One-Stops and build a stronger understanding of available services.
Allowability Vs. Services

A recent ES manager retreat revealed that staff within the division are more familiar with historical services than allowable services. Moving forward, awareness of funding allowability will better prepare staff to imagine services that meet the needs of employers and job seekers.

Title IV – Vocational rehabilitation (DVR)

DVR serves New Mexicans with disabilities toward suitable employment. To be eligible for services an applicant must have a physical or mental impairment, which constitutes a substantial impediment to employment, and can benefit from NMDVR services in terms of an employment outcome. Services to participants are individualized and are based on a comprehensive evaluation of the person’s strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice. Some of the types of services available include the following.

- Medical, psychological, and vocational evaluations
- Counseling and guidance
- Medical and psychological treatment
- Help with expenses due to participation in rehabilitation
- Job search and placement services
- Transition-to-work services for disabled high school students
- Supported employment persons with severe disabilities
- Rehabilitation technology
- Vocational and other training
- Disability and employment assessment
- Occupational licenses, tools, and other equipment
- Assistance with small-business plan development
- Interpreter services
- Help to maintain work
- Post-employment Services
- Special modifications to vehicles
- Vocational counseling and guidance by vocational rehabilitation counselors is the primary service to participants.

An Individualized Plan for Employment (IEP) is developed in partnership with the participant, and legal guardian, when appropriate. This plan is the basis for what services will be provided, how the services will be provided, the timeline for services and how progress will be measured.
toward achieving the employment outcome. Any addition or change to planned services, the vocational goal, service providers or timeframes is accomplished by amendment to the service plan, which is again developed and approved by the participant and the vocational rehabilitation counselor. Because each participant’s needs and goals are individualized, services provided vary significantly between participants and plans. Some services are available to all participants, if needed to participate in services and achieve employment, such as assessment to determine eligibility and/or vocational rehabilitation needs, referral to services offered by other agencies that can aid in accomplishing vocational goals, interpreter services, rehabilitation teaching, orientation and mobility services, reader services, job search, placement and retention services and post-employment services.

The barriers to employment are major challenges for DVR’s participants and are as varied as the participants themselves. Each individual has unique challenges depending on impediments caused by a disability or disabilities; lack of available resources, supports, services and accommodations; socioeconomic factors; lack of family and other natural supports; limited or no access to transportation; a limited job market; attitudinal barriers; cultural barriers; structural barriers and other factors. Finally, DVR has faced significant challenges over the last two years resulting from a high staff turnover and vacancy rate and difficulty with recruitment of qualified staff.

New Mexico Commission for the Blind

The Commission for the Blind is providing the full range of vocational rehabilitation services to all eligible individuals who are blind or visually impaired, meaning that the Commission does not have a waiting list for services. This enables the Commission to be responsive to both the needs of individuals who are blind or visually impaired and seeking to be employed, as well as businesses that are seeking to attract qualified employees. The lack of an Order of Selection also enables the Commission to be able to support businesses who wish to retain highly qualified employees who have become blind or visually impaired as older adults. The presence of a visual impairment is more prevalent in the population of persons who are considered seniors, and these older workers are often the most highly qualified and valuable employees. There is also a greater prevalence of diabetes in New Mexico, and employees with diabetes are at increased risk of losing vision due to diabetic retinopathy. The Commission is able to provide vocational rehabilitation services to these individuals that can help them to continue to successfully perform their jobs, which is especially valuable to the workforce.

The Commission is also providing all of the “required” and the “authorized” Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students age 14 to 21. This helps these students to be able to live and function more independently, and to attend universities, colleges, and vocational programs. The Pre-ETS services help prepare these transitioning students to successfully enter the workforce.

The delayed maturation that is taking place has resulted in fewer persons who are blind or visually impaired obtaining employment outcomes at ages commensurate to what has
traditionally been the case. The increase rate of persons born with Optic Nerve Hypoplasia and other disabilities that involve multiple impairments will likely mean that many of these individuals will require extended and more intensive vocational rehabilitation services to become successfully employed. This is resulting in reduced program income for the Commission, which is part of a national trend.

The Commission also has as a Goal and Priority of enhancing the number and quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers by providing services in a way that genuinely honors the "informed choice" provisions of the Rehabilitation Act. This means that the Commission provides services that are "consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice." This enables persons who are blind or visually impaired to seek and obtain opportunities that include "work-based learning experiences, apprenticeship, and internship programs in health, aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture, sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education, and international trade."

The Great Recession reduced both the number and quality of the employment outcomes achieved by Commission consumers. With the state and national economy now growing and generating improved rates of employment, the Commission is starting to see improvement in the number and quality of employment outcomes. However, the Federal government remains a major employer in New Mexico, and sequestration continues to result in significant restraints on the number of Federal employees, as well as to persons employed by Federal contractors.

New Mexico has also been highly reliant on oil and natural gas production for state revenue and economic growth. This reliance creates a "boom and bust" cycle with respect to the state economy as it is dependent on oil and natural gas prices, which are dependent on factors outside the control of the state. The state will benefit by expanding economic activities in the area of "health, aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture, sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education, and international trade."

New Mexico is very reliant on the Federal sector, and sequestration hit the state especially hard. Despite the impact of sequestration, Federal agencies and Federal contractors continue to be attractive career choices for persons who are blind or visually impaired. This is partially due to the fact that Federal programs are required to take affirmative action in the employment of persons with disabilities, but also because Federal hiring officials have had training that has increased their awareness of the benefits of hiring persons with disabilities. The continued reliance on the Federal sector creates a potential vulnerability should future national economic downturns resulted in freezes or cuts to Federal spending.
COMBINED PARTNER PROGRAMS

Senior Community Service Employment Service Program (SCSEP)

The SCSEP’s strength is a high level of personalized case management to assist participants in job preparation. Its weakness is its small size. Only about 250 positions are available in New Mexico for approximately 80,000 eligible individuals.

C. State Workforce Development Capacity

WIOA programs are designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training and support services to succeed in the labor market by matching employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. New Mexico’s services are coordinated and delivered through the Workforce Connection Centers located throughout the state. The WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, in coordination with the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service, are pivotal pieces of the one-stop delivery system, and the foundation of the workforce system. The one-stop system provides universal access to basic career services and coordination of individualized training services to eligible participants.

NMDWS receives funds from the U.S. Department of Labor that are passed through to Local Chief Elected Officials – CEOs, (ie, mayors, county commissioners), who together with the four Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) are charged with making policy decisions for their area to address the workforce needs of their citizens and residents. The CEO’s service as the recipient of the grant funds; they manage the federal investments at the local level that are intended to serve Title I services for adults, dislocated workers and youth. CEO’s appoint a fiscal agent to manage the funds; appoint local workforce board members, approve local board budget and consult with Governor and State Workforce Development Board on matters related to area designation, local board governance, quality and effectiveness of service delivery and coordination of the local one-stop center network.

Decisions at the local level are driven by the analysis of labor market data and other business information. LWDBs convene meetings with relevant stakeholders to map out the available resources, services and programs that are needed to support industry and sector partnerships, day-to-day operations and the needs of the community. This is all accomplished through strong leadership that communicate a vision with all stakeholders, throughout all levels of the workforce system and across partner and community organizations.

DWS supplies access to the WORKFORCE CONNECTION ONLINE SYSTEM. This system gives employers access to a database of job seekers in NM. Employers can enter, update, and archive job listings securely. The New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System is available free of charge to employers and jobseekers. Employers can post their own jobs or provide job listing information to Workforce Connection Center staff for the matching and referral of qualified job seekers.
Workforce Connection Center staff, along with core programs and combined partners, can access both employer job listings and job seeker accounts entered into the system. The job listing information allows Workforce Connection Center staff, core programs and combined partners to evaluate the hiring requirements of the employer, as well as the qualifications of the job seeker.

The workforce system also supports employers by providing customized screening and referral of qualified participants in career and training services to employers; customized employment-related services to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations on a fee-for-service basis that are in addition to labor exchange services available to employers under Wagner-Peyser; and, activities to provide business services and strategies that meet the workforce investment needs of area employers, as determined by the local boards and consistent with their local plans.

The State Workforce Development Board has convened a subcommittee to analyze and review the current capacity of the system as defined by WIOA. Concerns have been raised about the overall effectiveness of service delivery and system capacity to meet the needs of the workforce service regions currently defined as Central, North, South and East. Primary concerns raised include effectiveness in funds distribution across the four local workforce development boards, outcomes for job seekers and employers, implementation of sector strategy and career pathway development, and quality of coordination across core programs and partners agencies to support comprehensive one-stop centers. This subcommittee will provide recommendations that will be used for region designations, the one-stop certification process and recommendations to improve alignment of regional service areas and improvements needed for local workforce development boards.

THE FOLLOWING ARE ANALYSES OF REQUIRED AND COMBINED PARTNERS:

Title II - Adult Education and Family Literacy Program

The Adult Education Division of the New Mexico Higher Education Department oversees the provision of targeted educational services supported by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), Title II of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. At present, the New Mexico Adult Education system includes a network of 24 local program providers in every workforce region of the state who offer free instruction and training to eligible adults. Most Adult Education program providers in New Mexico are postsecondary institutions, primarily community colleges and branch campuses. Adult Education provides opportunities for strengthening basic literacy skills, including numeracy and digital literacy; obtaining a High School Equivalency (HSE) credential; English Language Acquisition (ELA) and civics instruction; enrolling in post-secondary education and training programs; and placement and retention in employment and workplace programs. Family literacy and workplace preparation are heavily emphasized in Adult Education programs, along with preparation for postsecondary education and training with an emphasis on career pathways that lead to jobs with family-sustaining wages and opportunities for advancement. Within these fixed
frameworks, adult educators and participants co-create individual learning plans that correspond to the personal needs and goals of each student. This individualization is a critical element of Adult Education, since participants bring a wide array of educational, employment, and other life experiences to the program table. Most Adult Education services are provided on site at local provider locations via one-to-one instruction, computer-aided instruction, and both small and large group formats. Many providers offer hybrid face-to-face/distance classes using various technology platforms. Supported by WIOA legislation and the resulting enhanced collaboration among core and community partners, local Adult Education programs are increasingly working with community agencies and One Stops to strengthen service support and referral connections for the benefit of all clients. Similarly, local Adult Education providers and partners are increasingly collaborating with local industry and trade associations to develop meaningful workforce preparation activities, student apprenticeships, and onsite workplace programs and courses, including those utilizing integrated education and training models.

Helping adults strengthen core basic skills with demonstrated efficacy and in a cost-effective manner is the great strength of Adult Education. As noted earlier, capacity issues must be considered and addressed as the State and core/Combined State Plan partners move forward with strategic workforce development initiatives. While level of allocated resources have historically played a large role limiting Adult Education’s reach at both the national and state levels, New Mexico is fortunate that federal funding for AEFLA activities helps the State leverage its own high-return investment in a manner that significantly boosts field capacity. Partners working together to achieve common goals further boosts Adult Education capacity to serve eligible adults in New Mexico. Accordingly, Adult Education is committed to working with local, state, and national partners to optimally leverage resources in a manner that addresses quality of service as much as it addresses quantity of people served. Adult Education is particularly committed to exploring new sources of synergistic support and to leveraging existing resources in a manner that enables partners to drive meaningful systems change that will fundamentally increase both the capacity and the ultimate efficacy of programs and services. Adult Education is willing and able to invest resources in a longitudinal effort to build cross-sector partnerships and develop a career pathway system (not just individual programs) that meets both human and industry needs in New Mexico. This and other specific strategies to leverage resources will be addressed more fully in Operational Planning Elements, Implementation of State Strategy, specifically in subsection (G).

At both the State and local Adult Education program levels, capacity challenges to serve adults eligible for Title II programs and services generally revolve around interrelated issues involving limited resources; less-than-optimal messaging and outreach; less-than-optimal system coordination; and both personal and structural barriers to participation. Local program providers cite the following as primary issues affecting their capacity to serve those in need:

Lack of extensive, coordinated, effective messaging and outreach to engage both potential program supporters and potential participants; the challenge to find and retain qualified instructors, especially in rural areas; lack of full time instructors and program administrators; barriers related to needed wrap-around services, including transportation, child care, medical, behavioral health, and disability support services; high turnover and vacancy rates for some partner agencies and the need for enhanced training, communication and coordination between local, regional, and State partner agency layers; technology/distance education challenges in
rural areas; insufficient funds for quality instructional materials; classroom space challenges; and in some cases, historical or current "open door" policies which emphasize serving high numbers of individuals over acceptable levels of service quality and efficacy.

**Title III – Wagner-Peyser Employment Services**

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions also administers Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, which it does from the state level through its Employment Services Division, along with the administration of Trade Adjustment Assistance, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Rapid Response, Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments program and Veterans programs. NMDWS receives funding from USDOL to hire and oversee state merit staff responsible for direct delivery of the Wagner Peyser employment services and the other related services to jobseekers and employers. Merit staff is located throughout 25 field offices and the programs are co-located with the WIOA programs in every local board area.

Employment Services are provided as part of the one-stop delivery system. Currently, each local workforce development area has at least one comprehensive workforce development center that includes, at a minimum, three partners: WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker services, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, and access to Unemployment Insurance services. Each Employment Services field office is assigned a Wagner-Peyser Area Manager who ensures the workforce centers are universally accessible, customer centered, and training is job-driven with an emphasis in career pathways. This includes providing easy access to and assistance with workforce related activities: such as assisting employers in recruiting talent, exploring work preparation and career development services for job seekers, as well as making a seamless referral to WIOA employment for on-the-job-training, and occupational training programs. Employment Services staff follow required guidelines regarding referral and placement.

**Title IV – Vocational rehabilitation (DVR)**

DVR serves New Mexicans with disabilities toward suitable employment. Services to participants are individualized and are based on a comprehensive evaluation of the person’s strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice. Vocational counseling and guidance by vocational rehabilitation counselors is the primary service to participants. An Individualized Plan for Employment is developed in partnership with the participant, and legal guardian, when appropriate. This plan is the basis for what services will be provided, how the services will be provided, the timeline for services and how progress will be measured toward achieving the employment outcome. Because each participant’s needs and goals are individualized, services provided vary significantly between participants and plans. Some services are available to all participants, if needed to participate in services and achieve employment, such as assessment to determine eligibility and/or vocational rehabilitation needs, referral to services offered by other agencies that can aid in accomplishing vocational goals, interpreter services, rehabilitation teaching, orientation and mobility services, reader services, job search, placement and retention services and post-employment services.
Commission for the Blind

On the basis of the Commission’s projected fiscal and personnel resources and its assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals who are blind or visually impaired in the state, the Commission has determined that it has the ability to provide the full range of vocational rehabilitation services to all eligible individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Accordingly, the Commission does not have a waiting list for services. This enables the Commission to be responsive to both the needs of individuals who are blind or visually impaired and seeking to be employed, as well as businesses that are seeking to attract qualified employees. The lack of an Order of Selection also enables the Commission to be able to support businesses who wish to retain highly qualified employees who have become blind or visually impaired as older adults.

The Federal mandate that vocational rehabilitation agencies must spend at least 15% of their vocational rehabilitation grant on Pre-Employment Transition Services has resulted in many state vocational rehabilitation agencies needing to implement Orders of Selection. However, the New Mexico Commission for the Blind has been able to manage the Pre-ETS mandate without needing to move to an Order of Selection, and the Commission does not anticipate the need to implement an Order of Selection during the term of the Combined State Plan. The Commission is also providing all of the five “required” Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students age 14 to 21. This has enabled the Commission to be able to provide the nine “authorized” Pre-ETS services to students age 14 to 21. The Commission anticipates being able to provide all of the five required Pre-ETS services throughout the term of the Combined State Plan.

COMBINED PARTNERS PROGRAMS

Trade Adjustment Assistance Program

The state receives federal funding to hire merit staff to provide trade benefits in 15 of the 25 local workforce connection offices statewide. In the remaining 6 offices where a TAA case manager is not present there is a trained Wagner Peyser Merit Staff appropriately informed of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program and is able to provide guidance to possible eligible participants when necessary.

Senior Community Service Employment Service Program (SCSEP)

New Mexico has been providing SCSEP services in New Mexico for as long as the program has been in operation. The capacity to continue these services is well-established.
Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (JVSG).

The WIOA State Combined Plan incorporates the plan of the WIOA required partner, Jobs for Veterans States Grants Program, which includes a narrative on the populations of veterans that will receive targeted services, provisions for priority of service for veterans and other eligible persons and performance goals. NMDWS receives federal formula funding to administer the JVSG program to hire dedicated staff to provide individualized career and training-related services to veterans and eligible persons with significant barriers to employment and to assist employers fill their workforce needs with job-seeking veterans. The JVSG program supports the Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist position, Local Veterans’ Employment Representative (LVER) staff, and Consolidated Position staff. DVOP specialists provide individualized career services to veterans with significant barriers to employment, with the maximum emphasis directed toward serving veterans who are economically or educationally disadvantaged. Veterans with barriers include homeless veterans and vocational rehabilitation clients. Local Veterans’ Employment Representatives conduct outreach to employers and business associations and engage in advocacy efforts with hiring executives to increase employment opportunities for veterans and encourage the hiring of disabled veterans.

DVOP specialists and LVER staff are appropriately integrated at the local Workforce Connection Centers. They are included among the other required partner program staff that are co-located within the centers, to provide online and/or in-person workforce development and support services as part of the workforce development system. NMDWS makes optimal use of the services and linkages to other veteran service providers in the state to enhance the employability and placement of veterans seeking employment and training related services. Formalized partnerships through Memoranda of Understanding exist with the Veterans Administration Vocational and Rehabilitation and Employment program office, Veterans Court in the 2nd Judicial District Court, Goodwill Industries-HVRP, New Mexico Veterans Integration Center, University of New Mexico Veterans’ Resource Center, Los Alamos National Laboratories to fulfill Jobs for Veterans mandates. The JVSG program should continue to forge partnerships with other veteran service providers, such as the New Mexico Department of Veterans Services, Employer Support for the Guard and Reserves, state rehabilitation programs, and colleges’ veterans’ resource centers, particularly wherever collocation is beneficial.

B. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

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

1. VISION

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

2. GOALS

Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the analysis in (a) above 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 and other populations.

(B) Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

[8] 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(j) 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.

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

3. PERFORMANCE GOALS

Using the tables provided within each Core Program section, 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.)

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.

1. Vision

New Mexicans envision a human-centered, inclusive, and innovative workforce development system that grows the talent, knowledge, and skills of people in our diverse communities, including Veterans, unemployed workers, youth and state tribal and pueblo communities. Culturally and linguistically responsive strategies that are developmentally appropriate and geared toward equitable opportunities will advance meaningful independence, self-sufficiency, and economic well-being across the lifespan. We are committed to working through partnerships at all levels to balance the needs and the assets of employees and employers in the public and private sectors to build a sustainable and thriving talent pipeline. Data-informed, coordinated, and integrated strategies are higher quality and strengthen life-long education, training, and work-based learning experiences. These strategies build competency in work and life skills that are foundational to the ongoing economic vitality of individuals, families, communities, and the state as a whole. NM is especially committed to serving individuals who face barriers to employment such as low-income, disabilities, ex-offenders, youth aging out of foster care, English language learners and individuals with low literacy, seasonal farmworkers and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers. This vision demonstrates a shared commitment to more resilient, responsive, and results-oriented workforce development system that moves all New Mexicans toward greater economic prosperity.
2. Goals

Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the analysis in (a) above 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, veterans and other populations.

Make lifelong learning a reality so that New Mexico’s workforce is able to attract economic development that results in high-paying jobs.

Grow apprenticeship opportunities across sectors to systematically build and sustain a high-skilled workforce.

Identify and remove barriers to employment and training.

Stop New Mexico’s brain drain by creating viable economic opportunities for veterans, youth and young adults.

(B) Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

Work across public and private partnerships to create a workforce development system that builds sector strategies that are responsive to employers.

Cultivate community colleges a driver of workforce and economic development.

3. Performance Goals

Appendix I, Performance Goals for the Core Programs, includes the New Mexico’s expected levels of performance based on primary indicators of performance for core programs, as described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. The State has also reached agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education on state adjusted levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan. As such, Appendix I also includes the core programs’ negotiated performance targets for all measures not considered “baseline.” “Baseline” indicators will not be used in the end of the year performance calculations and will not be used to determine failure to achieve adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. New Mexico is expected to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline.”

4. Assessment

The State will continue to assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce investment system in New Mexico in relation to the strategic vision and goals and use results of this assessment and other feedback to make continuous or quality improvements. The State Workforce Development Board, which is appointed by the Governor to provide vision and direction for the workforce system, is required to develop and improve the statewide WIOA-funded activities and the one-stop delivery system, including development of linkages to ensure coordination and prevent duplication among the programs and activities. The Board fulfills this function by providing direction for the development of the WIOA Strategic Plan and developing comprehensive state performance measures to assess the effectiveness of workforce investment activities. To assist the board in fulfilling its duties, it establishes committees to provide oversight and direction in the following areas.
To promote and support business engagement.

To coordinate program data to evaluate the return on investment of workforce programs and services.

To design systems and programs that coordinate and leverage WIOA resources.

To coordinate state agency efforts to support comprehensive, customer-driven one-stop centers.

To monitor program effectiveness and fiscal accountability

To coordinate, design and implement evaluations that may include analysis of customer feedback and outcome and process measures in the statewide workforce development system;

To design and implement rigorous analytical and statistical methods that are reasonably feasible; and

To the extent feasible, coordinate evaluations with core programs, including vocational rehabilitation, adult education, and Wagner-Peyser.

The Board also reviews, evaluates and reports annually on the performance of all workforce development activities administered by state agencies involved with workforce development. Key areas of focus include developing linkages with the public education and higher education agencies to ensure coordination of vocational education, apprenticeship, adult education and literacy, employment training programs and vocational rehabilitation programs with other workforce development and training programs. Any problems identified by the State Board will be included in the annual report on strategic plan implementation and the measures that will be taken to address those problems.

C. STATE STRATEGY

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

1. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT, INCLUDING INDUSTRY OR SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS RELATED TO IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS AND CAREER PATHWAYS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA SECTION 101(D)(3)(B), (D). “CAREER PATHWAY” IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(7) AND INCLUDES REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP. “IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTOR OR OCCUPATION” IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(23)

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)
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). 

1. Work across public and private partnerships to create a workforce development system that builds sector strategies that are responsive to employers and employees.

Sector strategies are an approach to workforce development that looks at the human resource needs of sectors within an industry and aligns workforce development strategies to respond accordingly. Sector strategies are based on the desire to align emerging, existing, or returning participants in the workforce with education, training, and work-based learning experiences that match the technical and soft skills needed in in-demand sectors. According to Jessica Ziegler with Mathematica Policy Research, “sector strategies can increase earnings and improve job quality for the under-skilled workforce. Further, businesses that have participated in sector strategies have credited the initiatives with increasing their productivity and reducing their operating costs.”

Phase 1 - Engage in asset mapping to clarify the use of local, state, and federal workforce development resources to build the workforce in priority sectors.

Asset based mapping would provide WIOA partners with a structured and sustainable process to build sector strategies in the priority sectors identified by Governor Lujan Grisham in 2019. The top ten workforce sectors include:

- health;
- aerospace and STEM;
- intelligent manufacturing;
- sustainable and value-added agriculture;
- sustainable and green industries;
- film and digital media;
- tourism and recreation;
- information technology and cyber security;
- education; and
- International trade.

This collaborative mapping process would engage public and private for-profit and non-profit partners in the mapping process to:
1. Analyze needed and existing resources in each workforce development region on in-demand or high growth sectors. Resources can include but are not limited to financial, data-and informational, educational, technological, and relational.

2. Identify key stakeholders and their abilities, reasons, needs, and capacity for partnership around sector strategies.

3. Develop some shared metrics that sectors can use to communicate progress within and across sectors.

**Phase 2 - Use data gathered from collaborative mapping efforts to build sector collaborations between public and private partners to create career pathways in health, aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture; sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education, and international trade.**

The partners identified in the mapping process would work together regionally by sector to assess the human resource needs of regional businesses in the priority sectors. Each sector would look for inclusive strategies that respond to the particular needs and capacity of those just entering the workforce, those who are looking for advancement within the sector, those who are looking for advancement but come from another sector, as well as those who are re-entering the workforce after having been out of it for an extended length of time. Sector assessments might identify barriers such as:

- lack of general job readiness;
- lack of training or experience in technical skills needed to successfully perform roles;
- barriers to the use of state-of-the-art technology in the sector;
- lack of quality reliable childcare for employees;
- lack of safe and affordable housing for the workforce;
- insufficient recruitment and onboarding practices;
- compensation and benefits packages that are not competitive; and others

Together sector partners would design and implement customized solutions. The specific solutions would depend on sector needs and workforce conditions in an area. Strategies within sectors may even vary by region depending on the barriers and assets in each region. For example, one region may have a wealth of higher education resources to deliver training and internship opportunities to provide an under-skilled workforce with sector-focused occupational skills training that is designed and implemented with regional businesses’ input and support. Another region may identify those same needs but not have a higher education partner with the same training and internship programs available. However, it is important that lessons-learned are being shared across region and across sector as some
strategies might be transferrable. The goal across sector and region is to have the necessary training, experiential learning, and supports in place so that employees and employers have a good match for success on day one of an employer-employee relationship.

Phase 3 - Continue implementation and analysis and quality improvement within and across sectors.

Each sector that works with the Department of Workforce Solutions and WIOA partners in each region of the state, needs support creating win-win solutions through sector strategies. For employers, identifying, growing, and retaining a highly-skilled workforce is important to productivity and profitability. For employees, building skills, securing and maintaining family-sustaining employment, and engaging in ongoing professional development opportunities are important to personal and familial economic well-being. Ongoing sector partnerships beyond the first two phases are important in terms of data and information sharing, identifying and acting on quality improvement opportunities, and spreading lessons learned and best practices within and across sectors.

2. Make lifelong learning a reality so that New Mexico’s workforce is able to attract economic development that results in high-paying jobs.

A commitment to lifelong learning reduces periods of unemployment and underemployment. Systems alignment around the importance of lifelong learning allows participants in the workforce to gain knowledge and skills, earn jobs, get promoted, and train for careers in new industries. When employers engage with a workforce that is committed to lifelong learning, they get people in their organizations who are effective, responsive, and adaptable.

Globalization and rapid changes in technology require educational and labor systems to respond quickly to support people in meeting the needs that accompany economic changes. For people who have been at the margin of the labor market and or educational systems, rapid changes often deepen the divide between those who have opportunities to participate successfully and those who do not. As New Mexico works to change longstanding trends in which New Mexicans as a whole do not share the same levels of labor market participation and success as other people in other states, goals to increase buy-in and participation in opportunities for lifelong learning are vitally important to employees and employers.

Phase 1 - Work across WIOA partners to develop shared cross-system expectations about lifelong learning and shared messaging to participants about the importance of lifelong learning throughout one’s work life.

To identify career and educational pathways that are aligned with family-supporting wages/compensation it is important that in-demand and high growth sector strategies are
successful. The investment of time and money in job training for professions that are not in demand and are not compensated at a living wage are poor uses of resources. In 2019, Governor Lujan Grisham identified ten priority sectors based on their in-demand and growth status. Health, aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture; sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education, and international trade provide a range of career opportunities for a variety of participants in the workforce. The diversity of individuals and communities is well-matched by the diversity of opportunity in New Mexico’s economy. Some of the characteristics these sectors have in common are the importance of ongoing soft skill training and development. In addition, these sectors share the need for a workforce with strong critical thinking, analytical and creative problem-solving skills as well as technical knowledge and experience.

Each sector has a range of human resource needs from entry level to experienced professionals. Lifelong learning is important across experience levels. Some sectors have entry level positions that require a 4-year degree or more and others are looking for people with certificates. At any level of educational attainment, additional credentials may be warranted to stay relevant and competitive in the workforce. However, credentials may be especially important in terms of higher education for youth. In New Mexico, focusing on dual credit opportunities in high school is a strategy for reaching youth at a formative stage and emphasizing the importance of lifelong learning related to career goals and higher education. In New Mexico, where less than 40% of the population has participated in higher education, aligning dual credit opportunities while in high school with general credentials and stackable credentials is a way to make educational attainment and employability a reality.

It is important that WIOA partners develop shared messaging about the importance of lifelong learning. People participating in workforce development may find themselves interacting with many WIOA partners in a short period of time and across their lifespan. Shared messaging and strategies are important in terms of clarity, the individual’s own goal-setting, and success. Messaging strategies with youth must recognize the importance of family engagement in promoting lifelong learning for those just entering the workforce. A two-generation approach which recognizes the importance of responding to both youth and family workforce development needs is important in terms of being culturally responsive and achieving sustainably good outcomes. In addition, communicating the link between lifelong learning to individual and family financial well-being is also part of building the case for lifelong learning. In this phase WIOA partners and community advisors need to work together to coordinate clear and consistent messaging about lifelong learning.

In addition to developing shared messaging, WIOA partners will develop shared metrics to determine progress on efforts to promote lifelong learning. This will allow WIOA partners to have a plan to evaluate the efficacy of messaging efforts and share lessons learned across departments, regions, communities, and demographic groups to refine and customize messaging effectively.
Phase 2- Implement efforts to promote lifelong-learning and share data with other WIOA partners to strengthen program, regional, agency, and state-wide efforts.

Once WIOA partners work together to develop shared messaging about lifelong learning and shared metrics to evaluate progress on messaging about lifelong learning, partners will engage in a coordinated effort around messaging and share data to monitor progress, conduct quality improvement, and continue to refine and strengthen messaging. Partners should meet at least quarterly to discuss shared and individual messaging efforts about lifelong learning. Some specific indicators that WIOA partners can use to measure progress are:

- Number of people eligible to participate in work-based learning experiences, GED completion, and or credit-based higher education;
- Of those who were eligible, the number of actual people who chose to participate in work-based learning experiences, GED, or higher education;
- Of those who participated in work-based learning experiences, GED, or higher education who completed the work-based learning plan, GED, or course of study;
- Pre-learning survey about attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors related to work-based learning, GED, and/or higher education; and
- Post learning survey about attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors related to work-based learning, GED, and/or higher education.

It’s important to share data with employers, k-12 teachers, higher education, parents, youth development professionals, and others who also have a role in promoting lifelong learning.

Phase 3- Use shared learning and longitudinal data to develop concrete innovative strategies around lifelong learning that reorient systems to meet the workforce needs of today while becoming ready and relevant for the needs of the future.

Successful lifelong learning systems and programs routinely evaluate their efforts to inform implementation, planning, and policies. Meaningful evaluation not only looks at individual success in meeting lifelong learning goals, it looks at trends to determine needs for systems improvements, addresses any disparities that may emerge, and uses data to strengthen quality improvement and makes sure that lifelong learning offerings are aligned with successful employment outcomes for participants.

Furthermore, this goal is also oriented toward collecting and analyzing data to sustain career readiness in a changing economic environment. While high-quality education and training should be attuned to the needs of specific positions and sectors for workers, it also needs to take into consideration the learning needs of employers. With both employers and employees there is a need to balance immediate needs with emerging and future needs. Through an ongoing relationship of public, private, for and non-profit partners, the ability to use data to inform decision-making and anticipate and respond to emerging needs is strengthened and the workforce system is more responsive and resilient.
1. **Cultivate a partnership with community colleges as a driver of workforce and economic development.**

Community colleges serve a variety of people in New Mexico across the lifespan. From students who are just out of high school and interested in entering or strengthening their position in the labor market to seniors interested in learning new skills and everyone in between, community colleges with a strong relationship with business and industry are well positioned to help people acquire or build on the skills needed to succeed in the workforce. Students of all ages have access to work-based and classroom learning to help them gain important skills, knowledge, and experience to make a meaningful contribution in the workplace with less than a four-year degree. When strong relationships between business and industry and community colleges exist, curriculum and course delivery systems are rigorous enough to meet industry standards and flexible enough to meet the needs of working students who often have family obligations.

**Phase 1- The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions and WIOA partners will work with the 19 public community colleges throughout New Mexico to map out programs and strategies underway related to career pathways in the previously identified in-demand industries as stated in Goal #1, Phase 1.**

In year one, the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions and WIOA partners will study and map community college programs directly and closely related to the Governor’s priority sectors. Mapping will allow NMDWS and WIOA partners to understand readiness for sector strategies and opportunities for capacity building. Mapping will be a collaborative effort and a visual map as well as narrative explanation of the baseline impact of community colleges on the Governor’s priority economic development sectors will be created.

Furthermore, NMDWS and WIOA partners will work with community colleges to understand the number of students participating in each of the available program offerings related to the priority sectors. Demographic information about students participating in the programs within the priority sectors will also be analyzed. NMDWS and WIOA partners will work with community colleges to identify strategies to recruit and retain a diverse group of people in the existing programs that are aligned with priority sectors.

**Phase 2- The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions and WIOA partners will encourage community colleges and priority sectors to realign course offerings to increase career pathways related to careers in at least two of the Governor’s priority areas in each region, as identified by each Local Area Workforce Development Board, in the following fields: health, aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture, sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education, and international trade.**
Through the use of sector strategies identified in goal 1, NMDWS and WIOA partners will facilitate new partnerships or support existing partnerships between community colleges and business and industry to increase career pathways into priority sectors. Readiness to realign courses and offer programs will be based on the readiness of community colleges and business and industry leaders to launch innovative efforts in an inclusive and effective manner. Success will be strengthened by a community colleges' ability to provide wraparound supports to remove barriers to education and training for all students in a manner that accommodates special needs. New programs will create new demands on wrap around services and resource allocation.

NMDWS and WIOA will meet regularly with community colleges and document what is working well and what is challenging.

**Phase 3 - The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions will study progress in each region related to the capacity of community colleges to provide career pathways in the high-demand or high-growth sectors of the workforce in New Mexico.**

Comparing the initial baseline mapping, ongoing communication with community colleges, and ongoing study of career pathways and the outcomes data will be used to study progress at each community college and within each region. At the end of the 4-years an additional map will be drawn based on the preliminary guidelines to measure progress.

1. **Grow work-based learning experiences, apprenticeships, and internship opportunities across sectors to systematically build and sustain a high-skilled workforce in in-demand occupations.**

Work-based learning allows people an opportunity to gain valuable information and perspective about careers they’re considering and discover what it’s like on the job outside of classroom learning. Research has shown that work-based learning can help students make academic progress as they apply what they’re learning in a course of study or training in a professional setting. Higher student attendance and graduation rates are also linked to work-based learning. These strategies can help employers reduce their recruitment and training costs. These strategies have been used with high school students and adult students across the country. Sometimes work-based learning is paid and sometimes it’s volunteer. The length and intensity may also vary though more robust programs are more closely linked to better academic and job placement outcomes.

Apprenticeships are another important workforce development strategy in New Mexico. Participants earn a paycheck from the start. Raises are often built into the process and as skill increases so does compensation. People learn a trade through mostly hands-on learning with a small percentage of classroom learning. The length of an apprenticeship varies based on the complexity of a job. This works well for people interested in a trade who want a structured, formal, and paid on the job learning opportunity. In New Mexico, the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions State Apprenticeship Office works with local Workforce Development
Boards to cover the costs of training. People who complete the program receive documentation of their successful participation and completion. Successful completion of apprenticeship programs results in an industry recognized credential.

Internships are another important workforce development strategy with benefits for students, employers, and experienced professionals. Internships help employers to connect with high quality talent in a competitive labor market and utilize skills that are limited or missing in their existing team. Students gain career experiences, clarity about strengths and opportunities for growth, and a broader professional network. Experienced professionals use internships also known as “returnships” to consider new career paths or regain entry to the workforce. No matter where someone is at in their life course or career trajectory, both paid and unpaid internships allow workforce participants to gain practical skills and helpful insights. Many businesses hire from their interns.

**Phases 1 & 2 of this goal will happened concurrently.** The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions and WIOA partners will work with the nineteen public community colleges throughout New Mexico, the seven public 4-year colleges and universities, and the four Tribal colleges to survey programs and strategies underway related to work-based learning experiences, apprenticeship, and internship programs in health, aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture, sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education, and international trade.

As part of baseline data collection efforts, NMDWS will work with higher education to create a survey of work-based learning experiences across NM related to the Governor’s priority sectors. Part of the baseline data collection process will include Identification of how many students are enrolled in each region by each sector and work-based learning strategy. Together, NMDWS and WIOA partners will work with local institutions of higher education to use aggregate data to set goals to better achieve the Governor’s priorities.

WIOA partners will work with the nineteen public community colleges throughout New Mexico, the seven public 4-year colleges and universities, and the four Tribal colleges to analyze program growth; student enrollment and completion; and successful transition into the workforce and job placement or promotion due to educational gains.

**Phase 3- WIOA partners will work with the nineteen public community colleges throughout New Mexico, the seven public 4-year colleges and universities, and the four Tribal colleges to identify and promote best practices in work-based learning, apprenticeships, and internships in the priority sectors.**

New Mexico has and will continue work-based learning, apprenticeships, and internships. This goal of the plan is to collaborate with higher education, regional workforce development boards, and businesses to identify, grow, learn from, and apply lessons learned about these strategies to the priority sectors identified by the Governor.
1. **Identify and remove barriers to employment and training**

New Mexico’s Labor Force Participation rate is lower than the national average and, since 2015, has been ranked in the bottom 1/5th among all states. As of November 2019, only 58.8% of New Mexico’s eligible labor force is participating. New Mexico’s unemployment rate is above the national average and has been in the top 5 states in the nation for the highest unemployment rates since 2015. New Mexico also has higher rates of unemployed and discouraged workers than the national average.

Identifying and removing barriers to employment and training is key to efforts to increase labor force participation, reduce unemployment, and increase compensation. To grow talent for in-demand jobs it’s important to systematically identify and remove barriers to employment and training. Governor Lujan Grisham believes in “an economy that works for everyone.” According to the 2017 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 28.6% of adults in New Mexico have at least one disability. New Mexico ranks higher than the national average on disabilities related to mobility, cognition, independent living, hearing, vision, and self-care. Identifying and removing social and structural barriers to meaningful participation in the workforce for people with disabilities, veterans, people in frontier and rural communities, as well as addressing disparities related to race, ethnicity, and gender are important to achieving this goal.

**Phase 1- Identify, quantify, and prioritize action around training and employment barriers.**

Several WIOA state partners were able to quickly identify lack of access to high quality and affordable child care; limited or unreliable transportation, unmanaged AODA and mental health issues, and criminal/legal barriers as common barriers to training and employment from their experience providing workforce development supports. However, more analysis is needed to identify, quantify, and prioritize action and problem solving to reduce and remove barriers to training and employment. Given the significant differences between urban, suburban, rural, and frontier communities across New Mexico, county, tribal, and regional strategies that are responsive to the unique barriers in communities may be the most effective. From these customized and individualized approaches, promising practices may emerge.

**Phase 2- Work collaboratively across WIOA partners to prioritize individual and shared goals, data collection, and best practices related to addressing and eliminating barriers.**

Communication and collaboration across communities will allow WIOA partners to set statewide, regional, and local level goals to reduce and eliminate training and employment barriers. By using data to inform decision-making, resources can be targeted to more effectively address barriers. Quantitative and qualitative data that is grounded in the experiences of New Mexico’s diverse populations across workforce development partners can provide insight into
best practices for eliminating barriers. In this phase partners need to agree on a set of metrics to monitor, analyze, and inform systems-changes to improve outcomes.

**Phase 3- Continue to meet, collaborate, and analyze data to improve efforts to remove barriers and focus on additional priority barriers if the first set of priorities has been resolved.**

Ongoing communication, collaboration, and data-informed decision-making to remove barriers at the individual and social and structural levels is key to increasing training and workforce participation.

1. **Stop New Mexico’s brain drain by creating viable economic and workforce opportunities for youth and young adults.**

New Mexico is committed to continuing to build on its talent acquisition and retention strategies by creating and sustaining workforce development opportunities that are competitive with opportunities in neighboring states and the nation. WIOA partners highlighted the importance of engaging in problem-solving about this issue in partnership with youth and young adults rather than for youth and young adults. A partnership approach at all levels from analyzing and understanding the “brain drain” issue to considering and testing strategies to reverse this trend, youth and young adult knowledge and perspectives are essential to the success of this goal.

Between years 2011-2016, economists estimated that 42,000 more people exited New Mexico than entered it. The majority of them were college-educated, 17,000 of them held a bachelor’s degree. "When a state starts losing its qualified workforce, economies contract, unemployment rises and more people join the out-migration. It is a vicious circle." (Lin July 2018) 13% of people aged 20-24 in New Mexico were unemployed; and 51.3% of out-of-school youth ages 16-19 were unemployed or not in the labor force. This is higher than the national average. (Labor Market Review September 2019)

**Phase 1- Involve high school youth and young adults in an advisory group to define the scope of the problem and guide strategies to increase economic and workforce opportunities for youth and young adults in New Mexico’s priority economic development sectors.**

Youth must be seen as assets and part of the solution rather than concerning populations to be addressed. The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions and WIOA partners will recruit youth and young adult policy advisors to inform and guide efforts to stop the brain drain and leverage the younger workforce's passion, knowledge and talent in the previously identified in-demand industry sectors. These stakeholders can partner with public and private sector partners to develop regional and statewide plans targeted at stopping the brain drain.
If the public and private sectors partner to create access for youth and young adults to sector strategies at points of transition, youth and young adults are less likely to opt to leave New Mexico because they have viable economic options at home. Part of success with this strategy requires an integrated and coordinated approach that involves youth and young adults in each of the other goal areas. Sector strategies must consider pathways for youth to enter and grow in a sector. Access to high-quality and developmentally lifelong learning opportunities are essential youth and young adults’ ability to navigate to healthy transitions into the workforce. While community colleges have success recruiting youth, more is needed to support retention and successful completion. Increasing engagement in work-based learning opportunities which include internships and apprenticeships in priority sectors are pivotal to economic well-being, meaningful independence, and self-sufficiency. Youth and young adults need to be part of ongoing conversations to identify and remove barriers to training and employment.

**Phase 2 - Engage the public and private for-profit and not-for-profit sectors in supporting strategies to increase economic and workforce opportunities for youth and young adults in New Mexico.**

Following collaboration and planning to identify causes of and strategies to stop the brain drain in all industry sectors, public and private workforce partners need to identify concrete and specific approaches to implementing the guidance of youth and young adults. These strategies need enough time to come to fruition and shared metrics to monitor progress, engage in quality improvement and see results.

**Phase 3 - Solicit feedback from New Mexico youth and young adults about strategies to stop the brain drain and expand on working strategies and adapt, refine, or retire strategies that aren’t working.**

Ongoing input is important and routine feedback loops with youth are essential to implementing and measuring progress. Each goal in the 2020-2024 WIOA plan will be well served by sustaining an ongoing feedback loop with stakeholders. Including youth and young adult stakeholders in each feedback loop has the added benefit of targeting efforts to stop the brain drain.

- **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)**

Strategy #1 – Develop and implement common messages and metrics across core programs and combined state plan partner agencies:
• Commitment to quarterly Workforce Partnership meeting that include core programs and combined state plan partner agencies. Meetings focus on statewide policy and program implementation, strategy alignment, coordination of resources/tools, communication planning, review of shared goals and metrics.

• Development of shared metrics among core programs and combined partners that can be used to document and report progress to State Workforce Development Board.

Strategy #2 – Create opportunities for shared and integrated learning and technical assistance across core programs and combined state plan partner agencies to promote alignment across systems

• Implementation of an annual workforce conference in partnership with the core programs and combined partners focused on State Plan goals and strategies; specifically sector strategies, career pathways, performance metrics and outcomes. Focus opportunities for cross learning with business engagement personnel and career advisors.

• Expansion of youth work-based learning opportunities statewide in partnership with Public Education and Vocational Rehabilitation through the promotion of career exploration and readiness tools and resources for youth enrolled in Career Technical Education or receiving pre-employment training services;

Strategy #3 – Identify opportunities to leverage state resources to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of workforce programming statewide.

• Ongoing review of office locations/staffing patterns with specific attention to promoting co-location, strengthened referral practices and coordinated outreach with industry sectors and businesses.

• Increase/enhance coordination across functions among core programs and combined state plan partners for services including career exploration and job readiness, business outreach and engagement, job placement services.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

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

A. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include—

1. STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS

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

The State Workforce Development Board plays a leadership role in aligning federal investments in job training and education programs, integrating service delivery across programs, enhancing the capacity and performance of the workforce development system at both the state and local levels, ensuring the one-stop system is customer driven, and the workforce system is job-driven and matches employers with skilled individuals. As such, the State Workforce Development Board establishes overarching strategies and framework for the local boards to follow in developing local plans that are consistent with the State Plan; establishes accountability measures and expectations for the implementation of the local board plans; conducts annual (or more frequent) review of local boards plans and progress; ensures compliance with criteria for membership on a local boards; receives and communicates public comments regarding the activities of the local boards to ensure accountability and transparency; recommends action consistent with state rule and policy if local board outcomes are not achieved and are not consistent with the principles, strategies, and vision described in this State Plan.

In PY 2019, the newly elected Governor appointed a new State Board Chair April 2019 along with several new members. The Board, under new leadership, has met four times and has been focused on setting vision and goals for the next four years. Key actions taken by the State Board in PY 2019 include the following: • review and adoption of by-laws to govern board engagement; • adoption of an Open Meetings Resolution to ensure transparency in the Board’s interactions; • approval of a meeting schedule to ensure the Board meets regularly; and • establishment of committees to support the Board’s work (discussed below).

Committees were established to assist the State Board in accomplishing its goals by focusing the board’s workforce development efforts. As such, the State Board has established two committees, as follows:

1. **Executive Committee** - This committee will meet at least twice per year between full board meetings, and more often, as necessary, to serve in an advisory capacity for supporting the review and development of proposed activities required by WIOA, as well as to conduct planning for State Board meeting agenda items.

2. **Workforce System Performance Committee** - This committee was established to prioritize and tackle issues of importance around improving the overall performance of the workforce system. The committee is currently focused on local area designation, reviewing current structure of regional boards to determine if designations are appropriate for meeting the needs of job seekers and businesses. The Committee has established a work plan and meeting schedule which includes submitting recommendations to the Governor by May 2020 for consideration for potential redesign of regional areas.

The State Board plans to establish other subcommittees, as needed, which could include the following:
• **Data and Performance Committee** - This committee could spearhead the acquisition and coordination of data across agencies to develop state performance measures to evaluate the overall effectiveness and return on investment of workforce/training programs and services. While recognizing the need for appropriate privacy safeguards, this committee could work to establish the necessary data sharing agreements to enable an integrated tracking process to better assess how well the state’s investment in individuals receiving career services yield successful outcomes. These efforts could provide a basis for setting priorities, goals, and benchmarks across agencies based on solid data. The State Board has already received presentations on Return on Investment practices and are well on their way to setting this committee as a priority.

• **Policy Review Committee**: The State Board desires to ensure the workforce system is agile and responsive to the needs of its customers. Working in partnership with a knowledgeable third-party contractor, this committee to would review existing policies at the state and local board levels and make recommendations for removing overly burdensome policies.

• **Business Engagement Committee (Sector Strategy)** - This committee could support the development and execution of statewide Sector Strategy deployment, with a focus on employer engagement to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, gaps and employability of the New Mexico workforce. They could review and analyze data to be used as the basis for a more comprehensive plan of action for enhancing the employability of job seekers through relevant training and education.

• **Workforce/Education Coordination Committee** - This committee could work to engage and challenge stakeholders to design systems and programs that coordinate and leverage WIOA resources; improve consistent and standardized assessment of basic skills; and increase the attainment of relevant credentials validated by employers. This committee could promote a strong partnership between community colleges and the public workforce system and explore options to more effectively target resources to support and sustain successful projects and demonstrated effectiveness.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

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

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

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

**New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions**

New Mexico’s Combined Plan includes strategies to achieve its vision and goals. These strategies and goals were created in partnership with the core programs and combined partners and are
flexible enough to accommodate the unique requirements for each program, as well as the needs for each region throughout the state. The plan includes specific strategies to address the needs of populations described in Section (a). The foundation of New Mexico’s plan is based on a comprehensive review of data, partnerships and resources available to implement strategies that support operations and services to individuals and employers. The core programs and combined partners are committed to changing and/or adjusting its strategies as needed to meet the state’s workforce needs. The State Workforce Development Board has plans to establish working subcommittees to address various aspects of the workforce system and are committed to continuous assessment and review of implementation.

NMDWS is designated as the State Administrative Entity for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and supports the State Workforce Development Board, responsible for leadership, vision and strategy for New Mexico’s workforce system. NMDWS provides statewide leadership to promote and support a cohesive workforce system that creates value and offers employers, individuals, and communities the opportunity to achieve and sustain economic prosperity. Specifically, NMDWS convenes the core programs and combined partners at least six times yearly to design, plan, and facilitate the development of comprehensive programs statewide. NMDWS also monitors each of the four local workforce development board activities to assure effective and efficient utilization of WIOA funds, partnership and engagement of local Chief Elected Officials, coordination with required WIOA partners and execution of the State Workforce Development Board vision and goals.

NMDWS coordinates and facilitates ongoing technical assistance at the state and local level to develop capacity across the system. Key activities planned over the next four years include that will be delivered in partnership with the core programs and combined partners include: an annual conference focused on best and promising practices in workforce service delivery, sector strategy partnership development in each regional area, enhanced coordination of work-based learning for youth and young adults in partnership with Carl Perkins, workforce performance management and continuous quality improvement implementation, and coordination with Native American WIOA funded programs to enhance coordination of statewide activities. Additionally, NMDWS will facilitate and coordinate ongoing technical assistance for the local workforce development boards based needs identified through onsite monitoring and needs communicated by local board members and their staff.

It is important to note New Mexico successfully developed and implemented a Common Unique Identifier with the core programs. This enables NMDWS to identify customers shared across Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education and Family Literacy. The data is useful and helps support implementation discussions surrounding program coordination. Plans for the next four years include adding TANF/SNAP recipients into the data. Strategies for co-enrollment have slowed and are hampered primarily due to lack of funding for comprehensive Information Technology infrastructure that can support case management across all systems, as well as competing federal policies and procedures. Although co-enrollment has been difficult to support and manage from an IT perspective, strategies to improve referral and follow-up at the local level has significantly improved. Each of the four local workforce development boards engage and maintain a workforce partner group responsible for reviewing referral processes and improving
communication and coordination across programs and implementing approaches to increase care coordination. There is a commitment to cross training staff at the local level.

**Adult and Dislocated Worker Services**

WIOA authorizes "career services" for adults and dislocated workers. There are three types of “career services”: basic career services, individualized career services, and follow-up services; there is no sequence requirement for these services. Career services under this approach provide local areas and service providers with flexibility to target services to the needs of the customer. The three categories of career services are defined as follows:

**Basic Career Services.** Basic career services must be made available to all individuals seeking services served in the one-stop delivery system, and include:

- determinations of whether the individual is eligible to receive assistance from the adult, dislocated worker, or youth programs;
- outreach, intake, and orientation to information and other services available through the one-stop delivery system;
- initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive service needs;
- labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance, and, when needed by an individual, career counseling, including the provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations;
- provision of information on nontraditional employment;
- provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including those within the one-stop delivery system and, when appropriate, other workforce development programs;
- provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including job vacancy listings in labor market areas;
- information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed;
- information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement for those jobs;
- provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and type of providers;
- provision of information about how the local area is performing on local performance accountability measures, as well as any additional performance information relating to the area's one-stop delivery system;
• provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance, including: child care; child support; medical or child health assistance available through the State's Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program; benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); assistance through the earned income tax credit; housing counseling and assistance services sponsored through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); and assistance under a State program for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and other supportive services and transportation provided through that program;

• assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA; and

• provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims under UI programs, including meaningful assistance to individuals seeking assistance in filing a claim.

**Individualized Career Services**

If Workforce Connection Center staff determine that individualized career services are appropriate for an individual to obtain or retain employment, these services must be made available to the individual at the center. Workforce Connection Center staff may use recent previous assessments by partner programs to determine if individualized career services would be appropriate. These services include:

• comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals;

• development of an individual employment plan, to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals, including the list of, and information about, eligible training providers;

• group and/or individual counseling and mentoring; career planning (e.g. case management); short-term pre-vocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training;

• internships and work experiences that are linked to careers;

• workforce preparation activities that help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education, or training, or employment;

• financial literacy services;
• out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance; and
• English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Program

The New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED), Adult Education Division oversees the provision of targeted educational services outlined by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), Title II of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. At present, the New Mexico Adult Education system includes a network of 24 local program providers in every workforce region of the state who offer free instruction and training to eligible adults. Adult Education provides opportunities for strengthening basic literacy skills, including numeracy and digital literacy; obtaining a High School Equivalency (HSE) credential; English Language Acquisition (ELA) and civics instruction; enrolling in post-secondary education and training programs; and placement and retention in employment and workplace programs. Family literacy and workplace preparation are heavily emphasized in Adult Education programs, along with preparation for postsecondary education and training with an emphasis on career pathways that lead to jobs with family-sustaining wages and opportunities for advancement. As outlined in Section 203 of WIOA, fundable Adult Education activities include:

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

For a complete definition and description of each fundable activity, see Program-Specific Requirements for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs. In accordance with the terms of their AEFLA grants and to the extent these funds apply, local Adult Education providers are restricted to program activities that fall within this scope. In addition to the activities provided by the local programs, NMHED is committed to utilizing AEFLA and other available funds to support agency leadership activities and initiatives in a manner both required and supported by WIOA Title II legislation, as detailed in Appendix V. This includes continuing to support the alignment of Adult Education and literacy activities with other core programs and

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Adopt one-stop partners, including eligible providers, to implement the strategy identified in the State plan under section 103, including the development of career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities.

**Adult Education** is committed to supporting the goals and overarching strategies presented in this Plan. It is committed to service excellence within its scope of activities and to the identification of increasingly effective ways to align State and partner efforts to serve individuals with significant barriers to employment, especially individuals with low literacy levels. This includes collaborating with WIOA core programs and partner programs included in the Combined State Plan, as well as outside partners in Education and Industry, Health and Human Services, Economic Development, and beyond. Because of its focus as an *education program* that fundamentally supports workforce development, Adult Education is oriented more directly toward continuously improving the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to individuals, but excellent service in this domain necessarily involves the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to employers. And it certainly involves close partner engagement with New Mexico’s educational institutions, primarily with its institutions of higher education, but also with other eligible training providers and with the Public Education Department and community schools.

**Adult Education supports activity alignment across the core and Combined State Plan partner programs on two primary levels:** Programmatic and state-level. Local Adult Education program providers collaborate directly with local one-stops and workforce development boards; with regional sector strategy collaborations; with local nonprofit organizations; and with the local business community. Supporting local Adult Education providers to provide high-quality Adult Education programs and services is the first and most important layer of Adult Education’s strategic efforts. NMHED provides monitoring and oversight, technical support, and professional development to all local providers to ensure compliance and promote quality. This centrally involves supporting collaborations and formal partnerships between local Adult Education providers and core WIOA partners and One Stops. NMHED actively encourages and incentivizes the collaborative efforts of local providers, including the creation of written agreements. This commitment to supporting partnerships is reflected in the competitive AEFLA grant process itself, specifically in the RFA requirements and considerations. It is equally reflected in provider reporting requirements, strategic professional development initiatives, and, most recently, in funding formula revision considerations. All local program providers are strongly encouraged to attend and actively participate in local workforce board meetings; all regions currently have an Adult Education representative on their local board. Every local Adult Education program provider has entered into an MOU with their regional board(s) and One Stop(s). At present, this MOU at minimum covers cost-sharing agreements, but some have included additional partnership elements. Referrals and co-enrollments between core partners are largely facilitated individually by dedicated local Adult Education providers and One Stop partner staff, since at present New Mexico has neither a statewide standardized referral system nor a shared data system to support it. Nonetheless, co-enrollment is strongly supported, along with co-location when possible. Adult Education strategic priorities on the programmatic level include: (1) Contributing to the development of shared cross-system expectations and messaging to participants around the importance of lifelong learning, (2) Working with NMHED and other core WIOA partners to remove barriers to education and training opportunities, and (3) Working internally and with NMHED, DWS, and other core WIOA partners to grow work-based learning experiences in New Mexico, including internships and apprenticeships, and to create infrastructure to connect Adult Education students to such experiences.
At the State agency level, NMHED collaborates directly with core WIOA and other Combined State Plan partners. Enhancing coordination and synergy at the State level is an area of significant strategic focus for Title II, with particular emphasis on collaborations around sector strategy and career pathway development. An Adult Education Outreach Coordinator position was created specifically to support workforce development collaboration and partnership efforts for Adult Education. Strategic state-level priority activities include: (1) Ensuring continued Adult Education engagement with the WIOA core partner leadership team; with the State and all four local workforce investment boards; and with related committees and work groups, to include those which might be convened to support career pathway development and/or regional sector strategy work. (2) Engaging individuals and organizations with significant local and national-level expertise to advise and collaborate with NMHED and other core partners in areas of high strategic priority, including the coordinated statewide development of priority sector strategies and career pathways for industry sectors the governor has identified as highest priority (health, aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture, sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education, and international trade); (3) Collaborating with DWS and core WIOA partners to build on the Common Unique Identifier (CUID) project and work toward the creation of interoperable data infrastructure and a streamlined referral and tracking system; (4) Providing and participating in cross-agency training and professional development; and (5) Working collaboratively with partners to identify and eliminate barriers to access--especially as they relate to system barriers--and developing effective messaging for stakeholders to increase system engagement and support.

**Title III - Wagner-Peyser Employment Services**

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions also administers Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, which it does from the state level through its Employment Services Division, along with the administration of Trade Adjustment Assistance, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Rapid Response, and Veterans programs. NMDWS receives funding from USDOL to hire and oversee state merit staff responsible for direct delivery of the Wagner Peyser employment services and the other related services to jobseekers and employers. Merit staff is located throughout 25 field offices and the programs are co-located with the WIOA programs in every local board area.

Employment Services are provided as part of the one-stop delivery system. Currently, each local workforce development area has at least one comprehensive workforce development center that includes, at a minimum, three partners: WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker services, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, and access to Unemployment Insurance services. Each Employment Services field office is assigned a Wagner-Peyser Area Manager who ensures the workforce centers are universally accessible, customer centered, and training is job-driven with an emphasis in career pathways. This includes providing easy access to and assistance with workforce related activities: such as assisting employers in recruiting talent, exploring work preparation and career development services for job seekers, as well as making a seamless referral to WIOA employment for on-the-job-training, and occupational training programs. Employment Services staff follow required guidelines regarding referral and placement.

All of the Basic Career Services offered by the WIOA programs must be made available by Wagner-Peyser staff in coordination with other one-stop delivery system partners. Employment Services staff may also make available the Individualized Career Services,
particularly for those individuals with barriers. Wagner-Peyser services are free of charge for individuals. Employment Services staff work cooperatively and collaboratively with the Local Workforce Development Boards, site managers and operators, and other workforce partners, to effectively serve both employers and jobseekers. A key role of this program is to identify potential matches between employers and jobseekers. The program’s service delivery approach includes self-service, facilitated self-help, and staff-assisted services, and involves a number of other tools and resources as follows.

**Worker and Jobseeker Services:**

- Work and Skills assessments
- Career pathway development
- Labor Market information
- Workshop and training referrals
- Reemployment services to unemployment insurance claimants
- Job referral assistance
- Assisting in the navigation of the Workforce Connection On-Line system

**Employer Services:**

- Outreach to promote the use of Workforce Connection Center facilities and services
- Entry, review, and maintenance of job listings in the Workforce Connection On-Line System
- Filling job listings
- Specialized assessment and testing of applicants
- Workforce Connection Online System technical assistance
- Recruitment assistance, i.e. employment hiring events
- Training services
- Response to layoffs and business closures

**Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation**

DVR is one of the partners included in the infrastructure funding agreements with each the four Workforce Boards with DWS. DVR’s contributions are through in-kind services specifically for deaf and hard of hearing sign language interpreters. DVR covers costs associated with the sign
language interpreters for major employment events coordinated by one-stop operators of the four boards.

DVR is currently co-located with other Workforce Connection partners in the Albuquerque Workforce Connections Central’s Mountain office and is fully integrated in daily operations. DVR is involved in the resource room, various job fairs, various rapid hire events, ADA Training Consults, and Disability Etiquette Training. DVR is currently collaborating on piloting an on-line referral system with both the Central and Eastern Workforce regions.

**Commission for the Blind**

The Commission for the Blind will provide the “full range” of vocational rehabilitation services to “all eligible individuals” pursuant to 34 CFR 361.36(a)(1) and 34 CFR 361.48. Pursuant to 34 CFR 361.48(b)(4), the Commission engages in “referral and other services necessary to assist applicants and eligible individuals to secure needed services from other agencies, including other components of the statewide workforce development system,” and to advise those individuals about the availability of the client assistance program. The goal is to enable persons who are blind or visually impaired to seek and obtain opportunities to participate in activities that include “work-based learning experiences, apprenticeship, and internship programs in health, aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture, sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education, and international trade.” The Commission for the Blind and the Commission for the Blind State Rehabilitation Council have jointly developed and adopted Goals and Priorities that will further the Commission’s activities to implement the state’s strategy, including Goal and Priority “e,” which states: e. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by partnering and working with community colleges and One-Stop centers to more effectively utilize services available through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner-Peyser programs.

**COMBINED PARTNERS PROGRAMS**

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

Education and training are essential to long term career development. Through WIOA, the Human Services Department will continue to work with Department of Workforce Solution and the Local Boards to ensure that the Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) are in place and ensure that the infrastructure costs have been agreed upon. Through the MOUs, it is determined that the individual who is identified as being eligible for TANF will also receive services through other WIOA partners.
Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (JVSG)

The U.S. Department of Labor Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (VETS) provides annual non-competitive funding to the NM DWS Jobs for Veterans State Grant.

NM DWS JVSG is aligned with the Wagner-Peyser program and provides referrals to other workforce program partners for training and/or co-enrollment of participants.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

The New Mexico Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is the only workforce program focusing on the needs of low-income, older, New Mexicans. As participants are recruited for this program, an individual assessment of skills and aptitudes for, and barriers to, employment is conducted. Half-time, minimum-wage work assignments, as well as classroom and on-the-job training, encourage skill development, while referrals to Program partners and others assist participants to overcome employment barriers.

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.

Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Program

Adult Education is committed to supporting the goals and overarching strategies presented in this Plan. It is committed to service excellence within its scope of activities and to the identification of increasingly effective ways to align State and partner efforts to serve individuals with significant barriers to employment, especially individuals with low literacy levels. This includes collaborating with WIOA core programs and partner programs included in the Combined State Plan, as well as outside partners in Education and Industry, Health and Human Services, Economic Development, and beyond. Because of its focus as an education program that fundamentally supports workforce development, Adult Education is oriented more directly on continuously improving the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to individuals, but excellent service in this domain necessarily involves the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to employers. And it certainly involves close partner engagement with New Mexico’s educational institutions, primarily with its institutions of higher education, but also with other eligible training providers and with the Public Education Department and community schools.

Adult Education supports alignment with activities and partners both inside and outside the Plan. Ramping up family literacy efforts is an excellent example of Adult Education’s commitment to all levels of workforce development and associated strategy, as it involves both a core partner (itself, Adult Education) and additional partners both internal and external to WIOA and the Combined State Plan. This is in true keeping with both the letter legislation and the spirit of WIOA, and the earnest collaborative and partnership efforts involved both guard against activity and service delivery duplication and increase synergy and the likelihood of demonstrable success outcomes. Some local Adult Education providers already partner with community and charter schools to offer family literacy programs and activities; others engage
with local libraries and community-based organizations. Examples of State Adult Education Division efforts on this front include outreach and collaboration with national organizations like the Springboard Collaborative and the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy, and more recently, exploring ways we might work broadly and strategically with ABC and other community school efforts statewide. Additional examples of Adult Education strategy and alignment efforts will be addressed in subsequent sections (C)-(I).

**Registered Apprenticeship**

New Mexico is expanding the development and implementation of registered and non-registered apprenticeship to improve access to work-based training as a career pathway option for job seekers. NMDWS is the State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) for New Mexico, responsible for apprenticeship design, development and oversight within the state. There are currently 37 registered apprenticeship programs in New Mexico with approximately 1,780 apprentices; the majority of registered apprenticeship programs are in the building and construction trades. Efforts are underway to expand the number and type of apprenticeship programs statewide – planned activities during the next four years include:

- Partnership with N.M. Department of Veterans Services to enhance participation of veterans in registered apprenticeship programs. An awareness campaign, along with strengthen coordination between Apprenticeship Program Sponsors and Veteran Services Staff to increase knowledgeable of resources.
- NMDWS is working more closely with the Department of Public Education to identify and coordinate career technical education programs with Apprenticeship Program Sponsors. NMDWS will assist in the development of pre-apprenticeship activities that can engage program sponsors, align instruction to industry to insure students can successfully transition into a registered apprenticeship program upon completion of high school;
- Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) has agreed to assist potential new apprenticeship program sponsors in providing the RTI and/or acting as the program sponsor;
- Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 412 has committed to provide an OSHA Certification training course to high school students (17 and older) as an initial introduction to the trades and to bring awareness of registered apprenticeship to the forefront as a viable career pathway for students;
- Local Workforce Development Boards are supporting one full-time staff dedicated to apprenticeship development. This position will be directly coordinating with the SAA to support apprenticeship development at the regional level with targeted industries outlines in the ASE grant.

NMDWS administers a nine-member State Apprenticeship Council (SAC) responsible for providing advice and guidance on the operation of the state’s apprenticeship system. Primary vision and goals for the SAC include ensuring quality of registered apprenticeship programs and promoting industry driven training that includes a combination of on-the-job learning (OJL)
with related technical instruction (RTI). NMDWS provides ongoing technical assistance to employers to develop program standards to comply with all regulatory (state and federal) requirements regarding the administration of the apprenticeship program. Program standards also include an outline of all skill sets to be mastered on the job, the related technical instruction modules and the approximate number of training hours for each. Another required element included in the program standards is a progressive wage schedule. The wage schedule indicates the number of wage progressions and the percentage of wage increases for all registered occupations. Each set of standards approved and registered with NMDWS also contain qualification and selection procedures. The Apprenticeship Program Sponsor is responsible for establishing these procedures and are required to follow them in the selection and recruitment of apprentices. Additionally, if a program sponsor has 5 or more apprentices they must adopt an Affirmative Action Plan (AAP); the AAP includes an Equal Opportunity Pledge which must be enforced. The intent of the outreach and positive recruitment strategies is to ensure the sponsor is taking affirmative steps to provide equal opportunity in apprenticeship.

NMDWS was awarded an Apprenticeship State Expansion Grant (ASE) in the amount of $815,000.00 from the U.S. Department of Labor for a period of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2022. The purpose of the grant is to support statewide apprenticeship expansion by increasing the overall number of registered apprenticeship programs and number of apprentices. Healthcare and hospitality/food service industries will be the primary targeted industries planned for this expansion, along with continued efforts to expand participation in existing registered apprenticeship programs. The efforts of the ASE are aligned with the Governor’s goals for workforce development and meet her vision for an increase in total number of apprenticeship programs statewide. Planned activities include coordination with the four local workforce development boards to enhance engagement with local industry, awareness training for partner staff and case coordination to fully support training, classroom and support services for eligible participants.

**Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation**

Effective communication is essential when interacting with consumers with disabilities. DVR participated with WIOA partners and other community rehabilitation programs (CRP) in providing effective communication on interacting with people with disabilities. DVR plans to continue to provide effective communication and disabilities awareness training in coordination with WIOA partners and CRPs on an ongoing basis.

DVR is strategically aligned with Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS) in various trainings such as the Workforce Website/VOSS Training, Managing Difficult Employees, Supervisory Skill-Up Training, and Evaluation Training. DVR has provided DWS with DVR Overview Training and DVR Disability Etiquette Training. Through a Vocational Rehabilitation grant (E3), DVR provided cross training to Workforce and various Community Partners in Understanding Social Security Programs and the Use of Workforce Incentives, Integrated Approaches to Improve Employment Outcome, Bridges Out of Poverty, Community Resource Academy, Addressing Internal Barriers to Improve Vocational Rehabilitation Participation and Outcomes, and Integrated Resource Team: Pathway to Implementation. Finally, DVR participates in the annual
NM Workforce Conference, the Disability Employment Awareness Month (DEAM) Job Fair, and the Disability Summit sponsored by the Attorney General’s Office. DVR co-sponsored the Leadership Summit for Supportive Employment with the Center for Development and Disability (CDD) and the Developmental Disability Support Division (DDSD).

Moreover, DVR is currently and actively involved in the Coalition for Advancement and Development of Employment Training Services (CADETS) program. CADETS is a conglomeration of state and federal agencies which have come together to provide a comprehensive team of service providers for individual populations which are considered “at risk.” These populations include: individuals engaged in the justice system, individuals with disabilities, individuals that have been on state benefits for a significant amount of time, etc. Some of the partners of CADETS include: local education agencies such as Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) and the University of New Mexico (UNM), Fathers Building Futures (a non-profit dedicated to helping justice involved citizens with re-entry), NM Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), local employers, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Roadrunner Foodbank which serves as both an employer and an on-the-job training provider and others. Recently, CADETS was able to initiate collaboration with State Probation and add them as a partner to the collaborative. Through a Vocational Rehabilitation grant via DVR, national E3 advisors has been providing technical assistance with various partners in this program.

DVR participated in a Rapid Hire event at EXPO New Mexico on December 11th-14th, 2019. The event was organized by the State Personnel Office (SPO) in conjunction with the Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS). Many key positions were filled as a result, thus decreasing the vacancy rate, and increasing the capacity of the agency.

**Commission for the Blind**

The Commission will cooperate and coordinate with other entities as required by 34 CFR 361.24, including independent living centers, American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and the state Medicaid program. Pursuant to 34 CFR 361.48(b)(4), the Commission will engage in “referral and other services necessary to assist applicants and eligible individuals to secure needed services from other agencies, including other components of the statewide workforce development system,” and to advise those individuals about the client assistance program. The Commission will also ensure that recipients of vocational rehabilitation services are able to access comparable services and benefits as required by 34 CFR 361.53 and as defined by 34 CFR 361.5(c)(10). The goal is to enable persons who are blind or visually impaired to seek and obtain opportunities to participate in “work-based learning experiences, apprenticeship, and internship programs in health, aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture, sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education, and international trade.” The Commission for the Blind and the Commission for the Blind State Rehabilitation Council have jointly developed and adopted Goals and Priorities that will further the Commission’s alignment with activities outside the plan, including Goals and Priorities "e" and "f," which state:
e. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by partnering and working with community colleges and One-Stop centers to more effectively utilize services available through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner-Peyser programs.

1. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by working cooperatively with the New Mexico Department of Health so as to develop opportunities for competitive and integrated employment for persons who are blind or visually impaired, which will be accomplished by working in partnership with the Medical Assistance Division, the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, and the Behavioral Health Services Division.

**COMBINE PARTNERS PROGRAMS**

**Public Education Department - Career and Technical Education (CTE)**

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) has a working partnership with the New Mexico Public Education Department and their College and Career Readiness Bureau. Together they are implementing strategies and activities to promote career exploration and readiness through K-12 and community colleges. Both agencies strive to align resources authorized under WIOA and under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century (Perkins V) Act. Specifically, as working partners, goals include:

- Aligning Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs offered through high schools and community colleges with the high demand sectors as defined by Governor Lujan Grisham;
- Coordinating ongoing technical assistance for CTE specialists working in public schools and community colleges, focusing on linking classroom experiences with work-based learning, apprenticeship and internships;
- Providing access to on-line tools and resources offered through NMDWS to CTE specialists that link labor market and occupational information to assist with career exploration and planning;
- Facilitating partnerships between the school and business community to grow and expand opportunities for students participating in CTE programs in both public schools and community colleges; and
- Integrating the vision of the state’s CTE program with the goals of the regional workforce boards to promote a fully integrated and well-organized integration of education and workforce.

The partnership between NMDWS and NMPED currently funds and supports a shared Work-Based Learning Coordinator who is specifically tasked with outreach and ongoing technical assistance to public schools. The Work-Based Learning Coordinator works in partnership with PED’s CTE staff to facilitate and implement the goals outlined above.
Planned activities moving through the next four years include:

- Increased understanding and utilization of labor market information to drive CTE planning at both the public school and community college level. Additional attention will be given to demonstrating how to utilize existing tools, data and resource available to enhance decision making and program implementation.

- Assessment of work-based learning opportunities available to students participating in CTE and expansion of quality and number paid and unpaid internships, apprenticeship and work-based experiences. Specific focus will be given to growing the number of businesses engaged with CTE programs, especially through offering work-based learning aligned with priority sectors described by Governor Lujan Grisham.

- Commitment to review and remove barriers that impede program implementation. The Work-Based Learning Coordinator will maintain a regular meeting schedule to review performance and progress, and will present at state and local events to support program growth.

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

HSD will identify TANF individuals who can conduct their activity with the one-stop partner. These individuals will be placed in the training and education services. This will allow TANF individuals to complete required work hours for the program and allow them to gain the skills to become self-sufficient. Through these services the individual will gain the skills, knowledge, and education for high demand jobs that might attract the individual to pursue.

**Jobs for Veterans State Grants Programs (JVSG)**

NM DWS JVSG is aligned with or by:

- Other U.S. DOL VETS grant recipients like Goodwill Industries of NM Homeless Veterans Re-integration Program (HVRP) participant’s co-enrollment in the workforce online system.

- Co-locating staff with VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program to facilitate employment services.

- Department of Veteran Services State Approval Agency for VA GI Bill education benefits (on-the-job training, apprenticeships).

- Outreach to local colleges and/or universities Veterans Resource Centers.

- Co-locating at the active duty and/or national guard/reserves military transition sites to assist transitioning service members. Work closely with the Employer Support for the Guard and Reserves.

- Outreach to veterans service organizations and Chambers of Commerce with veterans initiatives.
**Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)**

SCSEP activities are aligned with one-stop partners and other providers through the use of Individual Employment Plans (IEPs). These documents are developed based on individual assessments that include skills and aptitudes for, and barriers to, employment. IEPs list all programs that participants participate in related to employment goals. During the development and implementation of IEPs, case managers are able to encourage collaboration without duplication of services.

**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.

**New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS)**

The Department of Workforce Solutions in partnership with the four local workforce development boards are committed to high-quality, customer-centered services, including supportive services to individuals that align with the proposed vision and goals outlined in this plan. DWS will continue to lead planning and implementation activities with the core programs and partners to review activities, address challenges and identify opportunities for engagement as well as improvement. DWS has committed resources to address technical assistance needs to support sector partnership development, career pathway development, expansion of work-based learning and internship opportunities for youth, expansion of career exploration and career readiness programming in partnership with K-12, expansion of apprenticeship development statewide in partnership with Economic Development and Higher Education, development and design for a “career ready” project that innovates basic career services, and strengthened coordination with the Human Services Department to redesign TANF and SNAP work programs.

The State Workforce Development Board is committed to annual assessment and review of the quality of implementation at the local level and is dedicated to providing ongoing technical assistance to strengthen the overall capacity and effectiveness of each of the local workforce development boards. Strategies planning for review and technical assistance include:

- Best practices in engagement with industry partners,
- Strategies to improve fiscal and programmatic performance and outcomes for adult, dislocated worker and youth participants,
- Continuous quality improvement planning to accountability, transparency and excellence from their sub-recipient providers and other funded partners,
- Strategies to fully implement sector strategy approaches and career pathway development.
• Strategies to address regional needs through effective planning across workforce development areas that includes coordination and partnership among the local workforce development boards to assure access to services for job seekers; especially for those residing in remote, frontier areas.

NM has over 200,000 Native American Indian citizens which make up nearly 10.5% of the state’s entire population. There are 23 tribes and 19 pueblos, each with its own government, traditions and culture; many of whom reside in remote areas of the state. DWS is committed to working with the Native American WIOA funded programs. Steps have already been initiated to assure these programs are included and aligned with the vision and goals outlined in this plan. Ongoing efforts include quarterly meetings to address technical assistance needs, leveraging training to assure individuals from the tribal/pueblo community receive opportunities to engage in programs; inclusion in statewide training, workshops and conferences to assure access to best and promising practices.

Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Program

Adult Education is committed to supporting the goals and overarching strategies presented in this Plan. It is committed to service excellence within its scope of activities and to the identification of increasingly effective ways to align State and partner efforts to serve individuals with significant barriers to employment, especially individuals with low literacy levels. This includes collaborating with WIOA core programs and partner programs included in the Combined State Plan, as well as outside partners in Education and Industry, Health and Human Services, Economic Development, and beyond. Because of its focus as an education program that fundamentally supports workforce development, Adult Education is oriented more directly toward continuously improving the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to individuals, but excellent service in this domain necessarily involves the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to employers. And it certainly involves close partner engagement with New Mexico’s educational institutions, primarily with its institutions of higher education, but also with other eligible training providers and with the Public Education Department and community schools.

Adult Education supports the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to individuals. With the increasingly complex demands of the workplace and Adult Education’s WIOA-driven role as a core workforce development partner, NMHED has devoted considerable resources to ramping up professional development and training efforts, including contracting with a national expert to roll out an intensive longitudinal statewide Adult Education Career Pathways Training Initiative. This initiative was designed to ensure that all local providers fully understand both the spirit and the key technical components of WIOA legislation, including definitions and requirements, and that they use this knowledge to inform their self-evaluation efforts, service delivery model, and collaborative efforts with partner agencies and organizations. Accordingly, providers were encouraged to involve core workforce agency partners in the training and action planning for this initiative, where strategic implementation and sustainability were heavily emphasized. Training and action planning centered around ten (10) critical service delivery components, including partnerships, fostering a career culture,
utilizing labor market information, onboarding, education and career planning with students, advising, instruction, alignment, special populations, and wrap around support services. In addition to the uniform focus on individuals with low basic and English skill levels, special focus was placed on a target population with additional barriers to employment: The incarcerated, and other "justice-involved" individuals. Local Adult Education providers were required to assess services they provided to the incarcerated and other justice-involved individuals, and they were asked to systematically address how they might provide better access to services for such individuals, as well as more relevant, higher quality services. This assessment was to include an exploration activities which might help the statewide Adult Education system reach into underserved pockets of such persons, including places like local detention facilities and court diversion programs, and how we might partner with community organizations like Wings for Life, Fathers Building Futures, and Gordon Bernall Charter School to enhance reach and efficacy. This initiative is ongoing, with heavy emphasis on partnership development and sustainable action plans. Not only was this initiative intended to raise awareness and prompt shorter-term programmatic change for local Adult Education programs and providers, it was also designed to lay the groundwork for even larger efforts at barrier removal and systems change that will fundamentally involve all core and Combined State Plan partners and have positive ripple effects statewide. Additional examples of Adult Education strategy and alignment efforts will be addressed in subsequent sections (D)-(I).

**Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation**

The Jemez VR Project Hope is providing Pre-Employment Transition Services (PRE-ETS) to students with disabilities. This unique program will target students who live in the Pueblos of Jemez, Zia, Santa Ana, Sandia, Santo Domingo, and Cochiti. Additionally, they also work with students from Jemez Valley Walatowa Charter and Bernalillo school district. This work-based learning program will provide opportunities for students with disabilities to integrate with their communities to learn work skills.

DVR works with local education agencies (LEA) throughout New Mexico to provide school-to-work transition services and provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (PRE-ETS). Rehabilitation counselors are assigned to state public/charter high schools throughout the state and are working in collaboration with Central Regional Educational Cooperative (CREC) Vocational Transition Specialist (VTS) to provide (PRE-ETS) services. DVR counselors continue to attend Individualized Education Plans (IEP) and are working collaboratively with CREC VTS to attend IEP's. VTS and DVR staff are providing PRE-ETS services throughout the state. These services include Guidance to employment, Self-Advocacy, Work Readiness, and Guidance to Post-Secondary education and Work Experience.

Project Search is in its sixth year of achieving successful employment outcomes for Transition youth that are eligible to receive Supported Employment services. The University of New Mexico Hospital (UNMH) Project Search program was the first Project Search site in the state, and its initial cohort of interns was highly successful, placing all interns who graduated into competitive employment by the end of the program year, and earning the prestigious 90-99% Employment Placement Award from Cincinnati Children's Hospital Project Search National.
UNM hospitals has graduated 48 interns with 33 employed in an integrated setting earning minimum wage or above. The collaborating team consists of: UNMH, Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) Transition Services, Best Buddies NM, NM Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), NM Department of Health/Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD), and UNM Center for Development & Disability Partners for Employment (UNM CDD PFE). Hilton Garden Inn Gallup is completing its fourth Project Search year. In the first three years 18 interns graduated. 10 are currently placed in jobs, totaling 16 hours, earning at or above minimum wage. The Hilton Garden Inn-Gallup collaboration is unique in that it includes Nation Office of Special Education & Rehabilitation Services (OSERS). Embassy Suites is New Mexico's first replication site a sister site with UNM Hospitals. In beginning its fourth program year, 24 interns graduated from the program with 17 being placed within the community earning at or above minimum wage. Presbyterian Rust Medical Center in Rio Rancho is completing its fourth Project Search year. In the first three program years, 25 graduated successfully, with 22 employed in an integrated setting earning minimum wage or above. This Project Search site was also the first site in New Mexico to achieve a 100% employment Placement Award. They are on track to obtain this award again for program year 18-19. Good Samaritan Society – Las Cruces Village, collaborates with Gadsden Independent School District for a third year. In its first program year, Good Samaritan site graduated 10 interns. Eight graduates are successfully employed. Interns at this site travel over 45 minutes each way to participate in the program. A collaboration of community legislatures and community transportation companies provide transportation for the community and participants in project search to get from surrounding communities to Las Cruces. City of Farmington Municipal Services collaborates with Farmington Schools, Aztec Schools, NM Presbyterian Medical services/Project Shield Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), NM Department of Health/Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD), and UNM Center for Development & Disability Partners for Employment (UNM CDD PFE). Six interns graduated from the program and are in search of employment. The Pueblo of Pojoaque, in collaboration with Santa Fe Public Schools, Pojoaque Schools, and Community Options is our seventh Project SEARCH site in New Mexico. Seven interns learn skills in hospitality, customer service, stocking & inventory, and retail sales. The goal is for 70% to be placed in competitive employment working minimum of 16 hours.

Commission for the Blind

The Commission for the Blind will provide the “full range” of vocational rehabilitation services to “all eligible individuals” pursuant to 34 CFR 361.36(a)(1) and 34 CFR 361.48. In addition, pursuant to 34 CFR 361.25, services provided by the Commission “will be available in all political subdivisions of the State.” This includes remote and rural areas of the state. The Commission provides Vocational rehabilitation services to persons who are blind or visually impaired that are "consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, informed choice, and economic self-sufficiency." Services are provided through the individualized Plan for Employment, and are designed to “maximize the potential for individuals with disabilities to prepare for, obtain, retain, and advance in the same high quality jobs and high-demand careers as persons without disabilities.” This includes jobs and careers in the fields of "aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture, sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education, and international trade.” The Commission also provides individuals who are blind or visually impaired with transportation.
necessary to obtain and retain such employment pursuant to 34 CFR 361.48(b)(8), and as defined by 34 CFR 361.5(c)(56), specifically "travel and related expenses that are necessary to enable an applicant or eligible individual to participate in a vocational rehabilitation service."

The Commission for the Blind and the Commission for the Blind State Rehabilitation Council have jointly developed and adopted Goals and Priorities that will further the coordination, alignment and provision of services to individuals, including Goals and Priorities "j" and "p," which state:

j. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers by providing services in a way that genuinely honors the "informed choice" provisions of the Rehabilitation Act, enabling Commission consumers to have the opportunity to obtain employment at higher levels of compensation.

p. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by enhancing overall performance and productivity by engaging in activities designed to mitigate and ameliorate the impacts of blindness and visual impairment, and by engaging in outreach and other activities designed to identify additional potential consumers, and by making the public and medical community more aware of Commission services.

**COMBINED PARTNERS PROGRAMS**

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

At time of approval, the TANF individual has 15 days to complete an assessment. During the assessment the individuals' barriers, skill level, education level, and job history are discussed. The TANF program provides support services and resources to an individual who discloses barriers that prevents them from being work ready. The support services alleviate barriers to help the individual transition to work ready activities or they are matched with education services with the WIOA partners.

The Workforce Connection Centers also receive referrals from TANF that have resulted in some positive achievements, particularly the WIOA Youth program. This has allowed youth to participate in training and employability development services while receiving child care and other support services from this partner program. The Workforce Connection Centers work with local businesses to identify job openings and determine the level of skill needed to perform job functions. TANF participants are then tested through WorkKeys for their occupational skill level and scores are matched against the employers' job criteria to find suitable employment. If the participant does not meet the WorkKeys skill level required for the position they are interested in, an online skills remediation program called KeyTrain is utilized to help the participant get to the level they need to qualify for the position. The goal of this interagency collaboration is to help individuals find meaningful employment and end their dependence on
public assistance. In addition, the TANF program requires participants to utilize the NMDWS Workforce Connection Online System to improve the ability to appropriately match TANF clients with online job vacancies.

**Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)**

The SCSEP requires all participants to register at their local One-Stop and utilize its resources for job search assistance. Several SCSEP participants are placed in One-Stops as their work assignments. Training for SCSEP participants is provided by one-stop partners as well as community colleges. Assistance in overcoming barriers is often provided by vocational rehabilitation programs and public benefits provided through human services partners. Other community partners utilized by SCSEP participants include transportation services, senior programs, food banks and the like.

**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.

**Department of Workforce Solutions**

The four local workforce development boards have MOUs with their business and career center partners that require services to be integrated and delivered according to customer need rather than program focus. The following functional alignment elements are incorporated into each comprehensive and affiliate Workforce Connection Center through their respective workforce system operator and functional management structure.

- Welcome function - Services associated with the welcome function include activities such as registration, orientation to services, provisions of labor market information, resource room access, and initial assessment.
- Skill and career development function - This function assists customers that require more than informational self-directed services, and includes training and supportive services.
- Business services function - This function is responsible for building relationships with employers through regional initiatives including sector partnerships and business alliances, and includes business outreach, recruitment and referral for job vacancies, job development and job candidate qualification review.
Employers must be engaged more effectively as partners in shaping and implementing workforce solutions. The State Workforce Development Board and NMDWS are leading this effort by providing intensive technical assistance and training to promote a Sector Strategy initiative statewide. Each of the four local workforce development boards is required to coordinate a minimum of two sector strategy partnerships at the regional level; engaging industry leaders and program providers to design, develop and implement activities to address workforce investments that result in talent pipeline development. LWDBs, along with core partners and combined programs have all received training and are actively organizing sector strategies locally. The State Workforce Development Board will provide oversight of these efforts and are actively assisting in the engagement of industry leaders. Additionally, sectors targeted include those specifically identified by Governor Lujan Grisham.

Employers can and should define a skilled worker by their job requirements and determine the skills and skill levels required of workers to be successful in the workplace. To ensure the workforce system works, employers must be engaged as partners to manage their demand for workers in a way that ensures the workforce system knows and understands their needs and expectations. This approach optimizes investments by targeting training resources to local and regional employer skill needs and employers will use a system that provides them with a clear point of entry, matches skills training with real world job requirements, and delivers reliable, skilled workers in a timely manner. Examples of successful efforts include directed funds to support alternative licensure programs to address teacher shortage statewide, statewide rapid hiring event coordinated for state government that included core programs and combined partners; partnership with Los Alamos Lab, U.S. Forest Service and a welding company to fill vacancies, placements included clients from Vocational Rehabilitation.

Local boards must continue to facilitate communication with business, education, community and civic organizations, and economic development partners in an effort to address local and regional workforce development issues and to identify joint solutions for addressing industry-based skill shortages, aid employers in upgrading skills of workers, and prepare the unemployed for entry-level positions. This includes continuing to offer services, such as the following, to employers in priority industries.

- developing job descriptions;
- recruiting applicants and coordinating employer interviews;
- providing online access for posting job vacancies and searching qualified applicants;
- organizing hiring events and providing pre-employment screening;
- providing labor market data and analyses;
- administering employer incentive programs and identifying tax credits; and
- providing a full range of job seeker skill set assessments.
Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Program

**Adult Education** is committed to supporting the goals and overarching strategies presented in this Plan. It is committed to service excellence within its scope of activities and to the identification of increasingly effective ways to align State and partner efforts to serve individuals with significant barriers to employment, especially individuals with low literacy levels. This includes collaborating with WIOA core programs and partner programs included in the Combined State Plan, as well as outside partners in Education and Industry, Health and Human Services, Economic Development, and beyond. Because of its focus as an *education program* that fundamentally supports workforce development, Adult Education is oriented more directly toward continuously improving the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to individuals, but excellent service in this domain necessarily involves the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to employers. And it certainly involves close partner engagement with New Mexico’s educational institutions, primarily with its institutions of higher education, but also with other eligible training providers and with the Public Education Department and community schools.

**Adult Education is committed to coordination, alignment, and the provision of services to employers.** In an effort to support strategic leadership and state agency goals and in supreme alignment with the goals and strategies outlined in this Plan, the NMHED Adult Education Division has begun exploring formal partnership options with Jobs for the Future (JFF), a well-respected and well-resourced national nonprofit that drives change in the American workforce and education systems, with a special focus on the creation of educational and economic opportunity for low-income youth and adults. Launched in 2012, the *Pathways to Prosperity Network* is a joint initiative between JFF and the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) designed to support state efforts to build and scale career pathways that are equitable and tailored to specific state and regional goals, education and workforce systems, and unique labor market and industry needs. Adult Education is currently working with JFF leadership to explore a customized Pathways partnership, in the context of Adult Education’s role as a core WIOA partner and in service to the goals and strategies outlined in this Plan. The JFF/HGSE team has identified five key implementation levers for state and regional Pathway systems: Secondary school system pathways; career information and advising systems; intermediaries; effective leadership and enabling policies; and employer engagement. Adult Education is advocating large cross-agency collaboration to join the Pathways to Prosperity Network at the State level and work with JFF to leverage resources and capitalize on JFF/Network expertise in strategic planning and development, policy analysis and development, asset mapping, regional Pathways design and mobilization, and pathways sustainability. Additional examples of Adult Education strategy and alignment efforts will be addressed in subsequent sections (E)-(I).bura4+ STEM college and career pathways. Our polled and career pathways. Our p

Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation

DVR has representation on each of the four regional Workforce Boards. DVR also has a Business Operations Coordinator whose sole function is to expand engagement with the business sector in developing pathways for people with disabilities in high growth industries. In 2019, DVR was very engaged in Rapid Hire events conducted by the US Forest Service. DVR provided Schedule A letters to referrals for the Forest Service to expedite their hiring process.
DVR provides On-the-Job Training (OJT) for individuals to include students with disabilities who may require work skills and work experience. DVR negotiates OJTs in partnership with participants, exercising informed choice, and employers throughout the state. DVR engages employers to meet business demands while negotiating the OJT. Additionally, the National Employment Team (NET) through the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) are in communication with DVR to provide technical support in promoting business engagement and working with local WIOA partners to begin strategically planning on business-based training models.

**Commission for the Blind**

Pursuant to 34 CFR 361.24c, the Commission will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment opportunities and career exploration opportunities for persons who are blind or visually impaired. The Commission for the Blind provides training and services for employers pursuant to 34 CFR 361.32. The Commission provides services to employers who have hired or are interested in hiring persons who are blind or visually impaired under the Commission's vocational rehabilitation program. This includes providing training and technical assistance regarding the employment of individuals who are blind or visually impaired and the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Commission also works with employers to provide opportunities for work-based learning experiences, including internships, short-term employment, apprenticeships, and fellowships. The Commission also works with employers to provide opportunities for pre-employment transition services, to recruit qualified blind or visually impaired applicants, and to train employees who are blind or visually impaired. The Commission provides consultation, technical assistance, and support to employers on workplace accommodations, assistive technology, and facilities and workplace access through collaboration with community partners and employers. This includes employers who provide jobs and careers in the fields of “aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture, sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education, and international trade.”

The Commission and the Commission for the Blind State Rehabilitation Council have jointly developed and adopted Goals and Priorities that will further the coordination, alignment and provision of services to employers, including Goal and Priority “a,” which states:

a. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by proactively working to recruit, hire, and retain qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors, thereby providing greater continuity and consistency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services.
COMBINED PARTNERS PROGRAMS

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF)

Once ISD has determined that the individual is work ready and based on their individual goals, the individual may be referred to the one-stop partner programs.

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (JVSG)

High-quality services to employers will be provided by the Local Veterans’ Employment Representative (LVER) as member of the local workforce business services team.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

The SCSEP will focus on the Healthcare and Social Service Industry by training Personal Care and Service Workers. This is the fastest growing occupation in the fastest growing industry in New Mexico. Older workers will be trained in the particular needs of long-term care recipients, individuals living with behavioral health issues and other adults needing personal care and support.

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).

In general, educational programs must result in credentials that are aligned with the requirements of business or the economy. Training services are needed to significantly improve the employment and earnings potential of all WIOA participants served by the core programs and combined partners, especially populations with barriers to employment. Training should be strategic, must be aligned with in-demand occupations based on economic and labor market data and should lead to industry-recognized credential attainment.

Expanding the availability and effectiveness of education and on-the-job learning programs that are aligned to critical competencies identified by industry requires both innovations and new pathways for training in in-demand and labor-gapped occupations. This requires employers and institutions of higher education to rethink workforce development. Specifically, employers must rely less on degree attainment and more on industry certifications as a hiring qualification, and example includes certification and other credentials used for information technology jobs. Post-secondary institutions need to move beyond traditional classroom- and time-based course structures. In New Mexico, many Registered Apprenticeship programs have articulation agreements with post-secondary institutions by which apprentices receive related instruction and also acquire post-secondary credentials leading to an Associate’s Degree.
Local boards must continue to collaborate with education and training providers to develop and implement innovative training programs that increase credential attainment to include Registered Apprenticeships, as well as integrated education and training programs that combine adult education and occupational skills instruction. Boards must also work with industry leaders to develop sector-focused strategies that result in talent pools necessary to address current and future needs.

**Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Program**

**Adult Education** is committed to supporting the goals and overarching strategies presented in this Plan. It is committed to service excellence within its scope of activities and to the identification of increasingly effective ways to align State and partner efforts to serve individuals with significant barriers to employment, especially individuals with low literacy levels. This includes collaborating with WIOA core programs and partner programs included in the Combined State Plan, as well as outside partners in Education and Industry, Health and Human Services, Economic Development, and beyond. Because of its focus as an education program that fundamentally supports workforce development, Adult Education is oriented more directly toward continuously improving the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to individuals, but excellent service in this domain necessarily involves the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to employers. And it certainly involves close partner engagement with New Mexico's educational institutions, primarily with its institutions of higher education, but also with other eligible training providers and with the Public Education Department and community schools.

**Adult Education is specifically committed to strong engagement with educational institutions.** The Adult Education Division is organizationally housed in the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED), and the majority of local Adult Education programs are community colleges and branch campuses. This makes Adult Education particularly well-situated to help core and Combined Plan partners forge even strong partner relationships with these and other postsecondary education and training institutions. NMHED's nine (9) Divisions—including Adult Education—administer programs and projects to support an educated citizenry and which help strengthen workforce development efforts in New Mexico. NMHED’s Public School’s Academic Affairs Division, for example, supports New Mexico's critical statutory dual credit program, creating necessary bridges between the K-12 system and the higher education system. Adult Education leadership is working to expand the dual credit program to include Adult Education students. The Financial Aid Division administers all State scholarship programs, providing more critical opportunities for New Mexicans to access postsecondary education and training. The governor's proposed Opportunity Scholarship would make years of postsecondary education and training essentially free to eligible New Mexico residents at any of the state’s 29 public institutions of higher education, providing up to four years of education and training for recent high school graduates and two years for returning adults. Adult Education would work closely with all stakeholders to leverage this opportunity, to include collaborating with community colleges and other institutions around “ability to benefit” issues and broader issues related to program placement, development, and support.

NMHED supports the development of four (4) designated Centers of Excellence at New Mexico higher education institutions designed to support and drive innovation in growing economic
sectors and build closer links between research and industry. Each Center of Excellence is focusing on a particular field: Cybersecurity (New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology), Sustainable Food and Agricultural Systems (New Mexico State University), Renewable and Sustainable Energy (San Juan College); and Bioscience (University of New Mexico). Adult Education strongly supports such innovative approaches that demand strategic education and industry collaboration. We are committed to working with our state education institutions to support programs, instructional approaches, and education and training pathways which are equitable, research-based, data-driven, and aligned to career pathways and industry sectors that are in-demand and will lead participants to meaningful work and careers with family-sustaining wages. We are working with postsecondary institutions to address critical remediation issues and to support career pathway program development, including the continued use and further development of effective integrated education and training models statewide, where significant inroads have already been made with the assistance of U.S. Department of Labor’s TAACCCT (Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career) grant program funding. This is an area of high priority for Adult Education in New Mexico, where we are actively advocating for substantial cross-agency investment in system development and alignment that builds on substantial State investment and work done to date. Adult Education sees community colleges, technical schools, and other postsecondary institutions as critical partners in this effort, including in any formal Jobs for the Future partnership we might forge with other state agency partners to support a more job-driven education and training system. (This proposed partnership was discussed in section D.) Additional examples of Adult Education strategy and alignment efforts will be addressed in subsequent sections (F)-(I).

Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation

DVR supports State’s community colleges and career/technical schools by sponsoring students with disabilities with tuition, fees, books, tools, uniforms, and supplies. DVR can also assist these students with out-of-town dorm costs, computers, child-care, and transportation as it relates to a school plan.

Partners for Employment is a cooperative effort through an intergovernmental agreement that engages UNM CDD in providing expertise, training and coordination to DVR staff, community providers and others toward continuous improvement specific to Supported Employment. New Mexico Developmental Disability Services Division (DDSD) is also a key partner in this effort, which maximizes the expertise and communication necessary for successful Supported Employment provision.

Commission for the Blind

The Commission for the Blind engages community colleges and area career and technical education schools for both transitioning students and for adults who are receiving vocational rehabilitation services. The Commission provides “Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education” as a part of the Provision of the required Pre-Employment Transition Services (PreETS) pursuant to 34 CFR 361.48(a)(2)(iii). The Commission has also forecasted that it has sufficient resources to provide all of the five required Pre-ETS services, and the Commission is
therefore able to provide the nine authorized Pre-ETS services. This includes developing and improving strategies that enable persons who are blind to participate in postsecondary education experiences pursuant to 34 CFR 361.48(a)(3)(II). Pursuant to 34 CFR 361.48(a)(3)(ix), the Commission also engages in “disseminating information and strategies to improve the transition to postsecondary activities of individuals who are members of traditionally unserved and underserved populations.” The Commission also provides vocational rehabilitation services to adults who are attending “universities, colleges, community or junior colleges, vocational schools, technical institutes, or hospital schools of nursing or any other postsecondary education institution” pursuant to 34 CFR 361.48(b)(6). The Commission and the Commission for the Blind State Rehabilitation Council have jointly developed and adopted Goals and Priorities that will engage the State’s community colleges and area career and technical education schools, including Goals and Priorities “e, i, and j” which state:

e. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by partnering and working with community colleges and One-Stop centers to more effectively utilize services available through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner-Peyser programs.

i. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes of transition consumers by providing enhanced Pre-Employment Transition Services, including assistive technology where appropriate as a part of an Individualized Plan for Employment, by providing assistive technology through the Technology for Children Program, by conducting increased outreach activities, by conducting educational activities to meet the specific needs of transition students, and by increasing proficient use of Braille and Braille math.

j. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers by providing services in a way that genuinely honors the "informed choice" provisions of the Rehabilitation Act, enabling Commission consumers to have the opportunity to obtain employment at higher levels of compensation.

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

NMDWS and WIOA partners will facilitate new partnerships or support existing partnerships between community colleges and business and industry to increase career pathways into priority sectors. Readiness to realign courses and offer programs will be based on the readiness of community colleges and business and industry leaders to launch innovative efforts in an inclusive and effective manner. NMDWS and WIOA partners will meet with the colleges to identify what is working or where improvements need to be made.

**Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (JVSG)**

Educational Institutions will be engaged with the LVER and DVOP primarily with their Veterans Resource Centers, the VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program Vet Success on
Campus and the state's Department of Veterans Services State Approval Agencies for higher education/OJT/apprenticeship programs

**Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)**

The SCSEP collaborates with community colleges to provide Adult Basic Education classes to older workers without high school diplomas and literary and linguistic barriers to employment.

**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.

**Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS)**

DWS maintains an Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) which is comprised of entities with a proven capability of securing quality employment outcomes for participants. Each local board, through Workforce Connection Centers, makes this list available as required by WIOA. The application process for training providers largely remains the same as that of WIA; however, WIOA established additional requirements, specifically to provide more information and criteria for initial and subsequent eligibility to receive funds. These requirements ensure both the quality of the training programs and the opportunity for customer-informed choice regarding the available programs. The local boards will continue to solicit training and education providers to submit applications for eligibility to receive WIOA funds for educational programs. Programs must support targeted occupations and lead to a postsecondary credential or an industry-recognized credential/certificate.

The following types of training providers are subject to the ETPL requirements in order to receive WIOA Title I funds to provide training services to eligible individuals through individual training accounts:

- institutions of higher education that provide a program of training that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential;
- apprenticeship programs registered by the USDOL Office of Registered Apprenticeship;
- public or private training providers, including joint labor-management organizations, pre-apprenticeship programs, and occupational/technical training; and
- Providers of adult education and literacy activities provided in combination with occupational skills training (i.e. I-BEST).
Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Program

Adult Education is committed to supporting the goals and overarching strategies presented in this Plan. It is committed to service excellence within its scope of activities and to the identification of increasingly effective ways to align State and partner efforts to serve individuals with significant barriers to employment, especially individuals with low literacy levels. This includes collaborating with WIOA core programs and partner programs included in the Combined State Plan, as well as outside partners in Education and Industry, Health and Human Services, Economic Development, and beyond. Because of its focus as an education program that fundamentally supports workforce development, Adult Education is oriented more directly toward continuously improving the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to individuals, but excellent service in this domain necessarily involves the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to employers. And it certainly involves close partner engagement with New Mexico’s educational institutions, primarily with its institutions of higher education, but also with other eligible training providers and with the Public Education Department and community schools.

Adult Education is committed to supporting engagement with all education and training providers in the state, not just institutions of higher education. Adult Education students come to the program table with a wide variety of life experiences, needs, and career goals. College programs may not always be the best choice for education and training beyond the Adult Education program - or while the student is in the program, if integrated education and training is at play. Adult Education supports many types of education and training options for students, depending on their career goals, and it is committed to partnering with local One Stops to offer co-enrollment and options to help students achieve these education and training goals. Many types of quality training providers have met requirements to receive WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funds, for example, to provide training services to eligible adult and dislocated worker individuals through individual training accounts, or ITAs. Types of providers who may qualify include not only institutions of higher education that provide a program of training that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential, but also apprenticeship programs registered by the USDOL Office of Registered Apprenticeship; public or private training providers, including joint labor-management organizations, pre-apprenticeship programs, and occupational/technical training; and providers of adult education and literacy activities provided in combination with occupational skills training (integrated education and training). Adult education supports student transition to many different forms of postsecondary education and training, with a variety of quality providers. The Adult Education Division Outreach Coordinator was recently added to the State’s Eligible Training Provider Committee to facilitate partnership and coordination on this front. Additional examples of Adult Education strategy and alignment efforts will be addressed in subsequent sections (G)-(I).

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (JVSG)

Education and Training Providers: NM DWS JVSG utilizes the Dept. of Veterans Affairs WEAMS Institution Search (Web Enabled Approval Management System) and is a central web-data base application that list by-State Program Type (Institution of Higher Learning, non-Degree, OJT/Apprenticeship, Flight, Correspondence and others). Veterans, spouses and dependents of veterans that have the GI Bill Education Benefits can access WEAMS at https://www.va.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool to identify education and training resources.

NM Dept. of Veteran Services State Approval Agency is a resource for veterans education services; website at nmdvs.org.
Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

The SCSEP collaborates with education and training partners that are not required WIOA partners, especially to provide computer training to older workers. In addition, all places where SCSEP participants are assigned for on-the-job training, provide job-related training to SCSEP participants.

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).

Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS)

The Department of Workforce Solutions, in partnership with the four local boards are committed to leveraging federal, state and local investments to support workforce development and training programs. The following are just a few examples of some programs leveraged statewide by NMDWS and the local workforce development boards for resources:

- New Mexico Lottery Scholarship will pay a portion of tuition (up to an undergraduate degree) for students who meet eligibility. However the program is limited to youth students who have completed a high school at a public or accredited NM high school and students must enroll full-time and earn 15 credit hours per semester.

- Local Workforce Development Boards leverage federal funding such as FAFSA, work-study and other financial aid to support post-secondary training. Direct support to complete scholarship applications, as well as research/review of scholarships and awards available from non-profit agencies and other organizations is provided. Currently, the Central Workforce Development Board has a valuable working partnership with Mission Graduate specializing in college admissions and preparation for "returner" and older students.

- Engagement with youth leadership organizations such as NMCAN, Boys and Girls Club of New Mexico, Youth Development, Inc., Future Focused Education and Mission Graduate, who can provide support and additional resources to address, mentorship and civic engagement and positive youth leadership.

- Engagement with leadership organizations such as NM Municipal League, The Economic Forum, NM Technology Council, Hispano Chamber of Commerce and local chambers, who are available to leverage training and technical assistance for industry leaders, provide guidance on sector strategy approaches, and local governance strategies to improve regional planning and program implementation.

- Coordination with AmeriCorps program to leverage options for community service as a step toward career pathway development for high risk youth. Options currently include natural disaster planning, financial literacy, addressing housing opportunities for low income individuals, TEACH for America, environmental stewardship, health future education and veteran and military family services.
Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Program

Adult Education is committed to supporting the goals and overarching strategies presented in this Plan. It is committed to service excellence within its scope of activities and to the identification of increasingly effective ways to align State and partner efforts to serve individuals with significant barriers to employment, especially individuals with low literacy levels. This includes collaborating with WIOA core programs and partner programs included in the Combined State Plan, as well as outside partners in Education and Industry, Health and Human Services, Economic Development, and beyond. Because of its focus as an education program that fundamentally supports workforce development, Adult Education is oriented more directly toward continuously improving the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to individuals, but excellent service in this domain necessarily involves the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to employers. And it certainly involves close partner engagement with New Mexico's educational institutions, primarily with its institutions of higher education, but also with other eligible training providers and with the Public Education Department and community schools.

Adult Education services and strategies leverage resources and enhance access to postsecondary education and training programs.

As outlined in item (D), pursuing a Pathways to Prosperity cross-agency partnership with Jobs for the Future is a prime illustration Adult Education's commitment to strategically leverage resources in the manner described above. Other examples at the State agency level include collaborations with the U.S. Department of Education/OCTAE and its official partners (i.e. LINCS and the American Institutes for Research) to provide free or low-cost (but high quality) professional development and technical assistance, or collaborating with national organizations and coalitions like the National Association of State Directors of Adult Education (NASDAE), the Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE), and the National Career Pathways Network (NCPN) to strengthen and support our common mission-driven efforts. Likewise, the State office has mutually supportive alliances with the Mountain Plains regional and New Mexico local Adult Education Associations, as well as with organizations like United Way of Central New Mexico and its "Mission: Graduate” and “Mission: Families” Initiatives. Organizations like the New Mexico Coalition for Literacy and local community-based literacy providers help leverage resources and work hard to support the effort to address the crippling effects of low literacy in our state. Many adults in New Mexico and nationwide are simply not ready for postsecondary education and training, and it takes significant resources and a dedicated network of individuals, both paid and volunteer, to address the barrier of low literacy and help people move themselves further along the literacy path and closer to postsecondary and career advancement readiness.

Some of the key ways NMHED and the Adult Education Division work with postsecondary education institutions to leverage resources and increase education and training access were highlighted in section (E). The Adult Education Division works with core WIOA partners to support co-enrollment, pooling available resources to support student/client success. As outlined in the Program-Specific Requirements for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs (Appendix V) in the section addressing State Leadership, one of the Division’s highest priorities is to collaborate with DWS and other core WIOA partners to build on the Common Unique Identifier project and work toward the creation of interoperable data infrastructure and a streamlined referral and tracking system to support such efforts. Other top State Leadership priorities include providing and participating in cross-agency training and professional development; working collaboratively to identify and reduce barriers to access, especially as
they related to system barriers; and developing effective outreach and messaging to increase community support for/engagement with Adult Education and our core WIOA partners.

At the local programmatic level, superb examples of strategic efforts to leverage resources abound. First, local provider programs are strongly encouraged to diversify funding streams beyond their AEFLA grants, and many actively pursue and leverage these additional resources to support program activities. Some programs have large foundation or private industry grants (e.g. from Kellogg and Dollar General); others solicit local organization donations and engage in fundraising activities. Some funding comes in the form of large grants from federal agencies from which may benefit many Adult Education programs at once, such as a Second Chance Act grant or the DOL TAACCCT grant mentioned in (E). Most local provider programs are community colleges and branch campuses, so in addition to the AEFLA grant from NMHED to support Adult Education activities, these programs benefit from institutionally-leveraged resources like designated classroom space, IT support, additional academic support, counseling, advising, assistance with learning and other disabilities, and targeted institutional scholarships. Most local providers have a network of relationships and formal partnerships with local community-based organizations, city and county entities, and regional collaborations like Bridges of Southern New Mexico.

As discussed in many other sections, all local Adult Education programs partner with their local One Stops and regional workforce development boards to leverage resources; degree varies by region and program. Many local providers partner with programs like NM Works and State-contracted providers like SER Jobs for Progress to help students secure needed wrap-around supports like childcare and transportation assistance, as well as cash support. Providers partner with local libraries, with Chambers of Commerce, with tribal entities, and with trade associations. One local provider (Albuquerque Adult Learning Center) recently joined up with Associated Builders and Contractors of New Mexico to develop an integrated education and training program designed to allow member company employees and others begin registered apprenticeship training programs they would have previously been blocked from, no matter how eager or otherwise qualified, because they didn’t have a high school credential. The integrated education and training model allows participants to work on both aspects of their education and training simultaneously, rather than sequentially, a process which both speeds up progress toward education and training goals and increases the likelihood of program retention and success.

Another local provider program (Catholic Charities) has a formal partnership with the New Mexico Roofing Contractors Association to help their apprentices earn their high school equivalency credential and progress to journeyman status. This same program actually has international partners; it partners with the Mexican consulate to allow students to finish a Mexican diploma (K-8) to help prepare them for Adult Education classes. In Farmington, one local program provider (San Juan College) has spearheaded efforts to set up co-location of WIOA partners on campus; DWS representatives will be in this new building location by the end of March. Another (Eastern New Mexico University, Ruidoso) has created a Student Success Emporium on site to focus Adult Education, postsecondary, and WIOA Title 1 services squarely on jointly contributing to Adult Education student success. And the work of one local provider program (UNM Taos) has literally influenced this branch campus to modify its organizational structure to function in a more holistic, integrated fashion. Adult Education leadership from the Taos Education and Career Center have taken innovation to the next level via the creation of the HIVE project, which recently earned itself a $100,000 grant in the national Minds that Move Us contest, sponsored by the ECMC Foundation and the Institute for Educational Leadership. The contest was designed to reward innovative projects nationwide that integrate high quality
education and training, and to energize others to follow suit. “HIVE” stands for the Hub of Internet-Based Vocations and Education, and it is a partnership of UNM-Taos, local business professionals and economic development organizations who aim to build community wealth by helping Taos residents acquire internet–based jobs or build a locally-based business online. HIVE’s tagline “Live Local...Work Global” clearly communicates the essence of the project’s vision. In all these ways and more, local Adult Education program providers are working hard to leverage resources at the federal, state, and local levels to increase access to education and training opportunities for all New Mexicans. Additional examples of Adult Education strategy and alignment efforts will be addressed in subsequent sections (H)-(I).

Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation

To better leverage resources, DVR will coordinate with the Higher Education Department (HED) to develop a plan toward maximizing use of that program’s remedial training for participants pursuing secondary education.

Commission for the Blind

Pursuant to 34 CFR 361.48(b)(4), the Commission will engage in “referral and other services necessary to assist applicants and eligible individuals to secure needed services from other agencies, including other components of the statewide workforce development system,” and to advise those individuals about the client assistance program. The Commission will also ensure that recipients of vocational rehabilitation services are able to access comparable services and benefits as required by 34 CFR 361.53 and as defined by 34 CFR 361.5(c)(10). In addition, pursuant to 34 CFR 361.48(b)(6), no training or training services in an institution of higher education may be paid for with funds under this part unless “maximum efforts have been made” by the Commission and the individual to “secure grant assistance in whole or in part from other sources to pay for that training.” The goal is to secure the funding and resources necessary for persons who are blind or visually impaired to seek and obtain opportunities to participate in “work-based learning experiences, apprenticeship, and internship programs in health, aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture, sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education, and international trade.” The Commission for the Blind and the Commission for the Blind State Rehabilitation Council have jointly developed and adopted Goals and Priorities that will leverage other federal, State, and local investments, including Goals and Priorities “e” and “q,” which state:

e. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by partnering and working with community colleges and One-Stop centers to more effectively utilize services available through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner-Peyser programs.
q. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes for consumers by providing enhanced benefits counseling and guidance to reduce concerns related to the loss or reduction of benefits.

COMBINED PARTNERS PROGRAMS

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF)

NMDWS and WIOA partners will meet on a monthly basis to discuss the new enhanced programs that are being provided by the colleges and universities. This will allow the WIOA partners to communicate this to the local workforce boards to work with the educational partners to be able to enhance the individuals’ education to better position them to be job ready.

Jobs for Veteran State Grants Program (JVSG)


Veterans can apply to VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program for education/training benefits online at https://www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

The SCSEP is collaborating with the Peer-Support Worker program to train older individuals with stabilized behavioral health issues to provide support and assistance to others experiencing the same issues. This program is funded through SAMHSA. Other SCSEP participants, trained as Community Health Workers will assist in completing wellness checks on seniors when fire wood is delivered by the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps. Also, New Mexico community colleges provide low cost tuition to individuals over 65 years old, this includes many SCSEP participants, who take advantage of this benefit.

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.

Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS)

Expanding the availability and effectiveness of education and on-the-job learning programs that are aligned to critical competencies in dynamic fields requires both innovations and new pathways for training in in-demand and labor-gapped occupations. Specific strategies underway
to assure credentials are industry-recognized and that they are portable and stackable requires commitment to continuous review of what is available. NMDWS accomplishes by maintaining an Eligible Provider Training List (ETPL) that is relevant and current. Each local workforce development board is actively engaged in identifying and developing new training programs to meet industry needs and making sure these training programs are certified.

New Mexico K-12 public schools are also actively engaged in creating and developing dual credit courses that not only prepare students for post-secondary education, but also include opportunities to earn portable and stackable credentials that are meaningful to current industry. NMDWS partners closely with Carl D. Perkins funded Career Technical Education (CTE) programs to assure they are informed by local industry and aligned with identified sector strategies and used to inform career pathways throughout post-secondary education.

In New Mexico, many Registered Apprenticeship programs have articulation agreements with post-secondary institutions by which apprentices receive related instruction and also acquire post-secondary credentials leading to an Associate's Degree.

**Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Program**

**Adult Education** is committed to supporting the goals and overarching strategies presented in this Plan. It is committed to service excellence within its scope of activities and to the identification of increasingly effective ways to align State and partner efforts to serve individuals with significant barriers to employment, especially individuals with low literacy levels. This includes collaborating with WIOA core programs and partner programs included in the Combined State Plan, as well as outside partners in Education and Industry, Health and Human Services, Economic Development, and beyond. Because of its focus as an education program that fundamentally supports workforce development, Adult Education is oriented more directly toward continuously improving the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to individuals, but excellent service in this domain necessarily involves the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to employers. And it certainly involves close partner engagement with New Mexico's educational institutions, primarily with its institutions of higher education, but also with other eligible training providers and with the Public Education Department and community schools.

**Adult Education is committed to improving access to postsecondary credentials.** Providing bridges to postsecondary education and training with recognized credentials is one of Adult Education’s core priorities and performance indicators. Co-enrollment with core WIOA partner programs is one strategy for improving access to postsecondary credentials; working with partners to identify and eliminate barriers is another. Adult Education is working with NMHED and financial aid departments of postsecondary institutions to clarify ability to benefit issues in a way that could help improve matriculation for Adult Education and other students, and as indicated in (E) it is specifically working to address the state’s remediation issues that are holding many students back from persisting and completing postsecondary education and training and earning credentials. In addition, Adult Education is spearheading efforts to add an additional option for secondary credentialing to New Mexico's sanctioned options; the National External Diploma Program will
help a subset of New Mexicans achieve a high school diploma so they can move on to earn postsecondary credentials. Adult Education is working to support the development of more high quality integrated education and training programs and models in the state, which will help improve program completion rates. And as reinforced in section (D), supporting the coordinated, strategic development of priority industry sector-driven career pathways in the state will contribute substantially to valuable postsecondary credential access.

Additional examples of Adult Education strategy and alignment efforts will be addressed in the next section (I).

**Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation**

DVR supports state community colleges and career/technical schools by supporting students with disabilities with tuition, fees, books, tools, uniforms, and supplies for various programs. DVR can also assist these students with out-of-town dorm costs, computers, child care, and transportation as it relates to a school plan.

**Commission for the Blind**

The Commission for the Blind provides vocational rehabilitation services that enable access to postsecondary credentials for both transitioning students and for adults who are receiving vocational rehabilitation services from the Commission. For students age 14 to 21, the Commission provides “Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education” as a part of the Provision of the required Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) pursuant to 34 CFR 361.48(a)(2)(iii). The Commission has also forecasted that it has sufficient resources to provide all of the five required Pre-ETS services, and the Commission is therefore able to provide the nine authorized Pre-ETS services to students age 14 to 21. This includes developing and improving strategies that enable students who are blind to participate in postsecondary education experiences pursuant to 34 CFR 361.48(a)(3)(II). Pursuant to 34 CFR 361.48(a)(3)(ix), the Commission also engages in “disseminating information and strategies to improve the transition to postsecondary activities of individuals who are members of traditionally unserved and underserved populations.” The Commission also provides vocational rehabilitation services to adults who are attending “universities, colleges, community or junior colleges, vocational schools, technical institutes, or hospital schools of nursing or any other postsecondary education institution” pursuant to 34 CFR 361.48(b)(6). The Commission and the Commission for the Blind State Rehabilitation Council have jointly developed and adopted Goals and Priorities that improve access to postsecondary credentials, including Goals and Priorities “e, I, and j” which state:

e. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by partnering and working with community colleges and One-Stop centers to more effectively utilize services available through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner-Peyser programs.
i. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes of transition consumers by providing enhanced Pre-Employment Transition Services, including assistive technology where appropriate as a part of an Individualized Plan for Employment, by providing assistive technology through the Technology for Children Program, by conducting increased outreach activities, by conducting educational activities to meet the specific needs of transition students, and by increasing proficient use of Braille and Braille math.

j. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers by providing services in a way that genuinely honors the "informed choice" provisions of the Rehabilitation Act, enabling Commission consumers to have the opportunity to obtain employment at higher levels of compensation.

COMBINED PARTNERS PROGRAMS

Jobs for Veteran State Grants Program (JVSG)

Improving access to postsecondary credentials. NM DWS JVSG provide veteran referrals to VA Vet Success on Campus, College Veterans Resources to utilize their GI Bill Education benefits. Disabled veterans that do not have their education benefits are referred to VA VR&E and veterans with specific active duty wartime service are referred to NM DVS for education scholarships.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

SCSEP participants are working to achieve certification as Peer Support Workers and Community Health Workers through national certification programs

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.

Title II - Adult Education and Family Literacy Program

Adult Education is committed to supporting the goals and overarching strategies presented in this Plan. It is committed to service excellence within its scope of activities and to the identification of increasingly effective ways to align State and partner efforts to serve individuals with significant barriers to employment, especially individuals with low literacy levels. This includes collaborating with WIOA core programs and partner programs included in the Combined State Plan, as well as outside partners in Education and Industry, Health and Human Services, Economic Development, and beyond. Because of its focus as an education program that fundamentally supports workforce development, Adult Education is oriented more directly toward continuously improving the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to individuals, but excellent service in this domain necessarily involves the coordination, alignment, and provision of services to employers. And it certainly involves close partner engagement with New Mexico's educational institutions, primarily with its institutions of higher education, but also with other eligible training providers and with the Public Education Department and community schools.
Adult Education is committed to coordinating with State economic development strategies. Adult Education leadership strongly supported state economic development agency involvement on the State workforce development board. The Adult Education Division Director represents NMHED on the state Job Training and Incentive Program (JTIP) board tasked with awarding state funds to businesses to help subsidize training for New Mexico employees, including interns and those being promoted. At the State level, Adult Education is just beginning to formally explore additional ways it might collaborate with the Economic Development Department and its Community Development initiatives and activities. In its initial discussions with Jobs for the Future about a potential partnership with Adult Education and other Plan partners, the New Mexico Economic Development Department was cited as a critical partner in any effort designed to achieve stronger Pathways system development. At the local program provider level, the UNM Taos/Adult Education and Career Center HIVE project outlined in section (G) is an excellent example of coordination and alignment with Economic Development entities, activities, and strategies.

Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation

DVR has representation on all four regional workforce boards to address economic strategies for each region. DVR participated in the Department of Workforce Solutions’ Local Area Planning Meeting in 9/26/2018 in which the state got together to evaluate regions, education, economic development, and industry through various work groups.

Commission for the Blind

The activities performed by the Commission for the Blind to implement state strategies will be coordinated with economic development strategies to enable persons who are blind or visually impaired to seek and obtain opportunities to participate in activities that include “work-based learning experiences, apprenticeship, and internship programs in health, aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture, sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education, and international trade.” To accomplish this, the Commission will provide the “full range” of vocational rehabilitation services to “all eligible individuals” pursuant to 34 CFR 361.36(a)(1) and 34 CFR 361.48. Pursuant to 34 CFR 361.48(b)(4), the Commission engages in “referral and other services necessary to assist applicants and eligible individuals to secure needed services from other agencies, including other components of the statewide workforce development system,” and to advise those individuals about the availability of the client assistance program. The Commission for the Blind and the Commission for the Blind State Rehabilitation Council have jointly developed and adopted Goals and Priorities that will further the implementation of state strategies to be coordinated with economic development strategies, including Goals and Priorities “e” and “j,” which state:

e. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by partnering and working with community colleges and One-Stop centers to more effectively utilize services available through
the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner-Peyser programs.

j. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers by providing services in a way that genuinely honors the “informed choice” provisions of the Rehabilitation Act, enabling Commission consumers to have the opportunity to obtain employment at higher levels of compensation.

**Jobs for Veteran State Grants Program (JVSG)**

Economic Development Strategies. NM DWS JVSG provides veterans’ referrals to NM DVS for Veterans Boots-to-Business and other entrepreneurial initiatives. Established veterans-owned or service-disabled businesses obtain Federal-State-Local government purchasing/contracting preferences to provide their products and services.

**Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)**

SCSEP resources in New Mexico will be targeted to training Personal Care and Service Workers, to the Healthcare and Social Service industry. As the fastest growing segment of the economy in New Mexico these resources assist economic development throughout the state.

**B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES**

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

**III. b. 1. 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.)**

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

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.)**

The following State operating systems include labor market information systems, data systems, communication systems, case-management systems, and job banks, that together support
implementation of State strategies, including the data collection and reporting processes of core programs and activities.

**Department of Workforce Solutions**

NMDWS administers a common management information system, called the Workforce Connection Online System, described earlier. The Workforce Connection Centers use the system not only for registering job applicants, housing resumes, and job postings for job matching purposes, but also for the purposes of data entry, case management, and state and federal performance reporting. The Workforce Connection Online System integrates data collection, participant demographics, case management, and performance reporting for not only Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and Wagner-Peyser, but also Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers, Veterans, Trade programs. The system is also used for data collection and reporting for all partners located in comprehensive and affiliate centers. NMDWS has established both user access and data sharing agreements to support access to information and information sharing between the partners as allowed by authorizing law and regulation. The system also provides access to labor market information to support business and job seekers in need of training or employment assistance.

**Common Unique Identifier**

The NMDWS has also established a “Common Unique Identifier” (CUID) which applies to external WIOA citizen-customers across agencies and software applications. NMDWS sought to create a virtual one stop system by collecting and analyzing the availability, structure, accuracy, and completeness of partner agency data, which are qualified as the personal identifying information (PII) of individuals, who interact with Unemployment Insurance, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Employment Services, NM’s Higher Education Department (HED), NM’s Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and NM’s Commission for the Blind (CFB) in accordance with WIOA.

DWS built automated processes using ODI – Oracle Data Integrator and OEDQ – Oracle Enterprise Data Quality to perform record extraction, comparison, matching, and “CUID” creation in an efficient manner. The DWS automated system compares WIOA Core Program partner data and, then, creates and maintains a Common Unique Identifier. Once created, the CUID captures and stores needed data to report and communicate the CUID information back to the source systems for incorporation into their reporting datasets. In short, New Mexico has been able to utilize the CUID to facilitate the exchange of information about an individual among the source systems. Finally, NMDWS generates a data validation report to maintain and validate the data quality and communicate to the partner agencies when requested. As the CUID continues to add data, it will mature into a Master Data Management system and ensure further integration among all participating agencies’ systems.

The significance of the Common Unique Identifier cannot be overstated because it has opened up new avenues for exchanging data about individuals between systems and programs, which provide case managers in all partner agencies with a more complete view of individual customer needs, activities, strengths, and pain points. This also ensures that partner agency staff e.g., case managers, career coaches, and customer service representatives, are not unnecessarily duplicating efforts in terms of documentation, resources, training, wrap-around services and the like. Ultimately, CUID allows limited state resources to provide customers with
comprehensive case management, employment services, and wrap-around benefits in a more responsive, accurate, efficient, and cost-effective manner.

This past year we have also established a common intake system or “Single Sign On” (SSO) for staff and citizen customers. The SSO is shared across multiple WIOA partner programs and minimizes time lost to duplicative data entry and account maintenance. Importantly, SSO speeds up service to citizens. We did this through building an Enterprise Service Bus that hosts Application Program Interfaces. Finally, with both CUID and SSO in place, we were able to establish a personalized Citizen Self-Service Landing page called “My Workforce Connection.” This landing page is complete with intuitive, nudge technology that guides customers along a personal path to supportive services and employment and training opportunities.

We have already measured and experienced a high adoption rate for SSO at 95% since the May 2019 launch of the citizen self-service page and SSO. We will continue to measure the adoption rate for citizens and, then, employers when we launch SSO for employers in 2020. Ultimately, the key measure will be an increase in the New Mexico labor participation rate which has consistently been below the national average.

“My Workforce Connection” has dramatically streamlined and personalized the entire social safety net citizen experience for New Mexico’s citizens and partner agencies. Specifically, right now, "My Workforce Connection" means New Mexico’s citizens are:

- No longer required to establish accounts and remember several different passwords across social safety net programs,
- No longer required to enter the same personal data several times,
- No longer required to decide which services or supports they may need from a vast menu of potentially available and
- New Mexico’s safety net agencies no longer must try to identify, from the backend, which services and supports the same customer may have received from different agencies to determine the effectiveness of the services and supports provided for follow-up and reporting purposes.

In 2016, the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, launched a new career solutions site designed specifically for high school students looking to plan their next step after graduation. The site provides students with current career information and educational resources, as well as a variety of useful tools to help them explore and choose the right career path. The site is also accessible on mobile devices, giving students a convenient way to utilize career tools while on the go.

The New Mexico Career Solutions site gives students the ability to explore possible occupations related to their skills, background, and interests. Students can compare possible career choices against real-time job listings, as well as conduct job searches to see what opportunities are in their area when the time comes to apply. Students can save their information and compare occupation profiles to help choose which career they would like to pursue. The site also
provides education and training resources for students to review based on their chosen career path, including options to complete financial aid forms and college preparation checklists. Access to the ‘Why I Work’ application is also featured. This is a financial tool that shows job seekers how much income they need in order to live a selected lifestyle in a specific New Mexico location. The information is based on economic data provided by our Economic Research team.

In addition to the variety of career exploration tools available on the site, students can take advantage of the site’s Résumé Builder, Interview Practicing Tool, Letter Builder, information on WorkKeys® assessments, and more. Each tool on the site is user-friendly and designed to help guide students step-by-step in their journey towards reaching their short-term and long-term goals.

Our goal is to provide an easily accessible and personalized virtual one-stop-shop for our citizen customers that intuitively guides them along a personal path to supportive services and employment and training opportunities while maintaining data security. This will mature into a Master Data Management system and ensure further integration among social safety net agency systems. Ultimately, we seek to help create a consistent stream of technologically savvy, work-ready citizens for our New Mexico employers.

Program Data Alignment and Integration

State Level Efforts. NMDWS has established a standardized agreement process for external entities seeking to meet WIOA compliance. NMDWS strongly encourages program providers to utilize the Workforce Connection Online System to conduct case management where appropriate. NMDWS makes adjustments to the system configuration to accommodate this expanded use and provide direct user access for these entities to serve their participants. For entities that have established case management systems, NMDWS provides a mechanism to request and receive wage data electronically within the constraint of existing rules and regulations.

NMDWS has modified the Workforce Connection Online System to establish appropriate performance reporting tools. NMDWS continues to maintain its relationships with several educational institutions enabling these institutions to perform the necessary analytics to determine program outcomes.

There have been successful collaborations with the NM Higher Education Department, Central New Mexico Community College, and the University of New Mexico. Additionally, NMDWS has worked with Mission Graduate, Santa Fe County and several research institutions to assist with the analysis of program outcomes with an emphasis on specific target populations. NMDWS continues to work with several state agencies to standardize eligibility verification as it relates to employment or wage confirmation. The Department has worked with the State’s Human Services Department to establish an automated verification system and continues to work
towards an integrated workforce system that will provide for real time secured data sharing for both internal staff program support and individual participant servicing.

While recognizing the need for appropriate privacy safeguards, data sharing has been established among the partner agencies to enable more efficient use of all resources being applied to the benefit of each customer. NMDWS and the State Workforce Development Board continue to coordinate agreements with its partner agencies to establish a more integrated system and accounting process to enable tracking of services provided to all individuals receiving career services so that actual performance outcomes can be correlated to the investments being made in this area. These efforts allow the State Board to determine where opportunities for improvement exist and identify which practices and programs are yielding the best outcomes. The existing agreements have been refined and implemented in order to facilitate this activity while maintaining compliance with existing regulations established to safeguard the privacy of the individual customer.

Local Level Efforts. Local board grant agreements require the local boards to develop strategies for using technology to maximize the accessibility and effectiveness of the local workforce development system for employers, and workers and jobseekers through the following:

- facilitating connections among the intake and case management information systems of the one-stop partner programs to support a comprehensive workforce development system in the local area;
- facilitating access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including access in remote areas;
- identifying strategies for better meeting the needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including strategies that augment traditional service delivery, and increase access to services and programs of the one-stop delivery system, such as improving digital literacy skills; and leveraging resources and capacity within the local workforce development system, particularly for individuals with barriers to employment.

**Economic Research and Analysis Bureau**

The Economic Research and Analysis (ER&A) Bureau within NMDWS supports workforce development and planning by providing labor market information to assist businesses and job seekers in their decision making. Policy makers rely upon labor market information for informed policy development and to identify solutions that are appropriate for the state of New Mexico and the local communities served by local boards. Through customized reports ER&A supports local communities in their economic development initiatives aimed at attracting employers into a local area. Ultimately the objective is to provide accurate and timely labor market information in a usable format to assist in matching workforce needs with those of job seekers. Local boards rely on this labor market information in a number of ways. For instance, the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board indicates it uses the information to establish their occupations in demand for an individual training account contract. The
information also assists them in determining the workforce needs of employers in their local area and the state, and allows them to make quantitative decisions about the types of trainings programs needed in the area. This information also helps them assist employers who want to know the average wage for a specific position, the type of credential needed for an occupation, the number of jobs available in a certain area, or whether there will be a decline in the need the occupations.

**Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Record Data**

NMDWS staff leverages the Workforce Connection Online system as data consolidation point for access to quarterly unemployment insurance (UI) wage records from the UI data base for participants that exit following receipt of services. This wage data is uploaded to the Workforce Connection Online System to meet federal reporting requirements. The Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) and Federal Employment Data Exchange System (FEDES) were used to obtain wages received from outside the state of New Mexico. This wage data was uploaded into the Workforce Connection Online system and used to calculate performance outcomes. Over the past year, the FEDES application was not available and limited WRIS request were processed. NMDWS is working with US DOL and NASWA to find alternatives for the FEDES information. Additionally, NMDWS has switched over to the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS), finalizing the agreement including many of our key partners in July 2019. Test files have been processed in December and production exchanges have commenced.

Access to wage records has been an important issue for many years and is an even greater priority under WIOA. Use of wage records for WIOA core program performance and eligible training provider performance reporting purposes, and disclosure of wage records for certain federal evaluations are mandatory under WIOA (WIOA Section 116(e)(4)). State workforce, training, and education programs are required to use quarterly wage records to measure the progress of the State on the State and local performance accountability measures, and for obtaining the information required in the Eligible Training Provider List (WIOA Sections 116(i) and 121(d)). Quarterly wage records are the employer-provided wage reports collected under authority in Section 1137 of the SSA (42 USC 1320b-7). These are the reports state UI agencies obtain for UI tax liability and benefit eligibility determination purposes, and also use to detect improper payments. Confidentiality and disclosure of wage records are governed by the regulations at 20 CFR Part 603.

Like other state UI agencies, the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions coordinates disclosure of wage records for the mandated purposes for the state to be in compliance with WIOA requirements. To facilitate access to wage records for these purposes, DOL (ETA, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Chief Evaluation Office) has undertaken a number of activities in partnership with other Federal agencies to enable efficient and secure access to confidential wage data as envisioned under WIOA consistent with the guidance provided by U.S. DOL, including cross matching wage records with educational data, which is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g.
Wage information, defined in 20 CFR Part 603.2(k), includes the three data categories or elements that states must use for WIOA performance reporting purposes: wages, Social Security Number(s), and employer information. Federal regulations at 20 CFR Part 603.5(e) permit states to disclose confidential unemployment compensation (UC) information “to a public official for use in the performance of his or her official duties.” Performance of official duties means “administration or enforcement of law or the execution of the official responsibilities of a Federal, State, or local elected official.” Generally, under these regulations, disclosures of confidential UC information that WIOA requires are already permissible. The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions has established agreements to work collaboratively with one-stop partners to meet the requirements for use of wage records under WIOA.

**Adult Education**

Adult Education uses a web-based system called LACES (Literacy, Adult, and Community Education System) to collect and track all data. Local adult education program providers collect baseline demographic data for all participants, including employment and income status and level of education completed at entry. For as long as the student is enrolled in a local Adult Education program, providers track multiple aspects of program participation such as class enrollment, level and teacher assignments, attendance, and test scores. The following five target success metrics are carefully tracked in LACES: Measurable academic skill gains (MSGs), high school equivalency (HSE) credential attainment, transition to employment, entering postsecondary education or training, and median earnings in both the 2nd and 4th quarters after exiting the Adult Education program.

The Adult Education Division monitors local program data collection and quality via regular desk audits, scheduled site monitoring visits, and required semiannual reporting. Division staff provide quarterly data matches with the Diploma Sender database for high school equivalency attainment, with NMDWS for employment entry and wage information, and with the Higher Education Department’s internal database (DEAR) for entry into state public postsecondary institutions. Data match information is then imported into LACES. Adult Education reports local program performance annually to the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) at the U.S. Department of Education. The program year is from July 1 through June 30, and the annual report to OCTAE is due December 31 following the end of the program year.

As core WIOA partners continue to strengthen collaborations, the Adult Education Division is committed to working together in an effort to plug data collection holes (i.e. the failure to track wage gains over time, or to track student entry into postsecondary education and training beyond the limited scope of public institutions in New Mexico), as well as to expanding core partner ability to share data in an effort to enhance communication and the effective, efficient tracking and support of shared clients.
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Commission for the Blind

The vocational rehabilitation programs use a case management system called Accessible Web-based Activity Reporting Environment (AWARE) that is specifically designed for vocational rehabilitation programs. This system enables counselors to manage cases, managers to monitor cases, and the agency to prepare and submit required reports to RSA in a timely manner. All client data is captured and maintained in the AWARE case management system, such as information on client employment outcomes, including position title, employer, wages, hours, benefits, etc., and is provided to the Rehabilitation Services Administration, U. S. Department of Education through quarterly and annual reports. Alliance Enterprises, the software’s developer, revises the system to capture reportable data related to WIOA. Due to the especially strict confidentiality requirements imposed by the Rehabilitation Act and the sensitive nature of information about disabilities and medical conditions, the case management system is a closed system, accessible only by authorized employees. NMDWS has established a data sharing agreement to provide necessary wage data to support the programs’ activities.

B. DATA-COLLECTION AND REPORTING PROCESSES USED FOR ALL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING THOSE PRESENT IN ONE-STOP CENTERS

Data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including those present in one-stop centers.10

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

NMDWS administers a common management information system, called the Workforce Connection Online System, described earlier. The Workforce Connection Centers use the system not only for registering job applicants, housing resumes, and job postings for job matching purposes, but also for the purposes of data entry, case management, and state and federal performance reporting. The Workforce Connection Online System integrates data collection, participant demographics, case management, and performance reporting for not only Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and Wagner-Peyser, but also Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers, Veterans, Trade programs. The system is also used for data collection and reporting for all partners located in comprehensive and affiliate centers. NMDWS has established both user access and data sharing agreements to support access to information and information sharing between the partners as allowed by authorizing law and regulation. The system also provides access to labor market information to support business and job seekers in need of training or employment assistance.

NMDWS has also implemented a cloud based performance reporting tool – NM Performs. The NM Performs system is a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) dashboard reporting solution meets requirements relating to Employment Services ETA reporting, Monthly Dashboarding, and Ad-Hoc Reporting which support performance management needs of the Workforce Development System. The NM Performs system is designed to be a single source for workforce development analytics and reporting where users have access to dashboard reports and data applicable to their role, Workforce Development Board (WDB) and office location. Reports are used for program performance analysis and internal decision making. NM Performs users benefit from instant, single click access to over 80 default reports that provide data insight and answers to the most common WIOA performance questions.
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

NMDWS issues state-level policies and technical assistance guides to support the implementation of WIOA implementation. Information is available on-line and can be found at https://www.dws.state.nm.us/WIOA-Policy-Plans-Annual-Reports


- **WIOA Eligibility STAG (July 2015)** – Introductory guide summarizing key concepts and requirements of WIOA eligibility for basic career services, individualized career services, training services, supportive services, follow-up and eligible training providers.

- **DWS 16-001 – One-Stop Operator.** This workforce guidance letter provides information, criteria, and guidance that encourage Local Workforce Development Boards to establish One-Stop Operator scopes of works that meet requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

- **DWS 16-002 – One-Stop Certification.** To provide guidance, process, and deadlines for the certification of the Workforce Connection Centers and one-stop delivery system conducted by the local workforce development boards, and to set criteria for the development of local policy for one-stop certification.

- **DWS 16-003 – Local Governance.** This policy provides guidance on the appointment of local boards and outlines the roles, responsibilities and authority of the chief elected officials and the local boards in regard to the local workforce system.

- **DWS 16-004 – Eligible Training Provider Certification System.** This guidance provides new information, criteria, and procedures that inform the local workforce development boards, local administrative entities and workforce system partners of changes to the Eligible Training Provider system.

- **DWS 16-005 – One-Stop Common Identifier.** This guidance provides new information, criteria, and procedures that inform the local workforce development boards, local administrative entities and workforce system partners of changes to the Eligible Training Provider system.

- **DWS 16-006 – Infrastructure Funding.** These guidelines fulfill the WIOA requirement that the Governor issue guidance to State and local partners for negotiating cost sharing, service access, service delivery and other matters essential to the establishment of effective local workforce development services.

- **DWS 16-007 – Self Sufficiency.** To update the State WIOA Self-Sufficiency Wage Standards for grant recipients on the use when determining eligibility for participants in need of Individualized Career Services and/or Training Services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
• **DWS 16-008 – Incumbent Workers.** The purpose of this guidance is to provide direction to Local Workforce Development Boards regarding the permissible use of adult and dislocated worker funds for training activities associated with incumbent workers.

• **DWS 17-002 – Transfer of Funds.** To provide guidance and specific procedures for transferring of funds between the Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs by outlining the criteria and information required when submitting a request to transfer.

• **DWS 17-003 – Use of Supplemental Wage Data.** To provide direction to workforce system stakeholders regarding permissible use of supplemental wage information to assist in fulfilling the performance accountability requirements under §116 of WIOA.

• **DWS 18-001 – Procurement and Contracting.** To provide policy guidance to Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB), One-Stop Career Center Operators and other local workforce investment partners with respect to the state’s policy regarding procurement and contracting requirements.

• **DWS 18-002 – Individual Training Account – Change 2** The purpose of this guidance is to provide direction to Local Workforce Development Board in the development of a local policy on Individual Training Accounts.

• **DWS 18-003 - Negotiating Performance Goals with WIOA Title 1 PYS 2018 and 2019.** To inform local boards and the Chief Elected Officials of the guidelines for the negotiation process for the WIOA title 1 programs for PY 2018 and 2019.

• **DWS 18-004 – Youth Program Eligibility.** To provide direction to workforce systems stakeholders including Local Workforce Development Boards and youth program service providers, the Youth Eligibility Requirements for WIOA Title 1 Youth Program.

• **DWS 18-005 – Assistance to Wage Claimants.** Provides information and procedures to Local Workforce Development Boards regarding providing assistance to individuals who wish to file wage claims in the Workforce Connection Centers.

• **DWS 18-006 – On-the-Job-Training.** To provide guidance to Local Workforce Development Boards on the development of local policies and procedures to administer On-the-Job-Training (OJT) contracts under WIOA Title 1 Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs.

Additionally, two policies issued through the New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC) include:

• **Title 11 Chapter 2 Part 4 – Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Local Governance.** This policy outlines the local governance structure in New Mexico as required by WIOA, to administer the implementation of workforce development activities in the designated regions. This policy also provide guidance on the appointment of local boards and outlines the roles, responsibilities and authority of the CEOs and the local boards in regard to the local workforce system.

• **Title 11 Chapter 2 Part 21 – Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Grievance and Complaint Resolution Procedures.** This policy establishes procedures for processing grievances and complaints as required by WIOA. These procedures apply to all levels of the New Mexico workforce system and covers equal opportunity
requirements, discrimination grievances, state and local WIOA complaints and criminal fraud and abuse.

NMDWS has also made significant progress in developing state technical assistance guidance to support the effective implementation of WIOA at the local level, as follows.

In addition, the following fiscal policies have been updated to align with WIOA expectations.

- **#04-03 – Allowable Cost.**
- **#04-04 – Allowable Use of Funds and Adherence to UGG.**
- **#04-05 – Cash Management.**
- **#04-06 – Subrecipient Monitoring and Management.**
- **#04-07 – Time and Labor Reporting.**

DWS 16-006 provide local boards, chief elected officials and one stop partners with guidance on determining equitable and stable methods of funding infrastructure in accordance with Section 121 of WIOA. The guidance provides:

- Definition of terms and practices commonly associated with infrastructure agreements;
- A description of the differences between one stop operating costs and specific infrastructure costs;
- A list of the required one stop partners;
- Options for allocation methodologies;
- The required aspects of the Infrastructure Funding Agreement;
- The differences between the Local Funding Mechanism (LFM) and the State Funding Mechanism (SFM);
- Procedures the state will follow if one or Local Area requires the SFM including;

**Wagner-Peyser Policies**

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions maintains an Employment Services Manual, a handbook providing processes and procedures for the administration of Wagner Peyser Employment Services and to highlight how these services support the primary mission of the State’s workforce system. The guide, which establishes a comprehensive resource for Employment Service information and operational guidance, communicates expectations for program design and service deliver, and ensures a consistent level of service. The guide will be revised to reflect the changes imposed by the passage of WIOA. In order that Wagner-Peyser is successful in the implementation of its policies, all Wagner-Peyser Area Managers will be trained consistently in program policies and are required to hold office staff accountable for the proper service delivery of programs in their respective regions.
Adult Education Policies

The Adult Education program has policies that govern allowable activities, student assessment, local Adult Education provider monitoring, performance measures, local provider funding process, target populations, and evaluation of Title II activities. For more information, see Program-Specific Requirements for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs.

Vocational Rehabilitation Policies

Both VR agencies have policies that support implementation of the State’s strategies. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NMDVR and the Commission has existed for many years to coordinate the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to persons who are deaf-blind. The MOU was revised in fiscal year 2013 to update provisions for the coordination of services, processing of referrals, transitioning of cases, handling of joint cases, sharing of office space, sharing of confidential information, and representation on the State Workforce Board.

The VR agencies have the ability to enter into “cooperative agreements” with partner entities, and are required to have cooperative agreements with specific entities such as higher education. As such, the VR agencies have MOUs with the New Mexico Department of Public Education regarding 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; transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs; roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

Both VR agencies maintain a Manual of Operating Procedures which will be updated to reflect WIOA and other changes, as appropriate. The manuals provide guidance for assessment, determination of eligibility, order of selection, if necessary, service provision, documentation, case closure and other topics having to do with direct service provision. In addition, the VR agencies have policies that govern interaction with core partners, such as referrals and transfers to and from the agencies. In addition, the VR agencies provide services that are customized to the unique needs and “informed choice” of the individual consumer who has the right to challenge decisions that they do not agree with, which includes an impartial due process hearing.

3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

Describe the organization and delivery systems at the State and local levels for the programs covered in the plan, including the organizational structure. Include an organizational chart.
New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) is designated as the State Administrative Entity (SAE) for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. In their role as the SAE they are responsible for supporting the State Workforce Development Board, which provides leadership, vision and strategy for New Mexico's workforce system, as discussed earlier. In this role, NMDWS is responsible for organizing and facilitating a workforce development system that creates value and offers employers, individuals, and communities the resources necessary to achieve and sustain a talent pipeline needed to sustain and retain economic prosperity for the state. Specifically, NMDWS is the lead agency responsible for the fiscal and program administration of the following core programs as specified in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

- Adult Program (WIOA, Title I),
- Dislocated Worker Program (WIOA, Title I),
- Youth Program (WIOA, Title I)
- Wagner-Peyser Act Program (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III)

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions provides oversight of WIOA programs by contracting with four Local Workforce Development Boards to provide the required activities outlined in WIOA. The boards represent a wide variety of individuals, businesses, and organizations throughout the local area who work to:

- support an effective relationship between the Chief Elected Officials, economic development, education, and workforce partners throughout the local area;
- develop a regional strategy to continuously improve and strengthen the workforce development system through innovation in, and alignment and improvement of, employment, training, and education programs necessary to promote economic growth and support regional industry;
  - participate and collaborate with the required and other partners of the workforce development system, including public and private organizations; and
  - integrate and align an effective, job-driven workforce development system to meet the needs of regional businesses.

The chief elected officials in each local area serve as the local grant recipients for WIOA funds allocated to the local area. The NMDWS, as the State Administrative Entity for the administration of WIOA, allocates WIOA funds for services to youth, adults, and dislocated workers based on the U.S. Department of Labor-mandated formulas. Availability of WIOA funds is predicated upon receipt of federal allocations, and subject to required formula disbursements and rescission. Funds the local boards do not expend within the specified period are subject to reversion to the State pursuant to applicable law. Upon receipt of a fully executed grant agreement and all required attachments, the funds are made available to the local boards. Allocation letters, notices of increases and/or decreases in funding, or reallocation must be incorporated as modifications to this agreement.
WIOA requires chief elected officials and Local Workforce Development Boards to constitute WIOA-compliant boards through the appropriate local board appointments. For each local area the members of local boards are selected by the chief elected officials consistent with criteria established pursuant to WIOA section 107(b)(1) and required to meet the composition described in WIOA section 107(b)(2). Local boards must comply with New Mexico Open Meetings Act and Inspection of Public Records Act. Additionally, local board must elect chairpersons from among the business representatives on the boards. The local boards oversee the administration of funds for adult/dislocated worker and youth programs, and are directly responsible for assuring access to seamless and comprehensive training and support programs. Local boards develop, implement and evaluate the effectiveness and quality of one-stop services for job seekers, employers and workforce partners. NMDWS is responsible for monitoring for compliance of the local boards and for providing ongoing technical assistance and training to ensure performance and quality.

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions also administers Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, which it does from the state level through its Employment Services Division, along with the administration of Trade Adjustment Assistance, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Rapid Response, and Veterans programs. NMDWS receives funding from USDOL to hire and oversee state merit staff responsible for direct delivery of the Wagner Peyser employment services and the other related services to jobseekers and employers. Merit staff is located throughout 23 field offices and the programs are co-located with the WIOA adult/dislocated worker and youth programs in every local board area. Employment Services are provided as part of the one-stop delivery system. Currently, each local workforce development area has at least one comprehensive workforce development center that includes, at a minimum, three partners: WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker services, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, and access to Unemployment Insurance services. Access to other required partners, such as vocational rehabilitation, adult literacy and education, and TANF, is also available through itinerate and/or onsite staff. All Wagner Peyser Staff are trained and prepared to provide meaningful information and resources to support and manage referrals across programs.

Each Employment Services field office is assigned a site manager who ensures the workforce centers are universally accessible, customer centered, and training is job-driven. This includes providing easy access to and assistance with workforce related activities, such as looking for a job, exploring work preparation and career development services, as well as seamless referral to WIOA employment, on-the-job-training, and occupational training programs. Employment Services staff work cooperatively and collaboratively with the Local Workforce Development Boards, site managers and One-Stop Operators, and other workforce partners, to effectively serve both employers and jobseekers. A key role of this program is to identify potential matches between employers and jobseekers. The program’s service delivery approach includes self-service, facilitated self-help, and staff-assisted services, and involves a number of other tools and resources. The organizational chart for New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, in which the WIOA and Wagner-Peyser programs are situated, follows.
New Mexico Higher Education Department, Adult Education Division

Adult Education in New Mexico is administered by the New Mexico Higher Education Department, which provides leadership, services, support, and technical expertise to Adult Education program personnel, students, partners and communities. At the State level, the Director of the Adult Education Division reports to the Secretary of New Mexico Higher Education Department. The Adult Education Director oversees a Fiscal Officer, a Program Improvement Coordinator, an Outreach Coordinator, a three-quarter-time Professional Development Coordinator, a half-time Data Coordinator, a half-time High School Equivalency Testing Administrator, and a Volunteer Literacy Tutoring program. The first five functions above are funded through WIOA and a state legislative appropriation to the Higher Education Department to fulfill WIOA Maintenance of Effort requirements. The last two functions are funded by state legislative appropriation and are not governed by WIOA.

The statewide Adult Education system currently includes 24 local Adult Education providers. Three of the 24 providers are community based non-profit organizations, and the remainder are attached to public postsecondary institutions. Each local provider has a program manager and a data technician, as well as instructional and administrative staff. Each local Adult Education program provides instructional services using a curriculum aligned with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education's College and Career Readiness Standards, including literacy, high school equivalency preparation, workplace readiness.
training, basic technology skills, and English Language acquisition. Six programs have Integrated English Language/Civics Education grants through WIOA. In addition to instructional services, each program provides student assessment services, transition advising, and a variety of student support services, including referral to other entities for needed non-educational services.

Vocational Rehabilitation

DVR, a division of the New Mexico Public Education Department, assists individuals with disabilities to find, retain, and/or maintain suitable employment by providing vocational guidance, assistance, and services on an individualized basis. DVR consists of nine regions across the state, with 26 field offices. Five Field Operation Directors (FOD) oversee rehabilitation services throughout the state. Each area has a Program Manager (PM) who oversees daily operations of their respective area. Additionally, one Administrative FOD oversees the administrative needs, i.e. facilities and fleet, of all the areas. DVR opens cases for participants as early as age 14 and may provide services to participants through adulthood. DVR provides services through an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Depending on an individual’s specific needs, a wide array of services can be provided in order to obtain suitable, competitive, and integrated employment. Training and services that may be considered are as follows: evaluations, Pre-Educational Training Services, counseling and guidance, medical and psychological treatment, rehabilitation engineering, employment equipment, job training, job coaching, job placement, job readiness skills, transportation, and other services needed to maintain employment. DVR also supports educational linkages through Pre-Employment Transition Services in 89 school districts and 87 charter schools for a total outreach of a 150 school sites statewide. In an effort to expand programs and services to individuals and/or youth who are eligible for supported employment services, DVR sponsors 12 Project Search sites in Albuquerque, Gallup, Rio Rancho, Gadsden, Las Cruces, Farmington, and Pojoaque. DVR sponsors work-based experiences for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing students in
Taos through the Rock-Mountain Youth-Assisted Dogs of the West program. In Central New Mexico, DVR sponsors work-based experiences for Supported Employment students at Mandy’s Farm. DVR also facilitates work-based experiences through the Project Hope program in the Pueblos of Jemez, Zia, Santa Ana, Sandia, Santo Domingo, and Cochiti. Moreover, DVR is engaged in the 511 WIOA process by meeting employees with disabilities who make subminimum wage at 14c worksites and advising them about competitive, integrated employment and resources in the respective communities of Albuquerque, Los Lunas, Carlsbad, and Gallup.

**Commission for the Blind**

The Commission for the Blind provides vocational rehabilitation services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired, who need and can benefit from these services as it relates to an employment outcome. The Commission has eight vocational rehabilitation counselors located throughout the state, including four in Albuquerque, one in Las Vegas, one in Farmington, one in Roswell, and one in Las Cruces. The Commission typically opens a vocational rehabilitation case starting at age 14, and provides services through an Individualized Plan for Employment. As discussed earlier, examples of the types of services provided include guidance and counseling; transition services that can include participation in a summer youth training program or STEP; the provision of technological equipment, such as computers equipped with screen readers or
screen enlargement software, specialized Braille computers, video magnifiers, or other rehabilitative technology; support attending college or graduate school; job placement services; support in starting a self-employment business; or provision of needed assistive technology to become or remain employed in a specific job. The Commission also operates a residential training program in Alamogordo, New Mexico where individuals who are blind can receive six to nine months of intensive training in Braille, orientation and mobility, assistive technology, personal management, home management, and industrial arts. The training is provided by eight highly qualified teachers. The Orientation Center is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities and certified by the National Blindness Professional Certification Board. The organizational chart for the New Mexico Commission for the Blind, an independent agency, follows.

Aging and Long-Term Services Department

The New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department (ALTSD) oversees the State grant from the USDOL for the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). In addition a Goodwill Industries is the recipient for New Mexico's national grant from the USDOL for the SCSEP; and the National Indian Council on Aging has a set-aside grant from USDOL to focus on native communities.

The state grant is operated directly from the ALTSD’s Albuquerque office; there are no subgrantees. Plans are being formulated by ALTSD to focus on training older workers for positions as Peer Support Workers and Community Health Workers. These are positions with national certifications which may be eligible for Medicaid or other federal reimbursement.
Human Services Department

Central Office staff develops and maintains policies and procedures for Cash and SNAP programs. Field Office staff administers and implements federal and state policies and procedures to determine eligibility and benefit levels for both programs. In turn, Central Office staff ensures and monitors program integrity.
B. STATE BOARD

Provide a description of the State Board, including—

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### I. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

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

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II. BOARD ACTIVITIES

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

The State Workforce Development Board plays a leadership role in aligning federal investments in job training and education programs, integrating service delivery across programs, enhancing the capacity and performance of the workforce development system at both the state and local levels, ensuring the one-stop system is customer driven, and the workforce system is job-driven and matches employers with skilled individuals. As such, the State Workforce Development Board establishes overarching strategies and framework for the local boards to follow as they develop their local plans to ensure they are consistent with the State Plan; establishes accountability measures and expectations for the implementation of the local board plans; conducts annual (or more frequent) review of local boards plans and progress; ensures compliance with criteria for membership on a local boards; receives and communicates public comments regarding the activities of the local boards to ensure accountability and transparency; recommends action consistent with state rule and policy if local board outcomes are not achieved and are not consistent with the principles, strategies, and vision described in this State Plan.

In PY 2019, the newly elected Governor appointed a new State Board Chair April 2019 along with several new members. The Board, under new leadership, has met four times and has been focused on setting vision and goals for the next four years. Key actions taken by the State Board in PY 2019 include the following: • review and adoption of by-laws to govern board engagement; • adoption of an Open Meetings Resolution to ensure transparency in the Board’s interactions; • approval of a meeting schedule to ensure the Board meets regularly; and • establishment of committees to support the Board’s work (discussed below).

The State Workforce Board also reviews its key governance policies annually, including:

- review and adoption of new by-laws to govern board engagement;
- adoption of an Open Meetings Resolution to ensure transparency in the Board’s interactions;
- approval of a meeting schedule;
- review and approval of one-stop certification criteria as required by WIOA;
- review and approval of State Plan modifications for submission; and
- establishment of committees to support the Board’s work.
Committees planned to assist the State Board in accomplishing its goals by focusing the board's workforce development efforts. As such, the State Board has established two committees that are currently active, as follows:

1. **Executive Committee** - This committee will meet at least twice per year between full board meetings, and more often, as necessary, to serve in an advisory capacity for supporting the review and development of proposed activities required by WIOA, as well as to conduct planning for State Board meeting agenda items.

1. **Workforce System Performance Committee** - This committee was established to prioritize and tackle issues of importance around improving the overall performance of the workforce system. The committee is currently focused on review of local regions and area designation, reviewing current structure of regional boards to determine if designations are appropriate for meeting the needs of job seekers and businesses. The Committee has established a work plan and meeting schedule which includes submitting recommendations to the Governor by May 2020 for consideration for potential redesign of regional areas.

The State Board plans to establish other subcommittees, as needed, which could include the following:

- **Data and Performance Committee** - This committee will spearhead the acquisition and coordination of data across agencies to develop state performance measures to evaluate the overall effectiveness and return on investment of workforce/training programs and services. While recognizing the need for appropriate privacy safeguards, this committee will work to establish the necessary data sharing agreements to enable an integrated tracking process to better assess how well the state’s investment in individuals receiving career services yield successful outcomes. These efforts could provide a basis for setting priorities, goals, and benchmarks across agencies based on solid data. The State Board has already received presentations on Return on Investment practices and are well on their way to setting this committee as a priority.

- **Policy Review Committee**: The State Board desires to ensure the workforce system is agile and responsive to the needs of its customers. Working in partnership with a knowledgeable third-party contractor, this committee will review existing policies at the state and local board levels to make recommendations for removing overly burdensome policies.

- **Workforce/Education Coordination Committee** - This committee will work to engage and challenge stakeholders to design systems and programs that coordinate and leverage WIOA resources; improve consistent and standardized assessment of basic skills; and increase the attainment of relevant credentials validated by employers. This committee will promote a strong partnership between community colleges and the public.
workforce system and explore options to more effectively target resources to support and sustain successful projects and demonstrated effectiveness.

- **Business Engagement Committee (Sector Strategy)** - This committee will support the development and execution of statewide Sector Strategy deployment, with a focus on employer engagement to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, gaps and employability of the New Mexico workforce. They will review and analyze data to be used as the basis for a more comprehensive plan of action for enhancing the employability of job seekers through relevant training and education.

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

   **A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE PROGRAMS**

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

The WIOA performance accountability measures in Section 116 will be used to assess the effectiveness of programs ensuring continuous improvement in the service delivery system. To increase awareness, accuracy and transparency, performance reports will be published for each local workforce region. Programs are assessed on their fiscal management, program implementation and data management. The state will identify and target programs for technical assistance that fails to meet performance benchmarks.

New Mexico will use quarterly progress and annual performance to identify area of improvement. Should local areas fall significantly behind in their goals, they will be required to submit a performance improvement plan outlining the steps needed to bring performance outcomes up to negotiated standards. Programs will receive an annual monitoring (on-site or desk review) to assess fiscal, program and data performance. The state will also include quarterly desk reviews to assess accounting and monitoring systems, budget methodologies, cash management practices, cost allocation plans, purchasing and procurement procedures, internal controls, programs results or outcomes, reporting accuracy, and recordkeeping.

Adult Education is assessed by the federal Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) annually based on a standard of continuous program improvement, as well a rigorous comparison of performance measures among states. Annual evaluations form the basis of negotiating annual state performance targets with OCTAE. Targets are negotiated annually with U.S. Department of Education based on past performance and comparative performance across states. Periodically OCTAE conducts weeklong site monitoring visits to evaluate State practices, which includes intensive visits to samples of local provider programs. In addition to continuous fiscal and data desk monitoring, the Adult Education Division conducts program monitoring visits to all local providers every two years, which includes administrative, instructional, fiscal, and data process evaluations. A written report includes recognition of promising practices, recommendations for improvement, and, if necessary, a corrective action plan to be further
monitored by the State office. Besides these regular visits, the state office reviews each program's annual single audit prior to awarding funding and places programs on corrective action plans if the audit indicates that is necessary. Local program effectiveness, quality, and improvement are also taken into account in determining the amount of funding allocated each year to each program.

The core performance measures tracked by the Adult Education Program include the following.

- Entered Employment - number entering employment / number unemployed at program entry.
- Retained Employment - number retaining employment / number employed at program entry.
- High School Equivalency (HSE) - number attaining high school equivalency / number taking HSE tests.
- Postsecondary Education or Training (Current Year) - number entering postsecondary within current program year / number passing HSE or entering with a high school credential.
- Postsecondary Education or Training (Prior Program Year) - number entering postsecondary within current program year / number passing HSE or entering with a high school credential in prior year.

In fiscal year 2014, the Adult Education program exceeded its targets for retained employment and high school equivalency, but was not able to meet targets for other core measures. In fiscal year 2015, the program further improved its performance against its retained employment target, exceeded its target for entered employment, and came close to meeting its target for postsecondary education or training in the current year. The Adult Education program also tracks the educational functioning level of its participants to determine the percentage of students who have completed each literacy level based on Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, and English as Second Language standards.

The two vocational rehabilitation programs are measured by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), which has established Standards and Indicators, which the agencies must report on to the legislature each year. The Indicators are:

- 1.1 - Number of Case Closures with an Employment Outcome.
- 1.2 - Percentage of Case Closures that Received Services with an Employment Outcome.
- 1.3 - Percentage of Case Closures with a Competitive Employment Outcome. (Note: Competitive Employment also includes self-employment, Business
Enterprises Program participation, or supported employment in an integrated setting.)

- 1.4 - Percentage of Case Closures with Significant Disabilities with a Competitive Employment Outcome.
- 1.5 - Ratio of Average Closure Wage to Average State Wage
- 1.6 - Difference between the Percentage of Case Closures with Employment Outcomes that are Self Support at Application versus Self Support at Closure. (Note: Self Support means the individual reported their own income as the largest single source of economic support.)
- 2.1 - Ratio of Minority to Non-Minority Service Rate.

The VR agencies are required to submit reports to RSA that include data used to track trends of persons applying for VR services, and determinations of eligibility made by the state VR agency. Also, identification of persons with significant disabilities, Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) development, service implementation and program outcomes are key program measurements that provide a general assessment of state VR programs and their accomplishments.

**ADULT EDUCATION**

Adult Education is assessed annually by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) based on a standard of continuous program improvement, as well as rigorous comparison of performance measures among states. Annual evaluations form the basis of negotiating annual state performance targets with OCTAE. As part of their monitoring process, OCTAE conducts comprehensive weeklong site monitoring visits to evaluate State practices, which includes visits to local provider programs. OCTAE also periodically conducts intensive, targeted audits to review select State processes and practices, both to ensure federal requirement compliance and to support State efforts.

Likewise, in addition to ongoing fiscal and data desk monitoring, the Adult Education Division conducts comprehensive on-site program monitoring visits on a schedule determined through the use of a federally-approved Risk Assessment tool. These comprehensive visits include instructional, administrative, fiscal, and data process evaluations. Additional site visits and other forms of technical assistance are provided as needed, or by request. Local provider programs submit reports to the Adult Education Division twice annually to support quality assurance and compliance and to guide targeted assistance and support measures from the State. Each local program provider has administrative leadership responsible for internal program support, monitoring, and AEFLA compliance. The provision of high quality professional development is crucial to support efficacy, coordination, and compliance within and among all layers of the Adult Education system.

Per federal requirement, the following performance measures are tracked by Adult Education and offer core benchmarks for program quality and success:  (1) Measurable Skill Gains (substantial increases in core skill level functioning OR high school credential attainment), (2)
Entry into a postsecondary education program or training, (3) Employment during second and fourth quarter after program exit, and (4) High school credential attainment AND entry into postsecondary education/training or employment. State programs have freedom to incentivize and collect data on additional measures they believe to be crucial to program efforts and success, like co-enrollment with core WIOA partner programs.

B. ASSESSMENT OF ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS

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

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. This may include choosing to set additional indicators of performance. NM is committed to utilizing common unique identifier data to review progress for customers across programs, to outline opportunities for enhance of services and to identify system barriers regionally and locally. The common unique identifier is a strong data point to strengthen collaboration and continued coordination across systems.

Each of the one-stop partners will strive to achieve the locally-negotiated performance standards of quality service for its customers, employees, and partners. Each is committed to meeting or exceeding the various performance measures laid out in their grants or programs.

According to local board MOUs, one-stop partners are committed to the performance indicators of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act placing participants into unsubsidized employment, increasing job retention, removing barriers to employment, providing meaningful education and training activities leading to jobs with self-sufficiency. The partners are equally committed to meeting the needs of both job seekers and employers. Customer surveys will be utilized to gauge progress and to gather information for continuous improvement. Each local area is required to develop and implement a continuous quality improvement plan in coordination with one-stop partners to assess service delivery strengths and weaknesses and to offer opportunities to retool service delivery models to assure quality services.

NMDWS will continue to initiate an annual study in partnership with the core service agencies and partners programs to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the workforce system. Findings from this study, along with customer and business feedback will be used to inform decision making and strategies to improve access to and quality of services.

Finally, each of the Core Partners has committed to share data to support the Common Unique Identifier. This information is discussed quarterly at a Workforce Partners meeting to identify opportunities, address challenges and discover trends to inform policy and program decision making at a state level.

C. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications, provide the results of assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the Unified or Combined State plan during the preceding 2-year period (i.e. the 2-year period of the plan modification cycle). Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.
• The State must meet the requirement of the element by revising the narrative to provide the results of assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the State plan during the 2018-2020 period. Also please describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

To increase awareness, accuracy and transparency, NMDWS purchased a new software that provides "real time" data analysis for service delivery. Performance reports are published for each local workforce region regionally and one-on-one technical assistance is available to guide continuous improvement strategies. Programs are assessed on their fiscal management, program implementation and data management. Together with the local board staff, NMDWS assists in identify and target programs for technical assistance that fails to meet performance benchmarks.

New Mexico used quarterly progress and annual performance to identify areas of improvement, monitor performance and to understand service trends and outcomes. Programs also received an annual monitoring (on-site or desk review) to assess fiscal, program and data performance and concerns and findings were elevated for ongoing technical assistance and or training. The state conducted quarterly desk reviews to assess accounting and monitoring systems, budget methodologies, cash management practices, cost allocation plans, purchasing and procurement procedures, internal controls, programs results or outcomes, reporting accuracy, and recordkeeping. Information from these activities was also presented to the State Workforce Development Board for discussion and action with an overarching goal of improving access and quality of services statewide.

Finally, NMDWS conducted a study using the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) to determine whether biasness or preferential treatment is evident for WIOA participants of certain gender, race, ethnicity, veteran and disabled status, and age categories. Three types of statistical and econometric tests were run—a two-sample z-test of proportions, a logistic regression model, and the Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition—to compare participants who received Title 1 and Title 3 services. Barrier types and priority of service were also considered in explaining the difference in receipt of services.

Identifying with certain demographic groups increased a participant’s chance of receiving Title 1 services. Those demographics were being female (which increased the likelihood of receiving Title 1 services by 36.3 percent), being White (which increased the likelihood of receiving Title 1 services by 42.6 percent) and being Hispanic (increased the likelihood of receiving Title 1 services by 25.7 percent). Barrier type and priority of service explained 58.5 percent of the reason why women and Whites were each more likely to participate in Title 1, while it explained 78.9 percent of the reason for Hispanics. Being Native American and Black/African American increased the odds of receiving Title 1 services 1.14 and 1.28 times, respectively, but characteristics other than barriers and priority of service disfavored them from receiving Title 1 services. While characteristics such as education level, income level, and employment history could be the reason, the result is unexpected and should be researched further.

Having certain demographic characteristics decreased a participant’s likelihood of receiving Title 1 services. Being a veteran and disabled decreased the likelihood of receiving Title 1 services by 24.5 percent and 19.0 percent, respectively. Anecdotal evidence suggests that
veterans preferred using the GI Bill to receive services, and disabled participants were referred to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to receive Title 4 services. As expected, youth were more likely to receive Title 1 services, but those aged 25 to 29 were largely favored to receive Title 1 services due to reasons other than barrier type and priority of service. It is possible that participants in this age group had lower income levels, making it easier to meet the eligibility requirements. Younger participants may be more willing to participate in training and learn a new skill.

Participants aged 30 years and older were less likely to receive Title 1 services. The decomposition showed that barriers and priority of service disfavored participants between 30 and 39 years old from receiving Title 1 services. This result was unexpected and should be researched further. It is possible that persons in this age group reported fewer barriers than persons in other age groups. The PIRL showed 57,234 participants with no indicated barriers to employment, of which 1,733 were Title 1 participants. Participants aged 40 and older were disfavored from receiving Title 1 services. As participant age increased, variables other than barrier type and priority of service played an increasing role in determining the type of service received. What these variables consist of are unknown, but factors such as education level, income level, employment history, type of training available, or another unobservable factor could be the cause. It is recommended that this finding be further evaluated.

Findings from this evaluation were used to review and inform eligibility for services with all LWDBs, with a specific concentration on reviewing outreach and service delivery for Native American and African American customers. NMDWS hosted a “kick-off” meeting with the Native American WIOA funded programs (includes 14 pueblos and tribes) to identify strategies and actions necessary to promote coordination and collaboration with NMDWS. A key result of this initial meeting was the initiation of a quarterly standing meeting for planning, coordination and networking with a goal of assuring quality access to NMDWS tools and resources for job readiness, career exploration, and improved coordination with the WIOA partners.

D. EVALUATION

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

- The State must meet the requirement of the element by revising the narrative to adequately describe plans for conducting evaluations of all of the core partners as well as Title I program activities. The narrative must also address two other requirements under the regulation: coordination/consultation with local boards and agencies for other core programs, and plans to make findings in reports available to State and local workforce boards and to the public, by electronic means. Please note that technical assistance is provided through the many Workforce GPS resources on how to conduct value-added evaluations in its Evalhub located at https://evalhub.workforcegps.org/.

Evaluations of activities performed under the WIOA core programs will be conducted as required by 20 CFR 682.220. The Labor Market Information branch of the New Mexico
Department of Workforce Solutions will be the lead for facilitating and organizing the analysis. Unfortunately, New Mexico has not received Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) grants to fund the development of state workforce longitudinal administrative databases, which would be of great help in this endeavor. Instead, data used to conduct the evaluation will be from the workforce innovation performance system, unemployment insurance wage and claims records from New Mexico, and, if possible and applicable, unemployment insurance wage records from some surrounding states (Wyoming and Texas). The subject matter of evaluation is discussed and determined by the State Workforce Board, and a timeline and a description of the evaluation’s methodology is prepared and presented for review and consideration. Sound statistical and econometric methods will be adhered to, as appropriate.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

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

A. FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

Provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—

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

PROCEDURE MANUAL: WIOA Fiscal Section

SUBJECT: Determination of Annual WIOA Allotments to Local Areas for new Program Year

EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/01/2017

1.0 SCOPE

DWS is the statewide administrative entity charged with oversight of federal funds which flow through to local boards for payment of federal dollars under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

1. ASSOCIATED MATERIALS

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

3.0 PROCEDURES:

Each year, DWS WIOA Fiscal Section will calculate Local Area's formula distribution of WIOA funds using the following procedures:

- Staff will review U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Training & Employment Guidance Letter used by USDOL to provide States with Program Year and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) annual allotments. The TEGL provides the PY and FY distributions by funding stream: Adult and Dislocated Worker and the PY allotment for Youth.

- Staff will develop New Mexico's preliminary WIOA allotment from the TEGL. Compare to prior year's allotment to determine overall funding increases or decreases in
funding. Calculate state reservation of funds (5% State Administration, 10% Statewide Activities, and 15% State Rapid Response) to arrive at amount of funds available for distribution to local areas including the Navajo Nation.

- Staff will obtain LMI data from DWS ER&A and enter into a spreadsheet that calculates the fair share allocation utilizing the 6-part formula for Dislocated Worker and the 3-Part Formulas for Adult and Youth. This spreadsheet is designed to calculate the following local area funding stream allocations:

**Youth Funding**

Staff will use the spreadsheet for the Three-Part Formula to determine each Local Areas allocation using the relative share of the following three data categories in accordance with the TEGL:

1. Number of Economically Disadvantaged, Youth 16-21
2. Average Number of Excess Unemployed for the 12 month period.
3. Average Number of Substantial Unemployed for 12 month period.

Raw data will be used to develop three-part formula Indexes of Need, and funds will be distributed in fair share allocation (33 1/3% to each part) based on Index of Need for each part.

Spreadsheets break out calculations by:

- Fair Share Allocation (by County within Local Area) of State Set asides (5% and 10%).
- Fair Share Allocation (by County within Local Area) of Administrative Dollars
- Fair Share Allocation (by County within Local Area) of Program Dollars

Spreadsheets reflect calculations by:

- Program Year Fair Share Local Area Allocation by County within Local Area and by program and Administrative funds.
- Fiscal Year Fair Share Local Area Allocation by County within Local Area and by program and Administrative funds.

**Note:** Navajo Nation is a Local Area for the purpose of fair share allocation based on raw data.

Using a spreadsheet designed to calculate the 90% Hold Harmless amounts, staff will enter the prior two years' Actual Local Area Allocations to arrive at the 2-year average allocation for each area. Staff will multiply the 2-year average by 90% to arrive at the 90% amount of the prior 2-year average. This is the minimum amount of funding that local areas should receive if the 90% hold harmless amounts are used as a minimum allocation amount. This spreadsheet will calculate the ratable increases and decreases and adjust the final allocation accordingly.
4.0 RESPONSIBILITY

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ASSIGNED PERSONNEL TO ADHERE TO THIS PROCEDURE UNLESS OTHERWISE INSTRUCTED.

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

PROCEDURE MANUAL: WIOA Fiscal Section

SUBJECT: Determination of Annual WIOA Allotments to Local Areas for new Program Year

EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/01/2017

1.0 SCOPE

DWS is the statewide administrative entity charged with oversight of federal funds which flow through to local boards for payment of federal dollars under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

1. ASSOCIATED MATERIALS

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

3.0 PROCEDURES:

Each year, DWS WIOA Fiscal Section will calculate Local Area’s formula distribution of WIOA funds using the following procedures:

- Staff will review U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Training & Employment Guidance Letter used by USDOL to provide States with Program Year and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) annual allotments. The TEGL provides the PY and FY distributions by funding stream: Adult and Dislocated Worker and the PY allotment for Youth.

- Staff will develop New Mexico’s preliminary WIOA allotment from the TEGL. Compare to prior year’s allotment to determine overall funding increases or decreases in funding. Calculate state reservation of funds (5% State Administration, 10% Statewide Activities, and 15% State Rapid Response) to arrive at amount of funds available for distribution to local areas including the Navajo Nation.

- Staff will obtain LMI data from DWS ER&A and enter into a spreadsheet that calculates the fair share allocation utilizing the 6-part formula for Dislocated Worker and the 3-Part Formulas for Adult and Youth. This spreadsheet is designed to calculate the following local area funding stream allocations:
Adult Funding

Staff will use the spreadsheet for the Three-Part Formula to determine each Local Areas allocation using the relative share of the following three data categories in accordance with the TEGL:

1. Number of Economically Disadvantaged (2000 Census) Adults 22-72
2. Number of Excess Unemployed
3. Number of Substantial Unemployed

Raw data will be used to develop three-part formula Indexes of Need, and funds will be distributed in fair share allocation (33 1/3% to each part) based on Index of Need for each part.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ASSIGNED PERSONNEL TO ADHERE TO THIS PROCEDURE UNLESS OTHERWISE INSTRUCTED.

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

PROCEDURE MANUAL: WIOA Fiscal Section

SUBJECT: Determination of Annual WIOA Allotments to Local Areas for new Program Year

EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/01/2017

1.0 SCOPE

DWS is the statewide administrative entity charged with oversight of federal funds which flow through to local boards for payment of federal dollars under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

1. ASSOCIATED MATERIALS

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

3.0 PROCEDURES:

Each year, DWS WIOA Fiscal Section will calculate Local Area's formula distribution of WIOA funds using the following procedures:

- Staff will review U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Training & Employment Guidance Letter used by USDOL to provide States with Program Year and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) annual allotments. The TEGL provides the PY and FY distributions by funding stream: Adult and Dislocated Worker and the PY allotment for Youth.
• Staff will develop New Mexico’s preliminary WIOA allotment from the TEGL. Compare to prior year’s allotment to determine overall funding increases or decreases in funding. Calculate state reservation of funds (5% State Administration, 10% Statewide Activities, and 15% State Rapid Response) to arrive at amount of funds available for distribution to local areas including the Navajo Nation.

• Staff will obtain LMI data from DWS ER&A and enter into a spreadsheet that calculates the fair share allocation utilizing the 6-part formula for Dislocated Worker and the 3-Part Formulas for Adult and Youth. This spreadsheet is designed to calculate the following local area funding stream allocations:

**Dislocated Worker Funding:**

Staff will use the spreadsheet for the Six-Part Formula to determine each Local Areas allocation using the relative share of the following six data categories in accordance with the TEGL:

1. Insured Unemployed
2. Unemployed Concentrations
3. MLS Data
4. *Declining Industry*
5. Farmer/Rancher
6. Long term Unemployed

Raw data will be used to develop six-part formula Average Index of Need, and the Average Index of Need will be used to calculate Fair Share Allocations (20% to each part, except Farmer/Rancher due to a decline in BEA Agricultural Employment average from 2004 to 2014).

4.0 **RESPONSIBILITY**

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ASSIGNED PERSONNEL TO ADHERE TO THIS PROCEDURE UNLESS OTHERWISE INSTRUCTED.

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

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

**Competitive Process:** The New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) is the State’s eligible agency for administering Adult Education and Literacy programs under WIOA, and the Adult Education Division oversees this effort. NMHED is required to award multi-year grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers within the state or outlying area to develop, implement, and improve adult education and literacy activities within the State. Eligible providers must use AEFLA funds to establish or operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide these concurrently. Each State’s eligible agency must conduct a competition that ensures all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply and complete for AEFLA funds and that the same grant or contract announcement or application process are used for all eligible providers. The eligible agency in New Mexico, NMHED, uses a Request for applications (RFA) process follows both state procurement rules and federal guidelines under WIOA. At present, NMHED is in the middle of a 4-year grant cycle that began on July 1, 2017, with 24 awards issued to local providers in all four workforce regions. The RFA process for the next multi-year grant cycle is scheduled to occur in the spring of 2021 for funding to begin July 1, 2021. Any announcement will be contingent upon State Plan approval by the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor. If such approval is granted, the anticipated competition timeline is:

- **February 2021:** NMHED issues a Notice of Funds Available (NOFA) + Request for Applications (RFA)
- **February 2021:** NMHED begins assembling its review panel
- **March 2021:** NMHED provides a technical assistance conference
- **March 2021:** NMHED finalizes its review its panel
- **April 2021:** Grant applications are due by date specified in the application
- **April 2021:** Applications are sent to local workforce development boards for review
- **May 2021:** Reviewers review and score AEFLA grant applications
- **June 2021:** NMHED announces grant proposals approved to receive funding
- **June 2021:** NMHED holds negotiation conferences with grant recipients
- **June 2021:** Final award letters are sent to grant recipients

NMHED will not distribute any new federal funds for a funding cycle without a statewide public Notification of Funding Availability (NOFA) and formal Request for Proposals (RFA). The NOFA and RFP will be advertised statewide and sent to all known eligible service providers, covering all funding categories and programs available for current year distribution. Both will be sent to all requesting parties. All eligible recipients for AEFLA Section 225, 231, and/or 243 funds will be allowed the same opportunity to apply for funds regardless of the priorities they address,
and they will follow the same RFA process. While the nature of the NOFA and RFA process will be identical, funding set aside for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IEL/CE) will be addressed and distributed via a separate RFA process with program-specific content and criteria for evaluation that confirm to WIOA requirements for IEL/CE programs.

**Applicant Eligibility:** Federal regulations governing AEFLA (34 CFR, 463) clarify that only an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy services may apply for AEFLA funds. AEFLA lists 10 organization types that may be eligible providers and further permits other organization types to apply. These include:

1. A local educational agency
2. A community-based organization or faith-based organization
3. A volunteer literacy organization
4. An institution of higher education
5. A public or private nonprofit agency
6. A library
7. A public housing authority
8. A nonprofit institution that is not described (A)-(G)
9. A consortium or coalition of entities listed in (A)-(H)
10. A partnership between an employer and an entity listed in (A)-(H)

The State eligible agency, in this case NMHED, is responsible for determining if an application is from an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness. In its AEFLA RFA application, NMHED must specify a process for an applicant to follow when submitting data on demonstrated effectiveness.

**Demonstrated Effectiveness:** The CFR regulation named above addresses how an applicant establishes that it has demonstrated effectiveness, defined as the applicant’s “record of improving the skills of eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy, in the content domains for reading, writing, mathematics, English language acquisition, and other subject areas relevant to the services contained in the State’s application for funds.” An applicant must provide objective performance data to reflect this, as well as to demonstrate a history of “outcomes for participants related to employment, attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and transition to postsecondary education and training.” There are two ways an eligible provider might meet the demonstrated effectiveness portion of the eligibility requirement, depending on whether or not the applicant has been funded under AEFLA in the past, as amended by WIOA. If an applicant has previously received an AEFLA grant as amended by WIOA, then it will specifically be required to submit performance data required under Section 116, as listed in the application. If an applicant has not previously received an AEFLA grant as amended by WIOA, the applicant must take care to provide any and all available performance data related to the definition and outcomes addressed above, in a manner specified by the eligible agency, in this case NMHED. The
regulation establishes uniformity for determining demonstrated effectiveness and ensures that potential providers who have not received AEFLA funding in the past have an opportunity to compete for these funds. They also leave the State and its eligible agency, in this case NMHED, some flexibility. While NMHED cannot add any new criteria or data to the definition of demonstrated effectiveness set in regulation, it can determine both the number of years of data it will require and, importantly, the efficacy threshold on which it will screen applications.

**Determining Demonstrated Effectiveness + Applicant Eligibility**

NMHED must certify that each applicant meets both tiers of the eligibility requirement discussed above, including the demonstrated effectiveness requirement. To meet this obligation, the RFA process will contain two distinct phases of screening, with the first phase limited to pure eligibility screening and yielding simply a "yes" or "no" answer. To demonstrate effectiveness, eligible providers will provide NMHED with at least two years of performance data reflecting outcomes, as well as independent audits for fiscal responsibility for the two years preceding the AEFLA grant proposal, to include a targeted cost-benefit analysis of related services offered. The set threshold of demonstrated effectiveness NMHED will use to be considered for funding will be included in the RFA application. Application materials will transparently address both aspects of applicant eligibility, including a clear outline of the method NMHED requests applicants use for supplying required data on demonstrated effectiveness and how NMHED intends to evaluate the data. Care will be taken to ensure the applicant understands the difference between the demonstrated effectiveness component of the initial eligibility screening process, and the "past effectiveness" consideration used to evaluate proposals that have earned a "yes" in the eligibility screening phase. Once NMHED completes the eligibility screening process, only those applications who pass this initial review process will advance to the competitive phase of the application and proposal review process.

**Direct and equitable access:** NMHED will ensure direct and equitable access to all applicants by using the NOFA grant announcement and RFA application procedure described earlier in this section. Public notice of the NOFA and RFA will be issued through multiple venues. At minimum, the NOFA plus instructions for receiving a written copy of the RFA will be published in the Albuquerque Journal, a newspaper with statewide circulation. The NOFA and RFA will also be published on the NMHED website. Copies of both will be mailed directly to all existing local adult education service providers, as well as to all who request it. Should additional funding become available in the middle of a grant cycle (as in the case of the withdrawal of a provider during the term of a grant), the same process will be used to provide services in the applicable service area and will be open to all eligible agencies throughout the state.

All eligible applicants for Sections 225, 231, and 243 of WIOA will submit applications via the same application process directly to NMHED, the eligible agency. They will not be required to apply through another agency or agencies in a multi-tiered process. The application process is designed so that direct application to NMHED is clearly evident and nonnegotiable. Direct application for the grant is the norm. This ensures that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. 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 NMHED with an interest in participating will be provided the information needed.

Prior to any RFA application deadline, NMHED will conduct a technical assistance conference (typically in the form of a webinar) for potential applicants. An invitation to attend any prescheduled conference is attached to the NOFA and RFA, or published in conjunction with it. Serving as the program officer, the State Adult Education Director will respond in writing to individual questions before and after this conference; all questions and responses are published on the NMHED website. These approaches meet or exceed all requirements specified in AEFLA and in the State’s procurement policies.

**General Proposal Requirements:** All proposals must be submitted by the deadline shown in the RFA. Each applicant shall submit an application to NMHED according to the instructions contained in the RFA. Any application not including all the information and assurances required will be deemed non-responsive and rejected. NMHED will forward all responsive applications to the local workforce board in the region(s) from which they applied for review and comment on their alignment with the regional WIOA plan. These reviews will be taken into consideration during proposal evaluation and final scoring. AEFLA grant applicants should expect RFAs to request an address of the following general categories:

- Performance, financial, and independent audit data sufficient to determine eligibility, including demonstrated effectiveness;
- A description of how funds awarded under AEFLA would be spent;
- A description of how the applicant would meet the State adjusted levels of AEFLA-specific performance, including how the applicant would collect data to report on such performance indicators;
- A description of how the applicant would provide services in a manner that meets the needs of eligible individuals;
- A description of any cooperative or co-enrollment arrangements the eligible provider has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of sanctioned Adult Education and Literacy activities; and
- A description of how the applicant would provide services in alignment with the Combined State and Local Plans, including how the applicant would promote concurrent enrollment with core WIOA partners and how the applicant will fulfill One Stop partner responsibilities outlined by WIOA.

Assurances must be provided that all funds awarded under AEFLA will be used to provide, establish, or operate programs that provide instruction and services corresponding to allowable AEFLA activities listed and defined in Section 203 of WIOA. These activities are listed below. **The first two listed (Adult Education and Literacy) are required activities;** the remaining six are allowable AEFLA activities.
1. **Adult Education** Academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that include an individual's ability to read, write, and speak English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent; transition to postsecondary education and training; and obtain employment.

2. **Literacy** The ability to read, write, and speak in English and to compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family, and in society.

3. **Workplace Adult Education and Literacy Activities** Adult Education and literacy activities in collaboration with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or off-site location that is designed to improve the productivity of the workforce.

4. **Family Literacy Activities** Activities of sufficient intensity and quality to make sustainable improvements in the economic prospects for a family that better enable parents or family members to support their children's learning needs, and that integrate all of the following activities: (1) Parent or family Adult Education and literacy activities that lead to readiness for postsecondary education or training, career advancement, and economic self-sufficiency; (2) Interactive literacy activities between parents or family members and their children; (3) Training for parents or family members regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children; and (4) Age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences. NOTE: As previously indicated, no funds under an AEAFLA grant may be used for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law. In providing family literacy activities under AEFLA, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

5. **English Language Acquisition Activities** A program of instruction designed to help eligible individuals who are English language learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language and that leads to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent and transition to postsecondary education and training or employment.

6. **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education** Education services provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries that enable them to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Services shall include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and may include workforce training. NOTE: As previously indicated, IELCE funding will be awarded under a separate RFA following the same process as the Adult Education and English language acquisition RFA. IELCE proposers are required to describe their civics curriculum and instructional materials and how they align with OCTAE’s Employability Skills or other widely-accepted national employability skills framework, as well as how they align with local industry needs and
standards. Section 243 applicants are required to describe their relationships with workforce and economic development boards and systems and how those relationships will support integrated education and training for speakers of languages other than English, including professionals with credentials and degrees in their native countries.

7. **Workforce Preparation Activities** Activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment.

8. **Integrated Education and Training** 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. This includes offering courses in collaboration with postsecondary institutions, employers, or trade associations that are team-taught by an Adult Education basic skills instructor and a Career and Technical Education instructor.

**Proposal Evaluation and Considerations for Funding:** A review team selected by NMHED based on published criteria will evaluate all potential service provider applications. Each evaluator will complete an evaluation form for each applicant. While the names of each evaluator will be kept confidential, the scores assigned to each application by each evaluator will be retained and available for public review upon request. In addition to the General Application Requirements already outlined, within the narrative portion of the application, proposers will be required to explain how they will meet each of the 13 required considerations outlined in Section 231(e) of WIOA. Grouped into overarching categories, these considerations include the need for each applicant to demonstrate effectiveness, need for service, program accessibility, program quality, alignment and coordination, relevance, and capacity for administration and compliance. The full text for all 13 considerations NMHED is required to evaluate will is provided below:

1. The degree to which the eligible provider would be responsive to (A) the regional needs as identified in the local plan under section 108; and (B) serving individuals in the community who were identified in such plan as most in need of adult education and literacy activities, including individuals who have low levels of literacy skills or who are English language learners;

2. The ability of the eligible provider to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals with learning disabilities;

3. Past effectiveness of the eligible provider in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, to meet State-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance described in section 116, especially with respect to eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy;

4. The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates alignment between proposed activities and services and the strategy and goals of the local plan under section 108, as well as the activities and services of the one-stop partners;

5. Whether the eligible provider’s program (A) is of sufficient intensity and quality, and based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains;
and (B) uses instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction;

(6) Whether the eligible provider’s activities, including whether reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction delivered by the eligible provider, are based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available and appropriate, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice;

(7) Whether the eligible provider’s activities effectively use technology, services, and delivery systems, including distance education in a manner sufficient to increase the amount and quality of learning and how such technology, services, and systems lead to improved performance;

(8) Whether the eligible provider’s activities provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training, so that an individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;

(9) Whether the eligible provider’s activities are delivered by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators who meet any minimum qualifications established by the State, where applicable, and who have access to high quality professional development, including through electronic means;

(10) Whether the eligible provider’s activities coordinate with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community, such as by establishing strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, local workforce investment boards, one-stop centers, job training programs, and social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries, for the development of career pathways;

(11) Whether the eligible provider’s activities offer flexible schedules and coordination with Federal, State, and local support services (such as child care, transportation, mental health services, and career planning) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs;

(12) Whether the eligible provider maintains a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes (consistent with section 116) and to monitor program performance; and

(13) Whether the local areas in which the eligible provider is located have a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

NMHED must include at least these 13 considerations when evaluating proposal applications, though it has control over how to weigh each consideration. If NMHED includes additional considerations for evaluating applicant proposals, they will be clearly defined in the RFA application and marked as "STATE" considerations or requirements. As is customary, to demonstrate that the 13 considerations listed above were considered in the competitive process, NMHED will score and weight these (and all other) considerations according to a published rubric as part of the application evaluation process.

One of the 13 required considerations addresses past effectiveness of the eligible provider in improving the literacy of eligible individuals with low levels of literacy. To be clear, rating an application with respect to this "past effectiveness" consideration is not an allowable
substitution for NMHED when conducting applicant eligibility screening. The determination of applicant eligibility, including demonstrated effectiveness, must come first since it is required to be separate and distinct from rating "past effectiveness" as one of the 13 evaluation considerations described above. This means that it would be entirely possible for an applicant to pass the initial round of eligibility screening, to advance to the evaluation and rating phase of the competition, and score very low on the past effectiveness consideration. Depending on how NMHED chose to weight this consideration, it would be possible for the applicant in this example to be deemed ultimately non-competitive.

**Distribution of Funding:** Applicants selected to receive AEFLA grants will be informed in writing. Prior to receiving awards, selected applicants will be required to engage in a final negotiation process with NMHED. Areas subject to negotiation include the final approved budget(s). The negotiation process may include changes in final funding amounts or to line items to bring said budgets into compliance with federal and state regulations and/or fund availability. The final negotiation process may also include additional areas that might require technical assistance or clarification, such as professional development plans. NMHED will work with accepted applicants to schedule this negotiation process and to provide any needed technical assistance. A final written grant agreement will be sent to each awarded provider. Once this agreement is signed, it--along with the eligible provider’s original application--will constitute the grant agreement.

The amount of funding available in each program year to each eligible provider awarded an AEFLA grant will be determined by available state and federal funds and distributed according to a published funding formula. This formula is determined by NMHED in consultation with Adult Education program directors and financial officers from eligible provider institutions and organizations. It is formally reviewed at least once every four (4) years, with the next review and potential revision slated for 2021. At minimum, this funding formula will take into account the literacy needs of the local service area, number of participants served, and core performance indicators under WIOA. A number of provisions to incentivize service population targets, provider consortia arrangements, regional collaborations, and formal partnership arrangements with core workforce partners may be also be included in the funding formula.

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

The State eligible agency, in this case NMHED, is responsible for determining if an application is from an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness. In its AEFLA RFA application, NMHED must specify a process for an applicant to follow when submitting data on demonstrated effectiveness.

**Demonstrated Effectiveness:** The CFR regulation named above addresses how an applicant establishes that it has demonstrated effectiveness, defined as the applicant’s "record of improving the skills of eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy, in the content domains for reading, writing, mathematics, English language acquisition, and other subject areas relevant to the services contained in the State’s application
An applicant must provide objective performance data to reflect this, as well as to demonstrate a history of "outcomes for participants related to employment, attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and transition to postsecondary education and training." There are two ways an eligible provider might meet the demonstrated effectiveness portion of the eligibility requirement, depending on whether or not the applicant has been funded under AEFLA in the past, as amended by WIOA. If an applicant has previously received an AEFLA grant as amended by WIOA, then it will specifically be required to submit performance data required under Section 116, as listed in the application. If an applicant has not previously received an AEFLA grant as amended by WIOA, the applicant must take care to provide any and all available performance data related to the definition and outcomes addressed above, in a manner specified by the eligible agency, in this case NMHED. The regulation establishes uniformity for determining demonstrated effectiveness and ensures that potential providers who have not received AEFLA funding in the past have an opportunity to compete for these funds. They also leave the State and its eligible agency, in this case NMHED, some flexibility. While NMHED cannot add any new criteria or data to the definition of demonstrated effectiveness set in regulation, it can determine both the number of years of data it will require and, importantly, the efficacy threshold on which it will screen applications.

**Determining Demonstrated Effectiveness + Applicant Eligibility**

NMHED must certify that each applicant meets both tiers of the eligibility requirement discussed above, including the demonstrated effectiveness requirement. To meet this obligation, the RFA process will contain two distinct phases of screening, with the first phase limited to pure eligibility screening and yielding simply a "yes" or "no" answer. To demonstrate effectiveness, eligible providers will provide NMHED with at least two years of performance data reflecting outcomes, as well as independent audits for fiscal responsibility for the two years preceding the AEFLA grant proposal, to include a targeted cost-benefit analysis of related services offered. The set threshold of demonstrated effectiveness NMHED will use to be considered for funding will be included in the RFA application. Application materials will transparently address both aspects of applicant eligibility, including a clear outline of the method NMHED requests applicants use for supplying required data on demonstrated effectiveness and how NMHED intends to evaluate the data. Care will be taken to ensure the applicant understands the difference between the demonstrated effectiveness component of the initial eligibility screening process, and the "past effectiveness" consideration used to evaluate proposals that have earned a "yes" in the eligibility screening phase. Once NMHED completes the eligibility screening process, only those applications who pass this initial review process will advance to the competitive phase of the application and proposal review process.

**Direct and equitable access:** NMHED will ensure direct and equitable access to all applicants by using the NOFA grant announcement and RFA application procedure described earlier in this section. Public notice of the NOFA and RFA will be issued through multiple venues. At minimum, the NOFA plus instructions for receiving a written copy of the RFA will be published in the Albuquerque Journal, a newspaper with statewide circulation. The NOFA and RFA will also be published on the NMHED website. Copies of both will be mailed directly to all existing local adult education service providers, as well as to all who request it. Should additional funding become available in the middle of a grant cycle (as in the case of the withdrawal of
provider during the term of a grant), the same process will be used to provide services in the applicable service area and will be open to all eligible agencies throughout the state.

All eligible applicants for Sections 225, 231, and 243 of WIOA will submit applications via the same application process directly to NMHED, the eligible agency. They will not be required to apply through another agency or agencies in a multi-tiered process. The application process is designed so that direct application to NMHED is clearly evident and nonnegotiable. Direct application for the grant is the norm. This ensures that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. 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 NMHED with an interest in participating will be provided the information needed.

Prior to any RFA application deadline, NMHED will conduct a technical assistance conference (typically in the form of a webinar) for potential applicants. An invitation to attend any prescheduled conference is attached to the NOFA and RFA, or published in conjunction with it. Serving as the program officer, the State Adult Education Director will respond in writing to individual questions before and after this conference; all questions and responses are published on the NMHED website. These approaches meet or exceed all requirements specified in AEFLA and in the State’s procurement policies.

**General Proposal Requirements:** All proposals must be submitted by the deadline shown in the RFA. Each applicant shall submit an application to NMHED according to the instructions contained in the RFA. Any application not including all the information and assurances required will be deemed non-responsive and rejected. NMHED will forward all responsive applications to the local workforce board in the region(s) from which they applied for review and comment on their alignment with the regional WIOA plan. These reviews will be taken into consideration during proposal evaluation and final scoring. AEFLA grant applicants should expect RFAs to request an address of the following general categories:

- Performance, financial, and independent audit data sufficient to determine eligibility, including demonstrated effectiveness;
- A description of how funds awarded under AEFLA would be spent;
- A description of how the applicant would meet the State adjusted levels of AEFLA-specific performance, including how the applicant would collect data to report on such performance indicators;
- A description of how the applicant would provide services in a manner that meets the needs of eligible individuals;
- A description of any cooperative or co-enrollment arrangements the eligible provider has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of sanctioned Adult Education and Literacy activities; and
A description of how the applicant would provide services in alignment with the Combined State and Local Plans, including how the applicant would promote concurrent enrollment with core WIOA partners and how the applicant will fulfill One Stop partner responsibilities outlined by WIOA.

Assurances must be provided that all funds awarded under AEFLA will be used to provide, establish, or operate programs that provide instruction and services corresponding to allowable AEFLA activities listed and defined in Section 203 of WIOA. For more information, see the Program-Specific Requirements for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs.

C. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

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

The New Mexico Commission for the Blind (Commission) is designated as the state agency to administer the part of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services portion of the Combined State Plan under which VR services are provided for individuals in New Mexico who are blind. The Commission receives 18.5% of the vocational rehabilitation grant awarded to the State of New Mexico, and the New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) receives 81.5 percent of the award.

The Commission was created in 1986, and the 18.5% distribution was based on the funds that were actually being spent by DVR to provide vocational rehabilitation services to blind persons. The distribution was based on prior year actuals, and it also included consideration of the organizational structure of the Commission. The Commission has a residential training center, and the 18.5% was a distribution that was in the middle of the range for blind agencies that included a residential training center in their organizational structure. This distribution is consistent with the greater costs of providing vocational rehabilitation services to persons who are blind or visually impaired, and it falls within the average range of what is typically found for blind and general agencies in other states.

6. PROGRAM DATA
   A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

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

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
NMDWS has established a standardized agreement process for external entities seeking to meet WIOA compliance. NMDWS strongly encourages program providers to utilize the Workforce Connection Online System to support case management where appropriate. NMDWS makes adjustments to the system configuration to accommodate this expanded use and provides direct user access for these entities to serve their participants. For entities that have established case management systems, NMDWS provides a mechanism to request and receive wage data electronically within the constraint of existing rules and regulations.

NMDWS has modified the base data set available within the system to more effectively produce the Eligible Training Provider List. NMDWS has expanded its relationships with several educational institutions to create a tie to educational program data and enable these institutions to perform the necessary advanced analytics to determine more advance program outcome tracking.

NMDWS has worked with several state agencies to standardize eligibility verification as it relates to employment or wage confirmation. The Department is working directly with the State’s Human Services Department to establish an integrated workforce system that will provide for real time secured data sharing for both internal staff program support and individual participant servicing.

While recognizing the need for appropriate privacy safeguards, data sharing has been established among the partner agencies to enable more efficient use of all resources being applied to the benefit of each customer. NMDWS and the State Workforce Development Board continue to coordinate agreements with its partner agencies to establish a more integrated system and accounting process to enable tracking of services provided to all individuals receiving career services so that actual performance outcomes can be correlated to the investments being made in this area. These efforts allow the State Board to determine where opportunities for improvement exist and identify which practices and programs are yielding the best outcomes. The existing agreements have been refined and implemented in order to facilitate this activity while maintaining compliance with existing regulations established to safeguard the privacy of the individual customer. Unfortunately, New Mexico is not a recipient of key federal funding used to support the longitudinal database. Although there is a strong desire to integrate functions across systems, including a comprehensive case management system across the core programs, there are limitations. Aside from residing in different state agencies, each of the core programs are also required to adhere to federal reporting requirements that do not all align. Local workforce development boards worked tirelessly over the last four years to address the potential of a common data base, common case management system and referral system, but were limited due to several challenges associated with limited funding and capacity. To date, core programs are committed to working closely together to assure consistent referral strategies that enhance care coordination and reduce duplication of efforts on behalf of job seekers and businesses at the local level. New Mexico’s infrastructure and data systems may not be integrated, however, commitment is high. The Higher Education Department recently submitted a grant application to fund a longitudinal data system that has not yet been awarded. Additionally, NMDWS will continue to research for available funding.
LOCAL LEVEL EFFORTS. Local board grant agreements require the local boards to continue to seek strategies for using technology to maximize the accessibility and effectiveness of the local workforce development system for employers, and workers and jobseekers through the following:

- facilitating connections among the intake and case management information systems of the one-stop partner programs to support a comprehensive workforce development system in the local area;
- facilitating access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including access in remote areas;
- identifying strategies for better meeting the needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including strategies that augment traditional service delivery, and increase access to services and programs of the one-stop delivery system, such as improving digital literacy skills; and
- leveraging resources and capacity within the local workforce development system, particularly for individuals with barriers to employment.

WIOA identifies the one-stop system as the service delivery system for programs funded under the Act and its partner programs. Workforce Connection Centers have been designated as New Mexico’s one-stop delivery system. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) must be developed with the agreement of the chief elected officials of the local workforce development region and entered into between the local board areas and the workforce system partners in the Workforce Connection Centers, to establish a process to govern and maintain the operation of each of the comprehensive and affiliate workforce connection center.

**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.

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

NMDWS has established a standardized agreement process for external entities seeking to meet WIOA compliance. NMDWS strongly encourages program providers to utilize the Workforce Connection Online System to support case management where appropriate. NMDWS makes adjustments to the system configuration to accommodate this expanded use and provides direct user access for these entities to serve their participants. For entities that have established case management systems, NMDWS provides a mechanism to request and receive wage data electronically within the constraint of existing rules and regulations.
NMDWS has modified the base data set available within the system to more effectively produce the Eligible Training Provider List. NMDWS has expanded its relationships with several educational institutions to create a tie to educational program data and enable these institutions to perform the necessary advanced analytics to determine more advance program outcome tracking.

NMDWS has worked with several state agencies to standardize eligibility verification as it relates to employment or wage confirmation. The Department is working directly with the State’s Human Services Department to establish an integrated workforce system that will provide for real time secured data sharing for both internal staff program support and individual participant servicing.

While recognizing the need for appropriate privacy safeguards, data sharing has been established among the partner agencies to enable more efficient use of all resources being applied to the benefit of each customer. NMDWS and the State Workforce Development Board continue to coordinate agreements with its partner agencies to establish a more integrated system and accounting process to enable tracking of services provided to all individuals receiving career services so that actual performance outcomes can be correlated to the investments being made in this area. These efforts allow the State Board to determine where opportunities for improvement exist and identify which practices and programs are yielding the best outcomes. The existing agreements have been refined and implemented in order to facilitate this activity while maintaining compliance with existing regulations established to safeguard the privacy of the individual customer. Unfortunately, New Mexico is not a recipient of key federal funding used to support the longitudinal database. Although there is a strong desire to integrate functions across systems, including a comprehensive case management system across the core programs, there are limitations. Aside from residing in different state agencies, each of the core programs are also required to adhere to federal reporting requirements that do not all align. Local workforce development boards worked tirelessly over the last four years to address the potential of a common data base, common case management system and referral system, but were limited due to several challenges associated with limited funding and capacity. To date, core programs are committed to working closely together to assure consistent referral strategies that enhance care coordination and reduce duplication of efforts on behalf of job seekers and businesses at the local level. New Mexico’s infrastructure and data systems may not be integrated, however, commitment is high. The Higher Education Department recently submitted a grant application to fund a longitudinal data system that has not yet been awarded. Additionally, NMDWS will continue to research for available funding.

LOCAL LEVEL EFFORTS. Local board grant agreements require the local boards to continue to seek strategies for using technology to maximize the accessibility and effectiveness of the local workforce development system for employers, and workers and jobseekers through the following:
facilitating connections among the intake and case management information systems of the one-stop partner programs to support a comprehensive workforce development system in the local area;

- facilitating access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including access in remote areas;

- identifying strategies for better meeting the needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including strategies that augment traditional service delivery, and increase access to services and programs of the one-stop delivery system, such as improving digital literacy skills; and

- leveraging resources and capacity within the local workforce development system, particularly for individuals with barriers to employment.

WIOA identifies the one-stop system as the service delivery system for programs funded under the Act and its partner programs. Workforce Connection Centers have been designated as New Mexico’s one-stop delivery system. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) must be developed with the agreement of the chief elected officials of the local workforce development region and entered into between the local board areas and the workforce system partners in the Workforce Connection Centers, to establish a process to govern and maintain the operation of each of the comprehensive and affiliate workforce connection center.

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.

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

NMDWS has established a standardized agreement process for external entities seeking to meet WIOA compliance. NMDWS strongly encourages program providers to utilize the Workforce Connection Online System to support case management where appropriate. NMDWS makes adjustments to the system configuration to accommodate this expanded use and provides direct user access for these entities to serve their participants. For entities that have established case management systems, NMDWS provides a mechanism to request and receive wage data electronically within the constraint of existing rules and regulations.

NMDWS has modified the base data set available within the system to more effectively produce the Eligible Training Provider List. NMDWS has expanded its relationships with several educational institutions to create a tie to educational program data and enable these institutions
to perform the necessary advanced analytics to determine more advance program outcome tracking.

NMDWS has worked with several state agencies to standardize eligibility verification as it relates to employment or wage confirmation. The Department is working directly with the State's Human Services Department to establish an integrated workforce system that will provide for real time secured data sharing for both internal staff program support and individual participant servicing.

While recognizing the need for appropriate privacy safeguards, data sharing has been established among the partner agencies to enable more efficient use of all resources being applied to the benefit of each customer. NMDWS and the State Workforce Development Board continue to coordinate agreements with its partner agencies to establish a more integrated system and accounting process to enable tracking of services provided to all individuals receiving career services so that actual performance outcomes can be correlated to the investments being made in this area. These efforts allow the State Board to determine where opportunities for improvement exist and identify which practices and programs are yielding the best outcomes. The existing agreements have been refined and implemented in order to facilitate this activity while maintaining compliance with existing regulations established to safeguard the privacy of the individual customer. Unfortunately, New Mexico is not a recipient of key federal funding used to support the longitudinal database. Although there is a strong desire to integrate functions across systems, including a comprehensive case management system across the core programs, there are limitations. Aside from residing in different state agencies, each of the core programs are also required to adhere to federal reporting requirements that do not all align. Local workforce development boards worked tirelessly over the last four years to address the potential of a common database, common case management system and referral system, but were limited due to several challenges associated with limited funding and capacity. To date, core programs are committed to working closely together to assure consistent referral strategies that enhance care coordination and reduce duplication of efforts on behalf of job seekers and businesses at the local level. New Mexico's infrastructure and data systems may not be integrated, however, commitment is high. The Higher Education Department recently submitted a grant application to fund a longitudinal data system that has not yet been awarded. Additionally, NMDWS will continue to research for available funding.

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- facilitating connections among the intake and case management information systems of the one-stop partner programs to support a comprehensive workforce development system in the local area;
WIOA identifies the one-stop system as the service delivery system for programs funded under the Act and its partner programs. Workforce Connection Centers have been designated as New Mexico’s one-stop delivery system. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) must be developed with the agreement of the chief elected officials of the local workforce development region and entered into between the local board areas and the workforce system partners in the Workforce Connection Centers, to establish a process to govern and maintain the operation of each of the comprehensive and affiliate workforce connection center.

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.

IV. DESCRIBE THE STATE’S PLANS TO DEVELOP AND PRODUCE THE REPORTS REQUIRED UNDER SECTION 116, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM. (WIOA SECTION 116(D)(2))

NMDWS has established a standardized agreement process for external entities seeking to meet WIOA compliance. NMDWS strongly encourages program providers to utilize the Workforce Connection Online System to support case management where appropriate. NMDWS makes adjustments to the system configuration to accommodate this expanded use and provides direct user access for these entities to serve their participants. For entities that have established case management systems, NMDWS provides a mechanism to request and receive wage data electronically within the constraint of existing rules and regulations. NMDWS has developed a data warehouse where common unique identifiers are assigned and tracked across partners agencies.

NMDWS established business rules for data usages to include:

- Common unique identifiers for citizens who are served by core programs,
- Data matching requirements so the records of participants that are served through multiple programs can be identified,
- Data conflict resolution allowing for conflicting data to be reconciled.

Business rules will provide periodic updates to the data warehouse from partner agencies. Protocols will ensure privacy of personally identifiable information,
NMDWS utilizes the Workforce Connection Online System (WCOS) which is a vendor hosted management information system. This data collection application is compliant with WIOA Section 116 which requires the establishment and operation of a fiscal and management accountability system based on established guidelines.

The WCOS self-service and staff assisted labor exchange module provides job matching and workplace information services for employers and job seekers. The WCOS case management module allows case managers to track caseloads and report information required under WIOA. The case management module provides the ability to manage eligibility, maintain program registration and enrollment, store required documentation and provide staff a standardized process for managing participants through the workforce development system. The WCOS fully supports all state and federal grant reporting requirements. The WCOS also gives staff the ability to validate data and resolve errors prior to submitting quarterly and annual performance reports. Data collected in WCOS is collected in accordance with WIOA Section 116 and The Participant Information Record Layout (PIRL).

NMDWS has modified the base data set available within the system to more effectively produce the Eligible Training Provider List. NMDWS has expanded its relationships with several educational institutions to create a tie to educational program data and enable these institutions to perform the necessary advanced analytics to determine more advance program outcome tracking.

NMDWS has worked with several state agencies to standardize eligibility verification as it relates to employment or wage confirmation. The Department is working directly with the State’s Human Services Department to establish an integrated workforce system that will provide for real time secured data sharing for both internal staff program support and individual participant servicing.

While recognizing the need for appropriate privacy safeguards, data sharing has been established among the partner agencies to enable more efficient use of all resources being applied to the benefit of each customer. NMDWS and the State Workforce Development Board continue to coordinate agreements with its partner agencies to establish a more integrated system and accounting process to enable tracking of services provided to all individuals receiving career services so that actual performance outcomes can be correlated to the investments being made in this area. These efforts allow the State Board to determine where opportunities for improvement exist and identify which practices and programs are yielding the best outcomes. The existing agreements have been refined and implemented in order to facilitate this activity while maintaining compliance with existing regulations established to safeguard the privacy of the individual customer. Unfortunately, New Mexico is not a recipient of key federal funding used to support the longitudinal database. Although there is a strong desire to integrate functions across systems, including a comprehensive case management system across the core programs, there are limitations. Aside from residing in different state agencies, each of the core programs are also required to adhere to federal reporting requirements that do not all align. Local workforce development boards worked tirelessly over the last four years to address the potential of a common data base, common case management system and referral system, but were limited due to several challenges associated with limited funding and capacity. To date, core programs are committed to working closely together to assure consistent referral strategies that enhance care coordination and reduce duplication of
efforts on behalf of job seekers and businesses at the local level. New Mexico’s infrastructure and data systems may not be integrated, however, commitment is high. The Higher Education Department recently submitted a grant application to fund a longitudinal data system that has not yet been awarded. Additionally, NMDWS will continue to research for available funding.

LOCAL LEVEL EFFORTS. Local board grant agreements require the local boards to continue to seek strategies for using technology to maximize the accessibility and effectiveness of the local workforce development system for employers, and workers and jobseekers through the following:

- facilitating connections among the intake and case management information systems of the one-stop partner programs to support a comprehensive workforce development system in the local area;
- facilitating access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including access in remote areas;
- identifying strategies for better meeting the needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including strategies that augment traditional service delivery, and increase access to services and programs of the one-stop delivery system, such as improving digital literacy skills; and
- leveraging resources and capacity within the local workforce development system, particularly for individuals with barriers to employment.

WIOA identifies the one-stop system as the service delivery system for programs funded under the Act and its partner programs. Workforce Connection Centers have been designated as New Mexico’s one-stop delivery system. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) must be developed with the agreement of the chief elected officials of the local workforce development region and entered into between the local board areas and the workforce system partners in the Workforce Connection Centers, to establish a process to govern and maintain the operation of each of the comprehensive and affiliate workforce connection center.

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

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.

NMDWS convenes the core programs and core partner agencies monthly to review and analyze the workforce development system. Discussions center on progress of partnership at local level, integration of services, co-location and outcomes for job seekers who receive services. NMDWS implemented a Common Unique Identifier process to track customers across the core programs. This data provides an insight into the number of individuals and type of services received. The information also sheds light about impact regionally, demonstrating locations that are more likely to serve job seekers with more than one program. Using employment data, the core programs and partner agencies are able to pinpoint success and/or gaps that require additional resource and attention.

Core program and partner agencies are also using the workforce development system to assess the progress of participants who are exiting, entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment. This may include choosing to set additional indicators of performance. Each of the core programs and combined partners strive to achieve the locally negotiated performance standards of quality service for its customers, employees, and partners. Each is committed to meeting or exceeding the various performance measures laid out in their grants or programs. Each work cooperatively at the state and local level to share information about expected performance, gaps and opportunities for improvement.

Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) also enter into MOUs with each of their partners and have regularly scheduled partner meetings to review implementation. The MOUs include required performance indicators of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. At the local level LWDBs and their partners are focused on tracking outcomes related to placing participants into unsubsidized employment, increasing job retention, removing barriers to employment, providing meaningful education and training activities leading to jobs with self-sufficiency. Together they share a commitment to meeting the needs of both job seekers and employers and are engaged in design, planning and implementation to assure quality. Customer and business surveys are implemented and shared across the system to gauge progress and to gather recommendations for continuous improvement.

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.)

NMDWS staff leverages the Workforce Connection Online system as data consolidation point for access to quarterly unemployment insurance (UI) wage records from the UI data base for participants that exit following receipt of services. This wage data is uploaded to the Workforce Connection Online System to meet federal reporting requirements. The Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) and Federal Employment Data Exchange System (FEDES) are used...
to obtain wages received from outside the state of New Mexico. This wage data is also uploaded into the Workforce Connection Online system and is used to calculate performance outcomes.

Access to wage records has been an important issue for many years and is an even greater priority under WIOA. Use of wage records for WIOA core program performance and eligible training provider performance reporting purposes, and disclosure of wage records for certain federal evaluations are mandatory under WIOA (WIOA Section 116(e)(4)). State workforce, training, and education programs are required to use quarterly wage records to measure the progress of the State on the State and local performance accountability measures, and for obtaining the information required in the Eligible Training Provider List (WIOA Sections 116(i) and 121(d)). Quarterly wage records are the employer-provided wage reports collected under authority in Section 1137 of the SSA (42 USC 1320b-7). These are the reports state UI agencies obtain for UI tax liability and benefit eligibility determination purposes, and also use to detect improper payments. Confidentiality and disclosure of wage records are governed by the regulations at 20 CFR Part 603.

Like other state UI agencies, the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions coordinates disclosure of wage records for the mandated purposes for the state to be in compliance with WIOA requirements. To facilitate access to wage records for these purposes, DOL (ETA, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Chief Evaluation Office) is undertaking a number of activities in partnership with other Federal agencies to enable efficient and secure access to confidential wage data as envisioned under WIOA. As such, New Mexico awaits additional guidance and extensive technical assistance in this area from U.S. DOL, which expects to issue specific guidance about wage record access issues in partnership with the U.S. Department of Education, including issues related to cross matching wage records with educational data, which is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g.

Wage information, defined in 20 CFR Part 603.2(k), includes the three data categories or elements that states must use for WIOA performance reporting purposes: wages, Social Security Number(s), and employer information. Federal regulations at 20 CFR Part 603.5(e) permit states to disclose confidential unemployment compensation (UC) information “to a public official for use in the performance of his or her official duties.” Performance of official duties means “administration or enforcement of law or the execution of the official responsibilities of a Federal, State, or local elected official.” Generally, under these regulations, disclosures of confidential UC information that WIOA requires are already permissible. The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions will work collaboratively with one-stop partners to meet the requirements for use of wage records under WIOA.

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.

LWDB annual grant agreements require the boards to comply with the terms and conditions set forth in the Computer Matching and Privacy Protection Act (CMPPA) Agreement, which is part of the Information Exchange Agreement (IEA) between the Social Security Administration (SSA) and the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions. The boards cannot duplicate,
disseminate, or disclose such data without first obtaining through NMDWS, or SSA’s prior written approval. The boards understand that access, use, or disclosure of social security data in a manner or purpose not authorized by the CMPPA may be subject to civil and criminal sanctions pursuant to applicable federal statutes. Information technology resources must not be used to reveal confidential or sensitive information, client data, or any other information covered by existing state or federal privacy or confidentiality laws, regulations, rules, policies, procedures, or contract terms. Users who engage in the unauthorized release of confidential information via the state’s information technology resources, including but not limited to newsgroups or chat rooms, will be subject to sanctions in existing policies and procedures associated with unauthorized release of such information. Sensitive or confidential data passing over an external network connection must be encrypted to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of the information.

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.

The State intends to provide employment, training and job placement services for veterans and eligible persons under the JVSG in accordance with the Priority of Service for covered persons (20 CFR Part 1010, Final Rule) and VPLs 03-14, 03-14 Ch. 1 & 2, 03-19, or current guidance. Covered persons receive priority of service for qualified job training program or service for workforce preparation, development, or delivery that is directly funded (in whole or in part) by the Department of Labor. Qualified job training programs consists of universal access, discretionary targeting, and statutory targeting.

Veterans and eligible persons will be assessed upon entry to determine if they meet the requirements to be served under JVSG and have one or more significant barriers to employment (SBE). If so, they will be immediately referred to the DVOP or next available AJC staff person. If no SBEs are determined, or they do not meet the eligibility requirements to be seen by a DVOP, per Priority of Service requirements, they will be referred to the next available AJC staff person. SBE veterans/eligible persons will then be provided individualized career services to help overcome their barriers, to include being placed into case management when appropriate. The DVOP/AJC staff will make referrals to partner programs for additional assistance needed and any training opportunities that the veteran/eligible person has identified as having an interest in. Eligible persons are provided employment services that include assistance in completing universal access registration, attendance to the workforce center orientation and assessments to determine their employment or training needs.

All qualified job training programs will have policy or policies in place to ensure covered persons are identified at the point of entry and given the opportunity to take full advantage of priority of service, their entitlement of priority of service, the full array of employment, training, and placement services available under priority of service and/or services, and any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/or services.
Veterans and eligible persons with SBE that are referred to DVOP specialist will have their Objective Assessment Summary (OAS) and Individual Employment Plan (IEP) completed in the Workforce Connection Online System (WCOS). DVOP specialist will assign veterans and eligible persons for participation in career planning, provide them individualized career services and conduct follow-up meeting on a bi-weekly basis for a preferred successful employment or training outcome is achieved.

When the veteran/eligible person is found to be job ready, the DVOP/AJC staff will work with the LVER and BSTs to identify employment opportunities that match the veteran’s/eligible person’s skill set and make the appropriate referral to the employer(s).

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.

The annual LWDB grant agreements require local boards to assure and certify full compliance of WIOA and all other applicable laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Local board MOUs with one-stop partners also specify parties to the MOU assure that Workforce Connection Center facilities are both programmatically and architecturally accessible; programs are accessible to individuals with disabilities; and methods exist by which costs will be handled for reasonable accommodations.

New Mexico envisions a workforce development system with Workforce Connection Centers, programs, and services that are accessible for all customers, and fully compliant with accessibility requirements for individuals with disabilities, as follows.

- Workforce Connection Centers will reflect a welcoming environment to all customer groups who are served by the centers. This means local boards must ensure Workforce Connection Center staff are sensitive to the needs of individuals with disabilities and be prepared to provide necessary accommodations. These staff should be trained and equipped with the knowledge of accommodation policies, procedures and resources, skills in serving special populations, and motivation to provide superior service to customers with disabilities.

- Workforce Connection Centers must reflect innovative and effective service design to ensure meaningful access to all customers. Local boards should ensure one-stop centers are physically and programmatically accessible to all customers,
including individuals with disabilities. In so doing, one-stop centers should use principles of universal design and human-centered design, such as:

- considering flexibility in space usage; ensuring physical building access;
- using pictorial, written, verbal, and tactile modes to present information to customers with disabilities or limited English proficiency;
- providing clear lines of sight to information for seated or standing users;
- providing computer station accessibility;
- providing adaptive technologies, such as accessible computer software;
- supporting and sustaining availability of customer information and service access through the Internet; and
- providing adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistants.

**Workforce Connection Centers must be assessed for physical and programmatic accessibility.** Local boards must evaluate accessibility of Workforce Connection Centers to ensure the aforementioned accessibility categories are in place, and that front-line staff members are trained to adequately assist individuals with disabilities, and trained in the use of assistive technologies, to ensure the centers meet or surpass federal, state, and local accessibility standards. Local boards should also explore ways through the sharing of best practices to promote and develop employment opportunities for job seekers with disabilities, including the provision of career guidance and placement services.

**Workforce Connection Centers must adhere to federal and state privacy laws in serving customers.** In the sharing of information within and Workforce Connection Centers and among partner programs, such as for referrals, local boards must ensure Workforce Connection Center staff properly secure customer information in accordance with personally identifiable information guidelines, and facilitated as appropriate, with the necessary memoranda of understanding or other forms of confidentiality and data sharing agreements, consistent with federal and state privacy laws and regulations. Data should only be shared with other programs, for those programs’ purposes, only after an informed written consent of the individual has been obtained, where required.

**Workforce Connection Centers must commit to continuous improvement in service delivery.** Local boards should ensure Workforce Connection Centers develop and maintain policies and procedures to evaluate effectiveness of accessibility and overall customer satisfaction, as well as for making improvements based on data and feedback, such as customer accommodation requests.

**Workforce Connection Centers must leverage relationships with other programs to more effectively serve customers with barriers.** This means local boards must develop collaborative relationships with agencies and programs that have customers facing economic challenges, culture differences, language difficulties, stigmas, and disabilities to support long-range planning and design of universally accessible services. This also includes working with local partner
agencies and organizations who also serve individuals with disabilities in the community to coordinate outreach efforts, and to more effectively provide supportive services, such as transportation services and health and human resources.

- Workforce Connection Centers should explore opportunities to expand capacity for serving customers with barriers. The State and local boards can work to support and expand the capacity of existing workforce center services to better serve individuals with disabilities and other barriers through staff development, translation services, special equipment, and other accommodations.

One-Stop Certification Policy

New Mexico has developed criteria for one-stop certification that embodies the WIOA vision overall and provides a clear framework for consistency of service delivery state-wide. In accordance with Section 121(g) of WIOA, Local Workforce Development Boards must certify the Workforce Connection Centers every three years. The certification process is important to setting a minimum level of quality and consistency of services in Workforce Connection Centers across the state. The certification criteria allow states to set standard expectations for customer-focused seamless services from a network of employment, training, and related services that help individuals overcome barriers to becoming and staying employed.

A One-Stop Certification policy, process, and resource tool was issued by NMDWS, as the State Administrative Entity for the administration of WIOA, to the Local Workforce Development Boards on January 1, 2017. Local boards are required to certify their Workforce Connection Centers and delivery systems once every three years. The One-Stop Certification policy was approved by the State Workforce Development Board in an open meeting on May 18, 2017. Certification criteria for the tool addressed the areas of effectiveness, physical and programmatic accessibility and continuous quality improvement. Local boards were encouraged to have a tiered approach in order to give them the time to fully engage their partners in setting up an integrated, customer focused program center. Additionally, a self-assessment was required as part of the certification process so each local board could fully map system services and resources and identify areas where corrective actions and continuous improvement need to be made.

The goal for the 2017 certification process was a baseline minimum certification of the comprehensive Workforce Connection Center and affiliate sites requiring co-location of required partners, a signed umbrella memorandum of understanding and universal access for individuals with disabilities. Certification criteria also requires an ongoing, continuous improvement of the one-stop delivery system by requiring the Workforce Connection Center to collect, analyze and use multiple data resources to support improvement. This will be accomplished through meeting or exceeding negotiated levels of performance, along with providing professional development opportunities to the staff. The State Workforce Development Board will review the current policy/procedures in place May 2020. The process will be updated and shared with the LWDBs and recertification process will begin July 2020 and be completed and submitted with local plan development.
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.

New Mexico is traditionally a bilingual/bicultural state. Our state constitution recognizes Spanish as an official language and as such, access to bi-literate staff is common. NMDWS provides guidance, tools and resources to assure the Workforce Connection Centers can meet the needs of English Language Learners in the following ways.

- Bilingual staff in the Workforce Connection Centers is involved in providing all services offered in the centers, including assisting non-English speakers during job fairs, with interviewing, and employer engagement. Most of these staff are Spanish-English bilingual, and some staff are also Navajo-English bilingual. Local boards continue to recruit and hire bilingual staff across the state.

- Access to the Workforce Connection On-Line System include a Spanish option, and documents, tools and resources for Unemployment are available in a variety of languages.

- Every Workforce Connection Center has access to translation services via phone interpretation services. Training is made available to NMDWS staff, LWDBs and partner agencies on how to access and utilize this service.

- Workforce Connection Centers work in partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to coordinate American Sign Language interpreter services for job seekers who are deaf and hearing impaired. Additionally, each center is trained on how to access and successfully implement phone relay services for deaf and hearing-impaired customers.

- NMDWS has an inventory of all publications produced and printed for the Workforce Connection Centers and translates publications including pamphlets, brochures, and guides regarding various programs and services available to job seekers, students, and employers.

- NMDWS completed an inventory on all signage, including Workforce Connection Center outside signs, posters in the resource rooms, access signage, etc. and translated signage into Spanish and any other additional/requested languages, as appropriate.

IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

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

Through this Combined State Plan, New Mexico aims to share understanding of the workforce needs across the state and foster development of more comprehensive and integrated
approaches for addressing the needs of businesses and workers, including individuals with barriers to employment. Focused on meeting the objectives and priorities for the development of a competitive workforce, core and combined plan partners and State Board representatives came together to prioritize, strategize and assemble the New Mexico WIOA Combined State Plan to meet federal and state goals over a series of planning meetings. The State Workforce Board is responsible for guiding ongoing strategic planning and implementation efforts; and will be reviewing and analyzing progress. As such, this plan reflects alignment with Governor Lujan Grisham’s vision and strategies, including enhancement of coordination and partnership expectations for state and local entities. The core programs and combined partners also hosted two town hall forums to obtain community input and feedback. Town Halls were organized to facilitate participation from workforce region partners, including Chief Elected Officials, Local Workforce Development Boards, Industry, Training Providers and Programs and job seekers and businesses. Finally, the State Workforce Board, in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Councils jointly reviewed the vision and goals, community input and feedback and provided recommendations to the core programs and combined partners to strengthen the plan.

The Combined Plan specifically incorporates the core programs, Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act Programs, Adult Education and Family Literacy Programs, Vocational Rehabilitation Programs (Title 1 through Title IV) and also includes combined partners agencies, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs, Jobs for Veterans State Grant Program, and Senior Community Service Employment Program.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that:

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<td><strong>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;</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td><strong>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;</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td><strong>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;</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td><strong>4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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The State Plan must include

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<th>The Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; Include</th>
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<td>(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;</td>
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<td>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</td>
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<td>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</td>
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<td>7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable; Yes</td>
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<td>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</td>
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<td>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</td>
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<td>10. The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); Yes</td>
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<td>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</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
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VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

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

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

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

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

A. IDENTIFY THE REGIONS AND THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS DESIGNATED IN THE STATE

The designated four regional Workforce Development Areas in New Mexico include Central, Eastern, Northern and Southwestern. Each Workforce Development Area has a Local Workforce Development Board that administers employment and training programs through the Workforce Connection Centers.

The four local workforce development boards are as follows:

- Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico
- Eastern Area Local Workforce Development Board
- Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board
- Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board

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

The current four designated workforce regions have long been in existence in New Mexico. The four local areas include the Central, Northern, Eastern and Southwestern. NMDWS issued guidance that address both designation and re-designation of local areas. The current four designated local areas are required to submit a request in writing to the state that outlines satisfaction of requirements outlined in WIOA section 106(b)(2). If requesting a new designation, the State Workforce Development Board reviews, if opposition is voiced by municipalities or counties within the area, a hearing is held and public comments are compiled and a recommendation is sent to the Governor for review. All this must occur prior to the beginning of the fiscal and program year.
Criteria used to determine if performance and sustained fiscal integrity is conducted by NMDWS. Negotiated performance measures and fiscal reporting are required from each local area quarterly and is reviewed by the NMDWS – WIOA team to assure benchmarks and targets are being met. Additionally, a desk audit is conducted quarterly to assure data integrity and fiscal compliance. NMDWS also performs comprehensive monitoring annually which includes review of policies, procedures, performance and fiscal processes. Local areas not meeting performance or sustaining fiscal integrity results in technical assistance and/or corrective action when appropriate. Designated local areas have met the criteria as stated in 106(b)(2) and (3) of WIOA.

The specific policies and procedures for designating regions and local areas is scheduled for a comprehensive review. The current regional designations are aligned with the local areas and were carried forward when WIOA was enacted. The State Workforce Development Board is committed to a comprehensive review to determine if these designations are appropriately addressing the needs of the state. The State Workforce Board is working in partnership with the chief elected officials and local workforce development boards to document findings and recommendations and an official document will be presented to Governor Lujan Grisham for review and approval in 2020. Until this review is completed, the current regions and local area designations will remain intact and regional and local planning will proceed for Program Year 2022.

As part of this effort, the State Workforce Development Board will review current policy and procedures to determine if what is documented is accurate and in accordance with Section 106(a) of WIOA. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act mandates the State Workforce Development Board assist the Governor in designation of workforce development areas, and The Governor must designate local workforce development regions within the State through consultation with the State Board; after consultation with Chief Elected Officials and after consideration of comments received through the public comment process as described in Section 102 (b)(2)(E)(iii)(II). WIOA further states that the considerations should include:

- extent to which the areas are consistent with the labor market areas in the State;
- extent to which the areas are consistent with regional economic development areas in the State; and
- extent to which the areas have available the federal and non-federal resources necessary to effectively administer activities under subtitle B and other applicable provisions of this Act, including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and area career and technical education schools.

WIOA states that a unit of general local government (including a combination of such units) or grant recipient that requests, but is not granted designation of an area as a local area, may submit an appeal to the State under an appeal process established in the State Plan. WIOA
requires that existing federally recognized workforce areas are designated during the first two program years, which is referred to as Initial Designation, and again after the first two program years, which is referred to as Subsequent Designation. Units of local government that desire to become a new local workforce area should follow the New Area designation requirements.

C. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS REFERRED TO IN SECTION 106(B)(5) OF WIOA RELATING TO DESIGNATION OF LOCAL AREAS

The State Workforce Development Board is currently reviewing all policies and procedures related to workforce designation including the appeals process. Updates are anticipated and the current designations, along with current processes for appeal will remain intact until this activity is completed. The current procedures will follow Section 106(b)(5) of WIOA, which describes how opposition to designations may be voiced by municipalities or counties within the area seeking designation. Action include public hearings, if necessary, review by the State Workforce Development Board and final recommendations sent to the Governor.

D. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS REFERRED TO IN SECTION 121(H)(2)(E) OF WIOA RELATING TO DETERMINATIONS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

State Funding Mechanism Timeline for Local Infrastructure Costs and Appeals Process

It is the policy of the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) that it shall ensure that each Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) will comply with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 and make every effort to reach consensus with its local partners to implement a local Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA), as part of the One-Stop Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). As required by WIOA and stated TEGLE 16-18 the State Administrative Entity (SAE) determines the NMDW State Funding Mechanism for local infrastructure costs, and the process as described below, for use in the event that any local area in New Mexico is unable finalize its IFA by ninety (90) days after the start of the new fiscal year on July 1st. This process is being developed and annotated in a new NMDWS Policy #DWS 2020-002 and is put forth in summary form in this response.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) requires that Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) establish, as part of their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), an Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) for non-personnel One-Stop related costs (including rent, security, technology and utilities). The law further requires the establishment of a State Funding Mechanism (SFM) to be used ONLY if local areas are unable to finalize a local IFA by 90 days after July 1st or September 1, which ever comes first. This policy establishes the State Funding Mechanism for New Mexico as well as the appeals process should an LWDB want to appeal the Governor’s determination regarding a one-stop partner’s portion of the funds. This appeals process must be described in the Combined State Plan as required by 20 CFR 678.750 (a)(b).
Process

Local Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs) must be completed and included in a local MOU by **within 90 days of the beginning of the fiscal year, July 1**. It is the responsibility of the LWDB Administrative Entity to inform NMDWS by September 1st if the LWDB believes they are at impasse locally and will require the use of the State Funding Mechanism (See **Attachments 1 and 2**). Questions regarding infrastructure cost funding issues should be directed to the WIOA Operations Manager for NMDWS. Questions regarding signatories for any of the partner programs should be directed to the office of the WIOA Project Coordinator.

**It is important to note that it is and shall be in any case, the responsibility of the Local Workforce Development Board to obtain the information required to complete the State Funding Mechanism. Should the area choose to revert to the State Funding Mechanism, it is still the local workforce area’s responsibility to provide the information necessary to complete the computation to the Governor.**

Local workforce areas have the primary responsibility to develop a local formula, all data required to effectuate the formula and drive agreement amongst its partners. If an area believes it **cannot achieve** an agreement, the Local Workforce Development Board Director must inform the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, WIOA Bureau in writing **BY EMAIL or LOCAL MAIL no later than the close of business on September 1 annually**. The written notification must be sent to:

NMDWS  
C/O Operations and Performance Manager  
401 Broadway NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87102

NMDWS WIOA Deputy Secretary  
New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions

A team representing both organizations shall review any request for use of the State Funding Mechanism with the Governor who will make a determination consistent with the WIOA Joint Rules Sections 678.700 through 678.760 **within 30 days**. This determination may include requiring additional information, a recommendation that the local area complete the work or use of the State Mechanism. The simple request of the State Mechanism does not ensure its implementation nor does it absolve a local area of providing the information required to make a decision. This process includes the option to appeal a State Funding Mechanism decision, as outlined in the attached Attachment 1 & 2.
Appeals Process

(a) Upon receipt of the specific terms of an SFM determination, if any LWDB, partner program or Chief Elected Official (CEO) disagrees with the State determination of the local area infrastructure budget, the LWDB may submit an appeal for cause to the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions as the acting State Administrative Entity (SAE) in writing no later than 21 calendar days after the determination regarding the portion of funds it is to provide.

(b) All appeals submitted to the NMDWS in writing under (a) above shall state the basis for the appeal and shall include any documentary evidence that the LWDB would like the WIOA Operation Manager to review prior to rendering his or her decision.

(c) NMDWS shall review the documentary evidence presented by the LWDB and shall request any additional information or conduct any investigation necessary to render a decision.

(d) The Governor’s decision shall be based on the written record and shall be rendered within 30 days after receipt of the appeal and be deemed final.

(e) If a one-stop partner’s appeal to NMDWS using the process described in 20 CFP 678.750 is successful and results in a change to the one-stop partner’s infrastructure-cost contributions, then the LWDB’s MOU must be updated to reflect the final one-stop partner infrastructure cost contributions.

Basis for Appeal: A LWDB, partner program, or Chief Elected Official may appeal the State determination based on the following:

a. The determination is inconsistent with the proportionate share requirements of 20 CFR 678.735(a);

b. The determination is inconsistent with the cost contribution limitations in § 678.735(b);

c. The determination was inconsistent with the cost contributions caps as described in 20 CFR 678.738.
ATTACHMENT 1: STATE FUNDING MECHANISM

This reflects the steps required should a Local Area Workforce Development Board be unable to reach consensus for a locally developed effort.

Related Definitions:

| IFA: Infrastructure Funding Agreement; part of the local one-stop partners’ memorandum of understanding (MOU) |
| LFM: Local Funding Mechanism (effectuated by local partners) |
| SFM: State Funding Mechanism |
| MPC: Maximum Potential Cap |

State Formula Steps

Step 1: Notice of failure to reach agreement given to the Governor

If the LWDB, local one-stop partners, and CEO(s) cannot reach consensus on methods of sufficiently funding a one-stop center’s infrastructure costs and the amounts to be contributed by each local partner program, the LWDB is required to notify the Governor no later than September 1st.

In subsequent years in which agreements are renewed, notification must be given by July 1st. In years during which a grant competition takes place that may impact the formula, alternative timing may be necessary.

Step 2: Local negotiation materials provided to the Governor

In order to assist the Governor in making these calculations and determinations, the LWDB must provide the appropriate and relevant materials and documents used in the negotiations under the LFM, preferably when notifying the Governor of the failure to reach agreement.

At a minimum, the LWDB must give the Governor:

(1) the local WIOA plan;
(2) the cost allocation methodology or methodologies proposed by the partners to be used in determining the proportionate share;
(3) the proposed amounts or budget to fund infrastructure costs and the amount of partner funds included;

(4) the type of funds (cash, non-cash, and third-party in-kind contributions) available; (5) any proposed or agreed upon one-stop center or system budget; and

(6) any partially agreed upon, proposed, or draft IFAs.

The Local WDBs shall also provide the Governor additional materials that they or the Governor find to be appropriate.

**Step 3: The Governor determines one-stop center infrastructure budget(s).**

The Governor must determine the infrastructure budget(s). Depending on the local delivery system structure, there may be more than one infrastructure budget, each of which is contained in a one-stop operating budget. While the Governor should take into account the one-stop center's operating budget, the Governor only has the power to determine the infrastructure budget under the SFM. The Governor must determine the infrastructure budget in one of two ways. If, as a result of an agreed upon infrastructure budget, only the individual programmatic contributions to infrastructure funding based upon proportionate use of the one-stop centers and relative benefit received are at issue, the Governor may accept the infrastructure budget, from which the Governor must calculate each partner's contribution consistent with the cost allocation methodologies contained in the Uniform Guidance.

If, however, an infrastructure budget or budgets were not agreed upon in the local negotiations, or the Governor determines that the agreed upon budget does not adequately meet the needs of the local area or does not reasonably work within the confines of the resources available to that local area in accordance with the SAE guidance on one-stop infrastructure funding, then the Governor must use the State Funding Mechanism. **This mechanism must identify the factors, as well as each factor's corresponding weight, that the Governor must use in determining the one-stop center infrastructure budget.** At a minimum, these factors should include:

1. the number of one-stop centers in a local area (each facility should warrant separate consideration);
2. the total population served by such centers;
3. the services provided by such centers; and
4. any 2 factors relating to the operations of such centers in the local area that the State WDB determines are appropriate (20 CFR 678.745, 34 CFR 361.745, and 34 CFR 463.745).

**Step 4: Governor establishes cost allocation methodology.**

After an infrastructure budget has been determined, the Governor must establish a cost allocation methodology that determines the distribution of infrastructure funding costs among the local one-stop partners in accordance with the principles of proportionate use of the one-stop center and relative benefit received. This allocation methodology must be consistent with the Federal Cost Principles of the Uniform Guidance in 2 CFR part 200, all relevant Federal
regulations and statutes, further regulatory guidance, and the partner programs’ authorizing laws and regulations. Beyond these requirements, the determining factor can be a wide range of variables, such as number of customers served, square footage used, or a different basis that is agreed upon for determining each partner’s contribution level for infrastructure costs.

*A local area may use more than one cost allocation methodology to distribute costs.*

**Step 5: Partners’ proportionate shares are determined.**

Once a methodology is established, the Governor must use this methodology to determine each required one-stop partner’s proportionate share of infrastructure funding costs. The Governor must take into account a number of factors in reaching a proportionate share determination including:

1. the costs of administration of the one-stop delivery system for purposes not specifically related to a one-stop center for each partner (such as costs associated with maintaining the LWDB or information technology systems);
2. statutory requirements for each partner program;
3. each one-stop partner’s ability to fulfill such requirements; and
4. all other applicable legal requirements.

The Governor may draw upon any proportionate share determinations made during the local negotiations, including any agreements reached at the local level by one or more partners, as well as any other materials or documents from the negotiating process.

In some instances the Governor does not determine each one-stop partner’s contribution amounts for infrastructure costs. Should there be a partner where the policy-making authority is placed in an entity or official that is independent of the authority of the Governor with respect to the funds provided for the AEFLA program, postsecondary career and technical education activities authorized under Perkins IV, the VR program, or any other partner program, the determination of the amount each of the applicable partners must contribute to assist in paying the infrastructure costs of one-stop centers must be made by the official or chief officer of the entity with such authority, in consultation with the Governor.

For other required partner programs in which grant awards are made to entities that are independent of the authority of the Governor, such as Job Corps center contractors or grant recipients of the DOL-administered national programs, the determination of the amount each of the applicable partners must contribute to assist in paying the infrastructure costs of one-stop centers continues to be made by the Governor, through the authority granted to the entities by WIOA and its implementing regulations.
Step 6: Governor calculates statewide caps.

Once the Governor has created a cost allocation methodology, the Governor then must calculate the statewide caps to determine the maximum amounts that required partner programs could be required to contribute toward infrastructure funding in that local area. There are no statewide caps for additional partners because the SFM does not apply to them.

The statewide caps are a statutory requirement for purposes of the SFM, even when only one local area is unable to reach consensus on an IFA through the LFM. However, the caps only restrict the infrastructure cost contributions required of one-stop partners within the local area(s) that has (or have) not reached agreement. The caps used in the application of the SFM are referred to as the applicable program caps, which must be calculated by the Governor using the five sub-steps listed below.

In the event that more than one local area in a State does not reach agreement, then the aggregate of the infrastructure funding costs that must be contributed by each required one-stop partner in all of the local areas that did not reach consensus is restricted by the applicable program cap.

For example, if three of four LWDB did not reach consensus, then the required infrastructure funding contributions of each required one-stop partner under a particular program in these three areas would be added together, the sum of which could not exceed the calculated applicable program cap.

The Governor must take five sub-steps to calculate the applicable program cap for any given program.

Sub-Step 1: The Governor must apply a partner’s individual applicable limiting percentage (the statutory percentages listed in WIOA sec. 121(h)(2)(d)—which is dependent on the type of program (see chart in Attachment 2)—to the total Federal funding which that program receives for the affected program year to reach the maximum potential cap (MPC). The applicable limiting percentage for a program is listed in Attachment 2 and in WIOA sec. 121(h)(2)(d), 20 CFR 678.738(c), and 34 CFR 463.738(c). Some programs will use previous years’ funding to determine the cap due to internal program funding allocation or re-allotment methods.

Sub-Step 2: The Governor must select a determining factor or factors that reasonably indicates the use of one-stop centers in the State. This will be the percentage of the Title 1 WIOA funding each local workforce area receives.
Sub-Step 3: The Governor applies the determining factor(s) to all local areas across the State, and then determines the percentage of the factor(s) that is applicable to those areas that reached consensus, or the consensus areas' factor percentage.

Sub-Step 4: The Governor then applies the consensus areas' factor percentage to the MPC to find the consensus areas' portion of the MPC.

Sub-Step 5: The Governor subtracts the amount equal to the consensus local areas’ portion of the MPC from the MPC. The remaining amount is the applicable program cap for use in the local areas that have not reached consensus and are subject to the SFM.

Step 7: Governor assesses the aggregate total of infrastructure contributions as it relates to the statewide cap.

Once the Governor has determined the applicable program cap for each program, as well as the proportionate share of the infrastructure costs that the Governor has determined under Step 5 would be required of each local required one-stop partner in a non-consensus area without regard to the cap, the Governor must ensure that the funds required to be contributed by each partner program in the non-consensus local area(s), in aggregate, do not exceed the applicable program cap.

If the aggregate total contributions are below the applicable program cap, then the Governor must direct the one-stop partners to contribute what was determined to be their proportionate shares. If the aggregate total contributions exceed the cap, then the Governor may either:

A. Inquire as to whether those local partner programs that have pushed the aggregate total contributions above the applicable program cap (i.e., those whose contributions would have otherwise exceeded the Statewide cap on contributions) are willing to contribute beyond the applicable program cap in accordance with their proportionate share; or

B. Allow the LWDB, one-stop partners, and CEO(s) to:
   - Re-enter negotiations to reassess each one-stop partner's proportionate share and make adjustments and identify alternate sources of funding to make up the difference between the capped amount and the proportionate share of infrastructure funding of the one-stop partner; and
   - Reduce infrastructure costs to reflect the amount of funds available without exceeding the applicable program cap level.
Step 8: Governor adjusts proportionate shares.

The Governor must make adjustments to specific local partners' proportionate share in accordance with the amounts available under the applicable program cap for the associated program, if the LWDB, CEO(s), and the required one-stop partners fail to reach agreement on how to address the situation in which the proportionate share exceeds the cap using the approaches described in Step 7. The aggregate total contribution of a program's local one-stop partners under the SFM may not exceed the applicable program cap.

Appeals Process

(a) Upon receipt of the specific terms of an SFM determination, if any LWDB, partner program or Chief Elected Official (CEO) disagrees with the State determination of the local area infrastructure budget, the LWDB may submit an appeal for cause to the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions as the acting State Administrative Entity (SAE) in writing no later than 21 calendar days after the determination regarding the portion of funds it is to provide.

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a. The determination is inconsistent with the proportionate share requirements of 20 CFR 678.735(a);

b. The determination is inconsistent with the cost contribution limitations in § 678.735(b);

c. The determination was inconsistent with the cost contributions caps as described in 20 CFR 678.738.
**ATTACHMENT 2: PROGRAMMATIC STATEWIDE CAPS**

Limiting Percentages for Programmatic Statewide Caps on Infrastructure Funding under the State Funding Mechanism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Type</th>
<th>Limiting Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIOA title I programs (youth, adult, or dislocated worker)</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagner-Peyser Act ES</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Education</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perkins IV</td>
<td>1.5% of funds made available for postsecondary level programs and activities and funds used to administer postsecondary level programs and activities in the prior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Insurance</td>
<td>1.5% of Fiscal Year 2019 (or applicable UI funding)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Rehab</td>
<td>1.5% of Fiscal Year 2019 (or applicable previous year) Federal VR funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other required partners including Job Corps; YouthBuild; Native American programs; MSFW (NFJP) programs; SCSEP; TAA; TANF; SNAP; employment and training programs; and programs authorized under sec. 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007</td>
<td>1.5% of funds from the previous year spent by entities to provide employment and training activities, plus any associated administrative costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional (non-required) partners</td>
<td>SFM does not apply</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ATTACHMENT THREE: New Mexico Determining Factors**

When the State Funding Mechanism (SFM) is used, the total amount that any one partner can contribute is limited by a “determining factor.” New Mexico is using the Title 1 WIOA funding formulas as the determining factor.
To reach the percentages shown below, the funding allocations for Program Year (PY) 2019 were reviewed. Each local area’s allocations were averaged across the Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker programs. The total of those allocations that each local area received was then calculated as a percentage of the statewide total allocations.

These percentages will be used to reduce the maximum contribution under the State Funding Mechanism, based on which local areas do not reach agreement.

**Percent of State Total:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workforce Development Region</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>40.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>15.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>21.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>21.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

USDOL recommends that the determining factor should reasonably indicate the use of one-stop centers in the state. The funding allocations were chosen because they already represent a proportionate need for the system based on demographic and unemployment data.

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

New Mexico has plans to address the governor’s set-aside funding and to utilize Rapid Response (RR) funds to respond to layoffs, plant closings, layoff aversion and coordinating services quickly to aid companies and their impacted workers. In regard to the governor’s set-aside funding, New Mexico has centralized several functions such as finance, audit, human resources, legal counsel and our statewide 24/7 Workforce Connection On-Line System (WCOS) to create efficiencies to absorb some of these costs allowing for funds to be used on youth career services statewide, professional development and training for statewide workforce staff.

Available funds have also covered projects focused on improving coordination across systems; specifically, a partnership with Adult Education and an Apprenticeship Sponsor to create access to integrated curriculum designed to help adults complete their high school equivalency while engaged in related instruction. The model implements a best practice called I-Best and has opened opportunities for young adults who need assistance with basic education preparation/skill development while studying toward their apprenticeship related instruction and certificates. Additionally, funds were used to develop a partnership with a project entitled “Mission Graduate.” This project is focused on increasing the number of post-secondary certificates for adults returning to post-secondary training. The project expands awareness of
financial aid counseling and provides intensive training for Workforce Connection Center staff on financial aid counseling. Partnership with community college advisors to strengthen practices and processes to support returning students is also included. The project is assisting the Central Workforce Development Board toward designing a pathway for career advisors to become certified as professional career counselors. This type of certification will be a first for New Mexico.

Set aside Funds are also used to support youth engagement work statewide to support Governor Lujan Grisham’s vision that all students are prepared for college and/or career. NMDWS, in partnership with the Public Education Department, are expanding work-based learning and internship opportunities by coordinating business outreach with high schools. The goal is to increase the number of job shadowing, internships and paid work experiences that linked to career pathways identified by schools and students.

Funds are also currently being used to support sector strategy development; specifically, ongoing technical assistance and training for the four local workforce development boards and statewide professional development with core programs and combined partners. NM envisions utilization of these funds over the next four years to coordinate partnerships with post-secondary institutions and training providers to design training programs that are fully aligned with industry requests and needs.

Finally, funds also support an annual Workforce Development Conference. The conference participates include all core programs and combined partner staff with general attendance of 250-300 statewide. The conference provides an opportunity to share communication, practice and new policy across systems. The conference provides an opportunity for the State Workforce Development Board to share vision, goals and expectations.

NMDWS is setting aside Twenty Percent of Dislocated Worker funds for Rapid Response activities and additional assistance to go to local areas. Funds provide rapid response services to as many companies and workers as possible regardless of the size of event, either through formalized coordination with NMDWS Rapid Response Team learns of impending layoffs. Many companies will contact the Rapid Response team to notify them of a layoff and invite them to come on site to help the dislocated workers and/or Rapid Response team will reach out to companies extending services in accordance with the Worker Adjustment and Retraining (WARN) Act, a WARN notice is required when a business with 100 or more full-time workers is laying off at least 50 people at a single site of employment or employs 100 or more workers who work at least a combined 4,000 hours per week, and is a private for-profit business, private non-profit organization, or quasi-public entity separately organized from regular government. The WARN Act requires employers to provide written notice at least 60 calendar days in advance of covered plant closings and mass layoffs. An employer’s notice assures that assistance can be provided to affected workers, their families, and the appropriate communities through the State Rapid Response Dislocated Worker Unit, and gives workers and their family transition time to seek alternative jobs or enter skills training programs to remove barriers to employment and training.

State Rapid Response teams respond within 12 to 24 hours of notification of a layoff by coordinating with the employer to provide on-site information to the workers and employers about employment and retraining services that are designed to help participants find new jobs. In cases of natural disaster, response teams will also coordinate with FEMA and other entities. Rapid Response services may include information on unemployment insurance, job search and placement assistance; labor market information (occupational information and economic
trends); on-the-job training; classroom training; and/or referral to basic and remedial education. Teams also address at-risk companies and workers by educating employers about layoff aversion strategies.

New Mexico is also working to implement layoff-aversion strategies to address at-risk companies and workers by partnering with Economic Development.

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

As discussed earlier, Rapid Response teams provide services to employers and workers in mass layoff situations and conducting claim filing activities, when needed. Rapid Response staff serves as a key point of contact for businesses and are also be used to educate employers about layoff aversion strategies. Rapid Response is typically initiated when the state Rapid Response team learns of impending layoffs. Many companies will contact the Rapid Response team to notify them of a layoff and invite them to come on site to help the dislocated workers. In accordance with the Worker Adjustment and Retraining (WARN) Act, a WARN notice is required when a business with 100 or more full-time workers is laying off at least 50 people at a single site of employment or employs 100 or more workers who work at least a combined 4,000 hours per week, and is a private for-profit business, private non-profit organization, or quasi-public entity separately organized from regular government. The WARN Act requires employers to provide written notice at least 60 calendar days in advance of covered plant closings and mass layoffs. An employer’s notice assures that assistance can be provided to affected workers, their families, and the appropriate communities through the State Rapid Response Dislocated Worker Unit and gives workers and their family transition time to seek alternative jobs or enter skills training programs.

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C. IN ADDITION, DESCRIBE THE STATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO PROVIDE RAPID RESPONSES IN CASES OF NATURAL DISASTERS INCLUDING COORDINATION WITH FEMA AND OTHER ENTITIES

In cases of natural disaster or other emergency situations, response teams will also coordinate with FEMA and other entities to provide additional assistance to local areas that experience such dislocation events that exceed the capacity of the local area to respond with existing resources. Rapid Response services may include information on unemployment insurance, job search and placement assistance; labor market information (occupational information and
economic trends); on- the-job training; classroom training; and/or referral to basic and remedial education.

D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE PROVIDES EARLY INTERVENTION (E.G., RAPID RESPONSE) TO WORKER GROUPS ON WHOSE BEHALF A TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA) PETITION HAS BEEN FILED. (SECTION 134(A)(2)(A).) THIS DESCRIPTION MUST INCLUDE HOW THE STATE DISSEMINATES BENEFIT INFORMATION TO PROVIDE TRADE-AFFECTED WORKERS IN THE GROUPS IDENTIFIED IN THE TAA PETITIONS WITH AN ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROVISION OF TAA BENEFITS AND SERVICES IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY ARE TRANSPARENT TO THE TRADE-AFFECTED DISLOCATED WORKER APPLYING FOR THEM (TRADE ACT SEC. 221(A)(2)(A) AND SEC. 225; GOVERNOR-SECRETARY AGREEMENT). DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE FUNDS THAT HAVE BEEN RESERVED FOR RAPID RESPONSE TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR EVERY WORKER GROUP THAT FILES A TAA PETITION.

THE TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA) PROGRAM. The TAA program is a federal program that provides a path for employment growth and opportunity through aid to U.S. workers who have lost their jobs as a result of foreign trade. The State provides early intervention to worker groups on whose behalf a TAA petition has been filed. A petition must be filed with the U.S. Department of Labor by or on behalf of a group of workers who have lost or may lose their jobs or experienced a reduction in wages as a result of foreign trade. After the Department of Labor investigates the facts behind the petition, it applies statutory criteria to determine whether foreign trade was an important cause of the threatened or actual job loss or wage reduction. If the Department grants the petition to certify the worker group, individual workers in the group may apply for TAA benefits and services through the Workforce Connection Centers. TAA offers a variety of benefits and services to support workers in their search for reemployment, including opportunities to obtain the skills, resources, and support they need to become reemployed. The program benefits and services available to individual workers are administered by the State. Program eligibility, technical assistance, and oversight are conducted by state merit staff. This includes job training, job search and relocation allowances, income support, and assistance with healthcare premium costs. These services are administered by cooperating state agencies using federal funds.

TAA participants come from a variety of backgrounds and industries, and therefore many enter the program with a wide array of skills and experience. However, the majority of TAA participants who enter the program face similar challenges in obtaining reemployment, which can include no post-secondary degree, job skills solely in the manufacturing sector, and an average age of 46 with over 12 years of experience in a specific job that may no longer exist. The TAA program has been developed through legislation, regulation, and administrative guidance to best serve the needs of this unique population.

The State administers the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program in both Albuquerque and Silver City, which pays for 100 percent of books, tuition, fees, and supplies for qualified individuals. The State notifies potential trade affected individuals through the United State Postal Services. Individuals on an impacted worker list is provided a Notification of Benefits letter and notified of scheduled benefits, rights and obligations orientation sessions. In the event of undeliverable mail, office staff conduct research to find an alternative contact method and reaches out to the trade affected individual. In communities that are affected by a trade impacted layoff various forms of public notification (newspaper and radio ads) are used. The
TAA Coordinator will work with trade impacted employers who remain in the community to provide benefits, rights and obligations orientation sessions at the employers’ worksite.

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.

New Mexico continues to use work-based learning opportunities to support employers and participants with high quality training. Work-based opportunities include On the Job (OJT), Customized Training, Incumbent Worker Training, Transitional Jobs and Work Experience Training. Each of these approaches develops and improves career pathways for individuals by providing increased exposure to an occupation while gaining training and skills that also help the business by offsetting training costs. One Stop staff work with industry and individuals’ businesses to identify vacancy needs and to work in partnership to incorporate skill building into a work-site employment opportunity. On-the-Job Training is primarily used for participants who have been assessed for work readiness and who demonstrated a number of skills that prepare them for on-site training. OJTs equip the participant with specialized skills and competencies needed to perform a specific job and helps prepare them for opportunities for advancement. The participating business has a major investment in the OJT process as they assist by providing on-site mentoring and coaching and skill building based on a specific training plan developed in partnership with one-stop center staff, the individual and the employer.

NMDWS ensures each training approach is funded at the regional level. A State Workforce Guidance Letter outlining the criteria and expectations of each of the training approach guides the implementation. NMDWS guidance letters set standards for training services that are utilized for skill building and mentoring into employment opportunities. In early 2019 the OJT and ITA policy were revised to provide additional clarification and support to also include both registered and non-registered apprenticeship programs. The guidance letters also encourage the inclusion of work-based learning opportunities with an individual training accounts to ensure participants are prepared to enter and sustain employment long-term. This approach has improved the partnership with the business community as they share a role/responsibility in the development employees to meet specific industry demands. NMDWS will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of these approaches and together with the core program and combined partners identify opportunities to provide technical assistance and training to regional/state staff to innovate approaches that provide flexibility and creativity for high quality trainings.

Specific partnership with core program and combined partner program business engagement teams are key to expanding the availability of work-based learning opportunities. As we continue to move forward with sector strategies, core programs and combined partners are working together to align plans to expand work-based learning in an effort to address expressed industry needs. New Mexico’s strategy for the next 4 years is to increase the number of industry-led initiatives regionally that are aligned with training programs and that include
work-based training opportunities. The goal is to increase the access to work-based learning opportunities as a key strategy to improve readiness and preparedness. Using a sector strategy approach targets employer inputs on workforce gaps and challenges. The regional workforce development boards and their partners will lead efforts with targeted industries identified by Governor Lujan Grisham. Over the next four years NM envisions job growth in these industries that will lead to a reduction in overall unemployment and increases in economic health and well-being for job seekers.

Last year, NMDWS received a Technical Assistance and Training grant from USDOL-ETA to support the development and implementation of sector strategy partnerships. NMDWS is currently engaged with Maher and Maher, a nationally recognized technical assistance partner to oversee capacity development at the regional level to fully engage and implement a sector approach. Technical assistance began with a two-day convening with state and regional board members, core programs and combined partners to develop a foundational understanding of sector approaches, career pathway development and transformational business engagement. The State Workforce Development Board has directed NMDWS to provide coaching onsite with each regional board and to require each regional board engage a minimum of two industry sectors per year. Over the next four years, NMDWS proposed to address all the sectors outlined in Governor Lujan Grisham’s Workforce Development plan, including: healthcare, aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture, sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education and international trade. Sector Partnerships already emerging and underway at the regional level include healthcare, information technology and education.

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).

As discussed earlier, WIOA emphasizes the importance of Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship through many new statutory provisions (e.g. required representation on State and local boards, programs stay on the Eligible Training Provider List as long as they remain registered and pre-apprenticeship as a youth program service). WIOA also provides for enhanced access and flexibility for work-based training options and encourages the use of Registered Apprenticeships as a career pathway for job seekers and as a job-driven strategy for employers and industries.

Registered Apprenticeship is a structured occupational training program that combines on-the-job training and related instruction in which workers learn the practical and conceptual skills required for a skilled occupation, craft, or trade. The five core components of Registered Apprenticeship are employer involvement, structured on-the-job training with mentoring, involvement of Related Training and Instruction (RTI), rewards for skill gains, and national occupational credentials. Apprentices work as they complete their classes with their work schedule determined by their respective employers. When they graduate, apprentices receive a nationally recognized Certificate of Completion and will have earned the highly skilled “journey worker” designation. The program can last one to five years, depending on the occupation. For employers, benefits include skilled workers trained to industry/employer specifications, reduced turnover, a pipeline for new skilled workers, and reduced worker compensation costs due to an emphasis on safety training. For apprentices and journey workers, benefits include
jobs that usually pay higher wages, higher quality of life and skills versatility, portable credentials recognized nationally and often globally, and opportunities for college credit and future degrees.

The Department of Workforce Solutions is the State Apprenticeship Agency for New Mexico responsible for apprenticeship within the state. There are currently 38 registered apprenticeship programs in New Mexico with approximately 1,300 apprentices; the majority of registered apprenticeship programs are in the building and construction trades. A nine-member council, called the State Apprenticeship Council, provides advice and guidance to the State Apprenticeship Agency on the operation of the state’s apprenticeship system. The process of apprenticeship program registration with federal and state government agencies is standards-based, designed to ensure that working apprentices, program sponsors, and the general public can gain a clear understanding of the training content and the measures that are in place to ensure ongoing quality.

The Registered Apprenticeship program works to ensure quality training by combining on-the-job training with theoretical and practical classroom instruction to prepare exceptional workers for industry. Employers work with the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions to create program standards in written agreements that specify the length of a participant’s training, the related technical instruction, an outline of the skills that person will need to learn, and the wages the participant will earn. These agreements must be approved by NMDWS before apprentices can start their training.

In New Mexico, the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs are partnering with the Registered Apprenticeship program to encourage and expand the use of apprenticeships in the state by training local board staff on the importance of apprenticeships as a work-based experience for jobseekers and gaining technical assistance from the federal level on how to develop new apprenticeship programs, as well as the appropriate ways to braid Registered Apprenticeship and WIOA funding to support them.

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).

Training providers must be active on an Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), which is comprised of entities with a proven capability of securing quality employment outcomes for participants. Each local board, through Workforce Connection Centers, makes this list available as required by WIOA. The application process for training providers largely remains the same as that of WIA; however, WIOA established additional requirements, specifically to provide more information and criteria for initial and subsequent eligibility to receive funds. These requirements ensure both the quality of the training programs and the opportunity for customer-informed choice regarding the available programs. The local boards will continue to solicit training and education providers to submit applications for eligibility to receive WIOA funds for educational programs. Programs must support targeted occupations and lead to a postsecondary credential or an industry-recognized credential/certificate.
The following types of training providers are subject to the ETPL requirements in order to receive WIOA Title I funds to provide training services to eligible individuals through individual training accounts:

- institutions of higher education that provide a program of training that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential;
- apprenticeship programs registered by the USDOL Office of Registered Apprenticeship;
- Other public or private providers of training, which may include joint labor-management organizations and eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II if such activities are provided in combination with occupational skills training;
- Local Boards, if they meet the conditions of WIOA sec. 107(g)(1); and
- Community Based Organizations (CBOs) or private organizations of demonstrated effectiveness that provide training under contract with the Local Board.

**Initial Eligibility and Application Process.**

All applications for the ETPL will be completed using the New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System. Training providers may apply for initial eligibility at any time. The online application process for training providers starts with verifying the training provider is licensed, certified, or authorized by the New Mexico Department of Higher Education, or the relevant state agency with oversight, to operate training programs. If a provider is in compliance with the oversight agency, the provider can proceed to the next step in the application process. If a provider is not in compliance with the oversight agency, the provider will not be able to apply for inclusion on the ETPL until they meet the necessary requirements. Postsecondary institutions located outside New Mexico that offer distance education may be authorized to operate programs in New Mexico if the institution is an approved Eligible Training Provider in their home state.

Training providers applying for initial eligibility must provide the following information through the online application:

- Describe program/training to be offered;
- Provide information on cost of attendance, including costs of tuition and fees;
- Identify type of industry-recognized certificate or credential, including recognized post-secondary credentials;
- Indicate if the provider has developed the training in partnership with a business;
- Indicate the in-demand industry sectors and occupations best fit with the training program;
o Outline the prerequisites or skills and knowledge required prior to the commencement of training; and

o Performance indicator information (employment 2nd & 4th Quarter after exit, median earnings 2nd Quarter after exit, credential attainment) for all students regardless of funding source. To support this effort, the state has secured efforts to acquire performance information already in existence at other state agencies. Training providers and programs that have been in existence for at least two years will be required to provide available student and program data for the time period in existence.

Once the online application is submitted, the local board will be notified to approve, deny, or request further information within 30 days of the receipt of a complete application. If the local board takes no action on an application, the application will be reviewed for approval at the state level. In addition, after the local board determines the eligible training provider meets the initial or continued eligibility requirements and submits a recommendation for approval to NMDWS, as the State Administrative Entity for WIOA administration; NMDWS reviews eligibility criteria is met, and executes final approval on the ETPL system.

**ETPL Procedures for Registered Apprenticeship Programs.**

Under WIOA, Title I, Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) are automatically eligible for placement on the state-approved ETP. Registered Apprenticeship Programs are given an opportunity to consent to inclusion on the ETPL before being placed on the list. Registered Apprenticeship Programs are not subject to the same application and performance information requirements or to a period of initial or continued eligibility as other providers. In addition, LWDBs cannot establish additional criteria and information requirements or establish higher levels of performance for these entities to provide training services in the local areas.

On an annual basis, NMDWS notifies New Mexico sponsors of active Registered Apprenticeship Programs by email of their programs automatic eligibility for inclusion and maintenance on the Eligible Training Provider List. If interested in participating in New Mexico’s ETPL, the sponsor must provide the following limited sponsor and program information to NMDWS:

- Occupations included within the Registered Apprenticeship program;
- The name and address of the Registered Apprenticeship program sponsor;
- The name and address of the Related Technical Instruction provider, and the location of the instruction if different from the program sponsor’s address;
- The method and length of instruction; and,
- The number of active apprentices

Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors that do not provide the Related Technical Instruction portion of the apprenticeship program may be required to provide additional information about their education provider, including cost of the instruction.
For each Registered Apprenticeship Program on the ETPL NMDWS will verify its registration status biennially with New Mexico State Department of Apprenticeship.

Pre-Apprenticeship programs do not have the same automatic ETP status under WIOA title I-B as do Registered Apprenticeship programs.

**Continued Eligibility Process.**

After the initial eligibility period of one year Eligible Training Providers that want to remain on the ETPL for subsequent program years must be reviewed, updated and approved for continued eligibility every two years. Applications for continued eligibility must show the training provider is still authorized by the appropriate oversight agency, still offering the program, wishes to continue the program’s eligibility and receive WIOA Title I-B funds, provide accurate program cost information, maintain accurate consumer information in the New Mexico Workforce Connection Online system and provide the most recent program performance data. The continued eligibility application is required for any training provider that has previously been on the list. Dropping off the list for a period of time does not return a provider to an initial eligibility status.

**Continued Eligibility Criteria.**

Training providers or programs applying for continued eligibility must adhere to the following criteria. Approval is good for two calendar years. However, schools are strongly encouraged to maintain changes regarding programs throughout the eligibility period, specifically but not limited to the cost associated with the program to ensure accurate and current information. In addition to updating training program information, the following information must be provided:

- Total number of participants enrolled in the program;
- Total number of participants completing the program;
- Total number of participants exiting the program;
- Performance on the four WIOA performance indicators (Employment 2nd and 4th Quarter After Exit, Median Earning 2nd Quarter After Exit, Credential Attainment);
- Description of how the provider will ensure access to training services throughout the State, including rural areas and through the use of technology;
- Information reported to state agencies on Federal and State training programs other than WIOA title I-B programs
- The degree to which training programs relate to in-demand industry sectors and occupations in the State
- State licensure requirements of training providers, and licensing status of training providers
- ETP's ability to offer industry-recognized certificates and credentials
ETP's ability to offer programs that lead to a recognized post-secondary credential

- Quality of program of training services including programs leading to a recognized postsecondary credential

- ETP’s ability provide trainings that are physically and programmatically accessible for individuals who are employed and individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities

- Timeliness and accuracy of ETP’s performance reports

**Roles and Responsibilities.**

The Department of Workforce Solutions, State Administrative Entity (SAE), is responsible for the following:

- Establishing requirements for the Eligible Training Provider List system, to include:
  - Hosting the ETPL through a web-based platform; and
  - Establishing the web application and tracking system for use by training providers and local workforce development boards.

- Establishing ETPL eligibility criteria, and application and approval procedures.

- Facilitating the acquisition of performance data information for public institutions managed through a partnership with the New Mexico Department of Higher Education.

- Reviewing, monitoring and executing approval of training provider applications, for minimal eligibility criteria and performance requirements.

- Verifying the initial minimum eligibility of out-of-state program and training services; including review of applications or renewal; as well as the review of overall effectiveness of providers and programs to determine initial and continued eligibility based on ETP criteria.

- Notification to LWDBs when out-of-state programs and their providers are approved for utilization.

- Informing and supporting the appeals process for out-of-state training providers deemed ineligible as an Eligible Training Provider.

- Taking appropriate enforcement actions against providers and programs that intentionally provide inaccurate information or that substantially violate the requirements of WIOA.

- Disseminating the State ETPL along with performance and cost information for each provider, for use by the public and the local workforce development boards.

- Facilitating data matches between ETP records and Unemployment Insurance wage data to assist in providing a mechanism for ETP annual performance reporting and compliance with DOL performance guidance.

- Establishing a mechanism for adding Registered Apprenticeship programs to the ETPL and verifying registered status at least every two years.
- Convening WIOA Core Partners, Registered Apprenticeship and local workforce development boards as necessary to coordinate ETPL requirements.

- Establishing an appeals procedure for providers to appeal a denial of eligibility

Local Workforce Development Boards are responsible for the following:

- Verifying the initial minimum eligibility of entities providing a program of training services.

- Reviewing in-state applications to recommend approval or renewal, the overall effectiveness of providers and programs to determine initial and continued eligibility based on ETP criteria.

- Notifying in-state providers/programs of determination, if approved or denied.

- Reviewing applications to recommend possible termination of ETPs due to the provider's submission of inaccurate eligibility and performance information or the provider's substantial violation of WIOA requirements.

- Reviewing training provider applications within 30 working days of the receipt of application.

- Working with the State to ensure there are sufficient numbers and types of providers of training services, including eligible providers with expertise in assisting individuals with disabilities and eligible providers with expertise in assisting adults in need of adult education and literacy activities.

- Ensuring the accessibility and use of the State ETPL and use of the programs through the local one-stop delivery system, ensuring the information is available to inform consumer choice.

- Identify in-demand sectors or occupations for the local area by using relevant labor market information.

- Ensuring priority consideration for programs of training that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials and are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area.

- Recommending to the state, as necessary, removal of an eligible training provider from the ETPL with appropriate justification.

- Facilitating and supporting the appeals process for training providers deemed ineligible as an Eligible Training Provider. · For the purposes of the statewide list, LWDBs may not require additional criteria and information from local providers; or set higher levels of performance than those required by the State criteria.

- Regarding Registered Apprenticeship programs, LWDBs may not require additional criteria and information from local providers to become or remain eligible in that local area; or set higher levels of performance than those required by the State as criteria for local programs to become or remain eligible to provide services in that local area.

The State’s ETPL policy contains further details, such as exceptions to the ITA and ETPL requirements.
**Performance Requirements.**

As of July 1, 2017 all Eligible Training Providers are required to include the performance data to remain eligible and obtain subsequent certification. To support this effort, that state has acquired performance information already in existence at other state agencies. Once training providers and their programs have two years of data for the WIOA Performance Indicators stipulated in section 116, the state will collect the required information, determine performance outcomes and make the performance data available through the NM Workforce Connection On-Line System, for each training provider on the ETPL. Programs that have not been in existence for at least two years will be required to provide or support acceptable data sharing action to collect student data for the time period available. Programs with less than 10 students enrolled will not be included in the published performance data.

**CONDITIONS FOR REMOVAL**

Local boards may recommend for State removal or denial of an application, providers or programs, for a period of not less than 2 years, for the following reasons.

- If the provider knowingly supplies false performance information, misrepresents costs or services, or substantially violates requirements of WIOA regulations, including 29 C.F.R. part 38. Such providers are liable to repay all adult, dislocated worker and youth funds received during the period of non-compliance.

- If the provider fails to meet the established criteria. Situations that will result in removal include but are not limited to the following:
  - failure to meet established performance levels;
  - failure to provide all required performance information for continued eligibility; and
  - failure to maintain accreditation required for professional licensure.

- If the training provider or program is temporarily unable to meet the objectives of the approved program(s).

A training provider that is removed from the list for the reasons stated above may re-apply for continued eligibility when they can demonstrate that they meet all the requirements. Training providers debarred by the Federal government are not permitted to be placed or remain on the ETPL.

If a training provider or a program of training services is removed from the list while WIOA participants are enrolled, the participants may complete the program unless the provider or program has lost state licensing, certification, or authorization to operate by the appropriate state oversight agency.

**ETPL Removal Process.**

Local Workforce Development Boards shall inform the State in writing to inform of the removal of an eligible training provider/program and include the reason(s) for removal. The local boards must inform the training provider in writing; include the reason(s) for the removal; and provide information on the appeal process.
**Appeals Process.**

Training providers can appeal the rejection of their program for inclusion on the ETPL or the subsequent termination of eligibility. An appeal must be submitted in writing via email to NMDWS within 14 days after notification of the decision to remove. The appeal must include the justification for the appeal. The training provider also has the right to request a hearing to discuss their appeal. An ETP appeals board will be assembled by NMDWS. The appeals board will schedule a hearing and make a decision within 60 days of appeal. This will be a final decision.

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

**PRIORITY POPULATIONS.** Section 134(c) (3) (E) of WIOA establishes a priority requirement with respect to funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities. Under this section, Workforce Connection Center staff responsible for these funds must give priority to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient in the provision of individualized career services. Under WIA, priority was required to be given to public assistance recipients and low-income individuals when states and local areas determined that allocated funds were limited. Under WIOA, priority will be provided regardless of the level of funds.

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions has state-level policies that support the implementation of the State’s strategies, including ensuring priority of services for targeted populations, as described in the list of policies below. Also, NMDWS issues State Technical Assistance Guides regarding WIOA that govern eligibility for the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs, and other programmatic processes.

The WIOA Eligibility State Technical Assistance Guide discusses Order of Priority, as follows:

Priority of Service must always be given to covered persons (i.e. veterans and eligible spouses, including widows and widowers) regardless of whether or not the priority of service is in place. Priority of service is required for the provision of career services and training services, including individual training accounts, veterans’ priority as well as priority to public assistance recipients and low income individuals required in WIOA regulations will be established as follows:

- First priority will be provided to recipients of public assistance, low-income or individuals who are basic skills deficient who are also veterans or eligible spouses of veterans.
Second priority will be provided to recipients of public assistance, low-income, or individuals who are basic skills deficient who are not veterans or spouses of veterans.

Third priority will be provided to veterans or eligible spouses of veterans who are not recipients of public assistance, low-income or basic skills deficient.

Last priority will be provided to Adults in need of service who are not recipients of public assistance, not low-income or basic skills deficient.

In addition, NMDWS has a Priority of Service policy that prioritizes use of WIOA Adult formula funds for services to recipients of public assistance, other low income individuals and individuals that are basic skills deficient, in addition to priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses of veterans. NMDWS also monitors for these requirements through on-site and desk audits to assure adherence to this policy.

5. DESCRIBE THE STATE’S CRITERIA REGARDING LOCAL AREA TRANSFER OF FUNDS BETWEEN THE ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

NMDWS issued Technical Assistance Guidance Letter 17-002, Transfer of Formula Funds, on August 28, 2017, to local boards to provide guidance and specific procedures for transferring of funds between the Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs by outlining the criteria and information required when submitting a request to transfer.

BACKGROUND.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, in section 133(b)(4) authorizes the transfer of up to 100% of funds between the Adult and the Dislocated Worker programs. The WIOA final rule adds a requirement that the Governor establish criteria or factors for approving local workforce development board transfers of funds between the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and that these criteria must be in a written policy, such as in the State Plan or other written policy. The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) is designated as the State Administrative Entity and is authorized to act on behalf of the Governor for the implementation of requirements of WIOA.

The ability to transfer funds between the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs is intended to give greater flexibility to LWDBs to be able to manage all available funds to best meet the workforce needs of their local areas. The transfer of funds should be driven by demonstrated need in a specific program and the ability to utilize those dollars more effectively to achieve the objectives of the local area.

Local boards are accountable for meeting the negotiated levels of performance for the WIOA primary indicators of performance for the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and for reaching enrollment and expenditure targets. Local boards must consider how they will meet the adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators before requesting fund transfers. When funds are transferred from The Adult program to the Dislocated Worker program the transferred funds adopt the identity of the new fund source and are bound by all of the
requirements of that program. Transferring funds away from the Dislocated Worker program does not relieve the local board of its obligation to achieve any of the performance targets for that program. However, the State anticipates that enrollment, expenditure targets, or costs per participant will be adjusted proportionate to the amount of funds approved for transfer.

CRITERIA AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED WITH TRANSFER REQUEST.

Documentation to be included for transfer request consideration includes the following:

1. Brief analysis to justify the need to transfer the funds that is based on current labor market information; including activities such as the number of TAA petitions and Rapid Response events in the local area, anticipated layoffs based on local economic conditions. Brief analysis will include how these activities will impact regional activities for dislocated workers.
2. Budget documenting the local board will meet the 40% expenditure requirement for funding available during the program year for Adults and Dislocated Workers; and
3. Description of strategies local board will use to guarantee the ability to meet performance measures for the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs as a result of increased and decreased fund amounts.

PROCESS/REQUIREMENTS.

• Local boards must prepare and submit a written request to NMDWS that includes all supporting documentation to justify transfer request.

• NMDWS will review requests and provide a determination within 30 days of receiving a request.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS.

• The transfer of funds cannot result in an overall deficit in any program.

• WIOA allows for transfer of funds, therefore submission of a budget modifications is not required. However, expenditure reports and on-site monitoring should reflect actions taken to implement the approved transfer.

• The transferred funds are subject to all rules of the receiving title/part, including cost limitations and eligibility requirements.

• Performance standards for each title remain unchanged.

C. WITH RESPECT TO YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED IN SECTION 129 OF WIOA—

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


WIOA outlines a broader youth vision that supports an integrated service delivery system and provides a framework through which states and local areas can leverage other federal, state, local, and philanthropic resources to support in-school youth (ISY) and out-of-school (OSY).

New Mexico is committed to providing high quality services for all young people. Beginning with career exploration and continued support for educational attainment. Opportunities are available for skills training for in-demand industries, such as pre-apprenticeships or internships. Also assisting in enrollment into post-secondary education, or a registered apprenticeship.

The Youth Program assists young people ages 14-24. WIOA funds provided to the state help local workforce development areas with resources. This allows to deliver comprehensive youth services that focus on assisting low-income youth with barriers to employment or post-secondary education. Local board grant agreements require funds to be allocated to a local area for eligible youth under WIOA. Fund are to be used to provide an objective assessment of academic and skill levels, and service needs of each participant. Service strategies that are linked to participant performance and identification of career pathways that include education and employment goals. Youth service providers are required to support 75 percent out-of-school youth and 20 percent work experience expenditure rate as required by WIOA.

Grant agreements with local boards require the boards to hold local youth providers and programs responsible for making the following services available to youth participants:

- tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent or for a recognized postsecondary credential;
- alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;
- paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component academic and occupational education, which may include: summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training opportunities;
- occupational skill training;
- education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- leadership development opportunities;
- supportive services;
- adult mentoring;
- follow-up services;
• comprehensive guidance and counseling;
• financial literacy education;
• entrepreneurial skills training;
• services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area; and
• activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

The goal of the WIOA Youth program is to help youth attain the skills they need to gain meaningful, permanent employment and compete in the twenty-first century workforce. As it relates to program design, the grant agreements with local boards spell out required components of youth programs, which must be incorporated into youth provider contracts and reflected in contract scope of work. Funds allocated to a local area for eligible youth under WIOA section 128(b) must be used to carry out, for eligible youth, programs that:

• provide an objective assessment of the academic levels, skill levels, and service needs of each participant, which assessment shall include a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes (including interests and aptitudes for nontraditional jobs), supportive service needs, and developmental needs of such participant, for the purpose of identifying appropriate services and career pathways for participants;
• develop service strategies for each participant that are directly linked to 1 or more of the indicators of performance described in WIOA section 116(b)(2)(A)(ii), and that shall identify career pathways that include education and employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services for the participant considering the assessment conducted; and
• provide activities leading to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or a recognized postsecondary credential; preparation for postsecondary educational and training opportunities; strong linkages between academic instructions; preparation for unsubsidized employment opportunities, in appropriate cases, and; effective connections to employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations of the local and regional labor markets.

**Out-of-School Youth Expenditure Requirement.** WIOA requires a minimum OSY expenditure rate of 75 percent for youth formula-funded program. The 75 percent expenditure rate is a minimum requirement; therefore, local areas may spend up to 100 percent of their local area Youth funds on OSY as directed by local board policy. The OSY expenditure rate for local area funds is calculated after subtracting funds spent on administrative costs. Determination of whether a local area meets the 75 percent OSY expenditure requirement is made upon completion of expenditures of all funds in the specific program year's allotment. Local areas must track funds spent on work experience.
**Expanded Work Experience Focus.** Work experience is a critical WIOA youth program element. As such, local boards must implement the 20 percent minimum work experience expenditure rate. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component academic and occupational education may include the following four categories: summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year; pre-apprenticeship programs; internships and job shadowing; and on-the-job training opportunities. Program expenditures on the work experience program element include wages as well as staffing costs for the development and management of work experiences. The 20 percent minimum is calculated based on non-administrative local area youth funds and is not applied separately for ISY and OSY. Staffing costs must be reasonable and not exceed 10 percent of the work experience expenditures. Local areas must track funds spent on the 20 percent work experience requirement.

To deliver services, local boards procure service providers with expertise in working with populations targeted by WIOA, and incorporate WIOA requirements, oversight and performance expectations through those providers’ contracts to ensure the quality of services provided. Local boards must identify youth service providers based on criteria established in state policy DWS 18-001 and consider the ability of the provider to meet performance and accountability measures based on the primary indicators of performance for youth programs. A complete risk assessment of every provider selected must include the following factors:

1. Cost Realism (Can the services and the performance goals be delivered for the budgeted cost?)
2. Time Table (Can the services and performance goals be met in the projected time table?)
3. Technical Content
4. Management/Fiscal Capability
5. Qualifications of staff assigned to the project
6. Experience in delivering comparable services
7. Demonstrated Performance
   a. Providers prior experience;
   b. Results of previous monitoring or audit results;
   c. Personnel capabilities (new, experienced, changeover);
   d. Takes timely action to correct deficiencies;
   e. Review financial and performance reports;

Additionally, boards may, at their discretion, implement a pay-for-performance contract strategy for certain elements, for which the local board may reserve and use not more than 10 percent of the total funds allocated to the local area under WIOA section 128(b).
**Highlights of Accomplishments of the Youth Program.** As NMDWS builds a stronger partnership with NM Carl Perkins programs through the Public Education Department College and Career Readiness Bureau, a Work Based Learning Coordinator, partially funded with Carl Perkins funds through the College and Career Readiness Bureau, has been added to the NMDWS WIOA Youth Team. The Work Based Learning Coordinator will work alongside the NMDWS Statewide Youth Engagement Coordinator, with local boards, and one-stop offices state wide to provide guidance on available resources for students engaged in Career Technical Education (CTE).

The Youth Team continues to provide technical assistance and training to the Local Workforce Development Boards and their WIOA funded youth programs and Wagner-Peyser staff on the best and promising practices in youth engagement, strategies for strengthening coordination with youth agencies and organizations, including secondary and post-secondary programs, in an effort to promote statewide awareness of the unique workforce needs of youth.

**Targeted outcomes and goals include:**

- Develop a toolkit of best and promising practices in youth engagement linked to positive youth development principals and youth activities under Title I of the WIOA, based on New Mexico’s available resources and needs.
- Enhance awareness of and improve NMDWS tools and resources designed for youth created to enhance general awareness of the unique workforce needs of youth.
- Develop and facilitate partnerships with statewide youth organizations and agencies to promote unique needs and to identify opportunities for engagement and partnership at both state and local levels.
- Interpret and understand one-stop service delivery components and partners and identify opportunities to enhance and improve youth access and utilization of the workforce system.

**Current examples of activities supporting youth engagement, and targeted outcomes/goals including school districts and government include:**

- In partnership with the New Mexico Out-of-School Time Network and additional community leaders, NMDWS has participated in the creation of HUB ABQ. HUB ABQ is an education, business, and civic collaborative that prepares central New Mexico public school students for successful pursuit of high-wage, high-demand career pathways and facilitates systems change to ensure equitable outcomes.

- As part of Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham’s initiative to increase Youth Career and College Readiness Opportunities, the NMDWS Youth Team in partnership with the Workforce Connection Centers are supporting high schools around the state in providing mock interview opportunities for students. The goal of mock interview events is to provide students throughout New Mexico with the opportunity to enhance their
soft skills, and to help reduce the stress and anxiety that may surround a young person during their first interview, whether it’s for college or a career. We hope to boost confidence by acknowledging strengths during interviews, along with providing constructive feedback in a low-stress environment. NMDWS staff, Wagner-Peyser staff, and Local Workforce Board members will all participate as volunteer interviewers at annual mock interview events scheduled statewide.

- NMDWS created a partnership with ABC Community School Program. Community Schools focus on the integration of academics, health and social services, and youth, family and community engagement, and development, as a strategy to improve student learning and facilitate stronger families and healthier communities. In the partnerships first year, Community School Coordinators became familiar with the NM Career Solutions website, resume building, interviewing skills, and coordinating youth specific job opportunities. NMDWS introduced the 4-week Career Exploration curriculum, and 98 students signed up for Career Exploration. 3 Youth Focused Job and Resource Fairs were coordinated in partnership of NMDWS, ABC, and other agencies. Over 800 young people in Albuquerque attended the 3 events, gaining employment and/or knowledge of work-related resources. The 98 students that signed up for Career Exploration had the skills to: express interest in a job, interview confidently, ask necessary questions, and look professional. The work is being expanded with a goal to institutionalize youth career exploration and job readiness as a service provided in all high schools in Albuquerque.

2. DESCRIE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH AS DESCRIBED IN 129(A)(1)(B), INCLUDING HOW IT WILL LEVERAGE AND ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE.

The state is committed to providing high-quality services for youth and young adults. The Governor’s vision for youth includes ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to develop and achieve career goals through education and workforce training. Youth services should be business driven consistent with all other services within a region and state with the goal of building the workforce of the future. WIOA places a keen emphasis on the need to achieve improved outcomes for out-of-school youth and encourages the alignment of core and other partner programs to better serve this target population. As such, through grant agreements with its four local boards, the state has communicated the required minimum out-of-school youth expenditure rate of 75 percent for the Youth formula-funded program. As it relates to program design, these agreements spell out required components of youth programs, which must be incorporated into youth provider contracts and reflected in contract scope of work.

Specifically, funds allocated to a local area for eligible youth under WIOA section 128(b) must be used to carry out the following program elements.

- Youth programs must provide an objective assessment of the academic levels, skill levels, and service needs of each participant. Assessment must include a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability,
interests, aptitudes (including interests and aptitudes for nontraditional jobs), supportive service needs, and any developmental needs, to identify appropriate services and career pathways for participants.

- Youth programs must develop service strategies for each participant that are directly linked to one or more of the indicators of performance, as described in WIOA section 116(b)(2)(A)(ii). Programs must use assessments to identify career pathways that include education and employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services for the participant.

- Youth programs must provide activities that:
  - lead to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or a recognized postsecondary credential
  - prepare participants for postsecondary educational and training opportunities;
  - include strong linkages between academic instruction;
  - prepare participants for unsubsidized employment opportunities, as appropriate; and
  - provide effective connections to employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations of the local and regional labor markets.

Local boards will be required to identify and select a youth provider with staffing that specializes in positive youth development and engagement, dropout prevention and leadership and work skills readiness. Involving core and other program partners, as appropriate, in conversations with the youth providers will ensure alignment in program design and service delivery for the targeted OSY population. Local boards and partner programs must collectively explore ways to leverage funds and resources to assist youth with barriers to employment, beginning with career exploration and guidance, continued support for educational and credential attainment, opportunities for skills training in in-demand industries and occupations, such as pre-apprenticeships or internships, culminating with a good job along a career pathway, enrollment in post-secondary education, or a Registered Apprenticeship. Examples of services that can be coordinated across core and partner programs for OSY, where appropriate, include the following.

- **Career awareness regarding targeted industry and demand occupations.** Specifically, this involves youth service provider support of youth work readiness and career path development into occupations that are based on appropriate skills levels, with an ultimate goal of ensuring youth have access to options based on their interests and skill levels.

- **Quality educational employment opportunities consistent with local and state goals and priorities.** Specific activities include partnership with local universities, community colleges and technical training providers to identify and develop opportunities for out-of-school youth. For instance, creating a linkage between
youth service providers and providers of adult education to jointly serve youth who lack high school equivalency (HSE) by simultaneously enrolling them in both an HSE course, as well as a credit-bearing course through the WIOA Youth program, could ideally lead to a post-secondary credential or other certification, gainful employment, or even self-sufficiency (particularly if the TANF population is targeted). An emphasis on high school credit recovery, high school equivalency and high school diploma completion and other certification programs will broaden employment opportunities for out of school, at-risk youth and youth with disabilities.

- **Strategies that help prepare youth for success in a range of postsecondary education and career opportunities specifically those defined as high growth and high demand.** Specific activities includes working with local business and employers to understand needs, development of partnerships with universities, community colleges and trade schools to create training opportunities based on those needs. Additionally, local boards should communicate and share with school districts' Carl Perkins liaisons to guide classroom instructions and guidance counselor activities.

- **Other youth service strategies.** Specific activities can include tutoring, alternative secondary school offerings, summer employment opportunities linked to academic and occupational learning, paid and unpaid work experiences, occupational skill training, leadership development opportunities, supportive services, mentoring, follow-up services, and comprehensive guidance and counseling.

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]

[12] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)

WIOA outlines a broader youth vision that supports an integrated service delivery system and provides a framework through which states and local areas can leverage other federal, state, local, and philanthropic resources to support in-school youth (ISY) and out-of-school youth (OSY). The Youth Program focuses on assisting transitional youth ages 14-24, particularly youth who are disadvantaged and have one or more barriers to employment. The goal of the program is to prepare these youth for post-secondary education and employment opportunities, attain educational and/or training credentials, and secure employment that has a positive career outlook.

Local board grant agreements require funds allocated to a local area for eligible youth under WIOA to be used to provide an objective assessment of academic and skill levels, and service needs of each participant, service strategies that are linked to participant performance, and identification of career pathways that include education and employment goals. Youth service providers support the 75 percent out-of-school youth and 20 percent work experience expenditure rate as required by WIOA.
Grant agreements with local boards also require the local youth providers and programs to implement activities following the guidance from WIOA. All of the providers include “youth specialists” available to conduct outreach, assessments, individual and group skills development, and some case management. Local boards will be required to ensure the youth providers include delivery of the 14 elements of service in their overall scope. The following describe services currently in place as well as areas local boards will further develop:

1. **Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidenced-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent or for a recognized postsecondary credential** – Local boards, in partnership with their youth providers and local youth serving organizations focus on all these components as an essential service for youth. All youth providers are implementing tutoring and study skills via group and individual instruction. Evidenced-based dropout prevention activities include case management, mentoring, follow up, incentive based approaches for school attendance. All youth providing agencies support courses for GED completion and all work closely with local school districts regarding access to alternative school options for credit recovery and diploma completion. All youth providers closely monitor youth involved in postsecondary educational opportunities to address challenges and barriers; as well as opportunities to enhance overall performance and outcome.

2. **Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services** – Local boards are engaged in partnership development with local community colleges, alternative educational programs for at-risk youth and young adults, such as YouthBuild, specialized Charter Schools, homeless/runaway shelters and independent and transitional living projects designed specifically for youth and young adults; additionally high school credit recovery and/or GED preparation programs offered through via night schools; community centers, faith based organizations and employers, such as the GED/Trade co-enrollment underway in the Central Region. Strategies also include partnership with juvenile justice, including youth drug courts and child welfare staff to assure youth are aware of alternative school services and opportunities to complete high school equivalency.

3. **Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component academic and occupational educational** – Local boards are currently engaged in implementing summer employment opportunities in partnership with local school districts, and city and county governments; On the job training programs currently exist in all four regions - OJT opportunities currently focused on converting internships. Additionally, NMDWS is working in partnership with Public Education to expand business engagement to increase availability of meaningful work-based opportunities, including paid experiences, internships and opportunities for job shadowing.

4. **Occupational skills training** – Local boards in the Central and Northern regions of the state benefit from an agreement currently in place with local community colleges to training entry level health care skills and early childhood certification courses; additionally the state has a Job Corps program and YouthBuild. All four local boards currently offer job readiness skill development to assist youth with career awareness, communication, and social and soft skill improvement. An NMDWS tool entitled Career Exploration is available to all public and charter schools to increase career exploration and access to labor market information to drive career pathway planning. Strategies also include staff training and awareness on youth engagement and expansion of
internships and apprenticeships programs statewide – NMDWS hosts an annual Youth Summit for youth providers to support best practices and awareness of the unique needs of youth.

5. **Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for specific occupational cluster** - As stated above, two community colleges are currently offering specific training in health care cluster, i.e. certified nurse assistant and early childhood certifications. Additionally Job Corps, YouthBuild, and HSE/Trade co-enrollment programs are available, however not statewide. Strategies to be explored and expanded include creation of additional focused occupational clusters with local community colleges.

6. **Leadership development opportunities** - Currently in New Mexico, youth serving agencies include civic engagement, peer-to-peer mentorship; service learning and leadership skill development as part of their overall work. Additionally projects such as Mission: Graduate, Together for Brothers and NMCAN, organized in the central region, focus on awareness of the importance of youth engagement and leadership development as a core principle to increase graduation and employability of youth. NMDWS Youth Engagement Teams is concentrating efforts on Eastern and Southwestern regions to identify and strengthen youth serving organizations awareness of workforce tools, resources and strategies. Although the Central Region has the largest concentration of disconnected youth, as well as most organized youth serving organizations, efforts are needed to bolster capacity in other regions, specifically Eastern and Southwestern regions.

7. **Supportive services** - activities currently underway statewide include identifying items needed to enable youth to successfully enter and maintain employment. Case management is the primary vehicle used to identify these needs, as well as resource development to identify partners to support urgent and immediate needs such as transportation (i.e., bus passes), child care, work uniforms and supplies, etc. Strategies to be explored includes a comprehensive review of support services currently being provided and available funds, as well as identification of community partners and funding available for youth specific needs. NMDWS Monitoring Team conducts quarterly and an annual on-site review and supportive services for youth are closely monitored to assure they are being implemented effectively and timely.

8. **Adult mentoring** - Youth providers currently include adult mentoring in their services. Youth have access to youth specialists who provide support. Mission Graduate, NMCAN and Together for Brothers, current partners with the Central Region also have an adult mentoring component. Strategies to be explored includes exploration of statewide projects such as My Brother's Keeper, Together for Brothers and the Making Connections Project, as well as projects funded through NM Children Youth and Families Department to learn how adult/mentorship components offered align with the goals of employment. Partnerships with youth serving organizations needs to be strengthened in the Easter and Southwestern Regions.

9. **Follow-up Services** - Youth providers are required to conduct follow up with youth. Follow up includes one-on-one review of employment/training status, advocacy with employers and training/educational institutions, as well as feedback/survey from youth about services and supports. Strategies to be explored include increased partnership with youth to inform additional follow-up services needed to increase overall success,
i.e., “Let’s ask youth what works best!” The NMDWS Youth Engagement Team monitors this closely and has been providing on-going technical assistance to strengthen efforts.

10. **Comprehensive guidance and counseling** - Youth providing agencies currently have youth specialists available to meet with youth one-on-one. This service includes assessment, career exploration and guidance, and one-on-one support. NMDWS also provides two on-line tools and a curriculum to strengthen these efforts. Career Solutions and Why I Work, on-line tools guide youth through career exploration, labor market information, financial literacy and career pathway planning. The tools have proven to be valuable for career guidance and counseling.

11. **Financial literacy education** - Youth providing agencies utilize the FDIC’s Money Smart Program© that includes curriculum modules on banking and financial goal setting. They also utilize the “Why I Work” on-line tool to help youth link career pathway with future financial goals and spending.

12. **Entrepreneurial skills training** - Youth providers have access to Small Business Development Centers to provide low cost training and consultation. Strategies for improvement include expanding partnerships with mentioned agencies to link students with small business owners for mentorship and job shadowing to create greater awareness of the small business development.

13. **Services that provide labor market and employment information about in demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area;** - This service is foundational for all the local boards. Each board is required to review current labor and employer needs, and to understand what occupations are needed in the local area. All local boards currently are engaged in development of summer and seasonal employment opportunities available for youth. Strategies to be explored include developing information specific to youth employment and beginning to understand what occupations are available specifically for youth, specifically in relationship to internships and registers apprenticeships. Youth Providers are utilizing an on-line tools customized for youth called Career Solutions and Why I Work – both tools provide easy to understand concepts about labor market information and how to link with career pathway plans.

14. **Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training** - Youth providing agencies currently have youth specialists available to meet with youth. Their services include assessment, career exploration and guidance, as well as group and one-on-one training on postsecondary education and training preparedness. Youth specialists are also linked to postsecondary institutions, receiving updates on registration/eligibility requirements. Strategies to be explored includes, review of postsecondary and training partnerships to understand challenges and barriers experienced by youth - use information to drive transition focus; “What helped prepare youth best? What failed and why?”

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.

State Definitions:

- “Requires additional assistance to complete and educational program, or to secure and hold employment” - Because the State has chosen not to define “additional assistance” as it relates to WIOA Youth program eligibility, each local board has the responsibility for determining its own definition of this eligibility category. If a local board wishes to use this eligibility category, a local policy must be developed that specifies what conditions must be met for a youth to require additional assistance and what documentation is needed to demonstrate this eligibility category. In each local area, not more than five percent of the in-school youth under WIOA Section 129(3) (B) may be eligible under “individual who requires additional assistance” to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. The state monitoring guide for the youth program requires the program monitors to review the local board policies for compliance during the annual monitoring. All policies are reviewed annually during the state onsite monitoring.


New Mexico State statute addresses the definition of “attending school” in terms of a “qualified student,” and New Mexico Administrative Code addresses “not attending school,” in terms of “disenrollment,” as follows.

**2013 New Mexico Statutes, Chapter 22 - Public Schools, Article 8 - Public School Finance, Section 22-8-2 - Definitions. (2009)**

As used in the Public School Finance Act:

B. "membership" means the total enrollment of qualified students on the current roll of a class or school on a specified day. The current roll is established by the addition of original entries and reentries minus withdrawals. Withdrawals of students, in addition to students formally withdrawn from the public school, include students absent from the public school for as many as ten consecutive school days; provided that withdrawals do not include students in need of early intervention and habitual truants the school district is required to intervene with and keep in an educational setting as provided in Section 22-12-9 NMSA 1978.
M. "qualified student" means a public school student who:

1. has not graduated from high school;

2. is regularly enrolled in one-half or more of the minimum course requirements approved by the department for public school students; and

3. in terms of age:
   a. is at least five years of age prior to 12:01 a.m. on September 1 of the school year;
   b. is at least three years of age at any time during the school year and is receiving special education services pursuant to rules of the department; or
   c. has not reached the student's twenty-second birthday on the first day of the school year and is receiving special education services pursuant to rules of the department.

New Mexico Administrative Code, 6.10.4
Title 6, Primary and Secondary Education, Chapter 10, Public School Administration - Procedural Requirements, Part 4, Disenrollment When A Student Is Not Legally Enrolled In School.

6.10.4.1
ISSUING AGENCY: Public Education Department

6.10.4.2
SCOPE: This rule applies to local school boards and school districts.

6.10.4.3
STATUTORY AUTHORITY: This rule is adopted pursuant to Sections 22-2-1 and 22-2-2, NMSA 1978.
6.10.4.6
OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this rule is to establish procedures for the disenrollment of students who are not legally enrolled in school.

6.10.4.7
DEFINITIONS: As used in this rule the following words, terms and phrases shall have the meaning set forth in this paragraph:

1. "Administrative authority" means the local school district superintendent, a principal or the designee of such person.
2. "Disenrollment" means discontinuance of the student's attendance at school.

1. "Enrollment" means registration as a student on the rolls of the local school district.

1. "Invalid enrollment" refers to an enrolled student or a conditionally enrolled student who has not met the requirements of law for enrollment in school, either as to age, residence, immunization, or other reasons, or has not complied with conditional enrollment requirements.

1. "School" means public school.

1. "School day" means each day of the school year during which the membership of students is computed pursuant to the Public School Finance Act.

1. "Student" means a "qualified student" eligible to attend public school, as that term is defined in Section 22-8-2, NMSA 1978.

6.10.4.8
LIMITATION ON ENROLLMENT: Where a student is found to have an invalid enrollment the student shall be disenrolled from school in accordance with the procedure set forth in Section 6.10.4.9 NMAC below.

6.10.4.9
PROCEDURE: Where the administrative authority has reason to believe a student is enrolled under an invalid enrollment the administrative authority shall take the following action:
1. Preliminary notice of contemplated action of disenrollment. The administrative authority shall give a preliminary notice of contemplated action of disenrollment to the student, through his/her parent or guardian, of the contemplated disenrollment and the reasons therefore. The preliminary notice shall be in writing, and mailed to the student not later than ten (10) school days before the notice of disenrollment is to be mailed. The preliminary notice shall state that: (1) the student has a right to respond, either in writing or in person, to the administrative authority before the date of the contemplated action of disenrollment, and (2) the student may attempt to resolve the matter informally by presenting adequate evidence to the administrative authority to refute the alleged reasons for the contemplated action of disenrollment.

2. Stay of proceedings. Where the question of the student’s enrollment is under review by an administrative agency in the state of New Mexico or any court of competent jurisdiction, and written documentation has been filed with the administrative authority establishing the pendency of the action, all proceedings under this rule shall be stayed pending final determination of the question by that agency or court.

3. Notice of disenrollment. Where the student has not presented satisfactory evidence to cure the invalid enrollment and has been afforded notice as required by Subsection A of Section 6.10.4.9 NMAC above, the administrative authority shall give written notice to the student, through his/her parent or guardian, that the student will be disenrolled. The notice of disenrollment shall be mailed ten (10) school days after the mailing of the preliminary notice of contemplated action of disenrollment. The notice of disenrollment must include a copy of this rule and must advise the student, through his/her parent or guardian, of the following.

4. Subject to the procedure in Subsection C, Paragraph (2) of Section 6.10.4.9 below, if satisfactory evidence to refute the alleged reasons for the contemplated action of disenrollment is not submitted to the administrative authority within ten (10) school days from the date of mailing of the notice of disenrollment, the student will be disenrolled.

5. The student may, at any time within ten (10) school days after the date of mailing of the notice of disenrollment, present the administrative authority with an oral or written request for a hearing on the matter.

   a. The hearing shall be held within five (5) school days after receipt of a request for hearing.

   b. The student may appear at the hearing, with or without counsel, to refute the alleged reasons for the disenrollment.
c. The student may present witnesses or evidence at the hearing, as well as question any witnesses supporting disenrollment.

6. Within five (5) school days after the hearing, the hearing officer shall issue and mail to the student, through his/her guardian, the decision setting forth his/her decision and the reasons therefore.

   a. If the hearing officer decides in favor of the student, the matter shall be closed. If the hearing officer decides against the student, the student shall be disenrolled from school five (5) school days from the date of mailing of the decision.

   b. If no request for a hearing is received within the time provided, the student shall be disenrolled from school and shall be permitted to re-enroll only when all legal requirements for enrollment are met.

7. Hearing officer. The administrative authority may designate one or more of its staff to act as hearing officer for disenrollment matters; who, upon referral of the case from the administrative authority, shall follow the procedures set forth herein to afford the student and his/her parent or guardian due process.

8. Hearing procedure. The hearing shall be set within five (5) school days after an oral or written request for hearing is received by the administrative authority.

9. The administrative authority/hearing officer shall conduct the hearing informally but with dignity, firmness and fairness appropriate to the importance of the proceedings.

10. Written minutes of the proceedings shall be kept. A verbatim transcript shall not be required.

11. The hearing shall be conducted to afford the student due process, and shall provide:

   a. an opportunity for the student and his/her parent or guardian to respond at the hearing;

   b. the right to present evidence;

   c. the right to confront adverse witnesses;
d. the right of cross examination;

e. the right to be represented by counsel;

f. the right to have a decision based solely on the applicable legal rules and the evidence presented at the hearing.

12. Within five (5) school days after the hearing, the hearing officer shall prepare and mail to the student, through his/her parent or guardian, a written decision and the reasons therefore.

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.

State Definitions: Basic" skill deficient -

- For Adult - An individual who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

- For Youth - An individual who computes or solves problems, reads, writes, or speaks English at or below the eighth grade level on a generally accepted standardized test or comparable score on a criterion-referenced test.

D. SINGLE-AREA STATE REQUIREMENTS

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

1. ANY COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD THAT REPRESENT DISAGREEMENT WITH THE PLAN. (WIOA SECTION 108(D)(3).)

2. THE ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE 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).)

Not Applicable

5. THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS USED TO AWARD THE SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR TITLE I ACTIVITIES.

Not Applicable

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.

Not Applicable

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.

Not Applicable

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.

Not Applicable

E. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

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

1. IDENTIFIES THE STATUTORY OR REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR WHICH A WAIVER IS REQUESTED AND THE GOALS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, INTENDS TO ACHIEVE AS A RESULT OF THE WAIVER AND HOW THOSE GOALS RELATE TO THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

2. DESCRIBES THE ACTIONS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, HAS UNDERTAKEN TO REMOVE STATE OR LOCAL STATUTORY OR REGULATORY BARRIERS;

3. DESCRIBES THE GOALS OF THE WAIVER AND THE EXPECTED PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES IF THE REQUEST IS GRANTED;

4. DESCRIBES HOW THE WAIVER WILL ALIGN WITH THE DEPARTMENT’S POLICY PRIORITIES, SUCH AS:

   A. SUPPORTING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT;

   B. CONNECTING EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRATEGIES;

   C. SUPPORTING WORK-BASED LEARNING;

   D. IMPROVING JOB AND CAREER RESULTS, AND

   E. OTHER GUIDANCE ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT.
5. DESCRIBES THE INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER, INCLUDING HOW THE WAIVER WILL IMPACT SERVICES FOR DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS WITH MULTIPLE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT; AND

6. DESCRIBES THE PROCESSES USED TO:
   A. MONITOR THE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE WAIVER;
   B. PROVIDE NOTICE TO ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER;
   C. PROVIDE ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE REQUEST;
   D. ENSURE MEANINGFUL PUBLIC COMMENT, INCLUDING COMMENT BY BUSINESS AND ORGANIZED LABOR, ON THE WAIVER.
   E. COLLECT AND REPORT INFORMATION ABOUT WAIVER OUTCOMES IN THE STATE’S WIOA ANNUAL REPORT.

7. THE SECRETARY MAY REQUIRE THAT STATES PROVIDE THE MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE ABOUT THE OUTCOMES OF THE EXISTING WAIVER IN CASES WHERE THE STATE SEEKS RENEWAL OF A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WAIVER.

Not Applicable

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>The State Plan must include</th>
<th>Include</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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);</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The State Plan must include

7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7); Yes

8. The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan; Yes

9. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; Yes

10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report. Yes

11. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3); Yes

ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

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

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each
Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>PY 2020 Expected Level</th>
<th>PY 2020 Negotiated Level</th>
<th>PY 2021 Expected Level</th>
<th>PY 2021 Negotiated Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)</td>
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<td>Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)</td>
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<td>7,359.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credential Attainment Rate</td>
<td>69.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measurable Skill Gains</td>
<td>63.6%</td>
<td>63.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effectiveness in Serving Employers</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ "Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

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

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the
States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

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<tr>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>PY 2020 Expected Level</th>
<th>PY 2020 Negotiated Level</th>
<th>PY 2021 Expected Level</th>
<th>PY 2021 Negotiated Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>75.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>73.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>7,812.00</td>
<td>7,812.00</td>
<td>7,812.00</td>
<td>7,812.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credential Attainment Rate</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurable Skill Gains</td>
<td>62.0%</td>
<td>62.0%</td>
<td>62.0%</td>
<td>62.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness in Serving Employers</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ “Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.
For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

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

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

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<tr>
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<th>PY 2021 Expected Level</th>
<th>PY 2021 Negotiated Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td>66.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
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<td>65.0%</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
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<td>Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credential Attainment Rate</td>
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<td>Measurable Skill Gains</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effectiveness in Serving Employers</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
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¹ “Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR WAGNER-PEYSER PROGRAM
(EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)

All Program-Specific Requirements provided for the WIOA core programs in this section must be addressed for either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

A. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE 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.

Wagner-Peyser does recognize the flexibility to allow non-merit staff to administer employment services. In the past year, the Agency has worked toward a more comprehensive service delivery model – Career Ready. This model calls for a case-management-
approach to service delivery, and at the same time aims to achieve consistency in each activity within the model. That being said, limiting deviation from merit staff would create gaps in our ability to measure the effectiveness of the Career Ready model in various and diverse communities.

We will continue to only allow merit staff to assist in the following: job-search assistance, job referral, reemployment services for unemployment insurance (UI) claimants, and recruitment services for employers with job openings. Merit staff services would also include the administration system of the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program specialists (DVOPs) or Local Veterans’ Employment Representatives (LVERs) to have permission to complete the application specific to veterans. Wagner-Peyser will re-evaluate the use of non-merit staff practices in other states and determine if emerging practices lend themselves to the state’s demographic and economic landscape.

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

All Area managers (DWS specific) and staff are required to take two trainings monthly on issues related to career pathway development for job seekers, labor market needs to focus on employer’s needs, individual professional development and training on various partnerships with other agencies. Additionally, all staff are required to development on the use of auditing and case management of clients.

NMDWS will designate professional dates throughout the year, providing additional training to Wagner-Peyser staff at One-Stop Centers. Starting in Q2 of the fiscal year 2020, NMDWS will designate one day per region to focus on professional development to address soft skills trainings, career growth and leadership.

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

Quarterly Meetings with NMDWS staff and all partners located within the one stop centers, to discuss partnership needs to focus on participants needing orientation and training to educate them on benefits and programs to remove participants prior to UI benefits being exhausted.

B. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION AND MEANINGFUL ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING ASSISTANCE IN FILING A CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION THROUGH ONE-STOP CENTERS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA AS A CAREER SERVICE

The Unemployment Insurance Correspondence Module can be accessed by all Workforce Connection Center and partner staff when assisting individuals with UI issues, as well as by individuals working independently on computers in the resource rooms in the Workforce Connection Centers. The correspondence module includes the top 25 pieces of UI claims.
correspondence and the top 25 pieces of UI tax correspondence and provides a helpful tool for individuals applying and certifying for benefits and for employers to get answers to frequently asked questions about letters they receive from NMDWS. Once an individual has searched in the module for the type of letter they received, they can click on the title to find answers to questions including: why this letter was sent to them, what the letter means, what they can do next, where they are in the claims or tax processes, and who they can contact if they have further questions. They are also reminded that the answers to these questions are general answers for informational purposes only and not specific to their own claim. At the bottom of the screen, they will also find sample letters in PDF format that they can view to see if this matches the letter that they may have received. NMDWS has provided PDF samples of many of the standard letters in an effort to provide our customers with more information related to the Unemployment Insurance program. These PDFs include translated samples of letters that are not specific to any individual claim and are for general purposes only in order to better assist our customers.

Staff are able to direct customers to the “View Correspondence” section of the UI Tax and Claims system to retrieve correspondence and any accompanying instructions.

For further assistance that falls outside of the scope of the Workforce Connection Centers, staff assist customers with contacting the UI Operations Center, either via direct phone line or electronically.

**Outreach Material and Communication Tools**

NMDWS launched the “What You Should Know about UI” video and information series on the main NMDWS website and the NMDWS YouTube channel, and is accessible to NMDWS employees and partner staff in the Workforce Connection Centers. “What You Should Know About UI” includes several topic areas for both individuals receiving benefits and employers paying Unemployment Insurance taxes in New Mexico. In addition to the information available on each of the pages, each topic area includes a short video. Spanish versions are available for select videos.

- 10 Things
- Minimize UI Taxes
- UI Fraud
- Common Mistakes o Search for Work
- UI Taxes
- Appeals
- Login UI System
- Login UI System (Spanish)

On the NMDWS main website (www.dws.state.nm.us), “How Do I” questions are available for individuals filing or certifying for benefits. These FAQs cover information from filing for benefits to the callback features on the 1-877-664-6984 toll-free number for the UI Operations Center.

In order to provide robust information to individuals interacting with Workforce Connection Center and partner staff, various publications are designed, routinely updated, and printed, and
then provided to all Workforce Connection Centers, local staff, and partners around the state. NMDWS has been diligent over the last year to provide all UI publications in English and Spanish, and in print as well as in PDF on various websites including www.dws.state.nm.us and www.jobs.state.nm.us. These publications include: The UI Handbook; “UI Program Overview” brochure; “UI Quick Facts;” and various additional information about logging into the UI Tax and Claims system and work search requirements.

Filing a Claim

Customers who want to file a claim and who come into the local Workforce Connection Centers are assisted with general information, then provided with direct access to an onsite computer and/or direct telephone line to file the claim.

Staff is currently asked to keep this information generic due to the potential complexities of each customer situation and the desire to avoid inconsistencies and errors.

NMDWS has a centralized UI customer interface to ensure consistency and has found that this is a more effective approach.

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA)

As part of the RESEA program described in the previous section:

- Staff has access to the UI system to review each customer’s electronically submitted work search activities.
- Staff report, on a daily basis, all RESEA UI-related activity to the central UI Operations Center for purposes of creating and adjudicating eligibility issues.

C. DESCRIBE THE STATE’S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UI CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

If an unemployment insurance claimant is required to register and seek work, the claimant must have an active job seeker account while receiving UI benefits or appealing a determination. Job seekers self-register by completing the online application on the internet-based Workforce Connection Online System or can register in person in a Workforce Connection Center. Workforce Connection Centers generally provide public-access to computers for online self-registration, and staff-assisted registration.

This background information in the job seeker's account serves as the foundation for resumes; advertisement of job seeker skills and experience to employers; assists staff in performing a good match when connecting job seekers to job listings; and positions the job seeker to take advantage of the full functionality of the Workforce Connection Online System.

The UI claimant must meet the following criteria.

- Able - means the claimant must be able to perform suitable work.
- Available - means the claimant must be ready and willing to accept suitable work if a job is available.
- Actively Seeking Work - means claimant must be actively looking for work.
- Claimants are required to certify that they meet the three criteria above weekly by phone or internet.
• Claimants must keep a written record of all contacts for audit purposes.

Employment Service staff assist UI claimants with their work search and ensure the following:

• UI claimants receive the full range of employment services available to facilitate their earliest return to work, including referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources; and

• UI claimants requiring assistance in seeking work receive the necessary guidance and counseling to ensure they make a meaningful and realistic work search.

UI claimants and employers can request to use Workforce Connection Center equipment to address matters related to their UI claims, including appeals, without providing specific information on the claim. Workforce Connection Centers must ensure that UI claimants and employers have access to resources and assistance at all times during a Workforce Connection Center’s regular business hours, including access to telephones, computers, fax machines, and a location in which to participate in a UI telephone appeal hearing, if needed.

UI plays a significant role in supporting the reemployment of claimants. The workforce system connects skilled workers with employers who need them, and UI claimants have recent attachment to the workforce, making them a significant part of the available labor pool. Reemployment assistance also includes a focus on military veterans receiving unemployment compensation for ex-service member (UCX) compensation. Military veteran claimants under the UCX program are given priority of service.

WIOA designates the state UI program as a required one-stop partner. As such, local areas have included UI as a required partner in their Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the local boards, the Chief Elected Official, and the one-stop partners that address the operation of the one-stop delivery system. This arrangement facilitates UI claimants’ access to the full range of Workforce Connection Center services both online and in-person. Employment Services staff provides reemployment assistance to UI claimants and other unemployed individuals through its Rapid Response and RESEA programs to help ensure these individuals are searching for and registering for work, and participating in reemployment services.

Rapid Response

As discussed earlier, Rapid Response teams provide services to employers and workers in mass layoff situations and conduct claims filing activities, when needed. Rapid Response staff serves as a key point of contact for businesses and are also used to educate employers about layoff aversion strategies.

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment

Employment Services staff also connect UI claimants to reemployment services through RESEA. The State identifies UI claimants who are most likely to exhaust their benefits and need job search assistance to return to work, and refer them to reemployment services. Through RESEA, New Mexico is able to focus on the reemployment of these individuals. Through RESEA, the State strives to reduce the number of customers who exhaust unemployment benefits through individualized and targeted employment services and counseling, as well as referrals to training.

D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE W-P FUNDS TO SUPPORT UI CLAIMANTS, AND THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN W-P AND UI, AS APPROPRIATE INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:
1. COORDINATION OF AND PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS AS REQUIRED BY THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT;

If an unemployment insurance claimant is required to register and seek work, the claimant must have an active job seeker account while receiving UI benefits or appealing a determination. Job seekers self-register by completing the online application on the internet-based Workforce Connection Online System or can register in person in a Workforce Connection Center. Workforce Connection Centers generally provide public-access to computers for online self-registration, and staff-assisted registration.

This background information in the job seeker’s account serves as the foundation for resumes; advertisement of job seeker skills and experience to employers; assists staff in performing a good match when connecting job seekers to job listings; and positions the job seeker to take advantage of the full functionality of the Workforce Connection Online System.

The UI claimant must meet the following criteria.

- **Able** - means the claimant must be able to perform suitable work.
- **Available** - means the claimant must be ready and willing to accept suitable work if a job is available.
- **Actively Seeking Work** - means the claimant must be actively looking for work.
- **Claimants are required to certify that they meet the three criteria above weekly by phone or internet.**
- **Claimants must keep a written record of all contacts for audit purposes.**

Employment Service staff assist UI claimants with their work search and ensure the following:

- **UI claimants receive the full range of employment services available to facilitate their earliest return to work, including referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources; and**
- **UI claimants requiring assistance in seeking work receive the necessary guidance and counseling to ensure they make a meaningful and realistic work search.**

UI claimants and employers can request to use Workforce Connection Center equipment to address matters related to their UI claims, including appeals, without providing specific information on the claim. Workforce Connection Centers must ensure that UI claimants and employers have access to resources and assistance at all times during a Center’s regular business hours, including access to telephones, computers, fax machines, and a location in which to participate in a UI telephone appeal hearing, if needed.

UI plays a significant role in supporting the reemployment of claimants. The workforce system connects skilled workers with employers who need them, and UI claimants have recent attachment to the workforce, making them a significant part of the available labor pool. Reemployment assistance also includes a focus on military veterans receiving unemployment compensation for ex-service member (UCX) compensation. Military veteran claimants under the UCX program are given priority of service.

WIOA designates the state UI program as a required one-stop partner. As such, local areas have included UI as a required partner in their Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the local boards, the Chief Elected Official, and the one-stop partners that address the operation of the
one-stop delivery system. This arrangement facilitates UI claimants’ access the full range of Workforce Connection Center services both online and in-person. Employment Services staff provides reemployment assistance to UI claimants and other unemployed individuals through its Rapid Response and RESEA programs to help ensure these individuals are searching for and registering for work, and participating in reemployment services.

Rapid Response.

As discussed earlier, Rapid Response teams provide services to employers and workers in mass layoff situations and conducting claim filing activities, when needed. Rapid Response staff serves as a key point of contact for businesses and are also used to educate employers about layoff aversion strategies.

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment

Employment Services staff also connect UI claimants to reemployment services through RESEA. The State identifies UI claimants who are most likely to exhaust their benefits and need job search assistance to return to work, and refer them to reemployment services. Through RESEA, New Mexico is able to focus on the reemployment of these individuals. Through RESEA, the State strives to reduce the number of customers who exhaust unemployment benefits through individualized and targeted employment services and counseling, as well as referrals to training.

2. REGISTRATION OF UI CLAIMANTS WITH THE STATE’S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE IF REQUIRED BY STATE LAW;

If an unemployment insurance claimant is required to register and seek work, the claimant must have an active job seeker account while receiving UI benefits or appealing a determination. Job seekers self-register by completing the online application in the internet-based Workforce Connection Online System or can register in person in a Workforce Connection Center. Workforce Connection Centers generally provide public-access to computers for online self-registration, and staff-assisted registration.

This background information in the job seeker’s account serves as the foundation for resumes; advertisement of job seeker skills and experience to employers; assists staff in performing a good match when connecting job seekers to job listings; and positions the job seeker to take advantage of the full functionality of the Workforce Connection Online System.

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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

If an unemployment insurance claimant is required to register and seek work, the claimant must have an active job seeker account while receiving UI benefits or appealing a determination. Job seekers self-register by completing the online application in the internet-based Workforce Connection Online System or can register in person in a Workforce Connection Center. Workforce Connection Centers generally provide public-access computers for online self-registration, and staff-assisted registration.

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The UI claimant must meet the following criteria.

- Able - means the claimant must be able to perform suitable work.
- Available - means the claimant must be ready and willing to accept suitable work if a job is available.
- Actively Seeking Work - means the claimant must be actively looking for work.
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- Claimants must keep a written record of all contacts for audit purposes.

Employment Service staff assist UI claimants with their work search and ensure the following:

- UI claimants receive the full range of employment services available to facilitate their earliest return to work, including referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources; and
- UI claimants requiring assistance in seeking work receive the necessary guidance and counseling to ensure they make a meaningful and realistic work search.

UI claimants and employers can request to use Workforce Connection Center equipment to address matters related to their UI claims, including appeals, without providing specific information on the claim. Workforce Connection Centers must ensure that UI claimants and employers have access to resources and assistance at all times during a Workforce Connection Center’s regular business hours, including access to telephones, computers, fax machines, and a location in which to participate in a UI telephone appeal hearing, if needed.

UI plays a significant role in supporting the reemployment of claimants. The workforce system connects skilled workers with employers who need them, and UI claimants have recent attachment to the workforce, making them a significant part of the available labor pool. Reemployment assistance also includes a focus on military veterans receiving unemployment compensation for ex-service member (UCX) compensation. Military veteran claimants under the UCX program are given priority of service.
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4. PROVISION OF REFERRALS TO AND APPLICATION ASSISTANCE FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES.

Employment Services are provided as part of the one-stop delivery system. Currently, each local workforce development area has at least one comprehensive workforce development center that includes, at a minimum, three partners: WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker services, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, and access to Unemployment Insurance services. Each Employment Services field office is assigned a site manager who ensures the workforce centers are universally accessible, customer centered, and training is job-driven. This includes providing easy access to and assistance with workforce related activities, such as looking for a job, exploring work preparation and career development services, as well as seamless referral to WIOA employment, on-the-job-training, and occupational training programs. Employment Services staff follow required guidelines regarding referral and placement.

All of the Basic Career Services offered by the WIOA programs must be made available by Wagner-Peyser staff in coordination with other one-stop partners. Employment Services staff may also make available the Individualized Career Services, particularly for those individuals with barriers. Wagner-Peyser services are free of charge for individuals. Employment Services staff work cooperatively and collaboratively with the Local Workforce Development Boards, site managers and operators, and other workforce partners, to effectively serve both employers and jobseekers. A key role of this program is to identify potential matches between employers and jobseekers. The program’s service delivery approach includes self-service, facilitated self-help, and staff-assisted services, and involves a number of other tools and resources as follows.

Worker and Jobseeker Services:

- Work and Skills assessments
- Career pathway development
- Labor Market information
- Workshop and training referrals
- Reemployment services to unemployment insurance claimants
- Job referral assistance
- Assisting in the navigation of the Workforce Connection On-Line system

The New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System is available free of charge to employers and jobseekers. Employers can post their own jobs or provide job listing information to Workforce Connection Center staff for the matching and referral of qualified job seekers. Workforce Connection Center staff can access both employer job listings and job seeker accounts entered into the system. The job listing information allows Workforce Connection
Center staff to evaluate the hiring requirements of the employer, as well as the qualifications of the job seeker. NMCOS Services for jobseekers include:

- online self-registration,
- resume creation,
- online job matching,
- ability to browse jobs and contact employers immediately,
- e-mail notification of matches, if requested,
- current labor market information,
- access to career tools and training resources,
- access to job notices from external job listings, and
- access labor market information.

Employment Services staff also connect UI claimants to reemployment services through RESEA. Through RESEA, New Mexico is able to focus on the reemployment of these individuals. Through RESEA, the State strives to reduce the number of customers who exhaust unemployment benefits through individualized and targeted employment services and counseling, as well as referrals to training.

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.

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.

Assessment of Need

The state of NM is home of 25,044 farms and ranches. There is 14,979 women producers and a total of 43.9 million acres of farmland. The top five labor-intensive crops in the state of New Mexico include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crops</th>
<th>Months of Heavy Activity</th>
<th>Geographic Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pecans</td>
<td>November to January</td>
<td>Luna, Dona Ana, Chaves, &amp; Eddy Counties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crops</td>
<td>Months of Heavy Activity</td>
<td>Geographic Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay-Alfalfa/Sorghum</td>
<td>April to October</td>
<td>Luna, Dona Ana, Chaves &amp; Eddy Counties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onions</td>
<td>May to July</td>
<td>Luna &amp; Dona Ana Counties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>July to October</td>
<td>Luna, Dona Ana, Sierra, &amp; Chaves Counties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>November to December</td>
<td>Luna, Dona Ana, Sierra, Otero, Eddy &amp; Curry Counties</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the Southern part of the state, there continues to be a high demand for farmworkers due to the planting of labor-intensive crops. In the peak season is when most employers hire local seasonal farmworkers and migrant workers. Migrant workers travel from Mexico and cross the Port of Entry daily from El Paso, TX and Columbus, NM. These workers are then transported to the Southern part of the state to meet the farmers’ demands. Employers are reporting a decline in the farmworker workforce and are turning to the H2A program to meet the labor demands. The decline in farmworker workforce and drought are affecting the production of some agricultural commodities in the state. However, this past year the chile crop was affected by a fungus in the dirt called “Verticillium Wilt” which caused some farmers to plow their chile fields and others suffered losses in the yield of chile. In Luna County, there is an increase in agricultural mechanization for the clipping of onions but in other areas it is still labor intensive. A new labor-intensive crop that was introduced and planted last year in Dona Ana and Luna counties was “Hemp” which increased the need for more farmworkers.

Language, limited education, and the lack of employment skills continues to be reported as barriers that make it difficult for MSFW’s to transition to other employment opportunities. MSFWs generally require a lot of assistance finding and securing employment. New Mexico farmworkers predominately speak Spanish; therefore, the need for education services is required for English Language Learner (ELL) and High School Equivalency completion. New Mexico farm workers continue to struggle to secure adequate and affordable housing. Also, poor credit and low income affects the farmworker community from acquiring and securing proper housing.

Employer’s needs in New Mexico vary from crop and location. In the Southern part of the state there are enough farm workers locally and migrant workers to fill the jobs for harvesting the crops. However, in other parts of the state (Eastern and Northern), where there is a lack of farm workers, the agricultural employers rely on the H2A program to bring and hire foreign workers from Peru, Germany, South Africa, and Australia to work during the harvest season. Most of these individuals speak English and Spanish and can communicate well with their employers.

New Mexico employment declines are the result of multiple factors, such as the older generation is retiring, and their children are not interested in farmworker activities and are looking for better paying jobs. Although, some of the technology, automation, and the export of goods from Mexico is impacting the agricultural communities in New Mexico.

Higher paying employment opportunities in the oil field and mining industries are drawing farmworkers to these jobs which is affecting the farmworker workforce in the state.
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

Agricultural Crop and Labor Data

The New Mexico Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the National Agricultural Statistics Service and the annual New Mexico Agricultural Statistics are the agencies utilized to obtain data for agricultural activities. The data published by these agencies is the primary source of information for the MSFW needs assessment and identifies labor intensive agricultural crops throughout the state, including timelines for crops, and peak period dates by county.

Assessment of Agricultural Activity

The following tables are a summary of the previous program year's Agricultural crop activities, indicating each major MSFW labor intensive agricultural crops, the months of activities for each crop, and activities by county.
## Planting and Harvesting Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Field Crops</strong></td>
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<td>Corn, Grain</td>
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<td>Hay, Alfalfa</td>
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<td>Peanuts for Nuts</td>
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<td>Sorghum, Grain</td>
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<td>Wheat, Winter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chile Peppers</td>
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<td>Onions</td>
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<td><strong>Fruits and Nuts</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pecans</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Legend:**
- **Usual Planting Dates**
- **Begin Harvest**
- **Most Harvested**
- **End Harvest**
### Miscellaneous Crops and Livestock – New Mexico 2017 Census of Agriculture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Farms</th>
<th>Acres Harvested</th>
<th>Principal Counties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apples</td>
<td>832</td>
<td>1,153</td>
<td>Lincoln, Otero, Rio Arriba, Santa Fe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apricots</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>Doña Ana, Otero, Rio Arriba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantaloupe</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>Doña Ana, San Juan, Sandoval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherries (Sweet)</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>Mora, Otero, Rio Arriba, Santa Fe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumbers</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Rio Arriba, San Juan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapes</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>1,280</td>
<td>Not published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>828</td>
<td>Doña Ana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursery Crops</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>2,340</td>
<td>Not published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oats</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>Mora, Rio Arriba, Sandoval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaches</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>Bernalillo, Doña Ana, Rio Arriba, Valencia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pears</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Bernalillo, Lincoln, Rio Arriba, Taos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pistachios</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>Not published</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pumpkins</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>2,223</td>
<td>Not published</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snap Beans</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Luna, Rio Arriba, Santa Fe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Squash</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>McKinley, San Juan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet Corn</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>657</td>
<td>Rio Arriba, Roosevelt, Sandoval, San Juan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomatoes</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>Bernalillo, Rio Arriba, Santa Fe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watermelons</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>1,503</td>
<td>Not published</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Livestock

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livestock</th>
<th>Farms</th>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Principal Counties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bison</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4,942</td>
<td>Not published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ducks</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>6,397</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geese</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>3,481</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horses</td>
<td>8,883</td>
<td>43,366</td>
<td>Doña Ana, McKinley, Rio Arriba, San Juan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llamas and Alpacas</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>1,081</td>
<td>Bernalillo, Santa Fe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mules, Burros, and Donkeys</td>
<td>1,092</td>
<td>2,305</td>
<td>Colfax, McKinley, San Juan, Valencia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkeys</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>11,099</td>
<td>Not published</td>
</tr>
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</table>

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census 2017</th>
<th>Bernalillo County</th>
<th>Livestock - Jan 1, 2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 1,248</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cattle &amp; Calves (D)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres) 221,495</td>
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<td>Beef Cows 1,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Size of Farm 177</td>
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<td>Milk Cows (D)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold $9,317,000</td>
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<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs 1,600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold $7,466</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses $13,641</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income - $3,827</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crops 2018 Acres Harv.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yield</td>
<td>Product</td>
</tr>
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<td>Census 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay Alfalfa</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>3.95</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5,900</td>
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<th>Catron County</th>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 341</td>
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<th>Land in Farms (Acres) 1,260,711</th>
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<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold $9,471,000</td>
<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs 300</td>
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Page 297
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census 2017</th>
<th>Bernalillo County</th>
<th>Livestock</th>
<th>Head</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold</td>
<td>$27,774</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income</td>
<td>$3,060</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Acres Harv.</th>
<th>Yield</th>
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<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 560</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres)</td>
<td>Beef Cows</td>
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![Map of New Mexico highlighting Chaves County]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Bernalillo County</th>
<th>Livestock ( \text{Jan 1, 2019} )</th>
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<tr>
<td>2,318,413</td>
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<td>Avg. Size of Farm 4,140</td>
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<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold $722,348</td>
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<td>Avg. Net Farm Income $99,403</td>
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<td>Crops 2018 Acres Harv.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yield</td>
<td>Production Unit</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census 2017</th>
<th>Cibola County</th>
<th>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</th>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Farms</td>
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<tr>
<td>640</td>
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<td>1,593,679</td>
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<td>Avg. Size of Farm</td>
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<tr>
<td>2,490</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold (D)</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold (D)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **Cattle & Calves**: 14,900
- **Beef Cows**: 10,200
- **Milk Cows**: 3,000
- **Sheep & Lambs**: 3,000
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census 2017</th>
<th>Cibola County</th>
<th>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</th>
<th>Head</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expenses (D)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income (D)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crops 2018</td>
<td>Acres Harv.</td>
<td>Yield</td>
<td>Production Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
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<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 304</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres) 2,073,125</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beef Cows 16,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Colfax County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
<td>Head</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Size of Farm</td>
<td>6,819</td>
<td>Milk Cows</td>
<td>(D)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold</td>
<td>$25,093,000</td>
<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses</td>
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<td>Avg. Net Farm Income</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crops 2018 Acres Harv.</td>
<td>Yield</td>
<td>Production Unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Curry County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
<td>Head</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-------------</td>
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<td>Number of Farms 641</td>
<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
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<td>Land in Farms (Acres) 902,165</td>
<td>Beef Cows</td>
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<td>Avg. Size of Farm 1,407</td>
<td>Milk Cows</td>
<td>85,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold $480,580,000</td>
<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold $749,735</td>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses $688,859</td>
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<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
<td>Head</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income</td>
<td>$94,790</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crops 2018</th>
<th>Acres Harv.</th>
<th>Yield</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Unit</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hay, Other</td>
<td>15,600</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>21,800</td>
<td>Tons</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census 2017</th>
<th>De Baca County</th>
<th>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</th>
<th>Head</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Farms</td>
<td>226</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Land in Farms (Acres) | 1,182,224 | Beef Cows | 18,300 |
| Avg. Size of Farm | 5,230 | Milk Cows | |
### Census 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
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<th>Head</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curry County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

#### Value of Products Sold
- **Curry County**: $28,135,000

#### Avg. Farm Value Sold
- **Curry County**: $124,490

#### Avg. Farm Expenses
- **Curry County**: $113,458

#### Avg. Net Farm Income (D)

#### Crops 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Acres Harv.</th>
<th>Yield</th>
<th>Production Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hay, Alfalfa</td>
<td>5,800</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>27,400 Tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay, Other</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>3,150 Tons</td>
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### Census 2017

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<th>County</th>
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<th>Head</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dona Ana County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Curry County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Farms</td>
<td>1,946</td>
<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres)</td>
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<td>Beef Cows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Size of Farm</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>Milk Cows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold</td>
<td>$370,292,000</td>
<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold</td>
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<td>Avg. Farm Expenses</td>
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<td>Avg. Net Farm Income</td>
<td>$41,662</td>
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### Census 2017

#### Curry County

Livestock – Jan 1, 2019

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<table>
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<th>Acres Harv.</th>
<th>Yield</th>
<th>Production</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>542,000</td>
<td>Cwt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cotton Upland</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>1,792</td>
<td>16,800</td>
<td>Bales</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hay, Alfalfa</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>7.70</td>
<td>61,700</td>
<td>Tons</td>
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### Census 2017

#### Eddy County

Livestock – Jan 1, 2019

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Farms 507</th>
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<td>Farms</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land in Farms (Acres)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Beef Cows</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Avg. Size of Farm 2,146</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milk Cows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold $97,278,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold $191,869</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses $154,450</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income $40,826</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crops 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton, Upland 4,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hay, Alfalfa 20,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hay, Other 2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
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<td>-------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Farms</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Land in Farms (Acres)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Avg. Size of Farm</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Value of Products Sold</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Avg. Farm Value Sold</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Avg. Farm Expenses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Avg. Net Farm Income</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
</tr>
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<table>
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<th>Crops 2018</th>
<th>Acres Harv.</th>
<th>Yield</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Unit</th>
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<th>Guadalupe County</th>
<th>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Farms 297</th>
<th>Cattle &amp; Calves</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land in Farms (Acres)</th>
<th>Beef Cows</th>
<th>15,000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,444,135</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Avg. Size of Farm 4,862</th>
<th>Milk Cows</th>
<th>(D)</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value of Products Sold $13,260,000</th>
<th>Sheep &amp; Lambs</th>
<th>2,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Curry County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold $44,645</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses $50,850</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income $2,093</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crops 2018</td>
<td>Acres Harv.</td>
<td>Yield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Harding County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 184</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres) 938,460</td>
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<td>Beef Cows (D)</td>
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Number of Farms 184
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</th>
<th>Head</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Size of Farm</td>
<td>5,100</td>
<td>Milk Cows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold</td>
<td>$13,442,000</td>
<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs (D)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold</td>
<td>$73,056</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income</td>
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<thead>
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<th>Acres Harv.</th>
<th>Yield</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Unit</th>
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<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Hidalgo County Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
<td>Head</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 151</td>
<td>Cattle &amp; Calves 22,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acre) 848,867</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Size of Farm 5,622</td>
<td>Milk Cows</td>
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<td>Value of Products Sold $23,420,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold $155,097</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses $119,099</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income $49,345</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crops 2018</td>
<td>Acres Harv.</td>
<td>Yield</td>
<td>Product</td>
<td>Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay, Alfalfa</td>
<td>1,700</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>9,800</td>
<td>Ton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Lea County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 555</td>
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<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
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<td>Avg. Size of Farm 3,492</td>
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<td>Census 2017</td>
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<td>------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold $192,242,000</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Crops 2018 Acres Harv.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cotton, Upland 21,000</td>
<td>773 (^1) 33,800 Bales</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 454</td>
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<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
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<td>Avg. Size of Farm 3,230</td>
<td>Milk Cows</td>
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<td>(D)</td>
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<td>Value of Products Sold $15,858,000</td>
<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs</td>
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<td>1,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold $34,930</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses $40,630</td>
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<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income $626</td>
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<td>Crops 2018</td>
<td>Acres Harv.</td>
<td>Yield</td>
<td>Production</td>
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<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Luna County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 211</td>
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<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres) 575,844</td>
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<td>Avg. Size of Farm 2,729</td>
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<td>Value of Products Sold $79,278,000</td>
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<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold $375,726</td>
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### Census 2017

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<td>Avg. Farm Expenses</td>
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### Crops 2018

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<th>Crops</th>
<th>Acres Harv.</th>
<th>Yield</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Unit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>2,700</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>518,000</td>
<td>Cwt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hay, Alfalfa</td>
<td>3,200</td>
<td>6.80</td>
<td>21,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hay, Other</td>
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<td>4.40</td>
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### Census 2017

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<th>McKinley County</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Farms</td>
<td>2,441</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
<td>22,000</td>
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<td>Lincoln County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres) 2,569,810</td>
<td>Beef Cows 12,300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Size of Farm 1,053</td>
<td>Milk Cows (D)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold $8,139,000</td>
<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs 26,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold $3,334</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses $8,436</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income -$4,802</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crops 2018</td>
<td>Acres Harv.</td>
<td>Yield</td>
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Page 319
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census 2017</th>
<th>Lincoln County</th>
<th>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</th>
<th>Head</th>
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<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Mora County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Farms</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
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<td>Land in Farms (Acres)</td>
<td>930,642</td>
<td>Beef Cows</td>
<td>9,900</td>
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<td>Avg. Size of Farm</td>
<td>1,329</td>
<td>Milk Cows (D)</td>
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<td>Value of Products Sold</td>
<td>$18,152,000</td>
<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs</td>
<td>400</td>
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<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold</td>
<td>$25,931</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses</td>
<td>$19,505</td>
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### Lincoln County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census 2017</th>
<th>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</th>
<th>Head</th>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income $9,256</td>
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<table>
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<th>Crops 2018</th>
<th>Acres Harv.</th>
<th>Yield</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Unit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hay, Alfalfa</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>Tons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hay, Other</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>2,350</td>
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### Otero County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census 2017</th>
<th>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 473</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
<td>16,200</td>
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<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Otero County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
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<td>----------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres)</td>
<td>1,019,246</td>
<td>Beef Cows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Size of Farm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold</td>
<td>$18,160,000</td>
<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs</td>
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<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold</td>
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<td>Avg. Farm Expenses</td>
<td>$38,132</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income</td>
<td>$3,823</td>
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<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Otero County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Crops 2018</td>
<td>Acres Harv.</td>
<td>Yield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Quay County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 613</td>
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<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres) 1,548,435</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Size of Farm 2,526</td>
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<td>Milk Cows (D)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold $39,469,000</td>
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<td>Otero County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold</td>
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<tr>
<td>$64,387</td>
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<td>Avg. Farm Expenses</td>
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<td>$67,473</td>
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<td>$13,052</td>
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<td>Crops 2018</td>
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<td>Hay, Alfalfa</td>
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<td>Hay, Other</td>
<td>4,900</td>
<td>2.90</td>
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<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Rio Arriba County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 1,439</td>
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<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
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<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Otero County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres) 1,362,062</td>
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<td>Avg. Size of Farm 947</td>
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<td>Milk Cows</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold $10,172</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Crops 2018</td>
<td>Acres Harv.</td>
<td>Yield</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Roosevelt County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 742</td>
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<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Milk Cows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold $290,641,000</td>
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<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs</td>
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![Map of Otero County](image)
### Census 2017: Roosevelt County

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Head</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Avg. Farm Value</strong></td>
<td>Sold $391,699</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Avg. Farm Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$345,383</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Avg. Net Farm Income</strong></td>
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### Crops 2018: Roosevelt County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crops</th>
<th>Acres Harv.</th>
<th>Yield</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Unit</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cotton, Upland</td>
<td>6,500</td>
<td>775 ¹</td>
<td>10,500</td>
<td>Bales</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hay, Alfalfa</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>7.05</td>
<td>14,800</td>
<td>Tons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hay, Other</td>
<td>19,800</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>34,900</td>
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### Census 2017: Sandoval County

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<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cattle &amp; Calves</strong></td>
<td>12,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Sandoval County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
<td>Head</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Avg. Size of Farm 778</td>
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<td>Milk Cows (D)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold $12,372,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold $12,286</td>
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<td>Avg. Farm Expenses $14,400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income -$513</td>
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<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Sandoval County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
<td>Head</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crops 2018</td>
<td>Acres Harv.</td>
<td>Yield Production Unit</td>
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<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>San Juan County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
<td>Head</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 2,965</td>
<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
<td>16,300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres) 2,551,470</td>
<td>Beef Cows</td>
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<tr>
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<td>21,000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Sandoval County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
<td>Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold</td>
<td>$24,998</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses</td>
<td>$27,958</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income</td>
<td>-$865</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crops 2018</td>
<td>Acres Harv.</td>
<td>Yield</td>
<td>Production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay, Alfalfa</td>
<td>34,000</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>177,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Taos County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
<td>Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Farms</td>
<td>824</td>
<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
<td>5,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Sandoval County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
<td>Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres) 285,130</td>
<td>Beef Cows (D)</td>
<td>Avg. Size of Farm 346</td>
<td>Milk Cows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Size of Farm 346</td>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold $9,265</td>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income -$2,211</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold $7,634,000</td>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses $12,464</td>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold $9,265</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs 1,500</td>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income -$2,211</td>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold $9,265</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Sandoval County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019 Head</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crops 2018</td>
<td>Acres Harv.</td>
<td>Yield</td>
<td>Production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay, Alfalfa</td>
<td>8,400</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>7,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay, Other</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1,350</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census 2017</th>
<th>Torrance County</th>
<th>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019 Head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 716</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres) 1,561,057</td>
<td></td>
<td>Beef Cows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Size of Farm 2,181</td>
<td></td>
<td>Milk Cows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Torrance County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold $45,893,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs 1,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold $64,096</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses $63,035</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income $6,415</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crops 2018</th>
<th>Acres Harv.</th>
<th>Yield</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hay, Alfalfa</td>
<td>5,700</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>28,600</td>
<td>Tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay, Other</td>
<td>2,900</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>8,400</td>
<td>Tons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census 2017</th>
<th>Union County</th>
<th>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</th>
<th>Head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 369</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cattle &amp; Calves 78,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Union County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
<td>Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres)</td>
<td>1,886,887</td>
<td>Beef Cows</td>
<td>29,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Size of Farm</td>
<td>5,114</td>
<td>Milk Cows (D)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold</td>
<td>$83,134,000</td>
<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold</td>
<td>$225,297</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses</td>
<td>$208,600</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income</td>
<td>$35,103</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crops 2018</td>
<td>Acres Harv.</td>
<td>Yield Production Unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Union County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
<td>Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay, Alfalfa</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>4,200 Ton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay, Other</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2,600 Ton</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Census 2017 | Valencia County | Livestock – Jan 1, 2019 | Head |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------------|------|

Number of Farms 1,360 |

Land in Farms (Acres) 517,702 |

Avg. Size of Farm 381 |

Value of Products Sold $46,085,000 |

Avg. Farm Value Sold $33,886 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census 2017</th>
<th>Union County</th>
<th>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</th>
<th>Head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses</td>
<td>$38,606</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income</td>
<td>-$3,516</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crops 2018</td>
<td>Acres Harv.</td>
<td>Yield</td>
<td>Production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay, Alfalfa</td>
<td>7,800</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>37,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census 2017</th>
<th>San Miguel County</th>
<th>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</th>
<th>Head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Farms</td>
<td>1,170</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>45,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>San Miguel County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
<td>Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres)</td>
<td>2,269,554</td>
<td>Beef Cows</td>
<td>24,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Size of Farm</td>
<td>1,940</td>
<td>Milk Cows</td>
<td>(D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold</td>
<td>$19,098,000</td>
<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold</td>
<td>$16,323</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses</td>
<td>$20,384</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income</td>
<td>-$1,956</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Census 2017
San Miguel County

Livestock – Jan 1, 2019

Head

Crops 2018
Acres Harv.

Yield

Production

Unit

Hay, Other
5,300
0.75
4,000
Ton

Census 2017
Santa Fe County

Livestock – Jan 1, 2019

Number of Farms 639

Cattle & Calves
15,000

Land in Farms (Acres) (D)

Beef Cows
9,600

Avg. Size of Farm (D)

Milk Cows

Value of Products Sold $25,431,000

Sheep & Lambs
900
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census 2017</th>
<th>San Miguel County</th>
<th>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</th>
<th>Head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold</td>
<td>$39,798</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses</td>
<td>$47,305</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income</td>
<td>-$5,452</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crops 2018</th>
<th>Acres Harv.</th>
<th>Yield</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hay, Alfalfa</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>Tons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census 2017</th>
<th>Sierra County</th>
<th>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</th>
<th>Head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Farms 257</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
<td></td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Sierra County</td>
<td>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</td>
<td>Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres)</td>
<td>1,012,233</td>
<td>Beef Cows (D)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Size of Farm</td>
<td>3,939</td>
<td>Milk Cows (D)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Products Sold</td>
<td>$31,892,000</td>
<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Value Sold</td>
<td>$123,093</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Farm Expenses</td>
<td>$127,748</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Net Farm Income</td>
<td>2,509</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crops 2018</td>
<td>Acres Harv.</td>
<td>Yield</td>
<td>Production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census 2017</td>
<td>Sierra County</td>
<td>Livestock - Jan 1, 2019</td>
<td>Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>166,800 Cwt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay, Alfalfa</td>
<td>3,200</td>
<td>6.80</td>
<td>21,700 Tons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census 2017</th>
<th>Socorro County</th>
<th>Livestock - Jan 1, 2019</th>
<th>Head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Farms</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
<td>42,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land in Farms (Acres)</td>
<td>912,476</td>
<td>Beef Cows</td>
<td>14,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Avg. Size of Farm | 1,387 | Milk Cows | 12,000 |
| Value of Products Sold | $65,148,000 | Sheep & Lambs | $2,000 |
| Avg. Farm Value Sold | $99,009 | | |
### Census 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sierra County</th>
<th>Livestock – Jan 1, 2019</th>
<th>Head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Avg. Farm Expenses

- $90,197

#### Avg. Net Farm Income

- 11,067

### Crops 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hay, Alfalfa</th>
<th>Acres Harv.</th>
<th>Yield</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5,200</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>27,100</td>
<td>Tons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Hay, Other   | 1,200       | 2.50  | 3,000      | Tons |

### Assessment of Agricultural Employment

According to the US Bureau of Economic Analysis, as of 2018, there were an estimated 28,687 agricultural workers in the state of New Mexico; 74.1 percent were proprietors (21,243). A large concentration of proprietors is unique to the agricultural industry. Nonfarm industries only had a 20.1 percent representation of proprietors.
Exhibit 1 provides farm employment at the county level, which is primarily driven by the number of farms in the county. Doña Ana, San Juan, and McKinley counties had the largest farm employment in New Mexico as of 2018. Doña Ana is a top agricultural producer in the state, with 3,338 workers, or 11.6 percent of all New Mexico farm workers. The majority of farm employment is concentrated to the Northwestern region (San Juan, Rio Arriba, McKinley, and Sandoval) at 7,583 workers, or 26.4 percent of the state’s agricultural employment.

As of 2018, the median number of farm workers in each New Mexico county was 698. Of the ten counties that generated the largest market value of agricultural products sold (Curry, Chaves, Doña Ana, Roosevelt, Lea, Eddy, Union, Luna, San Juan, and Socorro), only Luna and Union had fewer workers than the statewide median. The three counties with the most farm employment (Doña Ana, San Miguel, and McKinley), made up 15.4 percent of the total market value of agricultural products sold.
### Growth in Farm Employment by County 2011-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catron</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valencia</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socorro</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taos</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Baca</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curry</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio Arriba</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaves</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernalillo</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guadalupe</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lea</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandoval</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddy</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Miguel</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cibola</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doña Ana</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Juan</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torrance</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luna</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harding</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidalgo</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colfax</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otero</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quay</td>
<td>-0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mora</td>
<td>-0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKinley</td>
<td>-6.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** BEA# CAEMP25N (Total Full-Time and Part-Time Employment by NAICS Industry 1); Farm Employment (Number of Jobs), 2011-2018
Exhibit 2 provides an illustration of farm employment between 2011 and 2018. Based on total farm employment estimates, employment grew by 4.8 percent between 2011 and 2018, or 0.7 percent annually. During the same period, total employment grew by 4.6 percent. The farm employment share of total employment remained consistent between 2011 and 2018, ending the time period as it begun, at 2.6 percent. In recent years, the ratio of proprietor employment in the agriculture industry has decreased, but the total count of proprietors has remained constant. Between 2011 and 2018, farming proprietorship fell by 1.8 percentage points, and non-farm proprietorship stay relatively level only gaining 0.1 percentage points.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Employment Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catron</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valencia</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socorro</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taos</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Baca</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curry</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio Arriba</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaves</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernalillo</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guadalupe</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lea</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandoval</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddy</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Miguel</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cibola</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doña Ana</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Juan</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torrance</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luna</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harding</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidalgo</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colfax</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otero</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quay</td>
<td>-0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mora</td>
<td>-0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKinley</td>
<td>-6.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** BEA# CAEMP25 N (Total Full-Time and Part-Time Employment by NAICS Industry 1); Farm Employment (Number of Jobs), 2011-2018
Exhibit 3 provides employment growth by county between 2011 and 2018. Catron, Santa Fe, and Valencia counties had the largest growth in farm employment. Only three counties did not see growth during this time period: Quay, Mora, and McKinley. McKinley had the most significant decrease in employment, declining by 6.1 percent. Nationally, farm employment has been trending downwards. From 2011 to 2018, the nation saw a declining rate of 1.3 percent, a slower rate compared to 2001 to 2012 (14.1 percent).


Agricultural Crop and Labor Data

In the Southwestern part of New Mexico, mostly all farm workers are from Mexican descent and are now residents of United States; their primary language is Spanish. Over the years, farm workers migrate from Arizona or Texas to harvest onions in the months of June and July. H2A farm workers mostly come from Mexico to the Southwestern part of the state. In other parts of the state, employers use H2A visa program and bring foreign workers from Peru, Australia, and Germany. Their primary language is English and Spanish. The New Mexico Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the National Agricultural Statistics Service, cooperatively issue the New Mexico Agricultural Statistics on an annual basis. This includes the data provided by 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees and MSFW organizations that assist farmworkers monetarily. These benefits include utility assistance, housing, training, and on-the-job training opportunities.

In the agricultural industry, farmers and farm labor contractors fall under the “joint responsibility” and rule of the Migrant Seasonal Protection Act (MSPA). Therefore, the accountability of these employer has increased and as well as the protection for farmworkers.

Several sources gather information on employment in agriculture operations, these include: The Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), the USDA’s Census of Agriculture, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). BEA employment estimates include full-time and part-time workers, but BEA data does not include a complete count of all migrant, undocumented or seasonal workers.

Farm Operator Characteristics

In exhibit 4, the 2017 data is from the Economic Census run by the US Census Department, and it is conducted every five years. The data in the Bureau of Economic Analysis is the most recent data available.

The USDA Agricultural Census collects some information on gender, ethnicity, and race of farm operators, up to four operators per farm. As of 2017, about 40.6 percent of all farm producers...
were women. As shown in Exhibit 4, the number of women producers increased by 24.1 percent between the 2012 and 2017 census. As of 2017, just under half of all women producers were principal operators (48.1 percent). Although men are still more represented among all producers, the rise of women in principal roles is drastic since 2012, a 60.3 percent increase. This can clearly be seen when looking at the tenure of farms, as women saw a 63.8 percent increase in full ownership of farms, and a 64.7 percent increase in partial ownership, since 2012. However, some of this increase can be attributed to a change in data collection; the 2012 census only collected data of up to three workers per farm, whereas the 2017 census collected up to four.
The 2017 data is from the Economic Census, run by the US Census Department, and it’s conducted every five years. Therefore, the data available is the most recent for exhibit 4.

### Producer Statistics - Gender, Ethnicity, and Race
New Mexico, 2012 and 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>Pct Chg 12-17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Producers</td>
<td>37,166</td>
<td>40,850</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Producer</td>
<td>24,721</td>
<td>25,044</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of all Producers</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women Producers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Producer</td>
<td>12,584</td>
<td>15,577</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Category</td>
<td>4,777</td>
<td>12,047</td>
<td>60.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Owners*</td>
<td>2,574</td>
<td>7,110</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part Owners*</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>64.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenants*</td>
<td>1,674</td>
<td>2,784</td>
<td>39.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish/Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Producer</td>
<td>13,195</td>
<td>12,212</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Category</td>
<td>9,377</td>
<td>10,220</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Owners*</td>
<td>7,010</td>
<td>6,447</td>
<td>-8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part Owners*</td>
<td>2,262</td>
<td>1,431</td>
<td>-58.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenants*</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>-37.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Races (Principal Operators)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>24,721</td>
<td>33,378</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Producer</td>
<td>5,202</td>
<td>6,988</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Category</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>19,293</td>
<td>25,975</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than One Race</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>7,439</td>
<td>8,523</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Producer</td>
<td>5,202</td>
<td>6,988</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Category</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Owners*</td>
<td>877</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part Owners*</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>-51.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenants*</td>
<td>3,715</td>
<td>4,576</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note that irregular variations from 2012 to 2017 are likely changes in data collection methodology, and definition of terms between the two census reports.

**Source:** 2017 USDA Census of Agriculture, New Mexico State and County Data (Issued April 2019)
New Mexico has a diverse group of agricultural producers that mirror the racial and ethnic composition of the state's general population. As shown in Exhibit 4, around 12,212 producers (29.8 percent of all operators) identified as Spanish/Hispanic/Latino. The number of Spanish/Hispanic/Latino producers fell by 8.0 percent between 2012 and 2017. This is the only ethnic or racial group to experience a decrease of in the number of producers. Since 2017, full ownership among Spanish/Hispanic/Latino producers fell by 8.7 percent, and partial ownership fell drastically by 58.1 percent. However, most Spanish/Hispanic/Latino producers were still full owner of their respective farm (52.7 percent). American Indian producers, on the other hand, were more likely to be tenants as opposed to full or part owners. Finally, the largest racial group of principal operators were white, which saw a 25.7 percent increase in principal operators since 2017. Nearly two out of three principal operators in New Mexico, or 63.6 percent of the total, were white.

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions is aware of the obligation to provide services to its customers in their dominant and/or preferred language of communication. Every Workforce Connection Center has two to three bilingual (English/Spanish) staff available to ensure assistance is provided as needed.

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions is staffed with a full-time Monitor Advocate and an Outreach Worker. The Las Cruces and Deming Workforce Connection Centers are the only designated "significant" offices. These two offices have the highest number of farmworkers in the state. The Outreach Worker conducts outreach throughout the state and conducts vigorous outreach services in Dona Ana County (Las Cruces/Hatch), Hidalgo and Luna Counties.

4. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

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

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

See E.2.A. below.

A. CONTACTING FARMWORKERS WHO ARE NOT BEING REACHED BY THE NORMAL INTAKE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICES

Outreach Activities

Contacting Farmworkers

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions will continue to conduct outreach services to MSFWs. Contacts will be conducted in person, through farm labor contractors, farmers, community agencies and other community events. The outreach worker will also provide services to workers at their worksites.

In PY 19, New Mexico reported that there were 686 MSFW in the state. The outreach worker plans to conduct outreach services to approximately 1000 MSFW's throughout the state. During the peak season (May-October), the outreach worker will perform outreach services four days per week. The rest of the year the outreach worker will continue to provide
unlimited services during the off-peak season. The outreach worker is aware of all community services available and provides this information to MSFWs and their families.

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions outreach policy is to inform MSFWs of the entire scope of services that are available to them and their families. These services include employment, training opportunities, and unemployment insurance, referrals to supportive services, as well as employment rights and complaint system.

B. PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO OUTREACH STAFF. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MUST INCLUDE TRAININGS, CONFERENCES, ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, AND INCREASED COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ON TOPICS SUCH AS ONE-STOP CENTER SERVICES (I.E. AVAILABILITY OF REFERRALS TO TRAINING, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, AND CAREER SERVICES, AS WELL AS SPECIFIC EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES), THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE AND EMPLOYMENT-RELATED LAW COMPLAINT SYSTEM (“COMPLAINT SYSTEM” DESCRIBED AT 20 CFR 658 SUBPART E), INFORMATION ON THE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS SERVING MSFWS IN THE AREA, AND A BASIC SUMMARY OF FARMWORKER RIGHTS, INCLUDING THEIR RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.

Technical Assistance and Training for Outreach Workers

The outreach worker as well as the State Monitor Advocate are included in all Wagner Peyser (WP) staff trainings provided by New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions. The trainings include the following:

- One-stop career services
- Partner services
- Customer services
- Employment services
- Human rights
- Security Awareness Training

State Monitor Advocate trained outreach worker and significant office staff in the following:

- EEOC Human trafficking
- Complaint System
- Complaint log & Apparent Violations
- New Mexico Workforce Solutions Wage & Hour
- USDOL Wage & Hour – MSPA & FLSA compliance and regulations
- H2A Employment and Housing compliance requirements

The outreach worker and State Monitor Advocate attend national and regional conferences to acquire additional information to better serve the farming community. These conferences allow us to collaborate and learn best practices from other states.
C. INCREASING OUTREACH WORKER TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS INCLUDING THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES

Outreach Worker Training and Awareness

The State Monitor Advocate provides training and technical assistance to outreach worker and all WP and partner staff. New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions Outreach Policy is to inform MSFWs of the array of services available at the workforce centers as well as other local and state agencies. The outreach worker training includes the following:

Types of training include the following:

- Registration and resumes
- Job search assistance and referrals to qualified jobs including H2A job posting
- Referrals to supportive services and training opportunities
- Referrals to other local and state agencies
- Assist with Resource room services such as:
  - Telephone
  - Computer
  - Fax
  - Copy machine
  - Scanner
- Assistance with unemployment issues such as: filing, eligibility, completion of UI questionnaires, and the translation of Unemployment insurance correspondence
- Educate farmworkers regarding employment rights, terms and conditions of employment
- Accept and forward complaints to proper enforcement agencies
- Provide H2A farmworkers with information regarding terms and conditions of employment, transportation, housing regulations, and marketing the complaint system
- Conduct Farmworker workshops
- Contact farmworkers out in the fields, at their homes and/or gathering areas
- Provide informational pamphlets in Spanish

D. PROVIDING STATE MERIT STAFF OUTREACH WORKERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE THEY ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

Professional Development for Outreach Workers
The NMDWS Training team provide training to all WP staff. SMA and outreach worker participate in the trainings on a regular basis. Training provided include the following:

- NM Workforce Connection Online System (WCOS) registrations
- Referrals to supportive and training services
- Provide pamphlets regarding employment rights (English and Spanish)
- Job postings and candidate referrals
- Assessments (Workkeys, Proveit)
- On-site recruitment events
- Employer Outreach
- Business Expo's
- Job Fairs
- Provide compliance and regulations posters
- Educate employers to display all required posters
- SMA conducted Farm Labor Contractors and Farmers seminars to educate, train, and provide information regarding Employment services, MSPA regulations, Human Rights/Trafficking, USDOL Wage & Hour changes, Worker's Comp, H2A and other related laws pertaining to agricultural workers.

E. COORDINATING OUTREACH EFFORTS WITH NFJP GRANTEES AS WELL AS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCIES AND MSFW GROUPS

Outreach Coordination

The outreach worker will maintain ongoing contact and refer MSFWs to the following organizations in and around Dona Ana and Luna counties: NFJP (HELP-NM), NM Department of Education, NM Department of Health, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Southern NM Legal Aid, NM Law & Poverty, Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation, New Mexico State University (CAMP), Home Education Livelihood Program-New Mexico, Inc. (HELP-NM), and USDOL Wage & Hour. Going forward, the outreach worker will participate in the annual Agricultural Employer Seminars in which he will learn about services, topics, and concerns related to the benefits and/or issues affecting the farmworker community.

The Luna County Extension office, USDOL Wage & Hour, Foreign Labor Coordinator and New Mexico Department of Agriculture are resources that the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions will utilize in identifying and providing services to employers.

5. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

A. PROVIDING THE FULL RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES TO THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY, BOTH FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS, THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. THIS INCLUDES:
I. HOW CAREER AND TRAINING SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER WIOA TITLE I WILL BE PROVIDED TO MSFWs THROUGH THE ONE-STOP CENTERS

II. HOW THE STATE SERVES AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH SERVICES

a. How career and training services required under WIOA Title I will be provided to MSFWs through the one-stop centers;

MSFW staff are an essential part of and fully integrated employment service delivery system or network. They are included among the service delivery partner staff, which consists of all staff employed by programs or activities operated by the partners listed in 29 U.S.C. 3151(b) that provide online and/or in-person workforce development or related support services as part of the workforce development system. Other partner staff members included staff of WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, and other network partner programs.

The State’s MSFW outreach staff members make the initial contact with the migrant seasonal farmworkers. They conduct an assessment to determine service needs and make referrals to the WIOA Title I partner staff. WIOA Title I partner staff determine eligibility, develop and employment plan and provides services.

a. How the State serves agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such services.

One-Stop Delivery System

The significant offices promote and provide an array of services to agricultural employers and farmworkers such as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employers</th>
<th>Job seekers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Employer self-service on-line system (WCOS)</td>
<td>• Employment registrations (WCOS) and resume and provide copy of ES notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Job orders and candidate referrals</td>
<td>• Job search and referrals to qualified jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recruitment events and job fairs</td>
<td>• Job development contacts (JD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Employer outreach</td>
<td>• Referrals to supportive services and training opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide Farm Labor Contractor's with applications, vehicle inspection and medical certificate forms</td>
<td>• Provide employment posters as well as USDOL and OSHA information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide employment posters as well as USDOL and OSHA information</td>
<td>• Provide resources room services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Informational Workshops</td>
<td>• Farmworker workshops</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The SMA, Foreign Labor Coordinator and Outreach Worker complete farm labor contractor’s applications and fingerprint cards for farm labor contractors and farm labor contractor employee’s (crew leaders) that need these services.

WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth providers as well as Wagner-Peyser staff have a full-time presence in all Workforce Connection Centers. This allows referrals to be made easily and provides comprehensive one-on-one services. Outreach efforts will also be coordinated with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups, as well as WIOA partners.

The Southwestern Area Local Workforce Development Board has a goal to establish objectives and action steps that serve the workforce needs of employers and job seekers in the farming communities.

- Classroom trainings to enhance farmworker skills and on the job trainings for agricultural employers to hire and train new employees
- Provide technical assistance to partner staff to better serve the farmworker community
- Offer WIOA supportive services to farmworkers
- WIOA staff participates in the farmworker workshops conducted in significant offices
- State Monitor Advocate collaborates with partners to identify partnership strengths and weaknesses
- Strengths
  - WIOA has been successful in meeting and exceeding their performance measures. They work closely with the SMA to identify the training needs of farmworkers and agricultural employers. The Southwestern board is focusing on expanding WIOA funds to serve more MSFWs under the Adult, Dislocated, and Youth Programs.
- Weaknesses
  - Lack of collaboration between partners. Plan to collaborate and strengthen the relationship with the Southwestern Board and all mandated partners to better serve the farmworker community

The Southwestern Area Local Workforce Development Board has achieved these goals and will continue to strengthen the collaboration between partners and other farm worker organizations.

B. MARKETING THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE COMPLAINT SYSTEM TO FARMWORKERS AND OTHER FARMWORKER ADVOCACY GROUPS

Employment Service Complaint System

Wagner Peyser, WIOA partner staff, HELP NM (NFJP) and other farmworker organizations were trained in the employment service complaint system and referral process. Wagner Peyser bilingual staff is trained to receive farmworkers’ complaints and report apparent violation to the proper enforcement agencies as needed. The Employment Service (ES) notice is a form provided to farmworkers which includes a list of community agencies that offer supportive services. It also includes addresses and phone numbers for each agency and the type of services
they offer. Therefore, the ES notice is always provided to farmworkers at the time of registration. Wagner-Peyser staff will attend meetings sponsored by farmworker organizations to learn about their services and be able to refer farmworkers and their families to these agencies.

The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) collaborates with state and federal enforcement agencies to ensure the resolution of all complaints. The SMA evaluates all local office complaint received and logs for accuracy and timely processing and complaint resolutions. The SMA also ensures bilingual complaint posters are posted in all the workforce centers and includes the State Monitor Advocate’s name, address and phone number.

During the collaboration meetings, the SMA and outreach worker will continue to educate and promote the complaint system process to all farmworker organizations, WIOA partner staff as well as other local and state agencies to ensure proper utilization of the complaint system.

C. MARKETING THE AGRICULTURAL RECRUITMENT SYSTEM FOR U.S. WORKERS (ARS) TO AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH PUBLICITY.

Agricultural Recruitment System

The Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) is used by the local offices throughout the state to prove that NM has enough workers to refer and fill job orders posted by agricultural employers. NM markets ARS to agricultural employers to improve its publicity. For instance, staff conducts file searches in the system for qualified applicants and contacts these individuals via phone calls or emails to notify them of these openings. Staff works closely with employer to fill job orders and match applicants to the skills require and needed for the positions.

NM promotes ARS to agricultural employers to improve publicity and utilizes the following methods:

- Workforce Connection online system (WCOS)
- In person field visits
- Outreach worker promote during outreach activities
- SMA promotes during annual workshops
- Luna County NMSU Extension Office

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. COLLABORATION

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

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

**Other Requirements**

Collaboration between mandated partners and other MSFW providers. The state workforce agency (SWA) will increase collaboration with existing partners and establish new partnership with other local and state agencies in the next four years to improve and increase services to the farmworker communities.

- Wagner Peyser (WP) – Employment services
- NFJP MOU was in place in February 2019
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
- Youth Development Incorporated (YDI)
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation services (DVR)
- WNMU and DACC Basic Adult educational services

**B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT**

In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must:

1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP;
2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and
3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP.

The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must:

1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP;
2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and
3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP. The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

Review and Public Comment. The plan was placed online at dws.state.nm.us for public review and comments. No public comments were received. Las Cruces (significant office) and Deming Workforce Centers (significant office) reviewed and no suggestion were made. HELP-NM National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) met with SMA in person and suggestions were as followed.

- Continuation of quarterly agency meetings.
- Collaboration and rapport with other community agencies.
- Increase outreach efforts and participate in community events throughout the state.
- Develop methods to communicate services and provide training to farmworkers and their families that do not visit field offices.
- Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP. Make our presence known.

NFJP Representative met with SMA in person to collaborate with suggestions. The suggestions were reviewed and incorporated in the AOP.

C. DATA ASSESSMENT

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

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

In 2017, the New Mexico Workforce Connection online system (WCOS) was update and it changed the process on how to enroll customers in the Wagner Peyser and MSFW program. Due to the changes in the WCOS, SMA provided training to Wagner Peyser and partner staff as they were not aware of the enrollment process.

In 2019, the New Mexico Workforce Solutions customized activity codes which caused confusion to staff as to what activities needed to be entered to meet the required MSFWs equity ratio and minimum service indicators. Therefore, the SMA has been providing technical assistance to workforce center staff to ensure correct activities are entered to meet the indicators.
Data Assessment. In assessing New Mexico’s Labor Exchange Agricultural Reporting System (LEARS) for PY18, New Mexico only met 3 of the 5 Equity Service Level Indicators and three of the seven Minimum Service Level Indicators. This is due to the changes and updates made to the Workforce Connection Online System (WCOS), which confused staff as to the proper enrollment and services needed to be enter in the system to meet the required indicators.

D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

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

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

Assessment of Progress. SMA will continue to provide technical assistance and monitor staff’s registration, activities and services provided to MSFWs by conducting monthly desk reviews. Also, SMA will ensure MSFWs receive the same array of services as non-MSFWs by conducting monthly desk reviews.

SMA will work closely with agricultural employers to educate and promote employment services and participate in conferences, workshops and seminars to meet their employment needs.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

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

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

State Monitor Advocate. The SMA has reviewed and approved the Agricultural Outreach Plan.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The State Plan must include</th>
<th>Include</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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));</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. SWA officials:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1) Initiate the discontinuation of services;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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The State Plan must include

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| 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued;  
  3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued;  
  4) Approve corrective action plans;  
  5) Approve the removal of an employer’s clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days;  
  6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs’ behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and  
  7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing. |

WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

**Performance Goals for the Core Programs**

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a
reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

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

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>PY 2020 Expected Level</th>
<th>PY 2020 Negotiated Level</th>
<th>PY 2021 Expected Level</th>
<th>PY 2021 Negotiated Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>62.4%</td>
<td>62.4%</td>
<td>62.4%</td>
<td>62.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credential Attainment Rate</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurable Skill Gains</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness in Serving Employers</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to adult education and literacy programs and activities under title II of WIOA, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

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

New Mexico has adopted the Common Core Standards for its K-12 school system. Beginning in program year 2016-2017, the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) adopted the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) developed by the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education at the U.S. Department of Education to align with the Common Core. All courseware used by Adult Education programs statewide, both online and in the classroom, must adhere to CCRS and thus align to the Common Core. NMHED’s focus on quality professional development supports teacher preparation in all levels of pedagogy, including standards-based lesson design.

Professional development is built on the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) “Standards to Action” model, which is designed to support excellence in teaching in the CCRS environment and to help teachers prepare students for the Webb’s Depth of Knowledge measures used in all standard High School Equivalency tests, including the two sanctioned for use in New Mexico (GED and HiSET), as well as by additional secondary school credential routes like the National External Diploma Program, which New Mexico is in the process of adopting. The combination of standards-aligned courseware and focus on pedagogical excellence support the development of courses and
programs that are not only aligned with CCRS and serve to prepare students to pass high school equivalency tests and earn recognized secondary credentials, but also courses and programs that provide strong foundational preparation for postsecondary education and training, current and future workplace demands, productive civic engagement, and supporting the educational needs of children.

B. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Describe how the State will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of these local activities.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

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

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

Competitive Process: The New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) is the State’s eligible agency for administering Adult Education and Literacy programs under WIOA, and the Adult Education Division oversees this effort. NMHED is required to award multi-year grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers within the state or outlying area to develop, implement, and improve adult education and literacy activities within the State. Eligible providers must use AEFLA funds to establish or operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide these
concurrently. Each State's eligible agency must conduct a competition that ensures all eligible
providers have direct and equitable access to apply and complete for AEFLA funds and that the
same grant or
contract announcement or application process are used for all eligible providers. The eligible
agency in New Mexico, NMHED, uses a Request for applications (RFA) process follows both state
procurement rules and federal guidelines under WIOA. At present, NMHED is in the middle of a
4-year grant cycle that began on July 1, 2017, with 24 awards issued to local providers in all four
workforce regions. The RFA process for the next multi-year grant cycle is scheduled to occur in
the spring of 2021 for funding to begin July 1, 2021. Any announcement will be contingent upon
State Plan approval by the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor. If such approval is
granted, the anticipated competition timeline is:

**February 2021:** NMHED issues a Notice of Funds Available (NOFA) + Request for Applications
(RFA)

**February 2021:** NMHED begins assembling its review panel

**March 2021:** NMHED provides a technical assistance conference

**March 2021:** NMHED finalizes its review its panel

**April 2021:** Grant applications are due by date specified in the application

**April 2021:** Applications are sent to local workforce development boards for review

**May 2021:** Reviewers review and score AEFLA grant applications

**June 2021:** NMHED announces grant proposals approved to receive funding

**June 2021:** NMHED holds negotiation conferences with grant recipients

**June 2021:** Final award letters are sent to grant recipients

NMHED will not distribute any new federal funds for a funding cycle without a statewide public
Notification of Funding Availability (NOFA) and formal Request for Proposals (RFA). The NOFA
and RFP will be advertised statewide and sent to all known eligible service providers, covering
all funding categories and programs available for current year distribution. Both will be sent to
all requesting parties. All eligible recipients for AEFLA Section 225, 231, and/or 243 funds will
be allowed the same opportunity to apply for funds regardless of the priorities they address,
and they will follow the same RFA process. While the nature of the NOFA and RFA process will
be identical, funding set aside for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IEL/CE) will
be addressed and distributed via a separate RFA process with program-specific content and
criteria for evaluation that confirm to WIOA requirements for IEL/CE programs.

**Applicant Eligibility:** Federal regulations governing AEFLA (34 CFR, 463) clarify that only an
organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy
services may apply for AEFLA funds. AEFLA lists 10 organization types that may be eligible
providers and further permits other organization types to apply. These include:
1. A local educational agency
2. A community-based organization or faith-based organization
3. A volunteer literacy organization
4. An institution of higher education
5. A public or private nonprofit agency
6. A library
7. A public housing authority
8. A nonprofit institution that is not described (A)-(G)
9. A consortium or coalition of entities listed in (A)-(H)
10. A partnership between an employer and an entity listed in (A)-(H)

The State eligible agency, in this case NMHED, is responsible for determining if an application is from an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness. In its AEFLA RFA application, NMHED must specify a process for an applicant to follow when submitting data on demonstrated effectiveness.

**Demonstrated Effectiveness:** The CFR regulation named above addresses how an applicant establishes that it has demonstrated effectiveness, defined as the applicant’s “record of improving the skills of eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy, in the content domains for reading, writing, mathematics, English language acquisition, and other subject areas relevant to the services contained in the State’s application for funds.” An applicant must provide objective performance data to reflect this, as well as to demonstrate a history of “outcomes for participants related to employment, attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and transition to postsecondary education and training.” There are two ways an eligible provider might meet the demonstrated effectiveness portion of the eligibility requirement, depending on whether or not the applicant has been funded under AEFLA in the past, as amended by WIOA. If an applicant has previously received an AEFLA grant as amended by WIOA, then it will specifically be required to submit performance data required under Section 116, as listed in the application. If an applicant has not previously received an AEFLA grant as amended by WIOA, the applicant must take care to provide any and all available performance data related to the definition and outcomes addressed above, in a manner specified by the eligible agency, in this case NMHED. The regulation establishes uniformity for determining demonstrated effectiveness and ensures that potential providers who have not received AEFLA funding in the past have an opportunity to compete for these funds. They also leave the State and its eligible agency, in this case NMHED, some flexibility. While NMHED cannot add any new criteria or data to the definition of demonstrated effectiveness set in regulation, it can determine both the number of years of data it will require and, importantly, the efficacy threshold on which it will screen applications.
Determining Demonstrated Effectiveness + Applicant Eligibility

NMHED must certify that each applicant meets both tiers of the eligibility requirement discussed above, including the demonstrated effectiveness requirement. To meet this obligation, the RFA process will contain two distinct phases of screening, with the first phase limited to pure eligibility screening and yielding simply a "yes" or "no" answer. To demonstrate effectiveness, eligible providers will provide NMHED with at least two years of performance data reflecting outcomes, as well as independent audits for fiscal responsibility for the two years preceding the AEFLA grant proposal, to include a targeted cost-benefit analysis of related services offered. The set threshold of demonstrated effectiveness NMHED will use to be considered for funding will be included in the RFA application. Application materials will transparently address both aspects of applicant eligibility, including a clear outline of the method NMHED requests applicants use for supplying required data on demonstrated effectiveness and how NMHED intends to evaluate the data. Care will be taken to ensure the applicant understands the difference between the demonstrated effectiveness component of the initial eligibility screening process, and the "past effectiveness" consideration used to evaluate proposals that have earned a "yes" in the eligibility screening phase. Once NMHED completes the eligibility screening process, only those applications who pass this initial review process will advance to the competitive phase of the application and proposal review process.

Direct and equitable access: NMHED will ensure direct and equitable access to all applicants by using the NOFA grant announcement and RFA application procedure described earlier in this section. Public notice of the NOFA and RFA will be issued through multiple venues. At minimum, the NOFA plus instructions for receiving a written copy of the RFA will be published in the Albuquerque Journal, a newspaper with statewide circulation. The NOFA and RFA will also be published on the NMHED website. Copies of both will be mailed directly to all existing local adult education service providers, as well as to all who request it. Should additional funding become available in the middle of a grant cycle (as in the case of the withdrawal of a provider during the term of a grant), the same process will be used to provide services in the applicable service area and will be open to all eligible agencies throughout the state.

All eligible applicants for Sections 225, 231, and 243 of WIOA will submit applications via the same application process directly to NMHED, the eligible agency. They will not be required to apply through another agency or agencies in a multi-tiered process. The application process is designed so that direct application to NMHED is clearly evident and nonnegotiable. Direct application for the grant is the norm. This ensures that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. 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 NMHED with an interest in participating will be provided the information needed.

Prior to any RFA application deadline, NMHED will conduct a technical assistance conference (typically in the form of a webinar) for potential applicants. An invitation to attend any prescheduled conference is attached to the NOFA and RFA, or published in conjunction with
it. Serving as the program officer, the State Adult Education Director will respond in writing to individual questions before and after this conference; all questions and responses are published on the NMHED website. These approaches meet or exceed all requirements specified in AEFLA and in the State’s procurement policies.

**General Proposal Requirements:** All proposals must be submitted by the deadline shown in the RFA. Each applicant shall submit an application to NMHED according to the instructions contained in the RFA. Any application not including all the information and assurances required will be deemed non-responsive and rejected. NMHED will forward all responsive applications to the local workforce board in the region(s) from which they applied for review and comment on their alignment with the regional WIOA plan. These reviews will be taken into consideration during proposal evaluation and final scoring. AEFLA grant applicants should expect RFAs to request an address of the following general categories:

- Performance, financial, and independent audit data sufficient to determine eligibility, including demonstrated effectiveness;
- A description of how funds awarded under AEFLA would be spent;
- A description of how the applicant would meet the State adjusted levels of AEFLA-specific performance, including how the applicant would collect data to report on such performance indicators;
- A description of how the applicant would provide services in a manner that meets the needs of eligible individuals;
- A description of any cooperative or co-enrollment arrangements the eligible provider has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of sanctioned Adult Education and Literacy activities; and
- A description of how the applicant would provide services in alignment with the Combined State and Local Plans, including how the applicant would promote concurrent enrollment with core WIOA partners and how the applicant will fulfill One Stop partner responsibilities outlined by WIOA.

Assurances must be provided that all funds awarded under AEFLA will be used to provide, establish, or operate programs that provide instruction and services corresponding to allowable AEFLA activities listed and defined in Section 203 of WIOA. These activities are listed below. **The first two listed (Adult Education and Literacy) are required activities;** the remaining six are allowable AEFLA activities.

1. **Adult Education** Academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that include an individual’s ability to read, write, and speak English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent; transition to postsecondary education and training; and obtain employment.
2. **Literacy** The ability to read, write, and speak in English and to compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family, and in society.

3. **Workplace Adult Education and Literacy Activities** Adult Education and literacy activities in collaboration with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or off-site location that is designed to improve the productivity of the workforce.

4. **Family Literacy Activities** Activities of sufficient intensity and quality to make sustainable improvements in the economic prospects for a family that better enable parents or family members to support their children’s learning needs, and that integrate all of the following activities: (1) Parent or family Adult Education and literacy activities that lead to readiness for postsecondary education or training, career advancement, and economic self-sufficiency; (2) Interactive literacy activities between parents or family members and their children; (3) Training for parents or family members regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children; and (4) Age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences. NOTE: As previously indicated, no funds under an AEAFLA grant may be used for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law. In providing family literacy activities under AEFLA, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

5. **English Language Acquisition Activities** A program of instruction designed to help eligible individuals who are English language learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language and that leads to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent and transition to postsecondary education and training or employment.

6. **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education** Education services provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries that enable them to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Services shall include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and may include workforce training. NOTE: As previously indicated, IELCE funding will be awarded under a separate RFA following the same process as the Adult Education and English language acquisition RFA. IELCE proposers are required to describe their civics curriculum and instructional materials and how they align with OCTAE’s Employability Skills or other widely-accepted national employability skills framework, as well as how they align with local industry needs and standards. Section 243 applicants are required to describe their relationships with workforce and economic development boards and systems and how those relationships will support integrated education and training for speakers of languages other than English, including professionals with credentials and degrees in their native countries.

7. **Workforce Preparation Activities** Activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources,
using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment.

8. **Integrated Education and Training** 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. This includes offering courses in collaboration with postsecondary institutions, employers, or trade associations that are team-taught by an Adult Education basic skills instructor and a Career and Technical Education instructor.

**Proposal Evaluation and Considerations for Funding:** A review team selected by NMHED based on published criteria will evaluate all potential service provider applications. Each evaluator will complete an evaluation form for each applicant. While the names of each evaluator will be kept confidential, the scores assigned to each application by each evaluator will be retained and available for public review upon request. In addition to the General Application Requirements already outlined, within the narrative portion of the application, proposers will be required to explain how they will meet each of the 13 required considerations outlined in Section 231(e) of WIOA. Grouped into overarching categories, these considerations include the need for each applicant to demonstrate effectiveness, need for service, program accessibility, program quality, alignment and coordination, relevance, and capacity for administration and compliance. The full text for all 13 considerations NMHED is required to evaluate will is provided below:

(1) The degree to which the eligible provider would be responsive to (A) the regional needs as identified in the local plan under section 108; and (B) serving individuals in the community who were identified in such plan as most in need of adult education and literacy activities, including individuals who have low levels of literacy skills or who are English language learners;

(2) The ability of the eligible provider to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals with learning disabilities;

(3) Past effectiveness of the eligible provider in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, to meet State-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance described in section 116, especially with respect to eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy;

(4) The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates alignment between proposed activities and services and the strategy and goals of the local plan under section 108, as well as the activities and services of the one-stop partners;

(5) Whether the eligible provider’s program (A) is of sufficient intensity and quality, and based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains; and (B) uses instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction;

(6) Whether the eligible provider’s activities, including whether reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction delivered by the eligible provider, are based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available and appropriate, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice;
(7) Whether the eligible provider’s activities effectively use technology, services, and delivery systems, including distance education in a manner sufficient to increase the amount and quality of learning and how such technology, services, and systems lead to improved performance;

(8) Whether the eligible provider’s activities provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training, so that an individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;

(9) Whether the eligible provider’s activities are delivered by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators who meet any minimum qualifications established by the State, where applicable, and who have access to high quality professional development, including through electronic means;

(10) Whether the eligible provider’s activities coordinate with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community, such as by establishing strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, local workforce investment boards, one-stop centers, job training programs, and social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries, for the development of career pathways;

(11) Whether the eligible provider’s activities offer flexible schedules and coordination with Federal, State, and local support services (such as child care, transportation, mental health services, and career planning) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs;

(12) Whether the eligible provider maintains a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes (consistent with section 116) and to monitor program performance; and

(13) Whether the local areas in which the eligible provider is located have a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

NMHED must include at least these 13 considerations when evaluating proposal applications, though it has control over how to weigh each consideration. If NMHED includes additional considerations for evaluating applicant proposals, they will be clearly defined in the RFA application and marked as "STATE" considerations or requirements. As is customary, to demonstrate that the 13 considerations listed above were considered in the competitive process, NMHED will score and weight these (and all other) considerations according to a published rubric as part of the application evaluation process.

One of the 13 required considerations addresses past effectiveness of the eligible provider in improving the literacy of eligible individuals with low levels of literacy. To be clear, rating an application with respect to this "past effectiveness" consideration is not an allowable substitution for NMHED when conducting applicant eligibility screening. The determination of applicant eligibility, including demonstrated effectiveness, must come first since it is required to be separate and distinct from rating "past effectiveness" as one of the 13 evaluation considerations described above. This means that it would be entirely possible for an applicant to pass the initial round of eligibility screening, to advance to the evaluation and rating phase of the competition, and score very low on the past effectiveness consideration. Depending on how
NMHED chose to weight this consideration, it would be possible for the applicant in this example to be deemed ultimately non-competitive.

**Distribution of Funding:** Applicants selected to receive AEFLA grants will be informed in writing. Prior to receiving awards, selected applicants will be required to engage in a final negotiation process with NMHED. Areas subject to negotiation include the final approved budget(s). The negotiation process may include changes in final funding amounts or to line items to bring said budgets into compliance with federal and state regulations and/or fund availability. The final negotiation process may also include additional areas that might require technical assistance or clarification, such as professional development plans. NMHED will work with accepted applicants to schedule this negotiation process and to provide any needed technical assistance. A final written grant agreement will be sent to each awarded provider. Once this agreement is signed, it—along with the eligible provider’s original application—will constitute the grant agreement.

The amount of funding available in each program year to each eligible provider awarded an AEFLA grant will be determined by available state and federal funds and distributed according to a published funding formula. This formula is determined by NMHED in consultation with Adult Education program directors and financial officers from eligible provider institutions and organizations. It is formally reviewed at least once every four (4) years, with the next review and potential revision slated for 2021. At minimum, this funding formula will take into account the literacy needs of the local service area, number of participants served, and core performance indicators under WIOA. A number of provisions to incentivize service population targets, provider consortia arrangements, regional collaborations, and formal partnership arrangements with core workforce partners may be also be included in the funding formula.

**Current local provider and participant data:** During FY19 (the last full year of available data at the time this Combined State Plan was written), a total of 10,960 students throughout the state were served by the 24 local Adult Education providers in New Mexico. All but three of these providers were postsecondary institutions. Provider student populations ranged from 30 to 1,911. Overall, 73% of students receiving Adult Education services identify as Hispanic, 11% as white, and 9% as American Indian or Alaskan Native. Three of New Mexico’s current local providers specifically serve Native American populations. Almost half of New Mexico’s Adult Education program participants were between the ages of 25 and 44.

C. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

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

- Adult education and literacy activities;
- Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- Secondary school credit;
- Integrated education and training;
- Career pathways;
- Concurrent enrollment;
• Peer tutoring; and
• Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible 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 eligible agency currently uses the same grant announcement and competitive application process for Section 225 as it does for other funds made available under Section 222. This includes the same process timeline outlined earlier in this document, the same methods for ensuring direct and equitable access, the same 13 required considerations specified in Section 231(e) of WIOA as part of the review criteria, and the same rubric and scoring criteria -- with additional considerations added to the application in order to reflect the range of allowable activities under Section 225. In the next RfA cycle, if the eligible agency decides to hold a separate competitive RfA for Section 225 funds, as it currently does for Section 243 IEL/CE funds, this change would be announced in advance by NMHED with a separate NOFA. Funds are distributed according to the funding formula described at length earlier in this section. As specified in WIOA 222 (a)(1), the eligible agency will ensure that not more than 20 percent of AEFLA grant funds awarded to the agency will be allocated to grantees for the purpose of carrying out Section 225 activities.

Allowable activities under Section 225 include: (1) adult education and literacy activities; (2) special education, as determined by the eligible agency; (3) secondary school credit; (4) integrated education and training; (5) career pathways; (6) concurrent enrollment; (7) peer tutoring; and (8) transition to re-entry initiatives and other post-release services with the goal of reducing recidivism. Historically, our largest sub grantee receiving funds dedicated to Section 225 activities have used these funds to target Section 225 activities (1), (4), (5), (7), and (8).

In Section 225 of WIOA, the term ‘correctional institution’ means any: (A) prison; (B) jail; (C) reformatory; (D) work farm; (E) detention center, or (F) halfway house, community-based rehabilitation center, or any other similar institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders. At present, a handful of local Adult Education programs around the state are providing services and activities that fall under Section 225, and the number is growing. There is a great need for these services and activities, and the eligible agency would like to see continued expansion of such efforts. One strategy to address this goal is outlined in the last paragraph of this subsection.

As one of NMHED's largest AEFLA sub grantees, the New Mexico Corrections Department (NMCD) is currently responsible for the administration of Adult Education programs, services, and activities in 11 state prisons, including six publicly operated and five privately operated facilities. NMCD is a state agency, not a consortium, and this agency's jurisdiction does not
include Federal prisons, local jails, or many other existing “correctional institutions” covered under Section 225.

There are state prison facilities in every workforce region. Combined, these facilities serve all state inmate custody levels, from minimum to maximum restriction. NMCD prison facilities include: Central New Mexico Correctional Facility, the Penitentiary of New Mexico, Roswell Correctional Center, Springer Correctional Center, Southern New Mexico Correctional Facility, Western New Mexico Correctional Facility, Guadalupe County Correctional Facility, Lea County Correctional Facility, Northeast New Mexico Correctional Facility, Northwest New Mexico Correctional Center, and the Otero County Prison Facility.

Education is housed in the Recidivism Reduction Division of NMCD. Ultimately reporting to the Recidivism Reduction Division Director, NMCD has a full time Adult Education Coordinator responsible for the oversight and support AEFLA-funded Adult Education programs and activities in all NMCD prison facilities, in coordination with a full time Education Director or Supervisor stationed at each facility. Because the Adult Education program serves a subset of inmates eligible for Special Education services, NMCD also retains a Special Education Coordinator and encourages each facility have a full time credentialed Special Education instructor. Adult Education functions within the NMCD-organized and supported system of Education and Recidivism Reduction programs, including cognitive-behavioral therapy programs, post-secondary education programs, family reunification programs, reentry programs, and vocational programs.

Enrollment in Adult Education is structurally supported by New Mexico state statute via the Inmate Literacy Act, which mandates that any person incarcerated in a state facility with a sentence greater than 18 months and less than 10 years be required to enroll in “Adult Basic Education” if they do not have a high school diploma or recognized equivalent. Due in part to limited allocated resources, only a fraction of those inmates who are required to participate are actually participating in an Adult Education program or class at any point in time. Wait lists are common, and facility work assignments are often prioritized over education assignments by policy and/or operational necessity or priority. As with other education and reentry programs, enrollment and service priority for Adult Education classes is given to inmates who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program, a policy which adheres to AEFLA Section 225 requirements.

While Adult Education classes are at least available at every state prison facility, other education program offerings vary, including the availability of postsecondary education and career and technical (vocational) education. Expanding vocational training--especially training that is tied to local industry and sector demands and that ultimately serves to provide viable career pathways for those with felony conviction--is a high priority for NMCD, opening the door to support the use of optional but highly effective AEFLA activities like integrated education and training. Other state correctional programs like Michigan’s Vocational Village are blazing strong trails in this direction and can provide valuable models for New Mexico. NMHED is committed to supporting such efforts and innovations.
Adult Education program efforts are supported by additional programs and services provided by the Adult Prison, Corrections Industries, Probation and Parole, and other NMCD Divisions. NMCD understands that providing education and other programs and services to the incarcerated is vital to their successful release and transition back into the community and to reduce recidivism. To this end, NMCD is committed to providing evidence-based programs like Adult Education to individuals who are incarcerated, as well as to providing linkages to effective programs and community supports upon release. Administrative leadership actively supports innovation and community partner collaboration to accomplish these aims, including with NMHED and other core workforce development partners.

Because incarcerated individuals have unique challenges and barriers to employment, NMHED has targeted this population as an area of professional development focus, including the intensive statewide Adult Education Career Pathways Training Initiative mentioned in the body of this Plan. Globally, this initiative was designed to ensure that all Adult Education providers fully understand both the spirit and the key “letters” of WIOA legislation, including actual definitions and requirements, and that they were using this knowledge to inform their self-evaluation efforts, their service delivery model, and their collaborative efforts with partner agencies and organizations. Training and action planning centered around ten (10) critical service delivery components, including partnerships, fostering a career culture, utilizing labor market information, onboarding, education and career planning with students, advising, instruction, alignment, special populations, and wrap around support services. Within this global orientation, all local Adult Education providers—not just NMCD—were specifically required to assess services they provided to the incarcerated and other justice-involved individuals. Participant programs were asked to systematically address how they might provide better access to services for such individuals, as well as more relevant, higher quality services. This assessment was to include an exploration of potential partnership activities which might help the statewide Adult Education system reach into underserved pockets of such persons, including places like local detention facilities and court diversion programs. This initiative is ongoing, with heavy emphasis on partnership development and sustainable action plans.

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.

D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Describe how the State will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs under Section 243 of WIOA, for English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, including how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities.

Describe how the State will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C, an Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program and how the funds will be used for the program.
Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

The State's dominant strategy will continue to be establishing and operating Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IEL/CE) programs in conjunction with English Language Acquisition (ELA)-focused programs delivered by local Adult Education providers, ensuring that IEL/CE programs funded under section 243 of WIOA include and support required integrated education and training activities. NMHED's application for IEL/CE Section 243 funds will require applicants to specifically demonstrate their intention and ability to provide literacy, English language acquisition, and civics education concurrently and contextually and in combination with integrated education and training. Proposed activities and budget are reviewed by NMHED to ensure they meet all Section 243 statutory requirements, as this category can be confusing for applicants. The term "IEL/CE" is used in two distinct ways in the AEFLA statute. In one sense, IEL/CE may be provided by an eligible provider as an activity under Section 231(b), in accordance with its grant or contract with the State to provide adult education and literacy activities. But it must also be implemented as a program under Section 243 of AEFLA with funds allocated as described in that section. The IEL/CE program under Section 243 carries additional requirements beyond those that an eligible provider must meet in implementing IEL/CE as a local activity under Section 231(b) - namely the integrated education and training requirement.

Eligibility for Section 243 IEL/CE program students is established in the same way it is for all Adult Education students, regardless of degree or credential attainment. In New Mexico, most English language learners are native to the State. A smaller percentage are immigrants, including some refugees, and some have degrees or professional certificates from their country of origin.

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

As described in detail in part (B) of this Appendix, the agency ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants or contracts. It ensures that the same grant or contract announcement, application, and proposal evaluation process is used for all eligible providers through the grant management system. All eligible applicants for AEFLA funding under WIOA sections 225, 231, and/or 243 will be allowed the same opportunity to apply for funds regardless of the priorities they address, and they will follow the same RFA process.
While the nature of the NOFA and RFA process will be identical, the funding set aside for Section 243 IEL/CE programs will be addressed and distributed via a separate RFA process with program-specific content and criteria for evaluation that conform to WIOA requirements for IEL/CE programs. In addition to the core required 13 considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, IEL/CE proposers will be required to describe their civics curriculum and instructional materials and how they align with OCTAE’s Employability Skills framework, or other comparable and widely accepted national framework, as well as how their curricula and instructional materials will be aligned to the national employability skills framework they will be using, and how these materials are based on industry standards. Applicants will also be required to describe their relationships with workforce and economic development boards and with local employers, and how those relationships will support integrated education and training for speakers of languages other than English, including professionals with credentials and degrees in their native countries.

In the spring of 2017, NMHED completed its first competitive application process for AEFLA Section 243 IEL/CE funding, in conjunction with Sections 231 and 225 funding. Seven local providers were selected for IELCE funding; however, in FY18 one of the funded providers determined that the IEL/CE funding and program requirements no longer adequately matched the program’s mission or student population, and so they returned the funds. This funding was redistributed to the remaining six IEL/CE providers. The RFA process for the next multi-year grant cycle for all AEFLA funds (including the separate RFA for section 243 funds) is scheduled to occur in the spring of 2021 for funding to begin July 1, 2021. Any announcement will be contingent upon State Plan approval by the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor.

NMHED has targeted this program as an area of professional development focus. The intensive statewide Adult Education Career Pathways Training Initiative mentioned in the body of this Plan addresses IEL/CE programming. Globally, this initiative was designed to ensure that all Adult Education providers fully understand both the spirit and the key “letters” of WIOA legislation, including actual definitions and requirements, and that they were using this knowledge to inform their self-evaluation efforts, their service delivery model, and their collaborative efforts with partner agencies and organizations. Training and action planning centered around ten (10) critical service delivery components, including partnerships, fostering a career culture, utilizing labor market information, onboarding, education and career planning with students, advising, instruction, alignment, special populations, and wrap around support services. This initiative is ongoing, with heavy emphasis on partnership development and sustainable action plans. Phase II of the initiative will focus heavily on integrated education and training models, which will be of great benefit to current IEL/CE provider programs. NMHED is actively working at the state level to encourage statewide development on this front.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.
All Section 243 IEL/CE program providers are tasked with preparing their participants for unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency. In essence, this is a task shared by all local Adult Education program providers and thus discussed at length in various sections of this Plan. To illustrate program possibilities, one IEL/CE provider is currently developing partnerships with local businesses to create an employment loop that moves students from the classroom to employment, back to the classroom for additional training leading to advancement in employment. Participation allowed the IEL/CE participants to move from apprentice to journeyman, promoting advancement in the participants' (in-demand) career pathway of choice and increasing wage earnings.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

Like all Adult Education program providers, all Section 243 IEL/CE program providers must collaborate with their local workforce development system and its functions to support the activities of the program. This includes potentially collaborating with business and industry, core WIOA partner and other economic development agencies, and local workforce development boards and One Stops. All Section 243 IEL/CE programs must have MOUs in place with their local workforce development boards, complete with One Stop cost-sharing agreements. Because of the many required components of being an IEL/CE program provider, including the IET component, strong partnerships are essential. While certainly this comprehensive program model is in the early stages of development in New Mexico and comes with many implementation challenges, collaborations with industry workforce partners have resulted in several industry-specific programs for current IEL/CE program providers and have resulted in MOUs with the construction of a new Facebook facility, the New Mexico Roofing Contractors Association, several Small Business Development Centers, and other public entities and private companies.

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

Section 223 of WIOA stipulates that each eligible agency shall use funds made available under Section 222(a)(2) to prioritize certain State Leadership activities outlined in that Section. In accordance with Section 223 of WIOA, NMHED will prioritize the following four (4) State Leadership activities:

(A) The alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop partners, including eligible providers, to implement the strategy identified in the combined State plan under section 103, including the development of career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities.

Funds shall be used to continue to support the alignment of Adult Education and literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop partners, including eligible providers, to implement the strategy identified in the State plan under section 103, including the development of career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities. For Title II, this will happen on two
levels: Local Adult Education and literacy provider collaborations and partnerships with their "host" organization or institution of higher education; with local one-stops and workforce development boards; with regional sector strategy collaborations; with local nonprofit organizations; and with the local business community. NMHED will support local program efforts to maintain or convene broad-based advisory boards from the community it serves to include workforce development system partners. Alignment will also occur at the State agency level with core WIOA and other Combined State Plan partners. Enhancing coordination and synergy at the State level is an area of significant strategic focus for Title II at present, with particular emphasis on workforce development-related collaborations with postsecondary institutions around ability to benefit, remedial education, and career pathway development; with our public education system partners on family literacy and career pathway development; and with all WIOA partners around equity issues, service barriers, and sector strategy/career pathway development.

(A) Strategic priority activities include:

1. Ensuring continued Adult Education engagement with the WIOA core partner leadership team; with the State and all four (4) local workforce investment boards; and with related committees and work groups, to include those which might be convened to support career pathway development and/or regional sector strategy work.

2. Engaging individuals and organizations with significant local and national-level expertise to advise and collaborate with NMHED and other core partners in areas of high strategic priority, including the coordinated statewide development of priority sector strategies and career pathways for industry sectors the governor has identified as highest priority (health, aerospace and STEM, intelligent manufacturing, sustainable and value-added agriculture, sustainable and green industries, film and digital media, tourism and recreation, information technology and cyber security, education, and international trade).

3. Collaborating with DWS and core WIOA partners to build on the Common Unique Identifier (CIJID) project and work toward the creation of interoperable data infrastructure and a streamlined referral and tracking system.

4. Providing and participating in cross-agency training and professional development

5. Working collaboratively to identify and eliminate barriers to access (especially as they relate to system barriers) and developing effective messaging for stakeholders to increase system engagement.

(B) The establishment or operation of high quality professional development programs to improve the instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under Section 231(b), including instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel of a State or outlying area, and dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to such programs.

Funding will be used for the establishment or operation of high quality professional development programs to improve the instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under Section 231(b), including instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel of a State or outlying area, and
dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to such programs. All professional development is delivered with the goal of supporting student success and ultimately achieving strong individual and programmatic outcomes. NMHED grounds professional development in the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTAE) research and research-based professional development curricula to help guide offerings and regularly partners with LINCS (Literacy and Information Communication System) experts to support and guide efforts. Topics vary widely based on general and situation-specific need, ranging categorically from instructional design and practice (e.g. learning theory and the general principles of andragogy; evidence-based essential components of effective reading instruction; addressing cultural differences in the classroom; the effective use of technology in the classroom, etc.) to research-informed program design (e.g. managed enrollment and effective onboarding) to leadership and staff development. Delivery methods range from online webinars, courses, and communities of practice to face-to-face workshops, institutes, and conferences, as well as extended blended opportunities. NMHED co-sponsors an annual state conference for all Adult Education practitioners and workforce development partners. Professional development offerings are continuously evaluated to determine effect on learner experience and performance, effect on the long term behavior of practitioners, and degree of systems change affected.

(B) Strategic priority activities include:

1. Leading the ongoing development of a comprehensive, statewide Adult Education professional development system in New Mexico, including completing a feasibility study on the creation of an Adult Education credentialing system and building out a State professional development resource portal
2. Sponsoring a year-long statewide Career Pathways Training Initiative for Adult Education leadership (FY20) requiring local program action plan development and sustainability investment
3. Building collaborative relationships with local, regional, and national adult education associations and coalitions to strengthen professional development efforts
4. Building internal training and leadership capacity
5. Mobilizing current and former Adult Education students to strengthen program efficacy, professional development, and outreach/advocacy efforts + develop leadership skills

(C) The provision of technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities receiving funds under this title, including—(i) the development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available and appropriate, in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, distance education, and staff training; (ii) the role of eligible providers as a one-stop partner to provide access to employment, education, and training services; and (iii) assistance in the use of technology, including for staff training, to eligible providers, especially the use of technology to improve system efficiencies.

Funding will be used for the provision of technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities, including development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available and appropriate, in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, distance education, and staff training; the role of eligible providers as a one-stop partner to
provide access to employment, education, and training services; and assistance in the use of technology, including for staff training, to eligible providers, especially the use of technology to improve system efficiencies. Technical assistance of the nature described will primarily be provided in the context of Title II professional development and pursuant to local program monitoring activities, though additional co-training and collaborative activities with One Stop partners will apply. All AEFLA providers have had extensive hands-on and pedagogical training about the use of technology in the classroom as part of an effort to make all Adult Education classes (as appropriate) a combination of blended distance and face-to-face education. An online platform aligned to CCRS standards with mapping to Key Train and O-Net was provided to local Adult Education programs statewide. All providers have been trained by the publisher, and pedagogically by master teachers, primarily those involved in the State-sponsored New Mexico “DELT” (Distance Education and Learning Technologies) initiative. New Mexico is working to both sustain and build on these efforts as it integrates effective but discrete technical assistance/professional development initiatives like NMDELT into a larger and more cohesive statewide professional development system.

(C) Strategic priority activities include:

1. Providing responsive, effective technical assistance in the context of the emerging statewide Title II professional development system, pursuant to program monitoring activities, and as needed to individual local providers based on performance and demographic or staff changes.

2. Diversifying and effectively coordinating channels for the development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available and appropriate.

3. Providing the timely revision of all NMHED Adult Education policies and developing codified role-based guidance materials for key local program staff positions, starting with program directors and data technicians.

4. Collaborating with One Stop partners to provide both reciprocal training and joint professional development opportunities to enhance coordination and provide better support and service to students and clients.

5. Exploring the use of Community Pro and other software platforms to improve system effectiveness and coordination for One Stop system partners.

(D) The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities and the dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the State.

Funding will be used to monitor the quality of/improvement in adult education and literacy activities and the dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the State. Monitoring activities are designed to ensure AEFLA grant compliance in ultimate service to improving student learning. Desk audits, reporting requirements, informal inquiries, and formal local program site visits are the State’s primary monitoring vehicles. Monitoring site visits are performed according to a schedule determined by a federally-sanctioned Risk Assessment Tool, with frequency and duration determined by risk ratings from that Tool. Regardless of risk, NMHED is committed to visiting all local Adult Education program providers at least once every three years for evaluation, learning, and support. Dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the State happens to some degree within the context of local program monitoring, where such
models and promising practices may be shared in reference to an area the State determines the program needs to improve, or could further build upon. But such dissemination happens more generally and frequently within the context of professional development activities. Sharing proven/promising models and practices both from within the State and from other states is an area of targeted strategic development for New Mexico.

(D) Strategic priority activities include:

1. Maintaining and enhancing a healthy statewide performance accountability system that includes maintenance of a statewide information management system; core performance and other quality program indicators; performance measures for each indicator; a system for evaluating the effectiveness of Adult Education and literacy activities based on the performance measures; ongoing needs assessment; and identifying promising practices.

2. Incentivizing data-driven decision making and formalizing opportunities for local programs to analyze data for program improvement purposes.

3. Improving the efficacy and utility of local program site monitoring visits via strategic front-end requests and planned follow up conferencing.

4. Supporting local program development of a "career pathway-oriented" service delivery model.

5. Encouraging and incentivizing innovation and responsible risk-taking.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE

While the following list of State Leadership activities are not required, Section 233 grants the State permission to use funds in order to support them. For the purposes of this Combined State Plan, NMHED has selected five (5) activities to include in its second tier of prioritized State Leadership activities. The permissible activities NMHED selected as second tier priorities will appear in bold. Priority permissible activities were selected on the basis of their critical supportive relationship to the goals and strategies outlined in the Combined State Plan, as well as to their current contextual significance to the required State Leadership activities listed and addressed in the last subsection.

(A) The support of State or regional networks of literacy resource centers.

(B) The development and implementation of technology applications, translation technology, or distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology.

(C) Developing and disseminating curricula, including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults.

(D) Developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways.

(E) The provision of assistance to eligible providers in developing and implementing programs that achieve the objectives of this title and in measuring the progress of those
programs in achieving such objectives, including meeting the State adjusted levels of performance described in section 116(b)(3).

(F) The development and implementation of a system to assist in the transition from adult education to postsecondary education, including linkages with postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education.

(G) Integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers.

(H) Activities to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities.

(I) Identifying curriculum frameworks and aligning rigorous content standards that—(i) specify what adult learners should know and be able to do in the areas of reading and language arts, mathematics, and English language acquisition; and (ii) take into consideration the following: (I) State adopted academic standards; (II) The current adult skills and literacy assessments used in the State or outlying area; (III) The primary indicators of performance described in section 116. (IV) Standards and academic requirements for enrollment in non-remedial, for-credit courses in postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education supported by the State or outlying area. (V) Where appropriate, the content of occupational and industry skill standards widely used by business and industry in the State or outlying area.

(J) Developing and piloting of strategies for improving teacher quality and retention.

(K) The development and implementation of programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners, which may include new and promising assessment tools and strategies that are based on scientifically valid research, where appropriate, and identify the needs and capture the gains of such students at the lowest achievement levels.

(L) Outreach to instructors, students, and employers.

(M) Other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title.

F. ASSESSING QUALITY

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

Section 223 of WIOA stipulates that each eligible agency shall use funds made available under Section 222(a)(2) to prioritize certain State Leadership activities outlined in that Section. In accordance with Section 223 of WIOA, NMHED will prioritize the following four (4) State Leadership activities:

Local programs are required to enter and maintain performance and demographic data governed by the National Reporting System (NRS) for Adult Education. The eligible agency maintains a web-based system called LACES (Literacy, Adult, and Community Education System) from LiteracyPro to collect and track all data. Local adult education program providers collect baseline demographic data for all participants, including employment and income status and level of education completed at entry. For as long as the student is enrolled in a local Adult Education program, providers track multiple aspects of program participation such as class enrollment, level and teacher assignments, attendance, and test scores. The following five target success metrics are carefully tracked in LACES: Measurable academic skill gains (MSGs), high school equivalency (HSE) credential attainment, transition to employment, entering
postsecondary education or training, and median earnings in both the 2nd and 4th quarters after exiting the Adult Education program.

The eligible agency trains all designated local provider data technicians and monitors local program data collection and quality via regular desk audits, scheduled site monitoring visits, and required semiannual and annual reporting. Division staff provide quarterly data matches with the Diploma Sender database for high school equivalency attainment, with NMDWS for employment entry and wage information, and with the Higher Education Department’s internal database (DEAR) for entry into state public postsecondary institutions. Data match information is then imported into LACES. Adult Education reports local program performance annually to the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) at the U.S. Department of Education. The program year is from July 1 through June 30, and the annual report to OCTAE is due December 31 following the end of the program year.

Annual program evaluations address the extent to which service providers have implemented each of the required activities specified in Section 223 of WIOA and their outcomes in terms of student learning and progress toward education and career goals. Effectiveness at meeting or exceeding State-adjusted levels of performance of the core indicator success metrics is a major focus of the local program evaluation process, which is holistically conducted using data-driven measurement of program effectiveness; identification of best practices and emerging needs; identification of staff needs as they relate to program effectiveness; and identification of trends and barriers that affect program outcome. Both quantitative and qualitative measures are reported twice annually to support continuous improvement and ensure required levels of performance are being met.

Monitoring site visits are performed according to a schedule determined by a federally-sanctioned Risk Assessment Tool, with frequency and duration determined by risk ratings from that Tool. Regardless of risk, NMHED is committed to visiting all local Adult Education program providers at least once every three years for evaluation, learning, and support. Service providers are required to conduct a self-evaluation prior to the site visit, using the Site Monitoring checklist provided. Each program must address areas in need in its annual evaluation report, as identified in the site evaluation. If at any time a program is found to be out of compliance with Federal or State requirements, the provider is placed on probation for up to one year as they fulfill a Corrective Action Plan. Failure to comply with this plan may result in a reduction or removal of funding pursuant to State policy and procedure.

In addition to assessing the quality of local program provider activities, the State is charged with taking action to improve such quality. Section 223 (a)(1)(b) of WIOA mandates "the establishment or operation of high quality professional development programs to improve the instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under section 231(b)," namely the provision of adult education and literacy activities. NMHED is committed to supporting high quality professional development, as evidenced by one of its highest strategic priority action items named in the previous section (E. State Leadership) under its highest Leadership Activity priorities: Leading the ongoing development of a comprehensive, statewide Adult Education professional development system in New Mexico, including completing a feasibility study on the
creation of an Adult Education credentialing system and building out a State professional development resource portal. To this end, NMHED is partnering with LINCS, consulting with a broad-based team composed of Adult Education Directors and practitioners from every region in the state plus Corrections, and contracting with local and national expert consultants in a longitudinal project designed to improve statewide accessibility and further enhance the quality and intentional coordination of state-sponsored professional development activities.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The State Plan must include</th>
<th>Include</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</table>

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The State Plan must include</th>
<th>Include</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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);</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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 &quot;eligible individuals&quot; 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;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The State Plan must include

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).

AUTHORIZING OR CERTIFYING REPRESENTATIVE

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

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

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

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

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.
Please download and sign the forms below. Please scan and return the forms to wioa@ed.gov at the same time you submit your State Plan via the portal.

1. SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs
   (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)
2. Grants.gov - Certification Regarding Lobbying
   (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)
3. SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (required, only if applicable)
   (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLICANT’S ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>Enter information in this column</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicant’s Organization</td>
<td>New Mexico Higher Education Department</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE</th>
<th>Enter information in this column</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Name</td>
<td>Kate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Name</td>
<td>O’Neill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Higher Education Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kate.oneill@state.nm.us">kate.oneill@state.nm.us</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

In the text box below, describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs provide the information to meet the requirements of Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), consistent with the following instructions posted at https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/gepa427.doc.

GEPA Section 427 is addressed in the AEFLA grant competition. Information about Section 427 is included in RFP application packet, and all applicants are required to complete a separate Attestation worksheet as part of this application. In this Attestation worksheet, potential providers are asked to list relevant barriers to Adult Education program participation, and to detail measures they are taking and/or plan to take in order to address these barriers. In order to encourage thoughtful attention and to support our local provider programs, after the competition NMHED compiles and distributes a list of promising practices and thoughtful approaches for potential implementation to all program providers who received AEFLA awards. In addition to highlighting promising practices from our own local providers, NMHED also spotlights noteworthy practices from around the country. Local provider institutions and organizations are committed to equal opportunity and affirmative action for employees and work to actively recruit applicants from traditionally underrepresented groups to create a diverse faculty and staff. NMHED local program oversight helps support institutional policy and practice to ensure that both program staff and students have access to counseling, accommodations, and other support services as needed to contribute to their success in the program as traditionally underrepresented students and/or students with special needs. All services must be provided in ADA accessible facilities. NMHED monitors GEPA Section 427 compliance issues as part of its monitoring process and works to provide relevant training for both staff and local program providers as part of its professional development system. At the
State level, NMHED is committed to working with our WIOA partners to systematically identify and remove barriers to access.

OMB Control No. 1894-0005 (Exp. 04/30/2020)

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about the following provision in the Department of Education’s General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.
Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

**What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?**

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

- An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.

- An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.

- An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

- An applicant that proposes a project to increase school safety might describe the special efforts it will take to address concern of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, and efforts to reach out to and involve the families of LGBT students

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

**Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements**

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the
collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Public Law 103-382. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0005.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)
The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as "baseline" for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

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

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>PY 2020 Expected Level</th>
<th>PY 2020 Negotiated Level</th>
<th>PY 2021 Expected Level</th>
<th>PY 2021 Negotiated Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>36.0%</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Indicators</td>
<td>PY 2020 Expected Level</td>
<td>PY 2020 Negotiated Level</td>
<td>PY 2021 Expected Level</td>
<td>PY 2021 Negotiated Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>3,500.00</td>
<td>3,219.0</td>
<td>3,750.00</td>
<td>3,220.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credential Attainment Rate</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurable Skill Gains</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness in Serving Employers</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ “Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
(COMBINED OR GENERAL)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan [13] must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA:

[13] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(iii) of WIOA

A. INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

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


SRC Recommendation 1:
Clearance of wait list for Order of Selection for DVR, along with regular updates to SRC.

DVR Response 1: DVR is on Order of Selection (OOS) and has three Priority Categories:

1. Most Significant Disabilities (open)
2. Significant disabilities
3. Non-Significant Disabilities

Priority Category one has no wait list. Priority Categories two and three are closed (wait list). As soon as DVR determines there are resources available to initiate new service plans, individuals who are not being served will be taken off the wait list in the order in which their applications were received. The client data system has the capability of sorting participants by priority level and date of application. Caseload budget expenditures and resources are monitored to determine when sufficient funds...
are available to release individuals from the wait list. Participants will be notified about their removal from the wait list. Individuals with less significant disabilities are provided resources in the community, such as One Stop Centers, to meet their needs. The intent of the law is to ensure that those who have the greatest need are served first.

DVR has implemented a model for releasing individuals from the waitlist. The model includes annual average cost to serve an individual on an individualized plan for employment (IPE), average cost over the lifetime of a closure after an IPE is developed, and the average years for a case to be closed as rehabilitated. DVR has released 307 participants from the waitlist for current program fiscal year. DVR anticipates releasing an additional 178 for the current program fiscal year for a total of 485 participants.

The goal for DVR is to remove the OOS. DVR will continue to analyze resources to continue to release participants from the waitlist and to determine the feasibility of removing the OOS. DVR will provide regular updates on the status of OOS to SRC.

SRC Recommendation 2:
SRC recommends involvement in selection and training of hearing officers for New Mexico.

DVR Response 2: DVR will include SRC in selection and training of future hearing officers. DVR has recently filled the position of Chief Legal Counsel who will review the agreements. DVR will involve SRC in the selection and training of hearing officers.

SRC Recommendation 3:
SRC recommends facilitation of public forums to collect feedback regarding DVR services.

DVR Response 3: DVR will hold public forums to collect feedback regarding DVR services, including the State Plan. The forums will be held throughout the state to allow for public input from every region of the state. DVR will conduct two public forums with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) partners in Albuquerque and Las Cruces, New Mexico. DVR will hold additional public forums which will be facilitated as recommended by SRC.

SRC Recommendation 4:
SRC Recommends continued planning for State Plan activities in 2020.

DVR Response 4: DVR is actively engaged with the SRC. Additionally, DVR works collaboratively with SRC by providing information on the state plan, providing updates on direct client services, providing DVR orientation for new SRC members, and addressing resource needs for the SRC. DVR will continue to support the SRC in attending public forums, legislative hearings and other activities.

SRC Recommendation 5:
Exploration of public hearings in conjunction with other boards and disability service agencies.

DVR Response 5: DVR and WIOA partners will hold public hearings in Albuquerque and Las Cruces, New Mexico. Several community rehabilitations programs as well as SRC will be invited to attend and participate in the forums.

SRC Recommendation 6:
Review of SRC bylaws and responsibilities to ensure council members are fully aware of federal regulations.

DVR Response 6: DVR will review SRC bylaws with SRC members and provides updates and information on federal regulations. SRC attends the annual SRC National Conference held during the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) conferences, and DVR provides information and updates from Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and other federal agencies. The SRC bylaws are uploaded to the SRC link on the DVR website.

SRC Recommendation 7:
Create a training program to ensure that SRC members are fully versed and aware of services throughout the state.

DVR Response 7: DVR will continue to provide training for SRC members on VR services and resources available to individuals with disabilities. Training can occur during the SRC quarterly meetings.

SRC Recommendation 8:
The SRC has established criteria for an award honoring DVR staff, and employers that hire DVR participants.

DVR Response 8: DVR will support promoting this activity to encourage a positive, productive, and innovative organizational environment. Recognizing employees for their contributions in assisting individuals with disabilities leads to improved results. The recognition of an employer for their contribution in working with individuals with disabilities enhances employment for individuals with disabilities. DVR will assist in promoting this annual event.

SRC Recommendation 9:
The SRC will encourage DVR to initiate a public relations campaign to help enhance the image of DVR and increase awareness of disability services in New Mexico.

DVR Response 9: A consumer satisfaction survey was conducted for potentially eligible students with disabilities ages 14-21, and both current and former DVR participants. Results were shared with SRC members. DVR will use results from the satisfaction survey to facilitate ongoing public relations efforts to promote DVR services and its partnership with the SRC. DVR is planning to hire a Public Information Officer staff position to implement an ongoing public relations (PR) campaign. The PR campaign will include feedback from stakeholders, participation in employment fairs, health fairs, and career fairs for students. PR campaign will also include media submissions in publications such as the New Mexico State Round the Roundhouse, the Santa Fe New Mexican, Albuquerque Journal and other media outlets, including social media.

SRC Recommendation 10.
The SRC recommends that DVR establish a culturally competent outreach program for Native Americans that will meet each individual community needs and provide a consistent presence in these communities to gain credibility and establish a positive relationship with the 121 programs.

DVR Response: DVR will continue to include a component of tribal diversity and sensitivity training in its Rehabilitation Academy. DVR has established an Interagency Agreement with the
Jemez Vocational Rehabilitation program to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services for students with disabilities ages 14 to 21. Memoranda of Understanding have been established with the tribal vocational rehabilitation (VR) programs throughout the state of New Mexico; Jemez Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Navajo Nation VR-Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), and Laguna Acoma VR. These programs provide and help with career development, improve opportunities for Native American adults and students with disabilities, and the Navajo people to enrich their quality of life in New Mexico.

DVR completed public meetings for State Plan: Wednesday, February 19, 2020 at 9:00 am MST, Farmington, New Mexico. Location: San Juan Community College.

Monday, February 24, 2020 at 6:00 pm MST, Santa Fe, NM. Location: DVR Administrative Office

Tuesday, February 25, 2020 at 9:00 am MST, Santa Fe, NM. Location: Toney Anaya Building

Wednesday, February 26, 2020 at 9:00 am MST, Roswell, NM. Location: Roswell Convention Center

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT’S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL’S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

Refer to section a. for States’ unit response from Input of State Rehabilitation Council (General)

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT’S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL’S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

None rejected.

B. REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

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

1. A LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY WILL PROVIDE THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WAIVER REQUEST;

New Mexico VR has not requested a Waiver of state wideness.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

Waiver not requested.

3. REQUIREMENTS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN WILL APPLY TO THE SERVICES APPROVED UNDER THE WAIVER.

Waiver not requested.

C. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:
1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

The Division has developed and maintained interagency agreements (IGA) with agencies that carry out activities and which do not carry out activities under the statewide workforce investment system. Some of the agencies not under the state workforce investment system are: University of New Mexico (Partners for Employment), The New Mexico Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; The Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, The Department of Health, and the Developmental Disabilities Support Services Division, to provide supported employment services to individuals on the developmental disabilities waiver and Jackson Class members.

The Division currently has an IGA with UNM Center for Development and Disability to provide Project SEARCH in eight locations in New Mexico with Supported Employment students as part of New Mexico's Pre-Employment Transition Services "Pre-ETS" requirements. The Division also has a Memorandum with the Public Education Department to provide comprehensive vocational and education services to individuals with disabilities ages 14-21.

DVR has contracts with the Independent Living Resource Center, San Juan Center for Independence, & Choices Center for Independence in the state, services include job seeking skills training, job placement, and Self-Advocacy and supportive services. Moreover, DVR has a Memorandum of understanding with Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Programs throughout the state of New Mexico; Jemez Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Navajo Nation VR-OSER's, and Laguna Acoma VR. These programs provide and help with career development, improve opportunities for Native American Adults & students with disabilities, and Navajo people to enrich their quality of life in New Mexico.

DVR has an Interagency Agreement with the Central Regional Educational Cooperative (CREC 5), Local Educational Agencies, New Mexico School for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing, New Mexico Rocky Mountain Youth Center "RMYC", Mandy's Farm, Jemez VR-Project H.O.P.E. "Hands On Preparation Experience" to provide statewide required Pre-ETS services to students with a disability which included state supported mental health & correctional facility schools.

The Division has implemented Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with the Local Workforce Development Boards and the American Job Centers Partners within New Mexico's counties. The development and implementation of a comprehensive system requires teamwork between the Partners to work together to establish goals, operating strategies and procedures for effective integration of workforce services. The collective development of the local plans intends to create a foundational blueprint for economic development organizations, state agencies, community organizations, labor unions, local businesses, and WIOA adult and youth service providers. Partners anticipate utilizing coordinated services for businesses, job training, and placement activities to meet the diverse needs of both rural and urban areas within the Local Workforce Boards. The Division and partners will integrate systems and coordinate services placing priority on customer service. The Division and Partners will contribute continuously to the improvement process designed to enhance outcomes and increase customer satisfaction. Continued regularly scheduled Partner and coordination meetings are held to exchange information in support and to promote the program with staff integration.

The Community Partner Work Incentive Counselors (CPWIC) in DVR must be accredited by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and keep the required number of continuing education credits up to date. All Work Incentive Counselors (WIC) work closely local Social Security Administration (SSA) field offices with the Area Work Incentive Coordinator (AWIC)
and Plan for Achieving Self-Support Cadre. Together they work to find solutions on how to help Social Security Disability Benefits beneficiaries return to work and move to self-sufficient with less dependency on public benefits. This includes providing services to Jackson class members, Pre-Employment Transitional Services (Pre-ETS) students, and Commission for the Blind participants to avoid termination of employment due to a glitch in the work incentive process. The Work Incentives Counseling includes developing individualized 1619(b) thresholds, mitigating overpayment with use of work incentives such as Student Earned Income Exclusion, and the proper use to the Ticket to Work (TTW).

DVR has six Memorandum of Understanding with local Employment Networks. This means potential and current participants holding a TTW can make use of partnership plus at the appropriate stage of the VR process. Partnership plus can be used as a post-employment services, once a participant case is closed by DVR or during the delayed status of Order of Selection until the VR process continues. When an agency or organization is interested in becoming an Employment Network, DVR connects the interested party to Maximus to start the contract with SSA and continue to support them during the process. The MOU in place so far are with Albuquerque Center for Hope and Recovery, Adelante Development Center, LifeROOTS, Mid Region Counsel of Governments (MRCOG), Best Buddies, and now Nizhonigo Careers. There was a loss of one Employment Network due to EN relocation. The EN is being contacted to continue the process.

Benefits Advisement Services (BAS) assist with self-employment, working on how earnings from different types of business structures could affect SSA calculations of benefits as well at the accounting system the participants choices for their business. WIC work with the New Mexico Small Business Development Center (NMSBDC), Accion NM, private and public accounting or bookkeeping services, and incubators to make sure the self-employment process is a smooth process and to prevent overpayments of benefits causing cash flow issues.

DVR Benefits Advisement Services connects with Medicaid Services at the Medical Assistance Division (MAD). DVR continues to work on the development of the Working Disabled Individuals (WDI) Medicaid pamphlets and keep in contact with the policy unit of MAD to clarify policy and procedure when participants lose Community and Home-Based Waivers or another, should loss of Medicaid mean loss of employment. DVR also attends the Medicaid Advisory Board meetings. MAD, a division of the Human and Services Department (HSD), provides clarification regarding rules given to HSD staff in considering cases.

**2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;**

Technology remains one of the primary engines for economic activity, education, and innovation in the Nation and throughout the world. Many aspects which were once only thought to help people with disabilities are used by those without disabilities moving the world closer to universal design and increased accessibility. The commitment of the United States to the development and use of technology is one of the main factors underlying the strength and vibrancy of the economy of the United States.

The New Mexico Technology Assistance Program (NMTAP) moved from DVR in 2008 and now administered by the Governor’s Commission on Disability (GCD). NMTAP provides information and access to Assistive Technology (AT) for individuals with disabilities statewide, including schools. Operating under the US Department of Health and Human Services and Administration of Community Living, NMTAP fulfills the requirements of the AT act of 2004. Services are delivered through the main location in the greater Albuquerque area and two satellite office,
located in the Northeast and southwest areas of NM. NMTAP has contracts with both the Northeastern Regional Educational Cooperative providing services out of New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas, NM and Western New Mexico University in Silver City. All three locations provide support to students in secondary schools and their individual transition plans required by WIOA.

The four core services required under the mandate of the AT Act of 2011 include; device demonstration, device loans, financial loans, and reutilized equipment. Device demonstration provides an opportunity to compare devices. This allows the individual to decide on which device might best serve their needs.

Frequently device demonstration will result in a loan of a device. DVR participants and others may borrow the AT device for consideration for 30 days in their own environment. This allows the individual and possibly their VR Counselor to assess if the device will in fact provide access to either employment or educations leading to employment.

The financial loan component of NMTAP provides low interest loans to individuals with disabilities statewide when there are no other options or to offset DVR funds. The San Juan Center for Independence contracts with NMTAP to provide two different loans. The Self-Employment for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities (SEED) loans can help fund equipment for entrepreneurs with disabilities by providing a low interest loan. SEED loans can help supplement a DVR participant’s plan for a home-based business. Access Loans NM is the second financial loan offered, and it provides low-interest loans for AT needed when all other financing options have been exhausted. Access loan are often used for accessible transportation or modification for entering or exiting one’s home.

The final core component provides used durable medical equipment and refurbished computers to people with disabilities. NMTAP contracts with two Adelante Development Center’s programs for this service – DiverseIT and Back In Use. DVR participants can receive a refurbished computer at no cost to be used for their education or employment through the DiverseIT program, while Back In Use offers used medical equipment.

NMTAP also provides training statewide for professionals working with individuals with disabilities and works with DVR and other agencies frequently to educate staff about AT devices and services. Yearly, NMTAP provides training to professionals statewide at the annual NMTAP Sponsored AT conferences and at NMTAP’s small one-day workshops called Hands-On Workshops of AT (HOW-AT).

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

The Division does not participant in programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States. The Division works cooperatively with other states and non-profit organizations, which includes USDA Forestry Service Division at the local level, to promote implementation of participant trainings and employment. Participants between the ages of 16 and 21 who are interested in natural resource management are provided with On-the-Job training, resource conservation skills which are relevant to a variety of careers, as well as first aid and CPR certifications, defensive driving, and ATV certifications.

The Division works with USDA Forestry Services at the local level since FFY 2011 using Schedule A applications, which has led to employment of multiple DVR participants and provided employees for Forestry Services.
DVR’s Benefits Advisement Services (BAS) are required to provide information to all Social Security Disability beneficiary’s receiving Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) administered by the United States Department of Agriculture. DVR’s participants are educated about how employment and wages will affect their benefits and to provide the proper information in a timely manner to the SNAP program to prevent receiving benefits the participant may not be eligible. DVR staff are educated on location of the website to screen participants on eligibility and possible amount of SNAP. This allows participants to make sure they have the correct paperwork to become eligible while working towards a vocational goal, with the hope the participants are moving to self-sufficiency and growing income and stopping use of public benefit.

4. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

UNM—Center for Disability and Development currently serves an employment internship site for out of school youth and/or Supported Employment (SE) participants with most significant disabilities to have job internship/work experiences. CDD provides direct onsite internship/work experiences training slots for at least five (5) out of school youth and/or SE participants.

The Social Security Administration serves out-of-school youth and refers individuals aged 22 to 26 to DVR benefits advisement. This demonstration the cooperation for DVR to assist SSA beneficiaries report income, apply for work incentives, and develop self-advocacy plans. DVR has committed to serving this age group even if the beneficiary is not yet a DVR participant or is on wait list under order-of-selection.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

The Division previously reported legislation of the State Use contract program. A vendor was identified and the State Use contracting system is fully operational. The agency conforms to the provisions of this legislation and contracts are submitted to the State Use vendor agency for first right of refusal whenever appropriate.

The vendor for the state use contract is Horizons of New Mexico. This non-profit agency works on behalf of the New Mexico Council for Purchasing from Persons with Disabilities to foster contracts for its members outside of the normal bid process, as long as, services are at fair market price. Horizons of New Mexico maintains a list of approved services available through its members with disabilities and the state refers to this vendor for those services.

D. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

Describe:

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

DVR is an organizational unit of and works with the Public Education Department. DVR facilitates the transition of students who are receiving special education services from the provision of a free appropriate public education under the responsibility of an educational agency. DVR also works with local education agencies to coordinate services for potentially eligible students ages 14-21 with disabilities and student referrals to the DVR field offices and
provide for eligibility determination of the student for vocational rehabilitation services and the development and approval of the Individual Plan for Employment before the student leaves the school setting.

DVR has received a memorandum from the New Mexico Public Education Department that sets forth the responsibilities of the New Mexico Public Education Department's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation ("DVR") and Special Education Bureau ("SEB") regarding transition students with disabilities in secondary education schools to transition to postsecondary education or employment. The purpose of the memorandum is to direct a basic commitment to provide comprehensive vocational and educational services to students with disabilities in accordance with the provisions of the most recent version of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act.

The agreement is designed to create common understanding and establish collaborative efforts regarding services that will ultimately improve employment outcomes for students with disabilities who may be eligible for DVR services. This interagency agreement has been revised from the April 2004 Memorandum of Understanding agreement to now focus on both students with disabilities transitioning from high school as well as adults with disabilities, who have an expectation for integrated competitive employment. DVR has Memorandum that defines necessary relationships, policies and procedures between the DVR, and the Departments of Public Education (PED). The two agencies have updated these agreements to reflect on-going projects that have enriched and deepened our relationship, understanding and program evolution. The updated agreements allow for an on-going vehicle that best reflects the updated procedures, policies and protocols established to serve potential students with disabilities and or those students with disabilities that are eligible for DVR services.

**Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)**

New federal mandates require that DVR, in collaboration with local educational agencies, offer to transition age high school students with disabilities (ages 14–21) Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) using 15% of our federal allocation on an annual basis.

Pre-ETS services include:

- Job exploration counseling
- Work–based learning experiences, (after school–work opportunities outside the traditional school setting including internships that are provided in an integrated environment)
- Counseling on opportunities in comprehensive transition or enrollment in postsecondary educational programs
- Workplace readiness training to develop social skills
- Independent living Instruction in self–advocacy/peer mentoring

WIOA mandates that DVR: (1) attend IEP meetings for students with disabilities when invited, (2) work with local workforce development boards, One–stop centers, and employers to develop work opportunities for students with disabilities, (3) work with schools, to coordinate and guarantee the provisions of pre–employment transition services, (4) attend person–centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under Title 19 of the Social Security Act, when invited (WIOA 422). DVR is required that 15% of section 110 state allotments for provision of pre–employment transition services, which is approximately $3.2
million per year, and cannot be used to pay administrative costs of providing pre-employment services (WIOA 419). To accomplish the new requirements under WIOA, DVR must expand its current workforce. The Division hired 10 new FTE who are providing 50% of their time conducting Pre-ETS. This is the first step in expanding FTE’s for the Division to meet PRE-ETS’ requirements outlined above as well as with an interagency agreement with the Central Regional Educational Cooperatives and Educational Institutions. Additionally, DVR will reclassify four FTE positions to 100% Pre-ETS Counselors in fiscal year 2020.

In order to reach those goals DVR is ensuring they have a strong relationship with the local school districts local Work Force Development Boards and community providers. Summer work experiences, work-place readiness training to develop social skills and independent living, and other work-based learning experiences have been implemented and will continue to expand as the population of high school students we serve increases.

Per DVR policy Students with Disabilities & Youth with Disabilities are recommended to apply for DVR services at least two years prior to graduation. DVR staff will use engagement and motivational interviewing techniques when working with this population. DVR, in collaboration the local education agency, will provide services to assist the student in developing and successfully achieving their Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) goal.

On a statewide basis, DVR has assigned each high school and Charter to a designated counselor, they will provide information and referral, Pre-ETS, advocacy, technical assistance, and to promote collaboration among consumers, parents, adult service providers, and other service agencies. DVR transition staff consists of a Statewide Transition Coordinator and 10 Supervising Counselors who will provide 50% of time to Pre-Employment transition services. This lead responsibility includes coordination of Pre-Employment activities in schools assigned to their region. Training of other DVR staff and involvement in various local transition councils and statewide transition initiatives.

To facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services, DVR will:

Continue to have counselors assigned to each school district. It is the role to provide pre-employment transition Services, technical assistance, information and referral to the secondary education officials in their assigned schools and districts as well as to assure the provision of direct services to eligible students with disabilities. DVR staff attends Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings, with consent from the student and family. DVR is also available to provide information and technical assistance on transition services to teachers, parents, and other organizations and councils.

Maintain the Interagency Agreement with the Public of Education (PED) and Departmental Disabilities Support Division (DDSD), Local Educational Agencies, Regional Educational Cooperatives agencies, and community providers.

DVR utilizes these agreements as the official document to guide its coordination of transition activities for students with disabilities as they move from school to post-high school vocational rehabilitation services with education officials and with long-term care and employment support providers.

It is understood by all DVR staff working with transition age youth that their responsibility is to coordinate with the school’s efforts to engage the students with disabilities in activities that will allow developing and improving strategies for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals with significant disabilities to live independently, participate in postsecondary
educational experiences, and obtain and retain competitive integrated employment; disseminating information about innovative, effective, and efficient approaches to achieve the goals of this section; coordinating activities with transition services provided by local educational agencies under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.); and development of an individualized plan for employment before the student leaves high school.

Order of Selection was implemented in February of 2011. Memoranda of Understanding with Local Education Agencies have been revised to address Order of Selection. The only Order of Selection category opened currently is Priority I: Most Significant Disability. There is currently a waiting list for those determined eligible under Priority II: Significant Disability and Priority III Non-Significant Disability. Waiting lists are anticipated to be necessary in FFY 2021. The Individual Plan for Employment must, at a minimum, identify the long-term vocational rehabilitation goal, intermediate vocational rehabilitation objectives, and goals and objectives related to enabling students with disabilities to live independently. These vocational rehabilitation goals and objectives are to be consistent with the student's individual education plan (IEP). The Division makes every effort to develop and implement the transition student’s Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) prior to leaving high school. The Division’s role and responsibilities are defined by a formal plan developed by the Public Education Department and, as appropriate, memoranda of agreement with local educational agencies responsible for the free appropriate public education of students with disabilities receiving special education services.

The agreements with individual Local Education Agencies identify: 1. Policies, practices, and procedures that can be coordinated between the agencies, including definitions, eligibility criteria for vocational rehabilitation services, policies and procedures for making referrals, procedures for outreach students receiving special education services and in need of transition service, practices and procedures also address time-frames for evaluation and follow-up with students; 2. The roles of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; 3. Procedures for providing training, consultation, and technical assistance to assist staff of State and local educational agencies as to the availability, benefits of, and eligibility criteria for vocational rehabilitation services; 4. Available resources, including sources of funds for the development and expansion of services; 5. The financial responsibility of each agency in providing services to students with disabilities who are receiving special education services consistent with State law; 6. Procedures for resolving disputes between the agencies that are parties to the agreement; and 7. All other components necessary to ensure meaningful cooperation among agencies, including procedures to facilitate the development of local teams to coordinate the provision of services to students with disabilities, sharing data, and coordinating joint training of staff providing transition services.

The Division works with local education agencies throughout New Mexico to provide school-to-work transition. Vocational Rehabilitation counselors are assigned to all public high schools throughout the state. Division counseling staff and Rehabilitation Technicians are deployed on a regional basis. Area Division Program Managers and local counseling staff work with local education agencies (LEA) to ensure that students with disabilities are afforded the opportunity to apply for vocational rehabilitation services. Referrals are made at the local level from local education agencies or schools to the Division’s field offices. DVR serves 89 school districts throughout NM, plus 87 Charter schools where Pre-ETS are being served. DVR staff are assigned a school and work in collaboration with LEA to attend Individual Educational Plans and deliver Pre-ETS.
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;

Currently the Division is establishing or supporting multistate or regional partnerships involving local Regional Educational memberships, states, local educational agencies, designated state units, developmental disabilities agencies, private businesses, or other participants to achieve the goal of this section; and disseminating information and strategies to improve the transition to postsecondary activities of individuals who are members of traditionally unserved populations.

Documentation Requirements for Students with Disabilities Seeking Subminimum Wage Employment

Under section 511 of Rehabilitation Act, 14(c) businesses referred to as “employers” are prohibited from employing any individual with disabilities who is 24 years of age or younger at subminimum wage, unless the individual has received documentation from DVR upon completion of all the following activities:

1. 
   a. Pre-employment transition services or transition services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA),
   b. Apply for vocational rehabilitation services and the individual was determined:
      i. Ineligible for vocational rehabilitation services.
      ii. Eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, had an approved Individualized Plan for Employment, and the individual was unable to achieve an employment outcome in competitive, integrated employment after a reasonable period of time, and his/her case was closed.
   c. Career counseling and information and referral services to federal and state programs to help the individual discover, experience and attain competitive integrated employment and the counseling and information was not for employment at subminimum wage.

This information should be shared by the Public Education Department with the Local Education Agencies, parents, guardians, teachers and students. This information and process should also be shared with participants during IEP meetings for transition planning. DVR will maintain the documentation of the above required activities and provide a copy to the individual pursuing 14(c) employment within the timelines identified as specified under 34 CFR 397. Any of the services identified above that the Lead Educational Agencies provides must be documented by the Local Educational Agency and provided to DVR as specified under CFR 397.

DVR, in consultation with the Public Education Department, must develop or use an existing process to document the completion of required activities, as well as the transmittal of
documentation from Local Educational Agency to DVR, consistent with the confidentiality requirements of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (20 USC 11232(b) and 34 CFR 99.30 and 99.31) and IDEA (20 USC 1417(c) and 34 CFR 300.622) pursuant to (section 511(d) of the Act and §397.10). This documentation must contain, at a minimum (§397.10(a)(1)):

- Youth’s name;
- Determination made, including a summary of reason for the determination or a description of the activity or service completed;
- Name of individual making the determination or the provider of the service/activity;
- Date determination was made or the required service or activity completed;
- Applicable signatures and dates by DVR or the Local Educational Agency making determination or completion of the required services or activity;
- Signature of the DVR personnel transmitting documentation to the youth with a disability;
- Date and method by which the document was transmitted to the youth; and
- DVR and Local Educational Agency must retain copies of the documentation in a manner consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR 200.333.

If a youth with a disability or, as applicable, the youth’s parent or guardian refuses, through informed choice, to participate in the activities required by section 511 or the implementing regulations in part 397, documentation must at a minimum:

- Contain the information in 397.10(a)(2); and
- Be provided by DVR to the youth within 10 calendar days of the youth’s refusal to participate.

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 Individual Plan for Employment must, at a minimum, identify the long–term vocational rehabilitation goal, intermediate vocational rehabilitation objectives, and goals and objectives related to enabling students with disabilities to live independently. These vocational rehabilitation goals and objectives are to be consistent with the student’s individual education plan. The Division makes every effort to develop and implement the transition student’s Individual Plan for Employment prior to leaving high school. The Division’s role and responsibilities are defined by a formal plan developed by the Public Education Department and, as appropriate, memoranda of agreement with local educational agencies responsible for the free appropriate public education of students with disabilities receiving special education services.

Documentation Requirements for Students with Disabilities Seeking Subminimum Wage Employment

Under section 511 of Rehabilitation Act, 14(c) businesses referred to as “employers” are prohibited from employing any individual with disabilities who is 24 years of age or younger at subminimum wage, unless the individual has received documentation from DVR upon completion of all the following activities:

1.
a. Pre-employment transition services or transition services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA),

b. Apply for vocational rehabilitation services and the individual was determined:

i. Ineligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

ii. Eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, had an approved Individualized Plan for Employment, and the individual was unable to achieve an employment outcome in competitive, integrated employment after a reasonable period of time, and his/her case was closed.

c. Career counseling and information and referral services to federal and state programs to help the individual discover, experience and attain competitive integrated employment and the counseling and information was not for employment at subminimum wage.

This information should be shared by the Public Education Department with the Local Education Agencies, parents, guardians, teachers and students. This information and process should also be shared with participants during IEP meetings for transition planning. DVR will maintain the documentation of the above required activities and provide a copy to the individual pursuing 14(c) employment within the timelines identified as specified under 34 CFR 397. Any of the services identified above that the Lead Educational Agencies provides must be documented by the Local Educational Agency and provided to DVR as specified under CFR 397. DVR, in consultation with the Public Education Department, must develop or use an existing process to document the completion of required activities, as well as the transmittal of documentation from Local Educational Agency to DVR, consistent with the confidentiality requirements of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (20 USC 11232(b) and 34 CFR 99.30 and 99.31) and IDEA (20 USC 1417(c) and 34 CFR 300.622) pursuant to (section 511(d) of the Act and §397.10). This documentation must contain, at a minimum (§397.10(a)(1)):

- Youth's name;
- Determination made, including a summary of reason for the determination or a description of the activity or service completed;
- Name of individual making the determination or the provider of the service/activity;
- Date determination was made or the required service or activity completed;
- Applicable signatures and dates by DVR or the Local Educational Agency making determination or completion of the required services or activity;
- Signature of the DVR personnel transmitting documentation to the youth with a disability;
- Date and method by which the document was transmitted to the youth; and
- DVR and Local Educational Agency must retain copies of the documentation in a manner consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR 200.333.

If a youth with a disability or, as applicable, the youth’s parent or guardian refuses, through informed choice, to participate in the activities required by section 511 or the implementing regulations in part 397, documentation must at a minimum:
● Contain the information in 397.10(a)(2); and
● Be provided by DVR to the youth within 10 calendar days of the youth's refusal to participate.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

The Public Education Department, of which DVR is a division, is the State Education Agency (SEA). The Memorandum of understanding with the Public Education Department serves to facilitate the integration and coordination of services to eligible secondary education students in providing a continuum of services that will meet the needs of all Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) eligible students. The integrated continuum of services is to be flexible enough to meet the needs of all IDEA eligible students to qualify for DVR services within the available resources, maximize opportunity for students and eliminate limitations and obstacles. Currently, Public Education Department is working with Regional Educational Cooperative Memberships to establish intergovernmental agreements.

The Memorandum further outlines: A. Assure that all students with disabilities as defined by the IDEA and its implementing regulations receive appropriate services; B. Coordinate services to students with disabilities so as to maximize learner outcomes and provide for a successful transition to appropriate employment as specified in student Individualized Education Programs (IEPs); C. Formalize referral procedures with appropriate agency(ies) to ensure students with disabilities are provided with opportunities for services; D. Coordinate services delivery and follow-up/along with the education/rehabilitation services continuum; E. Establish joint trainings to provide staff development and other training activities for Local Educational Agency (LEA) transition specialists and other individuals involved in transition planning. F. The current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the New Mexico Public Education Department was executed in 2004 and remains in effect. Review of the MOU indicates that required elements are in place and a revision process is underway.

Provision of Services and Reimbursement

1. Under 34 C.F.R. §361.53, the availability of Comparable Services and Benefits, as defined in 34 C.F.R. §361.5(c)(8), must be determined by New Mexico VR unless such a determination would interrupt or delay the progress of the individual.

1. Under IDEA, 34 C.F.R. §300.101, the public educational system must ensure that a free appropriate public education is available to all students with disabilities. Pursuant to 34 C.F.R. 361.22(c), nothing in this part will be construed to reduce the obligation under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.) of a local educational agency or any other agency to provide or pay for any transition services that are also considered special education or related services and that are necessary for ensuring a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities within the State involved.
D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

The Memorandum with the Public Education Department as the (SEA) defines responsibilities of both the SEA and designated state agency (DVR) for leadership, consultation and technical assistance to educational agencies in planning and providing transition services (including VR services) to students with disabilities. This includes technical assistance to aid in facilitation of student IEPs, as appropriate. The MOU identifies NM Public Education Department as the lead agency, establishes that no funds will be exchanged between the parties under the MOU, and provides procedures for dispute resolution between the parties under the MOU. The MOU describes processes for reporting by DVR to NMPED regarding VR counselor assignments to New Mexico high schools and service information provided to schools, students and families.

The agreements with individual Local Education Agencies identify: 1. Policies, practices, and procedures that can be coordinated between the agencies, including definitions, eligibility criteria for vocational rehabilitation services, policies and procedures for making referrals, procedures for outreach students receiving special education services and in need of transition service, practices and procedures also address time-frames for evaluation and follow-up with students; 2. The roles of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; 3. Procedures for providing training, consultation, and technical assistance to assist staff of State and local educational agencies as to the availability, benefits of, and eligibility criteria for vocational rehabilitation services; 4. Available resources, including sources of funds for the development and expansion of services; 5. The financial responsibility of each agency in providing services to students with disabilities who are receiving special education services consistent with State law; 6. Procedures for resolving disputes between the agencies that are parties to the agreement; and 7. All other components necessary to ensure meaningful cooperation among agencies, including procedures to facilitate the development of local teams to coordinate the provision of services to students with disabilities, sharing data, and coordinating joint training of staff providing transition services.

The Division works with local education agencies throughout New Mexico to provide school-to-work transition. Vocational Rehabilitation counselors are assigned to all public high schools throughout the state. Division counseling staff and rehabilitation technicians are deployed on a regional basis. Area Division program managers and local counseling staff work with local education agencies to ensure that students with disabilities are afforded the opportunity to apply for vocational rehabilitation services. Referrals are made at the local level from local education agencies or schools to the Division’s field offices.

Services provided by DVR in collaboration with the Regional Education Cooperatives (REC) who are eligible or potentially eligible for DVR services include: Job Exploration Counseling, Work-based learning experiences such as internships, counseling on opportunities for postsecondary training, Job readiness skills training to develop social and independent living skills, and self-advocacy skills. These required Core PRE-ET’s services are currently being provided in Conjunction with REC’s under the Divisions PRE-ET’s IGA with CREC. Under this IGA CREC has hired 23 Vocational Transition Specialist and 2 Transition Coordinators to provide Statewide PRE-ET services. Implementation of effective strategies to increase the likelihood of independent living and inclusion in communities and competitive integrated workplaces; developing and improving strategies for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals with significant disabilities to live independently, participate in postsecondary educational experiences, and obtain and retain competitive integrated employment; providing instruction to
vocational rehabilitation counselors, school transition personnel, and other persons supporting students with disabilities; disseminating information about innovative, effective, and efficient approaches to achieve the goals of this section; coordinating activities with transition services provided by local educational agencies under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.).

E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(3))

The Division ensures the appropriate use of community rehabilitation programs to the maximum extent feasible. The Division purchases a broad range of services for clients through local community rehabilitation programs.

These services consist of but are not limited to: Medical, neuropsychological; psychiatric, psychological, social, and vocational services; Testing, fitting, or training in the use of prosthetic and orthotic devices; Recreational therapy; Physical and occupational therapy; Speech, language, and hearing therapy inclusive of purchase of hearing aids; Psychiatric, psychological, and social services, including behavior management services; Assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs; Rehabilitation technology; Assistive technology; Job development, placement, and retention services; Orientation and mobility services for individuals who are blind; Extended employment; Psycho-social rehabilitation services; Supported employment services and extended services; Services to family members when necessary to the vocational rehabilitation of the individual; Personal assistance services; Services similar to the services described above.

F. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Describe the designated State agency’s efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(4))

Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services:

Supported employment services provided by the Division consist of case services made available through the Title VI–B funds of the Rehabilitation Act. Title VI–B funds for Federal FY 20 equaled $244,500.00 and is split 50:50 between Adult SE and Youth SE services. Title I funds of the Rehabilitation Act (available for general, basic vocational rehabilitation services) are used for supported employment services upon depletion of Title VI–B funds. The Division procures supported employment services on a case–by–case basis from local rehabilitation programs that have committed long–term funding to the individual participants. Area supervisors conduct direct negotiations of fee for service procurement schedules of supported employment services. The local area supervisors, counselors, Statewide Supported Employment Coordinator and administrative staff monitor the scope and quality of supported employment services available to DVR participants. Supported employment service providers are required to submit monthly reports to the Division including the local area counselor and supervisor. Reports highlight
client progress and satisfaction, as well as pertinent demographic data. The review, compilation, and analysis of the monthly cumulative reports obtained from the contract vendor enable the Division to monitor the quality of job coaching. The DVR counselor reviews these reports with the contract provider to ensure that the scope of services comply with supported employment guidelines and are consistent with the vocational needs of the participant.

The quality of supported employment services is measured in terms of integration achieved by the individual at the work–site along with the amount of wages earned. To increase the level of integration, the Division emphasizes the individualized placement model. This information is documented in the participant case files and monitored on a monthly basis. The scope and extent of services provided to clients under the Individualized Plan for Employment for supported employment continues to be the same as those available to individuals under the Title I program. This is in accordance with Division operating procedures. All services are provided on an equitable basis within the constraints of available funding. The Division currently has an IGA with UNM Center for Development and Disability that seeks to educate, train, and facilitate best practices in Supported Employment services to the Division’s employees, other state agencies, and vendors providing SE services.

DVR has implemented several intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) and/or Memorandum of Agreements (MOUs) in cooperation with other state agencies including the Department of Health (DOH), Developmental Disabilities Support Division (DDSD), Center for Development and Disabilities (CDD), Albuquerque Public Schools (APS), as well as the Aging and Long-Term Services Department (ALTSD). These cooperative agreements aid in facilitating the transition from Title VI–B funding to a long–term funding source for Supported Employment Services. The transition to extended employment occurs when the time spent by the job coach with the DVR participant in a supported employment program decreases to an average of 8 hours (20%) per week or less.

****DVR is aware that under the proposed provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) that 50% of allocated SE funding will be utilized towards services to youth.

In FFY19 the Agency updated the IGA with DDSD. This update directs appropriate referral and timelines of supported employment (SE) service to maximize efficient, effective service provision.

The Human Services Department (HSD) provides administrative support to and houses the Behavioral Health Collaborative to provide a long–term funding mechanism for Behavioral Health recipients. Behavioral Health Services and funding is allocated through the Collaborative to provide comprehensive and vocational services to individuals with significant disabling mental illness. Both mechanisms mentioned above are used to fund long–term supported employment services and extended services. The Division has a representative on the Behavioral Health Collaborative Board.

To expand programs and services to students with disabilities and youth who are eligible for Supported Employment services; DVR has developed intergovernmental agreements with the Center for Developmental Disability to implement Partners for Employment initiatives and Project Search.

Project Search is in its sixth year of achieving successful employment outcomes for Transition youth that are eligible to receive Supported Employment services. The UNMH Project SEARCH program was the first Project SEARCH site in the state, and its initial cohort of interns was highly successful, placing all interns who graduated into competitive employment by the end of the program year, and earning the prestigious 90-99% Employment Placement Award from
Cincinnati Children's Hospital Project Search National. UNM hospitals has graduated 48 interns with 33 employed in an integrated setting earning minimum wage or above. The collaborating team consists of UNMH Hospitals, Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) Transition Services, Best Buddies NM, NM Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), NM Department of Health/Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD), and UNM Center for Development & Disability Partners for Employment (UNM CDD PFE). On May 2, 2017, the program was renamed The Nene & Jamie Koch Project SEARCH Training Program at UNM Hospital, in honor of Former UNM Regent Jamie Koch, who was instrumental in launching project SEARCH in New Mexico.

Hilton Garden Inn Gallup is completing its 4th Project Search year, in the first three years 18 interns graduated. Ten are currently placed in jobs totaling 16 hours earning at or above minimum wage. The Hilton Garden Inn-Gallup collaboration is unique that includes Nation Office of Special Education & Rehabilitation Services (OSERS).

Embassy Suites is New Mexico’s first replication site a sister site with UNM Hospitals. It’s beginning its fourth program year, 24 interns graduated from the program with 17 being placed within the community earning at or above minimum wage.

Presbyterian Rust Medical Center (Rio Rancho) is completing its 4th Project Search year, in the first three programs years 25 have graduated successfully, with 22 employed in an integrated setting earning minimum wage or above. This Project Search site also was the first site in NM to achieve 100% employment Placement Award and they are on track to obtain this award again for program year 18-19.

Good Samaritan Society – Las Cruces Village, in collaboration with Gadsden Independent School District 3rd year. In its 1st program year, Good Samaritan site graduated 10 interns 8 graduates are successfully employed. Interns at this site travel over 45 minutes each way to participate in the program, with collaboration of community legislatures and community transportation company's transportation is provided for the community and participants in project search to get from surrounding communities to Las Cruces.

City of Farmington Municipal Services in collaboration with Farmington Schools, Aztec Schools, NM Presbyterian Medical services/Project Shield Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), NM Department of Health/Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD), and UNM Center for Development & Disability Partners for Employment (UNM CDD PFE). 6 interns graduated from the program and are in search of employment.

The Pueblo of Pojoaque, in collaboration with Santa Fe Public Schools, Pojoaque Schools, and Community Options is our seventh Project SEARCH site in New Mexico, with seven interns learning skills in hospitality, customer service, stocking & inventory, and retail sales. The goal is for 70% to be placed in competitive employment working minimum of 16 hours.

New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to work in collaboration with the Center for Development and Disability toward the implementation and sustainability of Supported Employment programs across the state. Services that are provided at Center for Development and Disability include: education, advocacy, and outreach in the field of Supported Employment. Services are available through Partners for Employment to participants and their families, community providers, job developers, job coaches, employers, as well as, educational facilities. DVR also collaborates with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide information on SSA benefits and Ticket to Work. The goal for NM is to add one more site within the state of NM currently DVR and CDD are working to expand Project Search to other parts of the state.
VR employs four Certified Community Partner Work Incentive Counselors called Benefits Advisors and one Supervisor who acts as the Ticket to Work Liaison throughout state. The state is broken into four areas, by the number of potential Ticket Holders and people receiving Social Security by county. Services available to DVR participants include Benefits Advisement Counseling to address Social Security Disability Benefits (SSDB), which can be Title II or Title XVI to address benefits income and impact to employment. The Benefits Advisement also addresses other public benefits, such as Medicare, Medicaid, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), Housing, and most importantly the Waiver or 1519(c) programs.

Benefits Advisement Services (BAS) have been asked to provide training to all state and nonprofit providers of supported employment, usually at the area meetings. They also assist in cases on a one on one process to help the providers and beneficiaries of SSDB to develop reports, work incentive plans, and complete SSA paperwork. The BAS has healthy, ongoing relationships with DD long term providers, Department of Health, and Partners for employment.

Project Search and Partners for Employment

G. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

1. VR SERVICES; AND

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(5))

1. VR services; and (General)

In advancing NM VR participants in the workforce, DVR recognizes it is a primary resource in providing potential candidates. New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is a viable resource in the State of New Mexico for enhancing and building the diversity of the New Mexico’s labor force and can be an integral part of any employer’s search for qualified, skilled career employees. Employers are supported by a professional team that specializes in preparing DVR participants for employment through pre-employment training, college and technical education, and finally matching the best talent with the right jobs.

Personnel - DVR created the position of the Business Outreach Specialist (BOS) in 2014 to begin to shift the Agency’s priorities of meeting the workforce needs of New Mexico’s businesses. This position is primarily responsible to promote collaboration, develop job matches, and conduct business needs assessments.

Advancing New Mexico’s economy and business climate by empowering and supporting the workforce system is the mission of the DVR

DVR is working towards fully embracing the dual customer role of serving the workforce needs of New Mexico’s business community while building the needed talent through our DVR job seeker clientele. Supports offered include assistance to business in locating candidates trained to meet their needs, focusing on the needs of the employer, sending employment opportunities to DVR staff for referral, providing resources to employers for expansion, ADA legal information/resources and other resources as appropriate. The Agency has supported the training for several staff on ADA and will obtain certification. Three managers covering each region of the state are attending the ADA training. Additional staff will obtain the training as it
becomes available in the state to ensure the agency is well-versed on ADA to be able to provide ADA consultation to employers and participants. In addition, the agency’s responsibility is to ensure Area Manager provide the following trainings and supports:

1. Completing and understanding Labor Market Analysis for the purposes of gaining a comprehensive competency of target occupational environment, analyzing job trends and factors, and to promote strategic placement activities for DVR participants. DVR has developed an active statewide announcement board to communicate position vacancies.

2. Staff training has been provided and will continue to be offered in efforts to increase capacity, knowledge, awareness, and understanding of the external business environment. An increase in efforts to educate staff on strategies in approaching businesses effectively to reach workable arrangements to support DVR participants to reach successful, long-term employment opportunities.

3. DVR staff, Area Program Managers and Coordinators work throughout the state with one-stops centers to assist and support the mission of locating competitive integrated employment opportunities. In addition, the staff participate in initiatives to collaborate with local workforce offices on employment trends and working with People with Disabilities.

4. DVR continues efforts to secure a workable online referral process between agencies. This ensures the continuity of services between agencies and encourages a seamless process between available resources and supports.

5. DVR is partnered with the Road Runner Food Bank (RRFB) to develop and provide training for individuals with disabilities in a multifaceted setting. The training programs continue to expand and in 2017 a training program and employment position within RRFB was developed for a Quality Control Specialist.

6. DVR will work with businesses throughout New Mexico to promote VR participants and identify training models that will facilitate skill development specific to the employment opportunities offered by the employers.

7. Based on a guidance letter from the Department of Labor, the Agency will work with local one-stop centers as a core partner to achieve the following:

- Enable businesses and employers to easily identify and hire skilled workers and access other human resource assistance including Skill-to-Work programs, pre-screening applicants, offering rooms for job fairs and interviewing, and consultant services which are Agency specific such as ADA Training and disability etiquette training for existing employees.

- Expand workforce services for individuals at all levels and skill of experience.

- Train one-stop staff on the basic eligibility requirements for DVR throughout the state.

- Utilize the integrated nature of one-stop centers to increase customer participation and engage, support local businesses, and strengthen partnerships.

- Continue to work with local one-stop centers to obtain physical and programmatic accessibility assessments to ensure each center is meeting modern accessibility standards to individuals of all skills levels and abilities as required in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act as well as Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
• Work collaboratively with State and Local Workforce Development Boards to establish and maintain the one-stop delivery system. This includes jointly funding the one-stop infrastructure costs through partner contributions. DVR has Agency representatives on each of the four Workforce Development Boards.

• DVR is currently co-located at the Albuquerque one-stop office and is fully integrated in the one-stop’s daily operations.

8. Benefit Advisement Services work with employers with filling out paperwork on Subsidy. Subsidy is a work incentive for people who receive Social Security Disability Benefits and assist in determining countable income for SSA to consider at application, recertification, and decisions about payments. This allows the participant to remain eligible for medical insurance to help cover the cost of treatments to keep employee working. To date BAS has helped with Subsidy with a local art dealer, University of New Mexico, state government, a local convenience store, and the Santa Fe Opera.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

Youth Development Incorporative (YDI) and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), are establishing a collaborative partnership to facilitate the transition of youth (ages 14 to 21) from YDI Educational programs to the achievement of their desired post-school outcomes, with a focus on employment; post-secondary education; training and lifelong learning; community participation; and healthy lifestyles; as well as facilitating provision of transition services to all participants who attend YDI programs.

The Division has increased its collaboration through participation with provider agencies; as well as independent and statewide entities to promote “Employment First” principles for individuals with the most significant disabilities served under supported employment Individuals Plans for Employment. Although the navigator program is completed, it did serve to increase awareness of vocational rehabilitation services and employment-related needs of People with Disabilities at local One-Stops. The result is that One-stop staff have established and continue to maintain contact with DVR Counselors throughout the state and DVR is currently co-located at the Albuquerque one-stop and is fully integrated in the one-stop’s daily operation. DVR plans to co-locate in Farmington one-stop office by the end of SFY 20.

Please see Section f. Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services (General) for information regarding Project Search. This is an example of coordination with employers to provide required pre-employment transition services to students in addition to services for out-of-school youth. Further coordination with employers continues to be developed through the collaborations described above.

DVR Benefits Advisement Services have had training the trainer for Money Smart to provided Pre-ETS training on financial literacy and has developed a relationship with Albuquerque Public School systems to help with benefits literacy on working while on Social Security Disability benefits. The training includes parents and guardians who have heard myths about what happens to Social Security and Medicaid while working.

DVR has made strides towards providing on-the-job training activities in the communities around the state. Through collaborative efforts with local educational agencies, work force centers and community employers who served as an on-the-job training provider and employer.
Through this strategy, students with disabilities can experience work skills that may lead to permanent employment. DVR will continue to expand engagement of the business sector as a partner in developing career pathways for students with disabilities in high-growth industries.

H. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

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

1. THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

The DVR Benefits Advisement Services (BAS) Coordinator attends the Medicaid Advisory Council meeting quarterly to observe changes being required of the Medicaid agency, while reminding and updating all council members about employment issues and Medicaid. The Benefits Advisement Services Coordinator maintains a relationship with the Medicaid eligibility trainers and supervisors and has since added a relationship with the policy and procedure unit of Medical Assistance Division which administers the Medicaid program. Benefits Advisor Coordinator has worked with Medicaid personnel to align wording in the New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC) and its interpretation in the field, when people eligible for Medicaid have been erroneously been terminated.

In addition, DVR maintains professional relationships with University of New Mexico Center for Development and Disability (UNM CDD). DVR staff have developed short training videos on different working issues and have teamed with UNM CDD units to provide statewide trainings. The latest Medicaid state plan has been provided to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, requesting an increase in premium payments for those people working and a change to align the co-pays across the board. This plan is expected to be approved with no amendments.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

In FFY19 the Agency updated the Intergovernmental agreement with Developmental Disability Services Division (DDSD). This update directs appropriate referral and timelines of supported employment (SE) service to maximize efficient, effective service provision. The MOU is the mechanism used to address referral, exchange of information and confidentiality of personal information used as part of eligibility determination of individuals served in common with the New Mexico Developmental Disability Services Division (DDSD). It facilitates the coordinated planning of programs and of service definitions between DVR and DDSD regarding individuals who are jointly served by the two agencies.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

The Division does not target specific disability groups to provide supported employment services. However, long-term support funding by the State is currently available for those individuals who are either developmentally disabled or who have significant disabling mental illness.

Behavioral Health Services are administered through state-wide Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO).
DVR is a member of New Mexico's Behavioral Health Purchasing Collaborative. During the past four years, work continued toward intra-agency collaboration specifically dealing with behavioral health services among all 17 agencies/divisions of the BHPC. Under the terms of an agreement reached with the State Behavioral Health Services Division, DVR continues to facilitate and monitor employment services for people within the BHSD system and to assist others in making connections with that system. Coordination of services among BHSD, DVR, regional employment providers, and mental health providers can increase successful employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

I. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT; DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

1. SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

A. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS

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

I. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL WHO ARE EMPLOYED BY THE STATE AGENCY IN THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES IN RELATION TO THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY;

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.10))

1. Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development (General)

A. Qualified Personnel Needs. (General)

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

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

DVR Staff Development Unit works closely with Human Resource department to analyze personnel needs and resources. In addition, Management staff regularly review staffing issues to assist in planning for future staffing needs for the betterment of the agency. Staff Development unit is specifically assigned to maintain training databases in order to design training initiatives necessary to support staff their various positions and job tasks as assigned within the agency. DVR is committed in supporting staff towards educational experiences that builds on their fundamental expertise to support the overall goals and mission of the agency. In consideration of WIOA, Comprehensive System of Personnel Development guidelines, the agency is committed to ensuring Vocational Rehabilitation staff is appropriately supported in training and professional development through various methods.

- Personnel Data and Projections
DVR is committed to employing and retaining qualified vocational rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessional personnel. DVR has a data system that maintains employee information and tracks date of hire, official job classification, job functions and office/area assignments.

The total number of counselors employed corresponds with a ratio of approximately one counselor per 27,571 of the general population, the number of positions filled as allowed by the State Personnel Office, and the available budget as approved by the State Legislature and Congress. Under this current methodology, the Division has 76 caseloads, of which ten caseloads are assigned as VR Counselor Supervisor positions; DVR was successful in obtaining approval from New Mexico Legislature these positions to serve as VR Counselor Supervisors. These 76 caseloads serve a statewide population base of 2,095,428 based on 2018 Census Data. Based on the Census Data New Mexico had a projected growth rate of 1.6% from 2010 to 2018.

Additional efforts to increase DVR personnel will continue in order to establish workable caseload sizes. The Division has determined that 10 new counselor positions will be necessary to adequately meet the growing population needs and provide the appropriate support to our Transition students. Therefore, expanding the Vocational Counselor positions and increasing to 86 caseloads is ideal. Other staffing initiatives include reclassifying the Transition Coordinator to a Transition manager to provide supervision to 10 Transition Pre-employment transition services. Further, DVR will also need nine Employment Specialists to assist in job placement and employer engagement efforts.

Other collaborative efforts in development of interagency agreements with the Central Regional Educational Cooperatives, which have resulted in 21 Vocational Transition Specialists available to support outreach efforts to Transition age population across the state.

The agency has expansion goals for positions in the following personnel categories, three Field Financial Specialists, nine Transition Counselors providing 100 percent of time to transition services, nine employment specialists conducting job development and placement services. This goal will remain a priority of the agency as will the effort to reduce the vacancy rate to under 10 percent.

When fully staffed, the Division employs 165 direct service positions consisting of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Supervisors, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, Rehabilitation Technicians, Administrative Assistants and Caseload Secretaries in the Rehabilitation Services Unit (RSU). DVR will reclassify the Caseload Secretaries in RSU to Rehabilitation Technicians. Other RSU staff are Transition Coordinator, Staff Development Manager, Financial Operation Specialists Supervisor, Financial Operation Specialists, Benefits Advisor Manager Benefits Advisors, and Supported Employment and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Coordinator.

There are 66 vocational rehabilitation counselor positions for the 66 caseloads located throughout the state and ten VR Counselor Supervisors. The Division also employs 34 rehabilitation technicians and 21 caseload secretaries providing direct services to DVR clients. As mentioned above DVR will reclassify the Caseload Secretaries to rehabilitation Technicians. The ratio of two Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to one rehabilitation technician will be initiated this current program fiscal year. The ratio varies throughout the state given the available resources. In various offices located in rural New Mexico, DVR staff is comprised of one counselor and one rehabilitation technician.
II. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

The agency has expansion goals for positions in the following personnel categories, nine transition counselors providing 100% transition services, nine employment specialist providing job development and placement services. This goal will remain a priority of the agency as will the effort to reduce the vacancy rate to under 10 percent.

Staff Development Unit is also responsible for providing updated training information to include Licensures, Certifications and various training completions relevant to their positions. Staff participation in trainings is monitored in databases, which are routinely reviewed to ensure information is accurate. SDU Staff is also responsible to ensure professional staff acquire the required licensure or certification for their positions. The Division employs 12 individuals with Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) designation, 8 of which provide direct caseload supports. Another eight certified individuals occupy other professional positions located in the Division as follows:

Administrative Services

RSU Deputy Director = 1
RSU Field Operations Directors = Three Positions
RSU Program Managers = Three Positions
Training Manager = One Position

The Division encourages eligible staff to attain and maintain CRC designation.

34 - Vocational Rehabilitation counselors are degreed at the master's level.
35 - Counselors are currently licensed by New Mexico Public Education Department.

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.

<table>
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<th>Position</th>
<th>Total Positions</th>
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<th>Projected Vacancy</th>
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<tr>
<td>Caseload Secretary</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

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

I. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM;

New Mexico Highlands University is the only in-state college providing a Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling Master’s Degree.
II. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation maintains a relationship with New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU), Las Vegas, New Mexico. NMHU is the only in-state college that provides a graduate program in Vocational Rehabilitation and accredited by Counsel for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs. Currently, NMHU has 175 students currently enrolled in their graduate Counseling Programs and 25 of those students identified in the Rehabilitation track. NMHU has graduated 34 individuals from the Rehabilitation program total for the academic years of 2017, 2018 and 2019.

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.

NMHU reports no current students declared in Rehabilitation Counseling supported through RSA dollars, grants or scholarships.

All graduates of NMHU’s Rehabilitation Counseling Program are eligible to sit for the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. New Mexico Highlands University currently has no data to report on licensed graduates in New Mexico or other states.

Goal/Activity:

In further maintaining and developing a strong relationship, NMHU will continue to request DVR presence on their curriculum Advisory Council to ensure that coursework be aligned with Agency goals. DVR will review collaboration efforts in terms of hosting interns from NMHU to complete their internship within DVR. Individuals from within the agency have taught courses in Foundations of Rehabilitation, Transition, and Job Placement at New Mexico Highlands University for the Rehabilitation Counselor program.

New Mexico Highlands University remains as an accredited program and their accreditation is valid through 2020, however the school is reviewed annually in order to hold full accreditation.

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

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

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

DVR utilizes various information to plan for projected needs to expand the number of FTE’s as well as realign distribution of work accordingly within the agency to best meet our participant needs. Management staff continually meet to discuss the various staffing issues and determine the agency need in planning for vital positions. Management and Staff Development Unit
collects Human Resource data, Agency initiatives, Federal standards as well as field data to plan for upcoming staffing needs. The information collected provides Management information on upcoming retirements, vacancy rates, educational requirements and new FTE development. To predict future needs, DVR management consistently review workforce data to plan for and predict staffing in order to avoid service delays to participants. Staff Development Unit will work closely with Management as well Higher Education establishments to provide develop and support potential recruitment possibilities.

The implementation of Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act has provided the agency the opportunity to expand the pool of eligible applicants for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor positions. The previous standard to employ at the master’s degree level has been amended to bachelor’s degree, per WIOA. WIOA has also expanded the definition of related degrees considered appropriate to meet the educational standards of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to work effectively in the field of Vocational Rehabilitation. Although the agency has made many efforts to obtain qualified employees, the goal remains to lower the vacancy rate and maintain current staff.

In response, the Division has implemented strategies that have influenced significant reduction in the turnover rate and will provide a valuable incentive to employee retention.

- Employees of the Division are covered by the State Personnel Act:
  - The Division has committed to hiring and compensating staff at competitive salaries (appropriate placement); The Division is also making strides to offer opportunity for internal advancement based on educational accomplishments. The agency intends to review current VRC pay bands to provide variances based on educational and certification qualifications. Career ladder opportunities with the approval of 10 new Supervising Rehabilitation Counselor opportunities.
  - State of New Mexico employees are offered a competitive employment benefits package, including premium health care coverage and having the option to retire with 25 years of services (75% of average of top three years’ salary) for staff hired before 2012 and 30 years of service thereafter;
  - State Personnel Board Rules allow for VR Counselors to be paid a supervisory differential for assuming supervisory responsibilities inclusive of training staff in effective case management and best practices;
  - The Division offers training and continuing education opportunities not available with other state agencies.
  - The State of New Mexico has implemented an Alternative Work Schedules Policy. This allows staff to request to change from the Normal Work Schedule (NWS) to an Alternative Work Schedule (AWS) with prior written approval of the employee’s immediate supervisor and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Director. Employees may not change their approved AWS to a different AWS without prior written approval of the employee’s immediate supervisor and the DVR Director. The purpose of this policy is to establish a process to request alternative work schedules, providing employees and DVR alternatives in employee work schedules, while adhering to Federal and State statutes and regulations. The added flexibility in creating alternative work schedules also provides new opportunities for efficiency and expanded hours of customer service.
• The State of New Mexico has also implemented the Fitness and Wellness Policy. Employees may request modified work schedules that permit the employee Fitness/Wellness leave for up to two (2) hours total per week for fitness and wellness activities. The purpose of this policy is to support The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) employees in pursuing a healthy lifestyle, potentially leading to improved job performance, increased work satisfaction, and reduced health care and insurance costs. DVR recognizes the benefits of employee health and wellness and supports time for fitness and wellness activities that promote physical and/or mental wellbeing, including physical exercise (for example, bicycling, walking, jogging, yoga, weight training, swimming, tennis, volleyball, softball and racquetball), health risk appraisals, wellness screenings, fitness testing, mindfulness and meditation exercises, healthy eating classes, nutrition consultation, health behavior change coaching, and smoking cessation classes. DVR also recognizes such activities are mutually beneficial to DVR and its employees because they improve productivity, work performance, and morale while reducing absenteeism, turnover and health care costs.

The Division experiences some barriers in hiring qualified staff particularly in isolated work locations. The State Personnel Director, pursuant to the direction of the State Personnel Board, establishes, maintains and in conjunction with state agencies, administers a pay plan for all positions throughout the classified service. The State Personnel Director conducts an annual survey of Total Compensation (means of all forms of cash compensation and the dollar value of the employer-sponsored benefit package.)

The comparison market is comprised of private and public entities within the state of New Mexico, regional state government employers from the Central, Western, and Southwestern areas. The pay plan offers many compensation tools for agencies to utilize to help management attract qualified applicants as well as retain employees who contribute to the overall success of the organization, motivate employees to maintain high standards of productivity and service, and reward employees for their specific contributions to the achievement of the organizational goals and objectives.

The Division has committed funds for efforts to ensure that all personnel, particularly Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, meet the highest requirements in the state applicable to that profession. In providing for training programs, the Division takes into consideration succession planning and capacity building as well as evolving issues such as amendments to the Rehabilitation Act, WIOA, the Workforce Investment Act, Ticket-to-Work, consumer informed choice, etc.

The Division has been largely successful in recruiting Individuals with Disabilities as well as those from minority groups. The Division continues to hire individuals with disabilities whenever those individuals are viable candidates. Job accommodations for staff with disabilities to support job retention are made available as requested.

The Division advertises job openings on the Internet at www.dvr.state.nm.us, in addition to New Mexico State Personnel Office listings; both are available nationally to anyone with Internet access. The Division uses the State Personnel automated data system to account for the number of employees, status of individual employees as probationary, permanent, temporary, or term and related information such as salary, earned leave balance, etc. Vacancies are reported on a routine basis and used to monitor hiring activities. All new hires, promotions and transfers require the approval of the Division Director.

3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS
Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR - RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND

3. Personnel Standards

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

The Division will continue to provide training to all staff interested in increasing their job skills. The goal of Staff Development Unit (SDU) is to respond to agency initiatives in order to provide valuable internal training supports to enhance knowledge, skills and abilities to the various agency positions. SDU will continue to collaborate with internal staff identified as experienced in their respective positions to support the training of new employees in their various areas. SDU will make efforts to collaborate with Management to identify options for implementation of a mentorship modality to be adopted by the agency in order to provide an expansion of quality training and hands-on support for new staff.

The Division’s strategic planning effort includes a Goal Area of Career Development and Succession Planning for all staff. The Division is aware of the need to hire and retain well-qualified staff.

DVR is proactively working toward the future in terms of career development and succession planning. With the expanded application pool based on WIOA educational standards for VRC positions there is an obvious increased need for training to new staff in specific VR topics. SDU advisory committee assists to address the many challenges and changes in our ability to support various educational endeavors that our staff may seek.

The Division developed state licensure for vocational rehabilitation counselors through its parent agency, the New Mexico Public Education Department in 2001. This licensure endorsed in rule by the Public Education Department is required of all vocational rehabilitation counselors working for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and is commensurate with national standards under CSPD.

In January 2002, a policy requiring all VR counselors to apply for state licensure by December 2002 was adopted. Counselors who are not eligible for the highest level of state licensure are required to be tracked through direct work experience for the established period in order to obtain licensure.

The DVR hiring standards for the Vocational Counselor position are as follows:

Master’s Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling.

Master’s Degree in Counseling (related counseling degrees)

Bachelor’s degree in Rehabilitation Counseling
Bachelor’s Degree in a related field as designated by the Public Education Licensing Board. (reference i.3.b)


In 2015, DVR amended the academic standard for the Job-Related Qualifications Standard to meet the new WIOA standard. The New Mexico Public Education Department licensure appropriate to VRC positions within the DVR is Primary and Secondary Education School Personnel-Licensure Requirements for Ancillary and Support Personnel Licensure in Rehabilitation Counseling Pre-K-12. DVR is working with PED to utilize five pathway options to support our VRC’s towards state licensure as follows:

Pathway 1

Master’s Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling (earned from a regionally accredited college/university)

Pathway 2

Master’s Degree in school counseling, vocational counseling or other related field (earned from a regionally accredited college/university); and verification of 1 year of experience in Rehabilitation Counseling

Or: 15 semester hours of credit in rehabilitation counseling in the areas of vocational/transition assessment, medical aspects of disability, psychosocial and/or psycho-cultural aspects of disability, case management in rehabilitation counseling, issues and practices in rehabilitation counseling, or placement aspects of rehabilitation counseling

Pathway 3

Bachelor’s Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling (earned from a regionally accredited college/university); and Verification of 1 year of direct vocational rehabilitation job experience

Pathway 4

Bachelor’s Degree in school counseling, vocational counseling or other related field (earned from a regionally accredited college/university); and Verification of 2 years of direct vocational rehabilitation job experience

Or: 5 semester hours of credit in rehabilitation counseling in the areas of vocational/transition assessment, medical aspects of disability, psychosocial and/or psycho-cultural aspects of disability, case management in rehabilitation counseling, issues and practices in rehabilitation counseling, or placement aspects of rehabilitation counseling

“Related fields” means a degree in such areas as sociology, psychology, school counseling, guidance and counseling, education, special education, social work, and mental health

Pathway 5

Possess a certificate issued by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification
DVR requires all Vocational Rehabilitation counselors to have applied for licensure and/or background check. It should be noted that new counselors have 90 days from their start date to apply for their license. Licensure application includes a criminal background check. All applications are monitored for compliance. If new DVR counselors do not meet the experience requirement for State Licensure, they are directed to proceed with the background check, and apply for licensure upon gaining the necessary experience. Initial VR counselor licenses must be renewed after three years.

State licensure is identified in policy as top priority and required for continued employment. Identified documents to be submitted in the credentials package for licensure include:

- Official college transcripts of all degrees received
- Copy of Certified Rehabilitation Counselor certification, if applicable
- Work history in a rehabilitation field
- Copies of course syllabi from courses related to counseling and guidance; vocational counseling; disability; psychosocial or psycho-cultural aspects of disability; case management in rehabilitation counseling; and placement aspects in rehabilitation counseling.
- Criminal background information
- Fingerprints

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

A. 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 Division continues to work cooperatively with the Public Education Department to issue State Licensure for Rehabilitation Counselors. The Division has informed State Personnel Office regarding the specific licensing qualifications for the Vocational Counselor position and they ensure this information is included in the recruitment and application process for potential candidates. DVR utilize the State's compensation and classification system and develop pay equity to reflect the appropriate pay schedule based on qualifications of licensed counselors. Counselors are encouraged to submit credentials and meet the qualification requirements of the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor designation, as this is the highest recognized level of a qualified counselor under the licensure rule. All new hires agency hired VRC positions are monitored by SDU to provide direction towards meeting licensure requirements.

The Division maintains a Staff Development Unit (SDU) designated to provide for professional and paraprofessional development of all staff from various training facilities. All employees are encouraged to update their job skills and knowledge by taking advantage of training available to them. DVR supports training through funding budgeted and overseen by Staff Development Unit. Training opportunities are supported in multiple formats through various training partners.
• Internal training offered by Staff Development Unit, content matter experts within the agency

• State sponsored training and training external of the agency through institutions of higher education

• Private vendors, professional training organizations

• Partners for Employment – Center for Development and Disability

• Virginia Commonwealth University

• VR Development Group

• Staff Self-Selection - any training that a staff member identifies enhancement of related job performance with emphasis on assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology

• New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions

• University of New Mexico Career Development Services

The goal of SDU is to provide continually educational and training opportunities that are meaningful to staff to return to their respective positions in their various areas and provide quality services.

SDU provides and monitors a series of required training that is available to all new employees. DVR policy provides that all employees repeat several of these courses on a regular basis. These computer-based courses include: Fraud Awareness, Federal Grants Management, Sexual Harassment Prevention, Civil Rights, Workplace Bullying-Violence Prevention, Employee Safety Orientation, Safeguarding Protected Information, Mileage and Per Diem, Email Essentials and Substance Abuse & the Drug-Free Workplace Act. Counselors and Rehabilitation Technicians also complete on-line courses of VR 101: Determining Eligibility and Writing the Individualized Plan for Employment; VR Development Group, Comprehensive Assessment, History of VR, Job Acquisition Training, Case Management and IPE Development. A Preventing Retaliation Claims Webinar is required for Managers and Supervisors as is a yearly refresher on Employment Related Conflict Resolution. State Personnel Office also does require Supervisors to partake in State sponsored management training.

Staff Development Unit is also assigned the coordination of New Employee Orientation (NEO). This daylong event is held quarterly at the State Office and features presentations from agency leaders. The emphasis is on agency culture and “Succeeding at the DVR”. NEO on-line version is one part of a comprehensive onboarding program currently under development to increase employee engagement, immediacy of necessary new employee information, and retention by helping new staff feel welcome and appreciated.

B. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS.

Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals:
SDU also offers Rehabilitation Academy to new counselors and rehabilitation technicians (rehabilitation secretaries are highly encouraged to attend). Participants from the Native American partner agencies and community-based programs are invited to attend Rehab Academy when space is available. The Academy is taught over a three-week period, one week is online course work and the other two weeks are conducted in-person and focuses on comprehensive assessment, eligibility, IPE development, case management vocational counseling, job placement, Ticket-to-work, supportive employment, Independent Living Centers, Disability Rights New Mexico and transition. Sample cases studies are utilized for comprehensive learning experience. The academy is designed to follow VR processes in an effort to replicate real-life scenarios in order to educate new staff in constructing appropriate eligibility decisions, vocational goals and educated service delivery. Staff give the Academy high marks in terms of content and satisfaction with content delivery. SDU makes good use of technology available within the agency in offering the training by utilizing DVR Case management software, visual aids, videos, discussion and hands-on experience.

SDU has created an Academy training directed towards RSU support staff in terms of Rehabilitation Technicians and Vocational Secretaries; however, Program Managers and Rehabilitation Counselors are also mandated to attend. The training includes training specific to related job duties, fiscal processes, support to caseloads, and business practices adapted by the agency. All new staff as well as established support staff are encouraged to attend.

Supervisory training implementation in the upcoming year specifically targeted for the professional development of leaders within the agency. The training will provide direction in a variety of challenging management areas, which will ultimately support fluidity and high-quality service delivery to consumers. The agency has identified 12 new leadership roles with the staffing projects and SDU will work to support those individuals in meeting both agency and leadership expectations.

The Division uses a customized software application called the Training Administration System (TAS) to track employee training progress. This software provides the information necessary to summarize the training requested and completed on an individual basis. It provides the data necessary to analyze overall progress of individuals and groups of employees toward obtaining and retaining required credentials. The system offers the agency the ability to track all employees’ training and enables employees to request training offered by outside entities and vendors.

SDU routinely acquires and disseminates research and information via electronic mail and Agency Intranet. Enhancements have been made to the Staff Development SharePoint webpage, which now includes training announcements, Rehab Academy materials, archived webinars, and other related training information. The SDU SharePoint page remains updated with new training opportunities based on professional development topics related to Vocational Rehabilitation. The addition to this feature will support both management and staff to identify valuable training within related VR topics.

Assistive Technology collaborative efforts include DVR’s identified AT liaisons who participate to support the annual Assistive Technology conference. Assistive Technology is training for DVR staff is offered throughout the year in coordinating presentations for staff. New Mexico Technology Assistance Program (NMTAP) offers hands-on access to equipment for DVR staff to learn and utilize for gaining knowledge regarding the variety of available equipment, applications for participants. NMTAP participates in DVR annual Statewide Staff meeting providing valuable learning experience.
Increased coordination efforts to provide quality trainings by supporting partner agencies has occurred and will continue to be a focus point of DVR SDU. Department of Workforce Solutions has sought assistance in acquiring disability related trainings for their staff throughout the state of New Mexico. As an established partner, DVR will work to support the acquisition of this knowledge to the NMDWS staff as it is essential in the goals and objectives set forth through the direction of WIOA and commitment identified in unified state planning. DVR has established a relationship with NM DWS training staff that will continue to benefit both agencies. Efforts will include training targeted towards increasing awareness of all staff in supporting employment opportunities, effectively providing quality services and employment for our consumers.

Currently the Staff Development Unit is understaffed; however, agency staffing objectives include efforts to fill a vacant Staff Development Specialist and the addition of a Support Staff Trainer. Overall, many training objectives for Staff Development Unit were achieved with the creation and addition of several agency trainings, as well additional supported trainings provided to a majority of the staff. Moving forward with the expansion of training opportunities SDU will continue to coordinate with leaders from other units and representation by various positions within the agency to collaborate and identify valuable trainings that maintain the integrity of the training provided to all staff.

- Counseling Skill Build-up series – offering refresher on many counseling modalities
- Self-employment in Vocational Rehabilitation – providing support from the Counselor perspective on the self-employment processes
- Job Acquisition Training – providing instruction to VR Staff in establishing Job Clubs, increasing public speaking skills, collaboration of resources with Department of Workforce Solutions.
- Supervisory Academy

The Benefits Advisement Services Program manager subscribes to newsletters from Mathematica; National Research Institute (NRI); Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment; Small Business Administration; Internal Revenue Services; Social Security Administration; Workforce GPS; and Virginia Commonwealth University and forwards new research and best practices to Field Operation Directors.

5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

In New Mexico, there are large portions of the general population whose first language is Spanish or Native American dialect. When necessary, the Division obtains the services of interpreters of Spanish and other languages. However, Division staffing, which is consistent with the percentage of minority population and the general population, includes many individuals who are able to communicate in Spanish and native languages. This is most beneficial to terms of providing services to applicants and eligible individuals with limited English-speaking ability.

Although not a requirement, the Division may give preference to individuals who are bilingual or multilingual in applying for Division jobs. Many of the Division’s field offices have at least one
individual who can speak Spanish or Native American dialect. The Division's EEO Plan reflects the State's diversity.

In addition, the Division employs several individuals skilled in communicating in American Sign Language. Many of these individuals provide direct support through identified caseloads serving this population. When necessary, interpreters are hired to fulfill communication needs. Video Relay Interpreter equipment has also been installed in more rural field offices where use of live interpreters is quite limited. Staff in those offices have completed training in use of the equipment.

Telecommunications, sensory and other technological aids and devices may be used to assist individual applicants and clients to participate in and benefit from the rehabilitation program. The Division may purchase, lease, or utilize equipment from loan banks to meet these needs, as appropriate. Division staff may consult experts in rehabilitation technology and assistive devices to address client needs. Vocational evaluations and rehabilitation engineering services are purchased through qualified vendors. Other services purchased through qualified vendors include accessibility studies, job modifications, and identifying essential functions of jobs for employers and employees. The Division also employs some staff capable of performing these services.

6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

In New Mexico, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is operating under the Public Education Department, as is the Special Education Unit, which administers state services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The Division has and will continue to coordinate with the Special Education Unit and will coordinate its professional development activities with those provided under IDEA. This activity will be implemented under the auspices of the Secretary of Education. The licensure rules for Rehabilitation Counselors in New Mexico are in agreement with the Public Education Department requirements and competencies applicable to both the school systems to effect school-to-work transition in the high schools and the Division. The Statewide Transition Coordinator provides routine Transition training to all field staff with emphasize on the staff directly providing transition services. IDEA, IEP's, Diagnostic Data are all represented through Transition Services. The Transition Coordinator also provides up-to-date information to staff regarding IDEA and acts as the liaison between DVR and Public Education Department. The agency will continue to encourage Transition Coordinator to maintain board seat on IDEA, School-to-work Transition Alliance and maintain relation to support Regional Education Cooperative Memberships. The Division will assign a staff member to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) advisory Committee to represent the division. The Division will assign a staff member to the School-to-work Transition Alliance and maintain relations to support Regional Education Cooperative Memberships, and Work Force Youth Development Incorporation (YDI). It is the intention of the agency to continue cooperation and coordination with the personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
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 Division jointly conducts with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) continuing statewide studies to determine the needs of individuals with disabilities within the State and the best methods to meet those needs. The Division periodically conducts surveys through its programs, projects and activities to ensure that the annual evaluation of effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program meets the goals and objectives set forth in the State Plan and does not impede the accomplishments of the purpose and policy of federal funding.

As part of the development of the State Plan, the State Rehabilitation Commission (SRC) conducted a consumer satisfaction/needs assessment survey to assist in gaining consumer feedback and assessing consumer perceptions of the program.

In 2019 at the direction of DVR/SRC, MA Strategies provided a comprehensive plan to conduct two (2) satisfaction surveys covering the entire state of New Mexico. The first survey solicited responses from current and former New Mexico Division of Vocations Rehabilitation (DVR) clients; the second survey solicited responses from transition students, currently receiving transition services from DVR. Two surveys were deployed through methods approved by the New Mexico State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), to at least 10% of DVR consumers, producing at least a 25% response rate. Each survey consisted of 15-25 questions, provided by the SRC. Surveys were conducted via the internet and in hardcopy format. Survey questions were provided by SRC, with each survey consisting of three parts: Part 1 assessed the services they have received related to planning for success in reaching your employment goals; Part 2 assessed the quality of services provided to individuals with disabilities statewide (general) and who are transitioning into a successful adult life (transition); Part 3 assessed the degree to which rights and responsibilities were explained to clients by their DVR Counselor.

Observations discovered were that DVR provides highly valued services to a broad spectrum of both General and Transition clients, who often report these services as life changing. Satisfaction levels for DVR were high (ranging from 82% Strongly Agree/Agree to 55% Strongly Agree/Agree in the lowest rated category). Areas of strength include professionalism and respect, clear explanations of processes, responsibilities and answers to questions. Areas of concern include staff turnover, timeliness of responses and difficulties in helping clients secure employment. Recommendations included: more extensive preparation of DVR counselors to understand a wider variety of employment options tailored to the needs of specific populations who've reported difficulty in finding good fits with employers. Deeper links with employers in order to understand their needs, particularly around employability skills and skills-based hiring. More effective use of technology in reaching out and maintaining contact with clients (Universal Design for Learning, mobile and online access to current information). Better coordination with schools (K12 and Higher Education) to ensure that policies and practices address barriers cited in comments. Better integration with Career/Technical Education programs and partnerships with local employers and economic developers, as appropriate to DVR client skillsets. Effective strategies for engaging clients periodically in order to keep contact information accurate and current. Explore entrepreneurship for DVR clients to take advantage of emerging “new economy” opportunities.
DVR has implemented two additional programs that are intended to expand and increase Supported Employment services throughout the state. These services are targeted to youth and individuals who have been identified as most severely disabled through innovative programs under the umbrella of Partners for Employment. The first program, Project Search was implemented in 2012–2013 to provide opportunities in collaboration with statewide school districts, and business partners in conjunction with DOH, toward access to employment opportunities that are unique and innovative in serving individuals with significant disabilities. Partners for Employment is identified as the statewide entity to oversee and manage a variety of Supported Employment Programs. This program is intended to serve and support individuals with a variety of disabling conditions.

The Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program is designed to provide a network of providers for Social Security beneficiaries to obtain, maintain, or regain employment. DVR is no longer an Employment Network; however, the division continues to work with Social Security as a VR Program under cost reimbursement. DVR provide services and information to participants related to Social Security Benefits and use of the Ticket to Work and other work incentives. Services includes five field staff located throughout the state who have completed the SSA required training and maintain certification to specialize in benefits advisement.

DVR coordinates with SSA to implement the Ticket to Work Program and obtain employment outcomes. The two units of Ticket/Security Services and Benefits Advisement services have been reorganized. The Ticket to Work-Cost Reimbursement duties within the agency have been moved to the fiscal department, who is primarily responsible for researching and requesting the cost reimbursement; placing and removing the participants from "in use" status; and requesting the appropriate backup documentation from the field. Benefits Advisement Services now take care of the program aspects of the Ticket as well as doing work incentive counseling.

Program aspects of the Ticket include instructing field staff on what is needed for a participant to move through the rehab process; providing technical assistance to field staff; advocating when a problem arises in the process of in use and medical continuing disability protection (CDR); attending SSA training and quarterly meetings; providing documentation to SSA about Ticket related issues, and assist with MOU in the community for Partnership Plus. Five MOUs with local/national Employment Networks (ENs) with one in process.

Benefits Advisors work with participants one on one, helping them move through the stages of change regarding employment while on Public Benefits. They serve people 14 to full retirement age. BASs are required to complete a Community Partners Work Incentive Coordinator certificate and choose a specialty as well. Specialties include transition issues, tax help, A Better Life Experience (ABLE), Money Smart, and Self Employment. Benefits Advisors have taken on specialties to provide technical assistance to other benefits advisors.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

DVR recognizes the need to address the vocational rehabilitation needs of minorities. One such measure is to work toward the improvement of community rehabilitation programs within the state to address rehabilitation needs of minorities, especially those in remote rural communities.

Central and Western New Mexico is a very large territory inclusive of Native communities, pueblos, and reservations. Indian Reservation land. Native American populations have access to four community rehabilitation providers through their local tribal affiliations when resident on Native land. However, for non-Native American populations access to community rehabilitation programs is limited to one provider and again funding is an issue relative to acquiring
supported employment services. There are four staff in the Gallup DVR office serving a geographic community of almost 80 miles to the east, 25 miles to the Arizona state line, not less than 80 miles to the south, and not less than 50 miles to the north. Outside of Gallup the services available to Native American populations become even more limited, there is not much available in terms of community rehabilitation programs in central western New Mexico.

The Division continues to explore ways to improve services to Native American populations as well as increasing staff competencies with respect to cultural differences. Division resources will determine priority and further development of these broad general goals of Career Development, Successful Employment Outcomes, and DVR–SRC Collaboration. In addition, DVR will continue to include a component of tribal diversity and sensitivity training in its’ Rehabilitation Academy which is utilized to train staff.

To this end, DVR has updated Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) with two of the 121 programs in the state. These agreements facilitate communication between DVR and the 121 programs in service provision to participants being served by both the 121 programs and DVR. DVR also assigns specific staff to tribes throughout the state. This is designed to maximize service provision, coordination and on-going relationships by itinerate VR staff being available on-site.

The Division is also currently involved with project E3: Educate, Empower, Employ. The purpose of the project is to provide technical assistance (TA) to State VR agencies and their partners to address barriers to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) participation and competitive integrated employment of historically underserved groups of Individuals with disabilities. The TA will be provided on-site through long term service delivery relationships with local VR agency personnel and community-based partners to high-leverage groups with national applicability in economically disadvantaged communities (targeted communities) Identified by the VR agencies themselves.

Project E3 provides technical assistance (TA) to State VR agencies and their partners to address barriers to VR participation and competitive integrated employment of historically underserved groups of individuals with disabilities who are economically disadvantaged. This RSA/Southern U. of Baton Rouge project concentrates on five specific zip codes in Albuquerque: 87102, 87105, 87106, 87108, and 87121. This project will focus on ways to breakdown employment barriers for people w/ Mental Health and Substance Abuse Disorders in these zip codes. Both DVR and Community Providers will be collaborating on this project.

With DVR continued emphasis on benefit advisement, they reach many people who are on Supplemental Security Income (SSI), which currently pays out the Federal Benefit Rate (FBR) of $771 a month. FBR is 77% of the poverty level. The average Social Security Disability Benefit is $835 in New Mexico which means most of the people served on SSDI is 83% of poverty.

New Mexico continues to be a majority minority state, with the US census quick facts showing the state has 49.1% Hispanic or Latino, 37.1% white, non-Hispanic/Latino, 10.9% Native American, 2.6 Black or African American, and 1.8% Asian American. DVR services to the state shows similar representation.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

There are rural locations throughout the state where population is scarce and distances vast from community to community with few rehabilitation community providers. These rural locations are itinerantly served by DVR offices in larger communities with many community rehabilitation services providers stretching their resources as best they can to extend services.
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Under the new federal law, DVR is developing outreach strategies to combine the needs of students with disabilities and those that might have been previously referred from schools to community agencies, rather than to DVR for career and employment needs. DVR believes this new focus will dramatically change the consumers served moving forward into the near future.

DVR, working with the Department of Public Education (PED), Work Force Centers, (WFC), Department of Health, (DOH), Tribal VR agencies and community contractors has increased coordination of VR services between local educational agencies, VR, & tribal VR.

Some of the partners of Coalition for Advancement and Development of Employment Training Services (CADETS) include: local education agencies such as Central New Mexico Community College and the University of New Mexico, DVR, Fathers Building Futures (a non-profit dedicated to helping justice involved citizens with re-entry), local employers, ACLU, Roadrunner Foodbank which serves as both an employer and an on-the-job training provider and others. CADETS was just recently able to extend an arm out to State Probation and add them as a partner to collaborative.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

Collaboration with Statewide Workforce Investment System: DVR has had representatives in the State and all the local Workforce Investment boards since their inception in 2000. Representatives address the issues and interests of individuals with disabilities in the workforce investment system, both in developing policy and influencing service delivery.

DVR is currently collocated with the Central One-Stop Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This consists of 2 VR Counselors and 1 VR Technician being housed out of this office in an effort for create a comprehensive one-stop. DVR is currently working towards colocation in two other parts of the state: Santa Fe, New Mexico and Farmington, New Mexico. This is anticipated to be completed in 2021. In the areas where colocation is not possible, itinerant services are being established between the local one-stop centers and the Division to create comprehensive services.

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.
Youth with a disability: Services provided to an individual with a disability, aged 14–24, not in school; or who does not qualify for services under IDEA. VR may provide youth with disabilities who are in transition from secondary school to postsecondary education and employment. The term is typically associated with services provided under the Workforce System.

Student with a disability: A student who is eligible for and receiving special education under IDEA or be considered a person with a disability under Section 504, and not younger than the earliest age allowable under IDEA or a state established age if lower, and not older than 21 or a higher age if set by state law as permitted under IDEA. Individualized plan developed by the public-school systems for a special education student which identifies educational goals, objectives and services to be provided to the student. In the state of New Mexico when a student reaches age 14, his or her IEP should also include a transition plan that addresses services and support focused towards post-school outcomes.

Services provided by DVR to students with disabilities and youth with disabilities in collaboration with local educational & community agencies to provide exploration and other services such as counseling and self-advocacy training in the early stages of the transition process.

Required activities of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) include: Job Exploration Counseling, Work-based learning experiences such as internships, counseling on opportunities for postsecondary training, Job readiness skills training to develop social and independent living skills, and self-advocacy skills.

The Division can authorize activities which include: implementation of effective strategies to increase the likelihood of independent living and inclusion in communities and competitive integrated workplaces; developing and improving strategies for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals with significant disabilities to live independently, participate in postsecondary educational experiences, and obtain and retain competitive integrated employment; providing instruction to vocational rehabilitation counselors, school transition personnel, and other persons supporting students with disabilities; disseminating information about innovative, effective, and efficient approaches to achieve the goals of this section; coordinating activities with transition services provided by local educational agencies under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.); applying evidence-based findings to improve policy, procedure, practice, and the preparation of personnel, in order to better achieve the goals of this section; developing model transition demonstration projects; establishing or supporting multistate or regional partnerships involving states, local educational agencies, designated state units, developmental disabilities agencies, private businesses, or other participants to achieve the goal of this section; and disseminating information and strategies to improve the transition to postsecondary activities of individuals who are members of traditionally un-served populations.

With the implementation of WIOA in July 2015 the Division will now be required by law to significantly add to the demographics of clients that are served in all DVR offices. Each local office of DVR now must: (1) attend IEP meetings for students with disabilities when invited, (2) work with local workforce development boards, One-stop centers, and employers to develop work opportunities for students with disabilities, (3) work with schools, to coordinate and guarantee the provisions of pre-employment transition services, (4) attend person-centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under Title 19 of the Social Security Act, when invited (WIOA 422). DVR is also now required to increase spending to at least 15% of section 110 state allotments for provision of pre-employment transition services, which for DVR is $3.5 million per year, which cannot be used to pay administrative costs of providing pre-
employment services (WIOA 419). To accomplish the new requirements under WIOA, DVR must expand its current workforce.

The purpose of Pre-Employment services is to provide statewide support for students with significant disabilities to obtain customized and integrated support throughout New Mexico’s Strategic Plan for education, ”Kids First, New Mexico Wins” through the implementation of Strategic Level 3, "Ready for Success" as measured by an increase in graduation rates and increasing the number of students prepared for college and career.

Under the new federal law Public Education Department and DVR are developing outreach strategies to coordinate the efforts of different government agencies to address the needs of students with disabilities. Continued efforts and cooperation with job center networks is valuable to consumers who can work on certain aspects of their job. 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. (General)

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

DVR is promoting Section 511 of WIOA, which limits the use of subminimum wage for employers that hold FLSA 14c certificates. The intention of Section 511 of WIOA is that individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities, must be afforded a full opportunity to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in, or reenter competitive employment. Starting in 2017 DVR arranged and met with three employers with 14c certificates and their disabled subminimum wage employees at five work sites throughout the state. DVR collaborated with Adelante in two sites in Albuquerque (the Document Shredding Center and the Fulfillment Center) and their site in Los Lunas (Bargain Square). In addition, DVR collaborated with CARC in Carlsbad and Zee Empowerment in Gallup. A mobile team of DVR vocational rehabilitation counselors met with disabled subminimum wage employees at each site and provided vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services to promote employment in competitive employment in integrated settings. A total of 239 disabled subminimum wage employees were served in 2019. DVR will continue to provide disabled subminimum wage employees with vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services at these sites a minimum of once a year and twice a year for those hired after July 22, 2016 as per compliance with Section 511 of WIOA.

- Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and (General)

DVR is promoting Section 511 of WIOA, which limits the use of subminimum wage for employers that hold FLSA 14c certificates. The intention of Section 511 of WIOA is that individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities, must be afforded a full opportunity to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in, or reenter competitive employment. In 2017 DVR arranged and met with three employers with 14c certificates and their disabled subminimum wage employees at five work sites throughout the state. DVR collaborated with Adelante in two sites in Albuquerque (the Document Shredding Center and the Fulfillment Center) and their site in Los Lunas (Bargain Square). In addition, DVR collaborated with CARC in Carlsbad and Zee Empowerment in Gallup. A mobile team of DVR vocational rehabilitation counselors met with disabled subminimum wage employees at each site and provided vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services to promote employment in competitive employment in integrated settings. A total of 288 disabled
subminimum wage employees were served, in which 54 of them were referred to DVR, and 7 obtained employment via DVR assistance. DVR will continue to provide disabled subminimum wage employees with vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services at these sites a minimum of once a year and twice a year for those hired after July 22, 2016 as per compliance with Section 511 of WIOA.

DVR sponsored ACRE training for community partners:

- In collaboration with Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Partners for Employment is offering a limited number of scholarships for private job developers to take the ACRE-certified Supported Employment Online Course offered by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). The online course will start October 30, 2017 and runs through January 15, 2018.

- The Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) awards nationally recognized Certificates of Achievement to providers of employment services to people with disabilities. This Certificate documents that the provider has satisfactorily completed a minimum of 40 hours of training or professional development provided by an ACRE-approved training resource. Virginia Commonwealth University is a member of ACRE, and the Supported Employment Online Certificate Series online course is a recognized training program.

3. INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES FOR TRANSITION CAREER SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH SERVICES ARE COORDINATED WITH TRANSITION SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

DVR has identified 17,000 students in the New Mexico public school systems that are eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. Additionally, we know that over 7,874 youth between the ages of 14-16 are receiving SSI and may or may not have an active IEP. New Mexico, through its partner collaborations with, UNM CDD/partners for employment, CREC, DOH and DDSD can support employment experiences, that target outreach to SSI and individuals with the most significant disabilities will allow for strategic niche for needed VR services and collaboration with the schools. DVR will continue to collaborate through the current Inner-governmental agreement with Central Regional Educational Cooperative (CREC 5) to coordinate of Pre-Employment Transition Services with education and long-term care services.

The Division can authorize activities which include:

Implementation of effective strategies to increase the likelihood of independent living and inclusion in communities and competitive integrated workplaces, developing and improving strategies for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals with significant disabilities to live independently, participate in postsecondary educational experiences, and obtain and retain competitive integrated employment, providing instruction to vocational rehabilitation counselors, school transition personnel, and other persons supporting students with disabilities; disseminating information about innovative, effective, and efficient approaches to achieve the goals of this section; coordinating activities with transition services provided by local educational agencies under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.); applying evidence–based findings to improve policy, procedure, practice, and the preparation of personnel, in order to better achieve the goals of this section; developing model transition demonstration projects; establishing or supporting multistate or regional partnerships involving states, local educational agencies, designated state units, developmental disabilities agencies, private businesses, or other participants to achieve the goal of this section;
and disseminating information and strategies to improve the transition to postsecondary activities of individuals who are members of traditionally un–served populations.

With the implementation of WIOA in July 2015 the Division will now be required by law to significantly add to the demographics of clients that are served in all DVR offices. Each local office of DVR now must:

(1) attend IEP meetings for students with disabilities when invited, (2) work with local workforce development boards, One–stop centers, and employers to develop work opportunities for students with disabilities, (3) work with schools, to coordinate and guarantee the provisions of pre–employment transition services, (4) attend person–centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under Title 19 of the Social Security Act, when invited (WIOA 422). DVR is also now required to increase spending to at least 15% of section 110 state allotments for provision of pre–employment transition services, which for DVR is $3.2 million per year, which cannot be used to pay administrative costs of providing pre–employment services (WIOA 419). To accomplish the new requirements under WIOA, DVR must expand its current workforce.

The Statewide Transition Manager provides routine Transition training to all field staff with emphasize on the staff directly providing transition services. Needs assessment, Collaboration forms with Local Educational Agencies, IDEA, IEP’s, Diagnostic Data are all represented through Transition Services. The transition manager provides up-to-date information to staff regarding IDEA and acts as the liaison between DVR and Public Education Department. The agency will continue to encourage a DVR staff member to maintain board seat on IDEA, School-to-work Transition Alliance and maintain relation to support Regional Education Cooperative Memberships.

DVR’s has increased the number of vocational positions throughout the state to ensure implementation of Pre-employment transition services. DVR has 66 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, conducting 16 hours per month of Pre employment Services. 42 Vocational rehabilitation techs should provide pre-employment transition services, to support rehabilitation counselor in implementation of pre-employment transition services. This allows DVR to provide pre-employment transition services to all local educational agencies, charters and private school districts to students with disabilities ages 14-21. DVR has hired a Transition Manager who will supervise 6 100% Transition Counselors through out the state of New Mexico. The additional transition counselors are required to assist in providing Pre-Employment Transition Services to meet the WIOA mandate of $3.2 million. DVR was successful at obtaining 10 FTE in SFY 19. These positions are Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor-Supervisors and focus on Pre-employment Transition Services and Supported Employment services. These positions are to carry a caseload of 50 to 65 participants and provide 50% of their time to pre-employment transition services. The goal is to increase the division’s ability to serve more participants by 500-600 individuals with disabilities and will create a stronger service pathway for Pre-ETS students referred to Title I services. DVR plans to increase nine 47 Employment Specialist FTE positions to assist in supported employment and with general VR participants with skills training, job development and job placement.
The Division is an organizational unit of the Public Education Department to facilitate the transition of students who are receiving special education services from the provision of a free appropriate public education under the responsibility of an educational agency. The Division also works with local education agencies to coordinate student referrals to the Division field offices. The division conducts eligibility determinations for the student to identify appropriate vocational rehabilitation services and the development of the Individual Plan for Employment before the student leaves the school setting.

To accomplish the new requirements under WIOA, DVR must expand its current workforce. The Public Education Department, of which DVR is a division, is the State Education Agency (SEA). Currently the memorandum with the Public Education Department serves to facilitate the integration and coordination of services to eligible secondary education students in providing a continuum of services that will meet the needs of all students with disabilities. The integrated continuum of services is to be flexible enough to meet the needs of all IDEA eligible students to qualify for DVR services within the available resources, maximize opportunity for students and eliminate limitations and obstacles. Public Education Department is working with Regional Educational Cooperative Memberships to establish intergovernmental agreements.

Currently the Division is establishing or supporting multistate or regional partnerships involving local Regional Educational memberships, states, local educational agencies, tribal, designated state units, developmental disabilities agencies, private businesses, or other participants to achieve the goal of this section. A transitional guide has been created and is being disseminating to local educational agencies, community partners, tribal partners, business and or other agencies who work with developmental disabilities. Information and strategies will be used to improve the transition to postsecondary activities of individuals who are members of traditionally unserved populations. The Division will assign a staff member to the School-to-Work Transition Alliance and maintain relations to support Regional Education Cooperative Memberships, and Work Force Youth Development Incorporation (YDI). It is the intention of the agency to continue cooperation and coordination with the personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Describe:

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES
(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(b)). Describe:
The Division utilized the U.S. Census Bureau, 2018, American Community Survey 1-year and 5-year estimates. This data provides that there are approximately 159,258 Individuals with Disabilities ages 18-64 residing in New Mexico for FFY 2020. These individuals may potentially qualify for VR Services under Title I, Part B. For FFY 2021 estimations from this data are 158,425.

The agency estimates approximately 2,100 individuals will be found eligible for services. In Performance year 2019 DVR, found 1,552 participants eligible for services. It is hoped that with aggressive attempts (doubling efforts) to contact participants via phone calls, emails, and mail this will increase the amounts of participants found eligible for services.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

DVR provides the following projections for FFY 2020 in providing services to an estimated 6,100 individuals with disabilities. These individuals will have meet Order of Selection rules. For FFY 2021 an estimated 5,736 individuals will be determined eligible, with the potential to meet Order of Selection and or receive services.

In Performance year 2019, DVR served 6,070 participants. It is hoped that this amount will increase slightly despite being and an Order of Selection again through aggressive contacting of participants (doubling efforts) to contact participants via phone calls, emails, and mail this will increase the amounts of participants found eligible for services.

New Mexico Order of Selection began in August 2018. Individuals receiving services and made eligible prior to August 13, 2018 continue to receive VR services. MSD priority category continues to remain open and participants made eligible will receive services as the VR process develops. Individuals who applied after August 13, 2018 determined Significantly Disabled and other are placed on the waitlist. All applications received through 12/31/2019 have been released from the waitlist and will be served as case planning develops.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

FFY 2020 the number of eligible individuals in the state who will receive services under Supported Employment, Title VI, part B is estimated to be 350. These services are expected to be provided with funds under title VI and part B funds.

During FFY 2021 the number of eligible individuals in the state who will receive services under Supported Employment, Title VI, part B is estimated to be 334. These services are expected to be provided with funds under title VI and part B funds.

In Performance year 2019, the numbers were low for Supported Employment. DVR will emphasize the importance of coding these participants correctly in the participant data system. It is hoped that through this effort and the increase collaboration efforts made by the new DVR Statewide Supported Employment Liaison more individuals will be identified and served by the agency.
C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION.

Category (non–Pre-ETS)
Priority 1: Most Significantly Disabled Title I: 2456
Priority 1: Most Significantly Disabled Title VI: 350
Priority 2: Significantly Disabled Title I: 3,172
Priority 3: All Other Eligible Title I: 122

**FFY 2021**

Category (non–Pre-ETS)
Priority 1: Most significantly Disabled Title I: 2600
Priority 1: Supported Employment- Most Significantly Disabled Title VI: 334
Priority 2: Significantly Disabled Title I: 2700
Priority 3: All Other Eligible Title I: 102

The number of eligible individuals who receive services have been trending downward since DVR went on an Order of Selection in August 2018. Again, it is hoped that with aggressive attempts (doubling efforts) to contact participants via phone calls, emails, and mail this will increase the amounts of participants found eligible for services. Through these aggressive efforts, DVR hopes to identify those participants who want to engage DVR and those who are not ready for services. Those participants that are not ready for services will be closed to make room for more participants to come off the wait list.

3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

DVR immediately serves individuals with the most significant disabilities (OOS Category 1). Individuals with significant disabilities (OOS Category 2) and all others eligible (OOS Category 3) are placed on a waiting list. DVR has been on active order since August of 2018 and currently remains on order with the intention to monitor budget availability to serve all eligible individuals timely.

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.

DVR anticipates state matching funds through State FY 2020 necessary to draw down all available federal match. The estimates below are based on receipt of full state matching funds.

- The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is under an Order of Selection. The table below provides estimates of the number of individuals to be served under each priority category within the order.
### FFY 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category (non-Pre-ETS)</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Estimated Funds</th>
<th>Estimate # to be served</th>
<th>Average Costs of Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title I: Most Significantly Disabled</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$3,420,000</td>
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<td>*50% of title VI funds are designated to serve youth with MSD</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Total Estimated Funds</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>$7,674,500</td>
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### FFY2021

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<th>Estimated Funds</th>
<th>Estimate # to be served</th>
<th>Average Costs of Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title I: Most Significantly Disabled</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$3,420,000</td>
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<td>334</td>
<td>$732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*50% of title VI funds are designated to serve youth with MSD</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significantly Disabled</td>
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<td>$3,860,000</td>
<td>2700</td>
<td>$1426</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title I: All Other Eligible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Estimated Funds</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5736</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### L. STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The designated State unit must:

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
Mission Statement: The mission of the New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is to encourage and assist the efforts of New Mexicans with disabilities to reach their goals for working and living in their communities.

Vision Statement: Every New Mexican with a disability has the opportunity to contribute to the quality of life and the economic prosperity of the state.

The State Rehabilitation Council and the Division jointly reviewed the results of the 2019 Satisfaction Needs survey with input from the SRC. The participant satisfaction survey is addressed in the State Plan. DVR plans for a comprehensive statewide needs assessment to be conducted in State Fiscal Year 2021 and will include SRC in the planning phases as well as reviewing results.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

State Goals and Priorities will now need to align with the new Federal Performance Accountability Measures of Section 116 of WIOA. These measures include: Employment in the 2nd quarter, Employment in the 4th quarter, Median Earnings, Credential Attainment, Measurable Skills Gains, and Effectiveness in Serving Employers. Via the RSA-911, DVR has submitted Common Performance Measures for the 1st quarter program year 2019. DVR will continue to submit performance data per RSA-911 reporting specifications. The performance measures in program years 2018 and 2019 will set a baseline of program accountability measures in 2019 and 2020.

As a core partner for local one-stops throughout the state, DVR has achieved and will continue to achieve the following:

- DVR is currently co-located at the Albuquerque one-stop office and is fully integrated in the one-stop’s daily operations. DVR plans to co-locate in the Farmington and Santa Fe one-stop offices by the end of SFY20.

- Enable businesses and employers to easily identify and hire skilled workers and access other human resource assistance including Skill-to-Work programs, pre-screening applicants, offering rooms for job fairs and interviewing, and consultant services, which are Agency specific such as ADA Training and disability etiquette training for existing employees.

- Expand workforce services for individuals at all levels and skill of experience.

- Train one-stop staff on the basic eligibility requirements for DVR throughout the state.

- Utilize the integrated nature of one-stop centers to increase customer participation and engage, support local businesses, and strengthen partnerships.

- Continue to work with local one-stop centers to obtain physical and programmatic accessibility assessments to ensure each center is meeting modern accessibility standards to individuals of all skills levels and abilities as required in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act as well as Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- Work collaboratively with State and Local Workforce Development Boards to establish and maintain the one-stop delivery system. This includes jointly funding the one-stop infrastructure costs through partner contributions. DVR has Agency representatives on each of the four Workforce Development Boards.

Goals for continued Service to Students and Youth with Disabilities and
Supported Employment:

New Mexico Division Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has implemented several intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) and/or Memoranda of Agreement (MOU) in cooperation with other state agencies including the Department of Health (DOH), Developmental Disabilities Support Division (DDSD), Center for Development and Disabilities (CDD), New Mexico Public Education (PED), and Central Regional Educational Cooperative (CREC) agencies. These cooperative agreements aid in facilitating transition services for Transition individuals and youth who are eligible for Supported Employment services across the state.

DVR continues to work in collaboration with the Center for Development and Disability toward the implementation and sustainability of Supported Employment programs across the state. Services that are provided at Center for Development and Disability include education, advocacy, and outreach in the field of Supported Employment. Services are available through Project Search and Partners for Employment to participants and their families, community providers, job developers, job coaches, employers, as well as, Local Educational agencies (LEA). VR continues to collaborate with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide information on SSA benefits and Ticket to Work.

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 most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates; (General) DVR along with SRC plan to conduct a new triennial comprehensive assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with significant disabilities who reside in the State. In 2019 at the direction of DVR/SRC, MA Strategies provided a comprehensive plan to conduct two (2) satisfaction surveys covering the entire state of New Mexico. The first survey solicited responses from current and former New Mexico Division of Vocations Rehabilitation (DVR) clients; the second survey solicited responses from transition students, currently receiving transition services from DVR. Two surveys were deployed through methods approved by the New Mexico State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), to at least 10% of DVR consumers, producing at least a 25% response rate. Each survey consisted of 15-25 questions, provided by the SRC. Surveys were conducted via the internet and in hardcopy format. Survey questions were provided by SRC, with each survey consisting of three parts: Part 1 assessed the services they have received related to planning for success in reaching your employment goals; Part 2 assessed the quality of services provided to individuals with disabilities statewide (general) and who are transitioning into a successful adult life (transition); Part 3 assessed the degree to which rights and responsibilities were explained to clients by their DVR Counselor.

Observations discovered were that DVR provides highly valued services to a broad spectrum of both General and Transition clients, who often report these services as life changing. Satisfaction levels for DVR were high (ranging from 82% Strongly Agree/Agree to 55% Strongly Agree/Agree in the lowest rated category). Areas of strength include professionalism and respect, clear explanations of processes, responsibilities and answers to questions. Areas of concern include staff turnover, timeliness of responses and difficulties in helping clients secure employment. Recommendations included: more extensive preparation of DVR counselors to understand a wider variety of employment options tailored to the needs of specific populations who’ve reported difficulty in finding good fits with employers. Deeper links with employers in
order to understand their needs, particularly around employability skills and skills-based hiring. More effective use of technology in reaching out and maintaining contact with clients (Universal Design for Learning, mobile and online access to current information). Better coordination with schools (K12 and Higher Education) to ensure that policies and practices address barriers cited in comments. Better integration with Career/Technical Education programs and partnerships with local employers and economic developers, as appropriate to DVR client skillsets. Effective strategies for engaging clients periodically in order to keep contact information accurate and current. Explore entrepreneurship for DVR clients to take advantage of emerging "new economy" opportunities.

B. THE STATE’S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

The Division has developed data tracking mechanisms in its’ client data base to align itself up with the Federal Performance Accountability Measures of Section 116 in WIOA. Both training and case reviews have been implemented statewide to ensure compliance with these measures. Also, measurable skill gains have been incorporated as a measure in the vocational rehabilitation counselor evaluation. Currently the expected levels of performance for Employment in the 2nd quarter, Employment in the 4th quarter, Median Earnings, Credential Attainment, and Effectiveness in Serving Employers are baseline for the Vocational Rehabilitation Programs for Performance Year 2020 and 2021. The expected and negotiated performance levels for Measurable Skills Gain for Performance Year 2020 and 2021 were developed in consult with New Mexico Commission for the Blind and the Rehabilitation Service Administration. In Performance Year 2020 the expected MSG rate was set for 19% and the negotiated MSG rate was set for 24%. In Performance Year 2021 the expected MSG rate was set for 20% and the negotiated MSG rate was set for 25%.

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.

DVR implemented a revised accounting process to ensure the recording of federal grant expenditures and associated state match expenditures, as well as program income and funds transfers from other agencies that also are used as match, in the state SHARE accounting system.

M. ORDER OF SELECTION

Describe:

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

It is the policy of DVR to provide vocational rehabilitation services to eligible individuals under an order of selection. Under the order of selection, the Division has established three priority groups. Every individual determined to be eligible for services is placed in the appropriate priority group based upon the documentation used to determine eligibility and/or vocational rehabilitation needs. Selection and placement in a priority group is based solely upon the significance of the eligible individual’s disability, and is not based upon the type of disability,
geographical area in which the individual lives, projected type of vocational outcome, age, sex, race, color, creed, religion, or national origin of the individual.

The priority groups are:

(1) Priority Group 1. Eligible individuals with a most significant disability are persons:

a. Who have a severe physical or mental impairment which seriously impedes the individuals functional capacities in three or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, cognitive abilities, or work tolerance or attendant factors) in terms of an employment outcome; and b. whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple and intensive vocational rehabilitation services in order to result in an employment outcome.

(2) Priority Group 2. Eligible individuals with a significant disability are persons: a. who have a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, cognitive abilities, or work tolerance or attendant factors) in terms of an employment outcome; and b. for whom vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

(3) Priority Group 3. Other Eligible individuals are persons with a disability who meet eligibility criteria, but do not meet the definition of a significant or most significant disability.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

Budget reductions experienced during fiscal years 2018–2019 had resulted in limited financial and personnel resources. Analysis of available resources resulted in a projection that by resulted by August 2018, DVR lacked sufficient resources to provide services to all eligible individuals. The Division, in consultation with the State Rehabilitation Council, determined the necessity of implementation of an order of selection at this time ensured service delivery to eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities not be interrupted. However, individuals with significant disabilities and individuals with a disability were put on delay status at this time.

DVR currently has addressed its vacancies rates from a high of 50% to 40% in SFY19 through several rapid hire events which have been successful. The current vacancy rate is at 25%.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS

Projected Service & Outcome Goals for FFY 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category (non-Pre-ETS)</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Estimate # to be served</th>
<th>Closed - Rehabilitated</th>
<th>Closed - Other</th>
<th>Average Costs of Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: Most Significantly Disabled</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,806</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>2,178</td>
<td>$1,308</td>
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<td>2: Significantly Disabled</td>
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<td>3,172</td>
<td>186</td>
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<td>$1,216</td>
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<tr>
<td>3: All Other Eligible</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>$1,229</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Estimated Funds</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,100</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>3,819</td>
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### Projected Service & Outcome Goals for FFY 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category (non-Pre-ETS)</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Estimate # to be served</th>
<th>Closed – Rehabilitated</th>
<th>Closed – Other</th>
<th>Average Costs of Services</th>
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<td>1: Most Significantly Disabled</td>
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<td>5736</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>3,829</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

**D. TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER; AND**

Time within which goals are to be achieved (all priority categories): 10/01/2020 – 09/30/2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Months in Plan to Closure</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: Most Significantly Disabled</td>
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<td>26.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>2: Significantly Disabled</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: All Other Eligible</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Estimated Funds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

Priority of categories to receive VR services under the order DVR shall continue to plan for and provide services to all participants being served under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) prior to, and at the time of, implementation of the order of selection irrespective of the severity of the participant’s disability. Participants that have been moved off the waiting list and who are receiving services will also continue to do so regardless of whether their priority group is closed. Participants shall be placed in priority categories at the time of eligibility determination.

Depending upon Division resources, the categories shall be closed for services in ascending order beginning with Category 3 and proceeding to Categories 2 and 1. Services shall be provided only to those individuals in an open category. Individuals with the most significant disabilities (priority category 1) will be selected for services before all others.
DVR will inform each participant on their caseloads:

1. Of the priority groups in the order of selection; (2) If eligible, of the individual's assignment to a priority group; (3) Of the individual's right to appeal that assignment; (4) If eligible and in a priority group not being served, that they can remain on a waiting list until such time that the priority group is served; and (5) Of information and referral services available to all applicants.

Cases in eligible status within a closed priority group will be placed in delayed status and remain on a waiting list until such time as resources allow for the release of cases to be served. No IPE will be written for cases on the waiting list. Staff will continue to take applications, diagnose and evaluate all applicants to determine eligibility and assign a priority group. If an eligible participant is placed in a closed priority group, the case will go on the waiting list and no IPE will be written.

When analysis of resources indicates the ability to open a priority group, the staff will receive notice along with a list of participants on their caseload who can be removed from delayed status. Eligible participants will be released from delayed status based on priority assignment and their application date, releasing those with the earliest application date. Staff will contact identified participants to develop and implement their Individualized Plan for Employment. Any participant with an IPE that existed prior to the date order of selection was implemented, irrespective of their priority group, will continue to receive services as planned. Such an IPE may be amended if the changes are necessary for the individual to continue progress toward achieving an appropriate employment outcome or are other wise necessary within policy. Persons requiring post-employment services will also be provided the necessary services regardless of priority group assignment.

Information and referral services will remain available to eligible participants who are not in an open priority group. These participants will be given information and guidance, using appropriate modes of communication, to assist such individuals in preparing for, securing, retaining or regaining employment, and will be appropriately referred to Federal and State programs (other than the vocational rehabilitation program) including other components of the statewide workforce investment system. No IPE will be written to provide such services to these individuals.

As of 8/2018 only category Priority 1 – Most Significantly Disabled remained open, however DVR went into an active Order of Selection with Priority 2 - Significantly Disabled and Priority 3 – All Others Eligible being closed. As of 9/2019 DVR started to release Priority 2 – Significantly Disabled participants off the wait list every other month in SFY 2020 in the amounts of 100-200 participants.

An on-going assessment of expenditures, expenditure projections for new (not yet written) Individualized Plans for Employment, Pre-ETS set aside requirements, budget changes and staff vacancies continue to be used to determine the need to close one or more priority categories.

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

DVR has not elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of the established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

The 2014 amendment to the Rehabilitation Act under WIOA includes a 15% set-aside of federal match for Pre-employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities. Since students who are potentially eligible for VR services may receive Pre-ETS, students who are not
yet eligible for DVR services would continue to receive the five core services (job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling regarding post-secondary opportunities, workplace readiness training and self-advocacy training). Students found eligible, but not in “Service” status under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IEP), would be placed on a wait list for services if a list for their priority group had to be implemented. DVR initiated a wait list in 8/2018 due to funding changes, staff vacancies, and referral rates.

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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

Continue to provide Title VI-B services to clients in active status in pursuit of goals established in Individualized Plans for Employment. Approximately 350 clients will be provided Title VI-B services during the 2020 Program Year. This will include an emphasis on services to youth with most significant disabilities as directed in the 2014 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act.

Strategies to enhance and increase Title VI-B services:

- Continue to purchase supported employment services from programs on either a fee-for-services basis developed statewide through specific Memorandum of Understanding with other state agencies, for clients with the most significant disabilities.

- Continue to seek long-term funding support from agencies providing supported employment. The Developmental Disabilities Support Division, Department of Health, provides long term funding for supported employment to provider agencies under the Developmental Disabilities Waiver and Mi Via Waivers. The Division works collaboratively with the Behavioral Health Services Division, Department of Health, New Mexico Department of Human Services, and the NM Behavioral Health Collaborative to assure ongoing support services for individuals with severe disabling mental illness served under supported employment Individualized Plans for Employment.

- The Division continues to work with other state agencies under memoranda of understanding focusing on serving individuals with the most significant disabilities under supported employment plans.

- Individual placements in integrated work settings at wages comparable to non-disabled peers performing similar work continue to be emphasized.

- The Division has increased its collaboration through participation with provider agencies; as well as independent and statewide entities to promote “Employment First”
principles for individuals with the most significant disabilities served under supported employment Individualized Plans for Employment. Since this collaboration 154 field staff have been trained in the Discovery process for non-traditional career development. Discovery is a customized employment process that gathers information through activities of daily living that can be translated into possibilities for meaningful and purposeful job placement. The goal of this activity is successful employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible for Supported Employment.

- The Division has established statewide liaisons in supported employment to assist the statewide Supported Employment Coordinator in technical assistance and conducting staff training relevant to supported employment policy and service provision. Division liaisons are active participants and attendees in supported employment trainings provided by experts at the local, regional, and national level. Division liaisons participate regularly in regional quarterly meetings held between collaborating agencies and the Developmental Disabilities Support Division, Department of Health.

- The Division has a position which provides information and will offer technical support to staff, service providers and other stakeholders on supported employment services and fee structure. This position will compile information and data to track Supported Employment activities.

- The Division continues to support and promote strategies to assure employment opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities served under supported employment Individualized Plans for Employment.

- DVR has an Intergovernmental Agreement with UNM Center for Development and Disability to continue training programs under Project Search. This intensive career training program includes multiple youth with most significant disabilities. This effort is in keeping with the emphasis on serving this population via Title VI finds with the 50% set aside established under WIOA.

2. DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED, WITH FUNDS RESERVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 603(D), FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING:

A. THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 4 YEARS; AND

Extended services are provided after DVR case closure and are primarily provided by DD Waiver funding allocated through DOH/DDSD. These funds are intended to provide long term services and support and may include additional employment needs such as long-term job coaching, on-site advocacy and job advancement and job retention opportunities as needed for the lifetime of the job. Additional resources for long term services and supports may also be provided through natural supports such as family, friends, employers and other community contacts. It is noted that time limits are not defined in the Division's Manual of Operational Procedures; rather, each case is assessed in terms of individual needs for supported employment services. Extended services can be provided up to 4 years and/or up until the age of 25.

Youth Development Incorportative (YDI) and the Office of the State of New Mexico, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), are establishing a collaborative partnership to facilitate the transition of youth (ages 14 to 22) from YDI Educational programs to the achievement of their desired post-school outcomes, with a focus on employment; post-secondary education; training
and lifelong learning; community participation; and healthy lifestyles; as well as facilitating provision of transition services to all participants who attend YDI programs.

DVR plans to utilize the 50% of Supported Employment funds set aside for youth with most significant disabilities to provide extended services, for up to four years, under the Partners for Employment and Project Search programs described in previous sections as well as extended services related to the partnership with YDI.

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.

DVR works with local education agencies to provide Students with most significant disabilities access to Pre-ETS. DVR has developed intergovernmental agreements with the Centers for Developmental Disabilities to implement Partners for Employment initiatives and project search. DVR works with long term providers who provide long term job supports to build capacity and training to ensure youth are provided access to participate in services successfully. NM DVR and DDSD have established support to long-term providers. These agencies have included; Best Buddies, Adelante, TAOS, Nezzy Care, PMS Shield, Los Cumbres, and Community Options.

The Division works collaboratively with Youth Development Incorporated (YDI) in establishing a collaborative partnership to facilitate the transition of youth (ages 14 to 22) from YDI Educational programs to the achievement of their desired post-school outcomes, with a focus on employment; post-secondary education; training and lifelong learning; community participation; and healthy lifestyles; as well as facilitating provision of transition services to all participants who attend YDI programs.

DVR has established a pilot internship program through the IGA with Center for Development and Disability to collaborate with Partners for Employment to focus on youth opportunities to provide work-based learning experience and potential job placement. The pilot has produced several successful experiences. DVR will look to expand this effort in the future.

O. STATE’S STRATEGIES

Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

New Mexico Division Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has implemented several intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) and/or Memoranda of Agreement (MOU) in cooperation with other state agencies including the Department of Health (DOH), Developmental Disabilities Support Division (DDSD), Center for Development and Disabilities (CDD), New Mexico Public Education (PED), and Central Regional Educational Cooperative (CREC) agencies. These cooperative agreements aid in facilitating transition services for Transition individuals and
youth who are eligible for Supported Employment services across the state. DVR continues to work in collaboration with the Center for Development and Disability toward the implementation and sustainability of Supported Employment programs across the state. Services that are provided at Center for Development and Disability include education, advocacy, and outreach in the field of Supported Employment. Services are available through Project Search and Partners for Employment to participants and their families, community providers, job developers, job coaches, employers, as well as, Local Educational agencies (LEA). VR continues to collaborate with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide information on SSA benefits and Ticket to Work.

DVR public website provides an online referral. This allows interested participants to the program to enter a referral 24/7. These referrals are directed to the local office that serves the individual based on their provided address. This online referral process allows for immediacy of outreach from local area offices to ensure referral is processed timely, orientations, and appointments scheduled promptly.

The Division has added DocuSign as an electronic signature option for participants to use to address participant barriers which avoids participants having to visit DVR office’s in-person to sign DVR documents. This is especially helpful for participants who live in rural areas who may have to travel a great distance to sign a plan.

DVR has implemented SharePoint program in efforts to improve communication and remain connected with staff. Staff will have immediacy in accessing agency documents, policies, and resources to best service participants consistently throughout the state.

DVR is considering an IGA with Developmental Disabilities Services Division in PY 19 to utilize the Title VI Youth SE funds of $122,250 to provide long term supports for employed SE youth not on the New Mexico Medicaid waiver. These funds can be utilized up to 4 years to provide on the job long term supports to SE youth as a stop gap for those waiting on the NM Waiver, which currently has an estimated wait time of 8 to 10 years. NM is considering, where appropriate, to utilize these funds to provide up to 2 years of on the job supports for Project Search graduates with a job.

DVR, in collaboration with the Self-Employment Task Force at Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Office and RTC: Rural to help people with disabilities understand the self-employment process. The website provides a way for participants’ and counselors to work from the same material while assessing self-employment readiness and developing a business plan.
The website is self-directed and can be used by individuals on their own or with the guidance of a vocational rehabilitation counselor or business development mentor. DVR is planning on serving as a study site for the self-employment process. A VR Self-Employment guide (www.vrselfemployment.org) has been developed and is of great value for self-employment business plans. Self-employment has been an underutilized employment option. The goal is to increase the VR counselor’s preparedness to guide participants through the process. This guide is self-paced for participants and counselors to work through the self-employment process. The guide offers an online curriculum both as a training tool for counselors and participants. DVR will identify VR counselors to participate in a training event that will orient them about the VR Self-Employment Guide. As envisioned, the website can serve both as a training platform for counselors and a tool and process that counselors and participants can use together during the self-employment exploration and development process. DVR’s participation in this effort reflects our interest in expanding self-employment outcomes in New Mexico DVR and the ongoing need for targeted counselor and participant materials.

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

Technology has become one of the primary engines for economic activity, education, and innovation in the Nation, and throughout the world. The commitment of the United States to the development and utilization of technology is one of the main factors underlying the strength and vibrancy of the economy of the United States.

The New Mexico Technology Assistance Program (NMTAP), a program under the Governor’s Commission on Disability (GCD), provides information and access to Assistive Technology (AT) for individuals with disabilities statewide. Operating under the US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Community Living, NMTAP fulfills the requirements of the AT Act of 2004. Services are delivered through the main location in the greater Albuquerque area and two satellite offices, located in the northeast and southwest areas of NM. NMTAP has contracts with both the Northeastern Regional Educational Cooperative to provide services out of New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas, NM, and with Western New Mexico University to provide services in Silver City, NM; contracts cover the surrounding areas in both regions. All three locations provide adequate support to students in secondary schools and their individual transition plans required by WIOA.

The four core services required under that mandate of the AT Act of 2001 include device demonstration, device loans, financial loans and reutilized equipment. Device demonstration provides a comparison of several devices that ease a particular challenge for an individual with a disability, such as visual or cognitive impairment. This allows the individual to make a decision on which device might best serve their needs.

Frequently device demonstrations will result in a device loan, during which a DVR participant will borrow the AT device to try it out for 30 days in their own environment. This allows the
individual and their VR Counselor to assess if the device will in fact provide access to either employment or education that leads to employment.

The financial loan component of NMTAP provides low interest loans to individuals with disabilities statewide when there are no other options or to offset DVR funds available. The San Juan Center for Independence contracts with NMTAP to provide the two different loans. The Self Employment for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities (SEED) Loans can help fund equipment for entrepreneurs with disabilities by providing a low-interest loan. SEED Loans can help supplement a DVR participant’s plans for a home-based business. Access Loans NM is the second financial loan offered and it provides low-interest loans for AT needed when all other options have been exhausted. Access Loans are often used for accessible transportation or modifications for entering and exiting one’s home.

The final core component provides used durable medical equipment and refurbished computers to persons with disabilities. NMTAP contracts with two of Adelante Development Center’s programs for this service - DiverseIT and Back In Use. DVR participants can receive a refurbished computer at no cost to be used for their education or employment through the DiverseIT program. The Back In Use program offers used durable medical equipment for DVR participants and other individuals with disabilities who need it.

NMTAP also provides training statewide for professionals working with individuals with disabilities and works with DVR frequently to educate VR counselors about AT devices and services. Over the last three years, NMTAP has provided training for VR Counselors statewide at the annual NMTAP-sponsored AT Conferences and at NMTAP’s the smaller one-day workshops in rural areas, called Hands-On Workshops of AT (HOW-AT’s). NMTAP also provided hands-on training at DVR-sponsored Statewide Training. In addition, NMTAP can provide technical assistance to DVR, such as ensuring their offices are accessible as required by federal law as requested.

DVR and NMTAP initiated a Memorandum of Understanding in 2017 and will be implementing an Intergovernmental Agreement in 2018. According to the agreement, AT Specialists with NMTAP will now be able to offer official AT evaluations conducted by a Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) certified Assistive Technology Professionals (ATP). These evaluations will help DVR participants with more complex considerations to achieve employment and strengthen the partnership between NMTAP and DVR.

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

Benefits advisement services are provided to enhance participation in VR by Social Security disability beneficiaries who tend to be underserved. Services aid to address concerns about the effect of employment on benefits as well as provide information regarding incentives and benefits of employment.

In addition, DVR maintains a strong relationship with University of New Mexico Center for Development and Disability (UNM CDD). DVR staff have developed short training videos on different working issues and have teamed with UNM CDD units to provide statewide trainings. The Benefits Advisor Services Supervisor has also volunteered to mentor the CDDs designated
Community Partners Work Incentives Counselor and has provided SSA approved presentation so the CDD may do outreach.

The Division is involved in a Vocational Technical Assistance Center project targeted at five economically disadvantaged communities (mostly Hispanic and Native American) in Albuquerque (87102, 87105, 87106, 87108, and 87121) to address barriers to employment regarding individuals with Mental Health Conditions and/or Persons with Substance Abuse Disorders. This project is a collaboration between the Division, Rehabilitation Service Administration, U.S. Department of Education, Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA, and the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation. The goal is to expand VR services to this target population and expand and strengthen partnerships with local social service and community development agencies, correctional agencies, community rehabilitation programs (CRPs), school systems, employers, community leaders, and other relevant stakeholders. This project will involve the Division in development of knowledge (training) in working with this target population and will design strategies to provide technical assistance and coordination of activities to maximize community service and alliance building. In 2019 this project developed an Integrated Resource Team pilot to serve participants in which the Division will collaborated regarding resources with Title I and Title III partners in conjunction with various community partners involved in mental health, substance abuse, homelessness, and probation/parole. This project also spawned a job club in the Albuquerque Metro Area for these targeted communities through Hope Works.

This project has the support of twenty local partnerships to implement comprehensive support services to address barriers in employment to this target population.

The Division continues to explore ways to improve services to Native American populations as well as increasing staff competencies with respect to cultural differences. Division resources will determine priority and further development of these broad general goals of Career Development, Successful Employment Outcomes, and DVR–SRC Collaboration. In addition, DVR will continue to include a component of tribal diversity and sensitivity training in its’ Rehabilitation Academy which is utilized to train staff.
To this end, DVR has updated Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) with two of the 121 programs in the state. These agreements facilitate communication between DVR and the 121 programs in service provision to participants being served by both a 121 program and DVR. DVR also assigns specific staff to tribes throughout the state. This is designed to maximize service provision, coordination and on-going relationships by itinerate VR staff being available on-site.

Division resources will determine priority and further development of these broad general goals of Career Development, Successful Employment Outcomes, and DVR–SRC Collaboration.

The Division continues to explore ways to improve services to Native American populations as well as increasing staff competencies with respect to cultural differences. Division resources will determine priority and further development of these broad general goals of Career Development, Successful Employment Outcomes, and DVR–SRC Collaboration. In addition, DVR will continue to include a component of tribal diversity and sensitivity training in its’ Rehabilitation Academy which is utilized to train staff.

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4. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES)

DVR has been collaborating with other NM state agency partners in supporting and funding "Partners for Employment". This innovative state-wide contract brings together a variety of both in-state and out of state vocational experts to develop and implement the Discovery
process for individuals with the most significant disabling conditions. This process, as well as other non-traditional career development paths, is intended to support and encourage vocational strategies which result in successful employment outcomes for participants. The majority of individuals served as a result of this collaboration are receiving direct training and support by nationally known experts employed by Marc Gold and Associates. In the last several months, DVR has participated in and been intimately involved in agency training provided by Marc Gold and Associates. In turn, DVR counselors are working directly with employment teams who have made the commitment to support DVR participants toward meeting their specific vocational objectives.

Reserved Title I funds have traditionally been used to support innovation and expansion operations and activities of both the State Rehabilitation Council and the Statewide Independent Living Council. This support continues.

The Division continues to collaborate with the Governor’s Commission on Disability on two initiatives: 1) increase direct services and support personnel services to deaf–blind individuals through existing community providers and 2) Transfer of the New Mexico Technology Assistance Program from the Division to the Governor’s Commission. This has now been completed and the program continues to be available for DVR participants.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE

The agency Supported Employment Coordinator continues to act as a resource for community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) and vocational rehabilitation staff. While the agency maintains a memorandum of Understanding with the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, efforts will be made to identify additional service providers and to maintain or improve relationships with existing CRPs.

The Division is involved in a Vocational Technical Assistance Center project targeted at five economically disadvantaged communities (mostly Hispanic and Native American) in Albuquerque (87102, 87105, 87106, 87108 and 87121) to address barriers to employment regarding individuals with Mental Health Conditions and /or Persons with Substance Abuse Disorders. This project is a collaboration between the Division, Rehabilitation Service Administration, U.S. Department of Education, Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA, and the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation. The goal is to expand VR services to this target population and expand and strengthen partnerships with local social service and community development agencies, correctional agencies, community rehabilitation programs (CRPs), school systems, employers, community leaders, and other relevant stakeholders. This project will involve the Division in development of knowledge (training) in working with this target population and will design strategies to provide technical assistance and coordination of activities to maximize community service and alliance building. In 2019 this project developed an Integrated Resource Team pilot to serve participants in which the Division collaborated regarding resources with Title I and Title III partners in conjunction with various community partners involved in mental health, substance abuse, homelessness, and probation/parole. This project also spawned a job club in the Albuquerque Metro Area for these targeted communities through Hope Works.

DVR is promoting Section 511 of WIOA, which limits the use of subminimum wage for employers that hold FLSA 14c certificates. The intention of Section 511 of WIOA is that individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities, must be afforded a full opportunity to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in, or reenter competitive
employment. Since 2017 DVR arranged and met with three employers on at least a yearly basis with 14c certificates and their disabled subminimum wage employees at five work sites throughout the state. DVR collaborated with Adelante in two sites in Albuquerque (the Document Shredding Center and the Fulfillment Center) and their site in Los Lunas (Bargain Square). In addition, DVR collaborated with CARC in Carlsbad and Zee Empowerment in Gallup. A mobile team of DVR vocational rehabilitation counselors met with disabled subminimum wage employees at each site and provided vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services to promote employment in competitive employment in integrated settings. A total of 239 disabled subminimum wage employees were served in 2019. DVR will continue to provide disabled subminimum wage employees with vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services at these sites a minimum of once a year and twice a year for those hired after July 22, 2016 as per compliance with Section 511 WIOA.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

State Goals and Priorities will now need to align with the new Federal Performance Accountability Measures of Section 116 of WIOA. These measures include: Employment in the 2nd quarter, Employment in the 4th quarter, Median Earnings, Credential Attainment, Measurable Skills Gains, and Effectiveness in Serving Employers. The Division plans to train staff to correctly enter data essential for these performance measures during the Program Years of 2019 and 2020 to develop baseline measures for future expected levels of performance.

Elements of the Division’s Performance Improvement Plan includes: 1. Develop innovative strategies to increase program outcomes in difficult economic times. 2. Develop effective partnerships with participants, employers, vendors and others as appropriate, to improve participants’ outcomes and therefore program outcomes. 3. Effectively and efficiently monitor and manage activities and expenditures for all programs for optimal performance. 4. Obtain necessary state match to capture all federal rehabilitation dollars available to NM. 5. Effectively manage an Order of Selection for participant services (priority of service) due to funding cuts. 6. Implement innovative technology alternatives to improve communication and performance. 7. Prepare for retirement or loss of key staff (Recruitment and Retention).

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

DVR continues to be actively involved as a Workforce Development partner in New Mexico. A representative from DVR attends meetings with other Workforce Development partners. DVR has strategized components which will aide other statewide workforce development systems in assisting individuals with disabilities.
Over the past year The Agency has been engaged with developing and evaluating the success of strategic workforce planning and developing relationships between DVR and other workforce entities in example: Wagner-Pyser, WIOA, YDI, Apprenticeships, and TAA. DVR will strive to maintain this high level of cooperation and participation.

Current strategies which complement existing initiatives or programs and supports expansion of successful employment-based strategies:

- Continue established partnerships to promote Education, Training and Career events on a quarterly or more frequent basis, begin to include other partners to the events by provide collaboration across partner organizations to increase participation of youths with disabilities to participate in education, training, and employment opportunities.

- Promotional activities geared towards the DVR service of ADA consultation, which can be utilized by other components/agencies in the statewide workforce development system. Three DVR Program Managers are completing the ADA training to obtain certification. The goal is for additional staff to attend the ADA training every year and obtain certification to provide ADA consultation to staff and employers.

- DVR will continue to work towards strengthening relationship between OFFCP and DVR.

- DVR will offer training to other agencies regarding DVR services, processes and requirements.

- DVR will strive towards improvements in communication and coordination of services around individual job seekers to better leverage resources available through multiple systems utilizing a referral process.

- DVR will continue to work with staff for their better understanding of Labor Market strategies.

- DVR will make strides towards providing employment experiences or On the Job training activities in the community. Through this strategy, mutual customers can provide experience that may lead to permanent employment.

- DVR will continue expand engagement of the business sector as a partner in developing career pathways for youth with disabilities in high-growth industries.

- DVR will pilot an Integrated Resource Team with Title I and Title III partners.

In 2017, the New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) opened a satellite office within the Bernalillo County Workforce Connection Center. The purpose of this DVR office is to help individuals with disabilities find employment. This office will consist of two Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, and a Vocational Rehabilitation Technician. This unit will also be supported by the DVR Business Specialist. The goal of this co-location will be to allow individuals with disabilities to be jointly served between the various workforce partners and DVR. DVR can provide technical assistance to both workforce partners and Job Seekers with disabilities on issues regarding disabilities. WCNNM, workforce partners and DVR staff will be cross-trained on each other’s programs which will lead to cross-referrals. A process for collaborative case management will also be developed. DVR staff will attend the bi-monthly Business Team Meetings with other workforce partners. This partnership will lead to knowledge about assessment tools, employment leads, job fairs, and hiring events being shared by all the partners within the Central Region Workforce area. It will also increase collaboration for on-the-job training (OJT) experiences for disabled job seekers. The DVR staff assigned to the
Bernalillo County Workforce Connection office will then notify other Central Region DVR offices about these opportunities available through WCCNM. DVR is an active partner with the Career, Training, and Education Committee (CTE) and the Coalition Advocating Development Employment Training Services Committee (CADETS) in developing job fairs, hiring events, OJT training programs, and certificate programs. DVR plans to co-locate in Farmington and Santa Fe by 2021.

8. HOW THE AGENCY’S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

The primary strategy to achieve agency’s goals and priorities continues to be filling vacant vocational rehabilitation counselor positions and reducing turnover. A statewide hiring freeze in recent years lead to delays in filling vacant positions. Positions are now being advertised and positions continue to be filled.

With the implementation of WIOA in July 2015 DVR will now be required by law to significantly add to the demographics of clients that are served in all DVR offices. Each local office of DVR now must: (1) attend IEP meetings for students with disabilities when invited, (2) work with local workforce development boards, One–stop centers, and employers to develop work opportunities for students with disabilities, (3) work with schools, to coordinate and guarantee the provisions of pre–employment transition services, (4) attend person–centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under Title 19 of the Social Security Act, when invited (WIOA 422). DVR is also now required to increase spending to at least 15% of section 110 state allotments for provision of pre–employment transition services, which for DVR is $3.2 million per year, which cannot be used to pay administrative costs of providing pre–employment services (WIOA 419). To accomplish the new requirements under WIOA, DVR must expand its current workforce.

DVR’s goal is to increase the number of positions to ensure DVR has 21 Transition Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, conducting 100% PreETS.

This will allow DVR to continue to provide service to all school districts by conducting Pre-Employment Transition Services to students with disabilities ages 14-21. DVR plans to add two additional positions for Transition Coordinators, as well as one Transition Manager. This
proposed plan to add additional FTE positions will be in the next four years. The additional transition counselors are required to assist in providing Pre-Employment Transition Services to meet the WIOA mandate of $3.2 million. The two transition coordinators are needed to fulfill the requirement of WIOA for the Southern and Northern sections of the state. DVR was successful at obtaining 10 FTE in PY 19. These positions are Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor-Supervisors and focus on Pre-Employment Transition Services and Supported Employment services. These positions are to carry a caseload of 50 to 65 participants. The goal is to increase the division's ability to serve additional participants by 500 to 600 individuals with disabilities and will create a stronger service pathway for PRE-ET’s students referred to Title I services. DVR plans to increase nine Employment Specialist FTE positions to assist in supported employment and with general VR participants with skills training, job development and job placement.

Justification for the additional FTE’s are as follows: • General Caseload's demographics have increasing number of mental health disabilities that significantly impact the severity of disabilities served and prolonging DVR services for participants. • The requested Transition Counselor positions.

Expanding the number qualified personnel providing direct participant service will do much to address suggestions made as a result of the latest update to the needs assessment. The identified needs of improved customer service and increased access by participants to training programs would both be addressed by increased staff available to serve participants and increased staff time/expertise available to identify, develop and procure specialized training program.

In addition to expanding the number of personnel, DVR is planning customer service trainings to enhance quality and consistency of service. The agency is also providing specific Supported Employment training to current field staff. This will serve to increase staff expertise in identifying customized employment and individualized training strategies for participants.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

One Stop Collocations

DVR is currently co-located at the Albuquerque one-stop office and is fully integrated in the
one-stop’s daily operations. DVR plans to co-locate in the Farmington and Santa Fe onestop offices by the end of PY 2021.

CADETS

DVR is also currently, and very actively, involved in the CADETS program. CADETS is a conglomeration of state and federal agencies which have come together to provide a comprehensive team of service providers for individual populations which are considered “at risk.” These populations include justice involved citizens, individuals with disabilities, individuals that have been on state benefits for a significant amount of time, etc. Some of the partners of CADETS include: local education agencies such as Central New Mexico Community College and the University of New Mexico, DVR, Fathers Building Futures (a nonprofit dedicated to helping justice involved citizens with re-entry), NM Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, local employers, ACLU, Roadrunner Foodbank which serves as both an employer and an on-the-job training provider and others. CADETS was just recently able to extend an arm out to State Probation and add them as a partner to the collaborative.

Transition Accomplishments and Innovative Practices under WIOA

Currently the Division is establishing or supporting multistate or regional partnerships involving local Regional Educational memberships, states, local educational agencies, designated state units, developmental disabilities agencies, private businesses, or other participants to achieve the goal of this section; and disseminating information and strategies to improve the transition to postsecondary activities of individuals who are members of traditionally un-served populations.

New Mexico Division Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has implemented several intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) and/or Memoranda of Agreement (MOU) in cooperation with other state agencies including the Department of Health (DOH), Developmental Support Division (DDSD), Center for Development and Disabilities (CDD), New Mexico Public Education (PED), and Central Regional Educational Cooperative (CREC) agencies. These cooperative agreements aid in facilitating transition services for Transition individuals and youth who are eligible for Supported Employment services across the state.
DVR continues to work in collaboration with the Center for Development and Disability toward the implementation and sustainability of Supported Employment programs across the state. Services that are provided at Center for Development and Disability include education, advocacy, and outreach in the field of Supported Employment. Services are available through Project Search and Partners for Employment to participants and their families, community providers, job developers, job coaches, employers, as well as, Local Educational agencies (LEA). VR continues to collaborate with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide information on SSA benefits and Ticket to Work.

**Regional Education Cooperatives**

The DVR works with local education agencies throughout New Mexico to provide school-to-work transition services and provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (PRE-ETS). Rehabilitation counselors are assigned to state public/charter high schools throughout the state and are working in collaboration with CREC Vocational Transition Specialist (VTS) to provide (PRE-ETS) services. DVR counselors continue to attend Individualized Education Plans (IEP’s) and are working collaboratively with CREC VTS to attend IEP’s. VTS and DVR staff are providing PREETS services throughout the state. These services include Guidance to employment, Self-Advocacy, Work Readiness, and Guidance to Post-Secondary education and Work Experience. VTS have referred 151 students as potential DVR participants to DVR offices across the state.

**Section 511**

DVR is promoting Section 511 of WIOA, which limits the use of subminimum wage for employers that hold FLSA 14c certificates. The intention of Section 511 of WIOA is that individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities, must be afforded a full opportunity to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in, or reenter competitive employment. Since 2017 DVR arranged and met with three employers on at least a yearly basis with 14c certificates and their disabled subminimum wage employees at five work sites throughout the state. DVR collaborated with Adelante in two sites in Albuquerque (the
Document Shredding Center and the Fulfillment Center) and their site in Los Lunas (Bargain Square). In addition, DVR collaborated with CARC in Carlsbad and Zee Empowerment in Gallup. A mobile team of DVR vocational rehabilitation counselors met with disabled subminimum wage employees at each site and provided vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services to promote employment in competitive employment in integrated settings. A total of 239 disabled subminimum wage employees were served in 2019, in which 54 of them were referred to DVR, and 7 obtained employment via DVR assistance. DVR will continue to provide disabled subminimum wage employees with vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services at these sites a minimum of once a year and twice a year for those hired after July 22, 2016 as per compliance with Section 511 of WIOA.

ACRE Certifications

DVR sponsored ACRE training for community partners:

- In collaboration with Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Partners for Employment is offering a limited number of scholarships for private job developers to take the ACREcertified Supported Employment Online Course offered by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). The online course will start October 30, 2017 and runs through January 15, 2018.

- The Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) awards nationally recognized Certificates of Achievement to providers of employment services to people with disabilities. This Certificate documents that the provider has satisfactorily completed a minimum of 40 hours of training or professional development provided by an ACRE-approved training resource. Virginia Commonwealth University is a member of ACRE, and the Supported Employment Online Certificate Series online course is a recognized training program.

DVR Employee Supported Employment Training and ACRE Certification:

- 154 DVR employees have completed the VCU online Support Employment Training
- 42 individuals have gone on to earn ACRE certification
Project E3: Educate, Empower and Employ

Provide technical assistance (TA) to State VR agencies and their partners to address barriers to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) participation and competitive integrated employment of historically underserved groups of Individuals with disabilities. The TA will be provided on-site through long term service delivery relationships with local VR agency personnel and community-based partners to high-leverage groups with national applicability in economically disadvantaged communities (targeted communities) Identified by the VR agencies themselves. Project E3 provides technical assistance (TA) to State VR agencies and their partners to address barriers to VR participation and competitive integrated employment of historically underserved groups of individuals with disabilities who are economically disadvantaged. This RSA/Southern U. of Baton Rouge project concentrates on five specific zip codes in Albuquerque: 87102, 87105, 87106, 87108, and 87121. This project will focus on ways to breakdown employment barriers for people w/ Mental Health and Substance Abuse Disorders in these zip codes. In 2019 this project developed an Integrated Resource Team pilot to serve participants in which the Division collaborated regarding resources with Title I and Title III partners in conjunction with various community partners involved in mental health, substance abuse, homelessness, and probation/parole. This project also spawned a job club in the Albuquerque Metro Area for these targeted communities through Hope Works

Expeditied Eligibility

The Division implemented a Same Day Eligibility as a business process in 2018 to expedite eligibility determination for participants. Expedited eligibility is same day eligibility for interested individuals requesting vocational rehabilitation services. This innovative model will be utilized to begin providing vocational guidance and counseling services for eligible participants at the onset of eligibility determination. In addition, the process will decrease the days in application status and promote quality customer service. Qualitative and quantitative measuring outcomes will be an ongoing process in developing a working sustainable model of Same-Day Eligibility. This involves participant surveys and vocational rehabilitation counselor surveys and feedback. When the agency is no longer on an active order-of-selection this business practice will once again commence.
Self-Employment

A VR Self-Employment guide (www.vrselfemployment.org) has been developed and is of great value for self-employment business plans. This website is used as a tool to prepare the VR Counselor and participants for development of a self-employment business plan. The website is available as a training platform for counselors and a tool and process that counselors and participants can use together during the self-employment exploration and development process.

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. (General)

Strategies to address barriers to equitable access of and participation in state Vocational Rehabilitation Services include:

• Increased use of on-site sign language interpreters where limited number of licensed and registered sign language interpreters are available and decrease use of Video Relay Interpreter services. Deaf and Hard of Hearing have indicated an increased preference to on-site sign language interpreters to the Video Relay Interpreter until the technology for the VRI can be improved or another viable Video Relay can be determined.

• Deaf or Hard of Hearing individuals that have an income below $50,000, can apply for technical equipment through the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of hearing which includes a free iPad that will access the Video Phone through the internet to communicate with the general public through a sign interpreter.

  • Collaboration with Behavioral Health Services. DVR continues work toward intra-agency collaboration dealing with behavioral health services among all agency/divisions in the New Mexico Behavioral Health Purchasing Collaborative (BHPC).

  • Collaborative partnerships with statewide community service providers.

• Filling vacant rehabilitation counselor positions and reducing turnover.
• Addressing the issues and interests of individuals with disabilities in the workforce investment system both in developing policy and influencing service delivery, through representation on State Workforce Boards.

• Strategies to address barriers to equitable access of and participation in state Supported Employment Services include: Continue to use Title VI–B funds for case services exclusively. Funds will be allocated to the Area Offices where the direct delivery of services takes place. These funds will be monitored quarterly and reallocated to the Area Offices based on need. Title I funds will also be used for supported employment services once Title VI–B funds are exhausted, or in the event that Title VI–B funds are rolled into Title I at the federal level.

• Continue to purchase supported employment services from programs on either a fee–for–services basis or through milestone payments developed regionally and/or through specific Memorandum of Understanding with other state agencies, for clients with the most significant disabilities.

• Continue to seek long–term funding support from agencies providing supported employment.

   The Developmental Disabilities Support Division, Department of Health, provides long term funding for supported employment to provider agencies under the Developmental Disabilities Waiver and Mi Via Waivers. The Division works collaboratively with the Behavioral Health Services Division, Department of Health, New Mexico Department of Human Services, and the NM Behavioral Health Collaborative to assure ongoing support services for individuals with severe disabling mental illness served under supported employment Individualized Plans for Employment. DVR works diligently with collaborating partners to assure and provide services that will mitigate and/or prevent potential barriers to employment. Some of the activities that DVR participate include: Active participation on a variety of committees and board memberships that reviews data with the focus on service outcomes with specific goals and objectives that are targeted throughout each fiscal year. As systemic issues are identified, collaboration with partnering agencies are developed to address identified barriers and concerns. The Division does not target specific disability groups to provide supported employment services. However, long–term support funding by the State is currently available for those individuals who are either developmentally disabled or who have significant disabling mental illness.
C. OVERCOME IDENTIFIED BARRIERS RELATING TO EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM AND THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM.

Strategies to address barriers to equitable access of and participation in state Vocational Rehabilitation Services include:

- Increased use of on-site sign language interpreters where limited number of licensed and registered sign language interpreters are available and decrease use of Video Relay Interpreter services. Deaf and Hard of Hearing have indicated an increased preference to on-site sign language interpreters to the Video Relay Interpreter until the technology for the VRI can be improved or another viable Video Relay can be determined.

- Deaf or Hard of Hearing individuals that have an income below $50,000, can apply for technical equipment through the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of hearing which includes a free iPad that will access the Video Phone through the internet to communicate with the general public through a sign interpreter.

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- Filling vacant rehabilitation counselor positions and reducing turnover.

- Addressing the issues and interests of individuals with disabilities in the workforce investment system both in developing policy and influencing service delivery, through representation on State Workforce Boards.

- Strategies to address barriers to equitable access of and participation in state Supported Employment Services include: Continue to use Title VI–B funds for case services exclusively. Funds will be allocated to the Area Offices where the direct delivery of services takes place. These funds will be monitored quarterly and reallocated to the Area Offices based on need. Title I funds will also be used for supported employment services once Title VI–B funds are exhausted, or in the event that Title VI–B funds are rolled into Title I at the federal level.

- Continue to purchase supported employment services from programs on either a fee-for-services basis or through milestone payments developed regionally and/or through specific Memorandum of Understanding with other state agencies, for clients with the most significant disabilities.

- Continue to seek long-term funding support from agencies providing supported employment.

The Developmental Disabilities Support Division, Department of Health, provides long term funding for supported employment to provider agencies under the Developmental Disabilities Waiver and Mi Via Waivers. The Division works collaboratively with the Behavioral Health Services Division, Department of Health, New Mexico Department of Human Services, and the NM Behavioral Health Collaborative to assure ongoing support services for individuals with severe disabling mental illness served under supported employment Individualized Plans for Employment. DVR works diligently with collaborating partners to assure and provide services.
that will mitigate and/or prevent potential barriers to employment. Some of the activities that DVR participate include:

Active participation on a variety of committees and board memberships that reviews data with the focus on service outcomes with specific goals and objectives that are targeted throughout each fiscal year. As systemic issues are identified, collaboration with partnering agencies are developed to address identified barriers and concerns.

The Division does not target specific disability groups to provide supported employment services. However, long-term support funding by the State is currently available for those individuals who are either developmentally disabled or who have significant disabling mental illness.

P. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

Describe:

1. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE VR PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE APPROVED VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

   A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS

The Division continues to expand and improve services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, to individuals who are minorities, or individuals who have been unserved or underserved.

Client data is examined to determine increased utilization of services in specific areas. Additionally, testimony received in public hearings that supports this data is considered. The following data represents achieved goals as per the most recently completed program year.

State's Goals and Priorities for the Program Year 2017 (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017):

Number of participants served (projected: 9,500) = 9,903

Number of persons achieving a viable employment outcome consistent with the client's skills, abilities, aptitudes, interests, and a minimum of 90 days (projected: 800) = 863

Number of participants with most significant/significant disabilities served (coded significant disability at eligibility) (projected: 6,840) = 9,124

Number of persons with significant disabilities achieving a viable outcome consistent with their
skills, abilities, aptitudes, interests, and a minimum of 90 days (projected: 740) = 798

Number of individuals to be served with Title VI-B funds (projected: 420) = 160

Strategies that contributed to the achievement of goals and priorities are varied as indicated below: 1. Rehabilitation Academy is available to new and less experienced staff, and to more experienced staff as a refresher. 2. Field fiscal processes are being reviewed by Field Operation Specialists in most areas to maximize efficiency while maintaining compliance with all regulations and standards. 3. Case and caseload reviews are conducted by field program managers routinely utilizing standardized instruments and monthly data reports. 4. Coaching and mentoring are provided by field program managers and lead counselors in field program to promote quality service delivery, support and guidance, and consistent practice. 5. Memoranda of Understanding are developed jointly with the Public Education 6. Department, local school districts, the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, the Behavioral Health Division, to promote collaboration and create systemic improvements. 7. Performance appraisal measures have been standardized to enable cumulative performance aligned with agency goals. 8. Staff members are recognized annually to promote an additional incentive to exceed individual and agency goals. 9. Attainment of CSPD standards: newer counseling staff are required to become licensed. 10. Efforts are made to attract higher qualified staff. 11. Continued planning and efforts to reduced ratio of staff to Program Managers allowing more time to managers to focus on Area needs, promote staff development, services to clients, and continuous quality improvement. In Program Year 2018, this included addition of two new regional areas and corresponding Program Manager positions to decrease staff-to-manager ratio. This also facilitates Program Managers being on-site in field offices in the two new regions. 12. Factoring in data from Participant Satisfaction and Statewide Needs Assessment recommendations for improved best practices.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The agency continues to experience vocational rehabilitation counselor and staff turnover in recent years, this has created significant staffing challenges. Although vacancies are being filled, there are a number of less experienced counselors on a learning curve. The achieved employment outcome percentage is expected to improve as new counselors become increasingly experienced. In addition, changes in the state personnel process may result in increased time to fill vacancies.

The number of participants served with Title VI-B funds was lower than anticipated due to the regulatory changes in when funds may be utilized. DVR is developing strategies to ensure use of all available Title VI-B funds in PY 2019 and beyond.

Workforce Partners continue to develop data sharing processes since the release of the federal final regulations in 2016.

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

- Continue to purchase supported employment services from programs on either a fee-for-services basis or through milestone payments developed regionally and/or through specific Memorandum of Understanding with other state agencies, for clients with the most significant disabilities.

- Continue to seek long-term funding support from agencies providing supported employment. The Developmental Disabilities Support Division, Department of Health, provides long term funding for supported employment to provider agencies under the Developmental Disabilities Waiver and Mi Via Waivers. The Division works collaboratively with the Behavioral Health Services Division, Department of Health, New Mexico Department of Human Services, and the NM Behavioral Health Collaborative to assure ongoing support services for individuals with severe disabling mental illness served under supported employment Individualized Plans for Employment.

- The Division continues to work with other state agencies under memoranda of understanding focusing on serving individuals with the most significant disabilities under supported employment plans.
• Individual placements in integrated work settings at wages comparable to non-disabled peers performing similar work continue to be emphasized.

• The Division has increased its collaboration through participation with provider agencies; as well as independent and statewide entities to promote "Employment First" principles for individuals with the most significant disabilities served under supported employment Individualized Plans for Employment.

• The Division has established statewide liaisons in supported employment to assist the statewide Supported Employment Coordinator in technical assistance and conducting staff training relevant to supported employment policy and service provision. Division liaisons are active participants and attendees in supported employment trainings provided by experts at the local, regional, and national level. Division liaisons participate regularly in regional quarterly meetings held between collaborating agencies and the Developmental Disabilities Support Division, Department of Health.

• The Division has a devoted staff person who provides guidance and technical assistance to staff, service providers, and other stakeholders. This individual also compiles information and data, and tracks Supported Employment activities.

• The Division continues to support and promote strategies to assure employment opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities served under supported employment Individualized Plans for Employment.

• The Division will continue to meet with WIOA section 511 Subminimum Wage individuals around the state, through a mobile unit, to provide Career Counseling and Information and Referral to each person and inquire if they are interested in integrated employment at minimum wage or better.

Strategies that contributed to achievement of goals included use Title VI-B funds for case services exclusively, purchase of supported employment services from programs on either a fee-for-services basis or through milestone payments developed regionally and/or through specific Memorandum of Understanding with other state agencies, long-term funding support from agencies providing supported employment, and working with other state agencies under memoranda of understanding focusing on serving individuals with the most significant disabilities under supported employment plans.

Other strategies that continue to contribute to achievement of supported employment goals are the devoted SE Coordinator who provides technical support as well as intra and interagency coordination. The SE Coordinator, along with identified area Supported Employment Liaisons (one in each area), monitor SE referrals and follow up toward success in supported employment services.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The agency continues to experience vocational rehabilitation counselor and staff turnover in recent years, this has created significant staffing challenges. Although vacancies are being filled, there are a number of less experienced counselors on a learning curve. The achieved employment outcome percentage is expected to improve as new counselors become increasing experienced. In addition, changes in the state personnel process may result in increased time to fill vacancies.
The number of participants served with Title VI-B funds was lower than anticipated due to the regulatory changes in when funds may be utilized. DVR is developing strategies to ensure use of all available Title VI-B funds in SFY 2019 and beyond.

Workforce Partners continue to develop data sharing processes since the release of the federal final regulations in 2016.

3. THE VR PROGRAM’S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

State Goals and Priorities will align with the Federal Performance Accountability Measures of Section 116 of WIOA. DVR is coordinating with NM Workforce Solutions to obtain and review baseline measures for employment in the 2nd quarter, employment in the 4th quarter, median earnings, credential attainment, measurable skills gains, and effectiveness in serving employers. These measures will be utilized to develop performance indicators for State FY 2019 and beyond.

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED

Reserved Title I funds are used to support innovation and expansion operations and activities of both the State Rehabilitation Council and the Statewide Independent Living Council. This support will continue.

The Division continues to collaborate with the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Commission for the Blind to increase services to deaf-blind individuals through existing community providers.

**Partners for Employment:**

DVR has been collaborating with other NM state agency partners in supporting and funding "Partners for Employment". This innovative statewide Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) is intended to build capacity in Supported Employment service by providing training, technical assistance and opportunities for networking and collaboration. The program serves state agency personnel, supported employment service providers, educators, family members, self-advocates and employers to advance promising practices for inclusive employment throughout New Mexico. One achieved goal is development of a statewide systematic master training plan toward increasing knowledge and competence of employment professionals providing Supported Employment services in New Mexico.

**One-Stop Partnership:**

As a core partner for local one-stops throughout the state, DVR has achieved and will continue to achieve the following:

- DVR is currently co-located at the Albuquerque one-stop office and is fully integrated in the one-stop’s daily operations.
- Enable businesses and employers to easily identify and hire skilled workers and access other human resource assistance including Skill-to-Work programs, pre-screening applicants, offering rooms for job fairs and interviewing, and consultant services, which are Agency specific such as ADA Training and disability etiquette training for existing employees.
- Expand workforce services for individuals at all levels and skill of experience.
- Train one-stop staff on the basic eligibility requirements for DVR throughout the state.
- Utilize the integrated nature of one-stop centers to increase customer participation and engage, support local businesses, and strengthen partnerships.
- Continue to work with local one-stop centers to obtain physical and programmatic accessibility assessments to ensure each center is meeting modern accessibility standards to individuals of all skills levels and abilities as required in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act as well as Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Work collaboratively with State and Local Workforce Development Boards to establish and maintain the one-stop delivery system. This includes jointly funding the one-stop infrastructure costs through partner contributions. DVR has Agency representatives on each of the four Workforce Development Boards.

**DVR Staff & Central Regional Educational Cooperative (CREC):**

The DVR works with local education agencies throughout New Mexico to provide school-to-work transition services and provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (PRE-ETS). Rehabilitation counselors are assigned to state public/charter high schools throughout the state and are working in collaboration with CREC Vocational Transition Specialist (VTS) to provide (PRE-ETS) services. DVR counselors continue to attend Individualized Education Plans (IEP’s) and are working collaboratively with CREC VTS to attend IEP’s. VTS and DVR staff are providing PRE-ETS services throughout the state. These services include Guidance to employment, Self-Advocacy, Work Readiness, and Guidance to Post-Secondary education and Work Experience. VTS have referred 151 students as potential DVR participants to DVR offices across the state.

Q. QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Include the following:

1. THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES

DVR is considering an IGA with Developmental Disabilities Services Division in PY19 to utilize the Title VI Youth SE funds of $122,250 toward providing long-term supports for employed SE youth not on the New Mexico Medicaid waiver. These funds may be utilized up to 4 years to provide on-the-job long-term supports to SE youth as a stop gap for those waiting on the NM Waiver, which currently has an estimated wait time of 8 to 10 years. NM is considering, where appropriate, to utilize these funds to provide up to 2 years of on-the-job supports for Project Search graduates with a job.

Intergovernmental agreements with the Center for Developmental Disabilities continue in support of Partners for Employment initiatives and Project Search.

Partners for Employment is identified as the statewide entity to oversee and manage a variety
of Supported Employment Programs. This program is intended to provide expertise, training and support toward enhanced Supported Employment services. New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is working in collaboration with the founders of Project Search out of Cincinnati, Ohio to expand services statewide with a focus on rural areas throughout the state.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), University of New Mexico Center for Development and Disability (UNM/CDD), UNM Hospital, Department of Health Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DOH/DDSD, Best Buddies, Adelante, Empowerment, Albuquerque Public Schools, Rio Rancho Public Schools, Gallup McKinley schools, Office of Special Education and Rehab Services (OSERS) and Project Search founders have given approval to replicate this program in New Mexico. Additional Project search sites are being developed and this program's expansion is expected to continue in State PY 2019.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES

DVR's policy is that all individuals who are eligible and receiving Supported Employment services must at a minimum require these services for a period of 6 months or longer. Transition to extended services is dependent upon individual participant need and stabilization in employment. Therefore, extended services will vary based upon client need.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL) CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

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

Certifications (General)

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Name of designated State agency New Mexico Public Education Department

Full Name of Authorized Representative: Diane Mourning Brown

Title of Authorized Representative: Director of Vocational Rehabilitation


ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

Certifications (General)
Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate

New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Name of designated State agency
New Mexico Public Education Department

Full Name of Authorized Representative: Diane Mourning Brown

Title of Authorized Representative: Director of Vocational Rehabilitation


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

Certifications (General)
Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate

New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Name of designated State agency
New Mexico Public Education Department

Full Name of Authorized Representative: Diane Mourning Brown
Title of Authorized Representative: Director of Vocational Rehabilitation

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

Certifications (General)

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate New Mexico
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Name of designated State agency New Mexico Public Education Department

Full Name of Authorized Representative: Diane Mourning Brown

Title of Authorized Representative: Director of Vocational Rehabilitation

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

[16] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.
[17] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.
[18] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations.
[19] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.
[20] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 6.

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signatory information</th>
<th>Enter Signatory information in this column</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of Signatory</td>
<td>Diane Mourning Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title of Signatory</td>
<td>Director of Vocational Rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Signed</td>
<td>March 6, 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances: **The State Plan must provide assurances that:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The State Plan must include</th>
<th>Include</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.a. The establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.b.(A) &quot;is an independent State commission&quot; (Yes/No)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.b.(B) &quot;has established a State Rehabilitation Council&quot; (Yes/No)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The State Plan must include

| 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 |
| 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 |
| The descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act | |
| All required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act | |
| The requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act | |
| 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 | |
| The reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities | |
| The 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:

| Comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act | |
| 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 | |
| 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 |
| Determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act | |
The State Plan must include:

4.e. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act

4.f. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act

4.g. Provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act

4.h. Comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act

4.i. Meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs

4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,

4.j.i. Has developed and will implement,

4.j.i.I. Strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and

4.j.i.II. Strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and

4.j.ii. Has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(25))

5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:

5.a. The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act

5.b. The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in 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:
The State Plan must include

6.a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State’s allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act

6.b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act

7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:

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 Goals for the Core Programs**

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such
performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.
The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state's plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>PY 2020 Expected Level</th>
<th>PY 2020 Negotiated Level</th>
<th>PY 2021 Expected Level</th>
<th>PY 2021 Negotiated Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credential Attainment Rate</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurable Skill Gains</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness in Serving Employers</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ "Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (BLIND)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan [13] must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA:

[13] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(iii) of WIOA

A. INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:


BASIS OF INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission and the State Rehabilitation Council developed and approved the methodology for the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment at a meeting held in Albuquerque on August 9, 2018. The methodology included a survey of demographic data, the conducting of public meetings, and focused discussion groups.

The demographic survey results of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment were reviewed at a special meeting of the Council held in Santa Fe on February 11, 2019. The public meeting portion of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment was reviewed at a special meeting of the Council held in Albuquerque on May 16, 2019.

The Commission for the Blind conducted ten public meetings to gather input on the Combined State Plan as required by 34 CFR 361.20(a). The purpose was to provide the public, including individuals with disabilities, an opportunity to comment on the policies or procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the Combined State Plan prior to their adoption. Prior to conducting the public meetings, the agency provided notice of the meetings as required by 34 CFR 361.20(d). This included compliance with paragraph 13 of the Open Meetings Act Resolution adopted by the State Rehabilitation Council at the meeting held in Santa Fe on February 11, 2019. Paragraph 13 of the Council’s Open Meetings Act resolution states: "Prior to the adoption of any substantive policies or procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the state plan, including making any substantive amendments to policies and procedures, the Commission for the Blind will conduct public meetings throughout the state to provide the public, including individuals with disabilities, an opportunity to comment on the policies or procedures. The public meetings will be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation, posted to the commission web page, and distributed as may otherwise be appropriate."

Notices for all of the public meetings were published in the Albuquerque Journal (a statewide newspaper), placed on the Commission’s web page, recorded on the Commission’s NEWSLINE for the Blind system, placed on NFB-Newsline, posted in Commission offices, emailed to consumer organizations, emailed to independent living centers, and emailed to interested persons and stakeholders. The information was also sent out on the statewide email list maintained by the National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico. The public meetings were conducted throughout New Mexico to solicit comments from geographically and ethnically diverse populations. Public meetings were held in Hobbs on October 16, 2019; in Clovis on October 17, 2019; in Santa Fe on November 25, 2019; in Albuquerque on November 27, 2019; in Las Cruces on December 2, 2019; in Alamogordo on December 3, 2019; in Las Cruces on February 12, 2020; in Albuquerque on February 20, 2020; in Santa Fe on February 24, 2020; and in Farmington on March 5, 2020. In addition, the Workforce Solutions Department conducted two community forums, one in Albuquerque on February 21, 2020, and the other in Las Cruces on February 27, 2020. The results of the October 16, October 17, November 25, November 27, December 2, and December 3 public meetings were summarized and presented
to the State Rehabilitation Council during a special meeting held on December 16, 2019. The results of the February 12, February 20, February 24, and March 5 public meetings were summarized and presented to the Executive Committee of the State Rehabilitation Council, which met on March 5, 2020. The results of the February 21 and February 27 community forum events were also summarized and presented to the State Rehabilitation Council Executive Committee.


The State Rehabilitation Council met in Silver City on August 7 and 8, 2019. During the meeting the Council reviewed and approved the Commission's Strategic Plan for September 1, 2019 through October 1, 2022. The revisions included updating statistics, adding language reflecting the improved state economy, and adding language recommending the importance of serving the aging workforce and providing the VR services that will be necessary to serve increasing numbers of older workers. The Council also discussed the ability of the agency to serve all eligible individuals, and the agency determined that it had the ability to provide the full range of vocational rehabilitation services to all eligible individuals. In addition, the Council also reviewed the ability of the agency to provide all of the required Pre-Employment Transition Services to all eligible students, and the agency determined that it had sufficient resources to provide all of the required Pre-ETS services. The Council also discussed and voted to approve technical revisions to the Manual of Operating Procedures.

The State Rehabilitation Council met in Albuquerque on October 21, 2019. The purpose of the October 21 meeting included receiving a report from the workforce representative to the Council on the Current State Plan process, discussion of the Commission's portion of the Combined State Plan, review of the goals and priorities jointly developed by the Council and Commission, and discussion of policies at the Orientation Center on harassment, admission, and social media. The meeting also included the approval of the Council Annual Report as required by 34 CFR 361.17(h)(5). In his cover letter for the Annual Report, the Council Chair stated the following: "The Council worked closely with the Commission during the year, including to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requirement that 15 percent of vocational rehabilitation funds be reserved and spent on provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS). While the Commission for the Blind has not been forced to implement a waiting list for services, the Federal Pre-ETS mandate has resulted in many agencies needing to go on to an Order of Selection. This is an area of critical concern, which the Council will continue to focus on in the coming year." The Annual Report also contained the Goals and Priorities jointly developed and agreed to by the Council and the agency. The Annual Report also reported on employment outcomes for the year, saying: "The Commission successfully placed 23 consumers in employment during the federal fiscal year that ended on September 30, 2019, an increase of eight individuals."

The Council held a special meeting in Albuquerque on December 16, 2019. The purpose of the special meeting was to provide additional opportunity for public comment on the Commission's portion of the Combined State Plan, to review the comments made at the public meetings, to
review the comprehensive statewide needs assessment, to develop and approve the Goals and Priorities, to approve the Council comments and input, and to approve the Commission’s portion of the Combined State Plan.

The State Rehabilitation Council read and considered each of the Goals and Priorities individually, allowing for thorough discussion and consideration of each Goal and Priority. The Council decided to add four new Goals and Priorities, to keep all but one of the existing Goals and Priorities, and to make minor updates and revisions to the existing Goals and Priorities. The new Goals and Priorities included one on the hiring and retention of VR Counselors, one concerning the provision of VR services to older workers, one concerning the provision of VR services that maintain healthy lifestyles, and one concerning the provision of VR services that support the development of consumer soft skills.

Notice of the Council meetings and copies of the agendas were published pursuant to the New Mexico Open Meetings Act. Meeting notices were published in the Albuquerque Journal, placed on the Commission’s web page, placed on Newsline and NFB-Newsline, and distributed by email to consumer organizations and key stakeholders. Notices were also sent out on the statewide email list maintained by the National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL

What follows are the approved Goals and Priorities that were developed and approved at the December 16, 2019 special Council meeting, and Council comments and recommendations on each of the Goals and Priorities.

a. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by proactively working to recruit, hire, and retain qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors, thereby providing greater continuity and consistency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services.

Council Input and Recommendations: The Council expressed concern over VR Counselor vacancies in the agency, and especially in the field offices. The Council recommended that the agency do all it can to maintain at least 75 percent of the VR Counselor positions filled.

b. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by providing appropriate vocational rehabilitation services to the growing population of older workers, many of whom will be unable or unwilling to retrain for work in a field different from their current occupations, thereby enabling these older workers to become or remain successfully employed.

Council Input and Recommendations: The Council recognizes that the workforce is aging, and that the population of older workers will require additional VR services, especially related to the provision of assistive technology needed to retain employment, and recommends that the agency works to provide greater support in this area.

c. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by providing appropriate vocational rehabilitation services that support the maintaining of a healthy lifestyle that is conducive to becoming and remaining successfully employed, thereby enabling a greater portion of agency consumers to become and remain successfully employed.

Council Input and Recommendations: The Council recommends that the agency support a healthy lifestyle due to the recognized association between the maintaining of a healthy lifestyle and successful employment. The Council especially recognizes that there are benefits to mental health and stress reduction that result from the maintaining of a healthy lifestyle.
d. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by providing vocational rehabilitation training and counseling that is designed to enhance and improve the soft skills of consumers, which are becoming an increasing barrier to agency consumers becoming and remaining successfully employed.

Council Input and Recommendations: The Council is concerned about the lack of appropriate soft skills that are more commonly missing in those persons who are seeking to be employed, and most especially amongst younger workers. The Council is concerned that the acquisition of soft skills is necessary to become and remain employed, and recommends that the agency provide more training and support in this area.

e. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by partnering and working with community colleges and One-Stop centers to more effectively utilize services available through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner-Peyser programs.

Council Input and Recommendations: The Council believes that this is an appropriate goal considering the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), in particular the requirements to improve cooperation with core partners.

f. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by working cooperatively with the New Mexico Department of Health so as to develop opportunities for competitive and integrated employment for persons who are blind or visually impaired, which will be accomplished by working in partnership with the Medical Assistance Division, the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, and the Behavioral Health Services Division.

Council Input and Recommendations: The Council believes that this is an appropriate goal considering the requirements of WIOA, in particular the requirements to improve interagency cooperation. The Council recommends that the agency take specific actions to meet the goal.

g. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by using the Orientation Center to provide employment preparation training for adults and transition students, including through the addition of an apartment training facility to be constructed adjacent to the Center. The proposed apartment facility will increase the capacity of the Orientation Center, will enable the Orientation Center to provide more realistic training, will eliminate the need to rent costly and less appropriate private apartments, and will reduce the number of instances in which costly out-of-state training will be necessary to meet the needs of consumers.

Council Input and Recommendations: Based on the comments received through the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, and based on prior Council support of the apartment project, the Council agreed that this is an important goal and recommends that the agency complete construction of the apartment complex.

h. Increase the number of consumers served through enhanced Outreach Activities; including media outreach, use of paid advertising, through increased collaboration with ophthalmologists and optometrists, and through the use of the Technology for Children program to conduct outreach to school districts.

Council Input and Recommendations: The Council agreed that outreach is an important activity and recommends that this goal should be continued.

i. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes of transition consumers by providing enhanced Pre-Employment Transition Services, including assistive technology where appropriate as a part of an Individualized Plan for Employment, by providing assistive
technology through the Technology for Children Program, by conducting increased outreach activities, by conducting educational activities to meet the specific needs of transition students, and by increasing proficient use of Braille and Braille math.

Council Input and Recommendations: The Council agreed that this is a necessary goal in light of new WIOA requirements to reserve and spend at least 15 percent of the VR appropriation on the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services to students who are blind or visually impaired. The Council recommends that the agency take specific actions to meet the goal.

j. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers by providing services in a way that genuinely honors the "informed choice" provisions of the Rehabilitation Act, enabling Commission consumers to have the opportunity to obtain employment at higher levels of compensation.

Council Input and Recommendations: The Council agreed that the concept of "informed choice" is fundamental within the public vocational rehabilitation program and recommends that this goal should be continued in the coming year.

k. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers by providing a quality and expanding Newsline system that gives consumers access to employment listings, business news, and other important information, including through both local Newsline and through NFB-Newsline.

Council Input and Recommendations: The Council agreed that Newsline is critical to the ability of blind and visually impaired New Mexicans to access information, news, breaking news, Spanish-language news, and access job listings, and recommends that the agency continues to make Newsline a priority.

l. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by innovatively using the Skills Center to meet the needs of vocational rehabilitation consumers and potential vocational rehabilitation consumers, including using it for provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services.

Council Input and Recommendations: Based on new WIOA requirements to reserve and spend at least 15 percent of VR funds on Pre-Employment Transition Services on students aged 14 to 21, plus comments received through the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, the Council recommends that this remains an important goal for the agency.

m. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes for consumers who are Deaf-Blind through collaboration and partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, with the Community Outreach Programs for the Deaf, and with the Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, including through the delivery of assistive technology to consumers who are Deaf-Blind.

Council Input and Recommendations: The Council recommends that this goal should be continued.

n. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes through the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) by shortening the time required for vendors to complete the required training, including by using Randolph-Sheppard Act training offered by the Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
Council Input and Recommendations: The Council is in full support of the agency's Business Enterprise Program and recommends that this continue as an important goal for the agency to pursue.

o. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by strengthening administrative services so as to timely and accurately submit federal reports, to assure compliance with all applicable fiscal regulations, and to comply with all applicable accounting standards.

Council Input and Recommendations: The Council recommends this goal in order to ensure that the agency can access its full allocation of federal funds each year. These funds are necessary to provide high-quality Vocational Rehabilitation services to youth and adults throughout New Mexico.

p. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by enhancing overall performance and productivity by engaging in activities designed to mitigate and ameliorate the impacts of blindness and visual impairment, and by engaging in outreach and other activities designed to identify additional potential consumers, and by making the public and medical community more aware of Commission services.

Council Input and Recommendations: The Council recommends continuing this Goal.

q. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes for consumers by providing enhanced benefits counseling and guidance to reduce concerns related to the loss or reduction of benefits.

Council Input and Recommendations: The Council recommends continuing the Goal, noting the many benefits of working that outweighs the loss or reduction in benefits.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

Commission for the Blind Response to Council Recommendations:

a. Agency Response: There is a national shortage of qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors, and the agency is engaging in maximum efforts to recruit, hire, and retain qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors. The agency has also recently hired counselors for the Farmington and Las Cruces offices, and currently has 87.5 percent of VR Counselor positions filled.

b. Agency Response: The Commission is committed to serve the increasing population of older workers. The aging population has resulted in an aging workforce, and 50 percent of workers report that they plan on working beyond age 65. In addition, 25 percent of workers do not plan on retiring. These older workers will require an increasing amount of VR services to remain or become employed, and especially assistive technology services.

c. Agency Response: The Commission recognizes that maintaining a healthy lifestyle can be conducive to obtaining and retaining an employment outcome, and will provide services designed to support healthy lifestyles when such services are necessary to obtaining and retaining employment.

d. Agency Response: The Commission recognizes that having appropriate soft skills is essential to obtaining and retaining employment, and that an increasing portion of consumers are deficient in their soft skills. The Commission will continue to use the Orientation Center and
Skills Center to provide instruction in the area of soft skills, and will explore additional ways to enhance instruction in soft skills as a part of Pre-Employment Transition Services.

e. Agency Response: The agency recognizes the benefits of partnering and working with community colleges and One-Stop centers. The agency has been participating in monthly partner meetings that have enhanced the coordination between the Commission and the partners. The Commission will continue to work cooperatively with the partners by designating specific points of contact, by providing appropriate information, and by entering into cooperative agreements where appropriate.

f. Agency Response: The agency will work cooperatively with the Department of Health, with the Medical Assistance Division, with the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, and with the Behavioral Health Services Division. The agency will designate specific points of contact for each of these entities, will provide information as appropriate, and will enter into a cooperative agreement with the Department of Health.

g. Agency Response: The agency is committed to completion of the apartment complex at the Orientation Center. The proposed apartment project has been fully funded with state appropriations, and construction should start during calendar year 2020.

h. Agency Response: The agency will continue to work to increase and enhance outreach to the identified groups using the recommended methods.

i. Agency Response: The agency will continue to work to increase services to Pre-Employment Transition Students using the identified methods. The agency already seeks to be involved in Individualized Education Plan meetings for students starting at age 14, and the agency operates the Students in Transition to Employment Program in Albuquerque and in Alamogordo. On February 2, 2019, the agency sponsored a workshop on Unified English Braille, and the agency will continue to sponsor Unified English Braille workshops and National Certification in Unified English Braille exams. The agency is also renewing its cooperative agreements with state and local educational officials. The agency has also entered into a Governmental Services Agreement with the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services, and has entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the New Mexico Central Region Educational Cooperative to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services.

j. Agency Response: The agency continues to provide services in a way that enables consumers to set and obtain high employment goals. This often includes supporting consumers in the attainment of advanced degrees. For the federal fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, the average starting hourly wage for agency consumers was $16.47.

k. Agency Response: The agency is committed to providing a quality Newsline service, including both local Newsline and NFB-Newsline. The agency will continue to sponsor NFB-Newsline in New Mexico, which provides access to over 400 national publications. The agency will also continue to support local Newsline, which provides access to newspaper information that is not available on NFB-Newsline.

l. Agency Response: The agency is committed to using the Skills Center to meet the statewide needs of vocational rehabilitation consumers, and especially consumers receiving Pre-Employment Transition Services. As a result, the agency used the Skills Center to provide training to participants in the Students in Transition to Employment Program, to provide training in local communities, as well as student and Braille seminars. The Skills Center was also used to provide training to individual students, and was used as a meeting place for programs...
related to vocational rehabilitation. The agency will continue to use the Skills Center to provide these services.

m. Agency Response: The agency has assigned a vocational rehabilitation counselor to take the lead on services related to consumers who are Deaf-Blind. The agency also works with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to coordinate provision of services to persons who are Deaf-Blind. The agency works with a variety of other partners, including the Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Community Outreach Program for the Deaf, the Helen Keller National Center, and the Deaf-Blind Task Force. The agency also participates in the annual Deaf-Blind Awareness Day at the Roundhouse. The agency will continue these efforts.

n. Agency Response: The agency has adopted the Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired as the training provider for BEP vendors, and is working with New Mexico programs to create a local provider so that food preparation and cooking methods can be taught locally. The agency is hoping that an improving state and national economy will allow for additional opportunities in the Business Enterprise Program.

o. Agency Response: The agency recognizes the need to have strong fiscal programs so as to maximize the receipt of federal funds, and to otherwise provide appropriate vocational rehabilitation services to our consumers. To do this, the agency must have in place a sufficient number of qualified fiscal staff to comply with federal fiscal rules, and to appropriately respond to changing fiscal requirements. The agency also proactively works to make sure that the agency is in compliance with applicable fiscal regulations, including through the adoption of the agency Allowable Cost Policy and Procedure.

p. Agency Response: The agency is engaging in new and innovative approaches to provide services and conduct outreach. The agency has a new web page that allows for referrals to be made by health care professionals, and the web page enables members of the public to sign up to automatically be emailed meeting notices, agendas, and minutes.

q. Agency Response: The Commission continues to provide benefits counseling and guidance through the New Mexico Legal Aid Society. The agency has also provided training on benefits to vocational rehabilitation counselors and consumers.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

The agency concurs with all of the Council's input and recommendations, and does not reject any of the Council input or recommendations.

B. REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

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

1. A LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY WILL PROVIDE THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WAIVER REQUEST;

The Commission is able to provide services to all applicants and is not requesting a waiver at this time.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND
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.

requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined 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

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

1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

The Agency works cooperatively with the following agencies:

The agency has established cooperative relationships with a number of different state agencies, including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Public Education Department, the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, the Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Governor's Commission on Disability, the Human Services Department, and The New Mexico Department of Health.

The Commission has a signed Memorandum of Understanding with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) that complies with 34 CFR 361.24(e). The MOU between the agency and DVR provides for reciprocal referral services, use of each other's services and facilities, joint planning activities to improve services for individuals with multiple impairments, and otherwise cooperate to provide more effective services. The Department of Health (DOH) administers the Developmental Disabilities Support Division, and the agency has negotiated a written cooperative agreement with DOH that complies with 34 CFR 361.24(f). The agency and DOH have worked cooperatively to fund the Commission's Technology for Children program. The Human Services Department (HSD) is the state agency in New Mexico that administers Medicaid under Title XIX of the Social Security Act, and The agency has negotiated a formal cooperative agreement with HSD in compliance with 34 CFR 361.24(f).

The Commission works cooperatively with all three American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation programs located in New Mexico. The agency has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Navajo Nation Office of Special Education & Rehabilitation Services that meets the requirements of 34 CFR 361.24(d). In addition, the Director of the Navajo OSERS program has been a long-time member of the Commission's State Rehabilitation Council, and makes regular reports to the Council on behalf of the three American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation programs. The Commission has also established cooperative relationships with Laguna—Acoma Connections and Jemez Vocational Rehabilitation. The agency has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Laguna—Acoma Connections, and has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Jemez Vocational Rehabilitation. The written cooperative agreements meet all of the requirements of 34 CFR 361.24(d). The written cooperative agreements describe strategies for collaboration and coordination in providing vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals who are blind or visually impaired.
The agency has developed working relationships and coordinates its activities with the Statewide Independent Living Council and the state’s Centers for Independent Living. The agency Executive Director attends meetings of the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), and the newly hired Independent Living Program Manager will likewise attend SILC meetings. The agency has for many years had representation on the Statewide Independent Living Council, and has made a recommendation to the Governor for appointment of the Commission’s Deputy Director to the SILC. A representative of the SILC has served on the Commission’s State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), and makes SILC reports at each SRC meeting. The agency also works cooperatively with the Centers for Independent Living.

The agency works with community rehabilitation programs, including Adelante Development Center; TREC0; LifeRoots; Zuni Entrepreneurial Enterprises; Tobosa Developmental Services; Goodwill Industries; and Taos County ARC. This cooperation includes activities undertaken as a part of the New Mexico Council for Purchasing from Persons with Disabilities, which the Executive Director serves on.

The Commission works closely with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to support veterans with blindness and visual impairments to obtain, maintain, or advance in employment. Generally, the VA purchases technology and other equipment and the Commission provides education and training support, enabling each organization to leverage its strengths in order to serve the needs of veterans. The agency works with other agencies, including the Helen Keller National Center, Community Outreach Programs for the Deaf, Albuquerque Center for Hope and Recovery, Best Buddies International, and Small Business Development Centers located throughout New Mexico.

The agency participates on the Ticket to Work Partners group, along with the Social Security Administration, the New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and a number of employment networks that serve ticket holders throughout New Mexico. Relationships with these organizations run the gamut, including referrals, vocational evaluations, job development, job coaching, transportation, consulting, case management, joint case servicing, deaf blind services, supported employment services, and self-employment services.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

The agency has a working relationship with the Governor’s Commission on Disability as set forth at 34 CFR 361.24(h), and has in place a memorandum of Understanding with the Governor’s Commission on Disability, which is the agency that administers the New Mexico Technology Assistance Program Coordinating Council (NMTAP). A member of the Commission’s Skills Center staff serves on NMTAP. The staff member regularly attends and participates in NMTAP events and meetings, and the Skills Center Coordinator and Assistive Technology Manager have presented at NMTAP technology conferences.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

The Commission currently does not have an active partnership regarding programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture, but will seek to develop such partnerships in future years.

4. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

With regard to coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services, including the
provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services, the Agency has signed a formal interagency agreement with the New Mexico Public Education Department that meets the requirements of 34 CFR 361.22(b). The agreement sets forth methods wherein the agency shall provide Consultation to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, and Transition planning that facilitates the development and implementation of the individualized education programs of agency consumers. The agency has also signed cooperative agreements with local educational agencies to help facilitate transition services. In addition, the agency has agreements with the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and with the Central Region Educational Cooperative to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

The executive director of the agency has served on the New Mexico Council for Purchasing from Persons with Disabilities since 2014. The Council is the state use contracting entity in New Mexico. The Executive Director is the Secretary of the Council, and is also a member of the Council’s Executive Committee. Horizons of New Mexico is the Central Nonprofit Agency, and the director of Horizons has made presentations to the vocational rehabilitation counselor team on several occasions, including during PY 19.

D. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

Describe:

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 Commission has put in place plans, policies, and procedures to enable the agency to coordinate with educational officials, and to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services.

The agency signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) on January 28, 2020. The purpose of the Memorandum of Agreement (Agreement) is to establish a Formal interagency agreement as required by 34 CFR 361.22(e). The Agreement provides for methods of coordination between the agency and PED to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from the receipt of educational services, including pre-employment transition services, in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services from the agency. These methods of coordination also facilitate the development and approval of an Individualized Plan for Employment as early as possible during the transition planning process, but not later than the time a student with a visual impairment is determined to be eligible for the Commission’s vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting. The Commission for the Blind and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation have agreed to make pre-employment transition services available to all students with disabilities who are potentially eligible or eligible for VR services in New Mexico starting at 14 years of age, or earlier as needed, based on the IDEA definition of a "student with a disability."

The Commission has established relationships with Local Educational Agencies, including formal signed cooperative agreements with school districts and other educational agencies. The
purpose is to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from the receipt of educational and Pre-Employment Transition Services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services from the Commission. The Commission has signed agreements with Aztec Municipal School District; Bloomfield School District; Carlsbad Municipal Schools; Cloudcroft Municipal Schools; Clovis Municipal School District; Deming Public School District; Española Public School District; Farmington Municipal Schools; Gadsten School District; Gallup-McKinley County Schools; Las Cruces Public Schools; Los Lunas School District; Moriarty-Edgewood School District; Pecos Public Schools; Portales Municipal School District; Roswell Independent School District; and Taos Municipal Schools. These agreements were signed by the agency’s Executive Director in meetings with the Special Education Directors or superintendents of each school district. The Commission is actively working to update these existing agreements, and the agency is also actively working to obtain cooperative agreements with additional school districts. In addition, the agency has a cooperative agreement with the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

The agency signed a Governmental Services Agreement (GSA) with the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NMSBVI) in May of 2019. Under this GSA, the agency funds the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services that are provided by NMSBVI. The purpose is to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from the receipt of educational and Pre-Employment Transition Services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services from the Commission.

The agency has also entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the New Mexico Central Region Educational cooperative. The purpose of the IGA is to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from the receipt of educational and Pre-Employment Transition Services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services from the Commission.

The Commission has assigned a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to serve as the agency Transition Coordinator. The Transition Coordinator is supervised by the Vocational Rehabilitation Program Manager. Together, they coordinate with educational officials on the transition of students. The Transition Coordinator works out of the Albuquerque office, and has a caseload dedicated to transition students who are in Albuquerque and the surrounding Counties. The Commission also has Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors in Farmington, Las Vegas, Las Cruces, and Roswell, and these Counselors serve the transition students residing in these communities and surrounding areas. These counselors are under the supervision of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program Manager, and they also coordinate with educational officials on the transition of students.

The Commission administers the Technology for Children program, which is managed by the Skills Center Coordinator. The Technology for Children program provides assistive technology to blind and visually impaired students for use in their homes. The program is in its 14th year, and the assistive technology is funded by the Department of Health. The program works closely with Teachers of the Visually Impaired, and helps to build relationships with these teachers and their local educational agencies. The program also identifies students who might be eligible for Commission transition services, and facilitates the early participation of the Commission in Individualized Education Program meetings.
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 agency has established a Formal interagency agreement with the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) as required by 34 CFR 361.22(e). The Agreement provides for methods of coordination between the Commission and PED to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from the receipt of educational services, including pre-employment transition services, in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services from the agency. These methods of coordination also facilitate the development and approval of an Individualized Plan for Employment as early as possible during the transition planning process, but not later than the time a student with a visual impairment is determined to be eligible for the Commission’s vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting. The Agreement contains the following terms:

The Commission shall coordinate with educational agencies to ensure that services are not duplicated, and that services provided by the Commission do not supplant existing educational agency services.

As set forth in the Memorandum of Agreement with the Public Education Department, the Commission shall provide consultation and technical assistance to help PED plan for the transition of students who are blind or visually impaired from school to post-school activities, including Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) and other vocational rehabilitation services. The Commission shall also provide consultation and technical assistance to help local educational agencies, charter schools, the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and the New Mexico School for the Deaf (collectively referred to as “educational agencies”). This consultation and technical assistance will be provided to help these educational agencies plan for the transition of students who are blind or visually impaired from school to post-school activities, including Pre-ETS and other vocational rehabilitation services.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

As set forth in the Memorandum of Agreement with the Public Education Department, the Commission recognizes the importance of facilitating the transition of students who are blind or visually impaired from the receipt of educational services to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services from the Commission. Consequently, the Commission will participate in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings of eligible students referred to the Commission as soon as possible. The Commission will participate in IEP meetings for students starting at the age of 14, and even younger when circumstances make such participation appropriate. This IEP participation may take place in person, or by conference or video call. The information shared during the IEP shall include a description of the Commission’s vocational rehabilitation program, eligibility requirements, application procedures, and scope of services that may be provided to eligible students who are blind or visually impaired.

The Commission, in partnership with the New Mexico Department of Health, shall provide assistive technology devices for home use to eligible children who are blind or visually impaired in order to increase capacity and ability to provide Pre-ETS services by building relationships.
with families, teachers and school districts, and identifying students who are potentially eligible to receive and can benefit from services from the Commission.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

As set forth in the Memorandum of Agreement with the Public Education Department, the Commission shall coordinate with educational agencies to provide the five required Pre-ETS services set forth at 34 CFR 361.48(a)(2) to eligible blind and visually impaired students. The Commission shall also carry out the four coordination activities set forth at 34 CFR 361.48(a)(4). The Commission shall engage in annual forecasting to determine if it has sufficient funds and resources to provide the five required Pre-ETS services. Should the Commission determine that it has sufficient funds and resources to provide all of the five required Pre-ETS services, the Commission shall provide the nine authorized services set forth at 34 CFR 361.48(a)(3). The Pre-ETS services to be provided by the Commission include the Students in Transition to Employment Program (STEP), which provides students who are blind or visually impaired with paid work-based learning experiences.

As set forth in the Memorandum of Agreement with the Public Education Department, personnel from educational agencies shall provide transition planning for students who are blind or visually impaired that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs under section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Consistent with its obligations under state and federal law, personnel from PED shall also provide guidance and direction on transition planning to educational agencies for students who are blind or visually impaired that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs under section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. This shall include methods for the identification of students who may be eligible for Commission services, and methods for making referrals of such students to the Commission.

PED shall designate at least one representative to serve on the Commission’s State Rehabilitation Council pursuant to 34 CFR 361.17(b)(3), and as specified at 34 CFR 361.17(b)(1)(x).

PED shall establish and maintain an advisory panel for the purpose of providing policy guidance with respect to special education and related services for children with disabilities pursuant to 34 CFR 300.167. When making panel membership recommendations, PED shall consider representatives with knowledge of and experience in the delivery of Pre-Employment Transition Services, including Pre-ETS Services provided to students who are blind or visually impaired.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

As set forth in the Memorandum of Agreement with the Public Education Department, the Commission shall maintain an Executive Director who shall be responsible for the overall operation of the Commission, a Deputy Director who is responsible for the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program, a Vocational Rehabilitation Program Manager, and a Transition Coordinator. The Commission shall also employ such other personnel as may be
necessary for the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services, including a Deputy Director responsible for the Orientation Center in Alamogordo, the Skills Center Coordinator in Albuquerque, the Technology Manager in Albuquerque, and the Technology Specialist Supervisor in Alamogordo.

PED shall employ a Director of Special Education and such other staff as may be necessary for the provision of special education and related services in New Mexico, including the provision of transition services.

PED may include the Commission in transition conferences and such other activities that might further outreach to students who are blind or visually impaired.

The Commission has entered into an agreement with the New Mexico Central Region Educational Cooperative to provide Pre-ETS services to students who are blind or visually impaired. The Commission has also entered into an agreement with the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired to provide Pre-ETS services to students who are blind or visually impaired. The Commission will maintain these agreements as appropriate and to the extent that sufficient funding is available.

The Commission shall maintain documentation of its compliance with Section 511 for students and youth with disabilities who are seeking subminimum wage employment, including documentation showing that all required Section 511 counseling has been provided.

Pursuant to 34 CFR 397.31, neither the PED nor any local educational agency in New Mexico will enter into a contract or other arrangement with an entity, as defined in 34 CFR 397.5(d), for the purpose of operating a program under which a youth with a disability is engaged in work compensated at a subminimum wage.

E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

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

The Agency works with the following non-profit rehabilitation services providers:

Zuni Entrepreneurial Enterprises, Inc.; New Vistas Center for Independent Living; TRESO; Tobosa Developmental Services; Goodwill Industries; Community Outreach Programs for the Deaf; the Best Buddies; and the New Mexico Council for Purchasing from Persons with Disabilities, through Horizons of New Mexico, their central non-profit agency.

The Agency also maintains cooperative partnerships with the Centers for Independent Living throughout the state, and coordinates services through the Statewide Independent Living Council. The Agency has actively worked to expand ties with the IL centers and work with the SILC, in an effort to increase staff and consumer awareness of their activities. A SILC representative serves on the Agency’s Statewide Rehabilitation Council,
and as such, keeps each respective Council up to date on their respective activities. The Commission’s Deputy Director for Independent Living programs has also applied for SILC membership.

The manner in which these agreements are established comes from several methods. The Agency receives input directly from consumers and service providers, either through telephone contact or written referrals and requests. Input is received from Public Hearings, the State Rehabilitation Council, the SILC, and the joint planning ventures with various service providers. Needs assessments studies, consumer surveys, and cooperative meetings are also conducted to gather data and information with respect to establishing cooperative agreements. Cooperative agreements typically do not involve any monetary exchange between the agencies. The staff of each agency agrees to cooperate with each other, and reciprocate in referring consumers for services as appropriate.

The Commission is proud of its relationship with the National Federation of the Blind (NFB). The NFB is the largest organization of blind persons in the United States. The Agency incorporated NFB Newsline as a part of its overall Newsline services in FY 2002, and intends to continue NFB Newsline in PY 2020.

Newsline is an important part of the Commission’s outreach program to identify and serve most significantly disabled persons who are minorities, and individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation or supported employment program. Newsline provides access to state and national publications to individuals in all portions of New Mexico, including in the most rural portions of the state. The local Newsline and NFB-Newsline have publications that include newspapers from Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Los Alamos, Farmington, Gallup, Alamogordo, Las Cruces, and Roswell. Newsline also has a Spanish language news category. NFB-Newsline offers prompts in Spanish, and has several Spanish language publications. NFB-Newsline voices can also be customized to meet the needs of individuals who are hard of hearing, and NFB-Newsline offers the ability to download publications for reading on a Braille display. This feature enables individuals who are deaf-blind to access the entire selection of more than 365 national newspapers and magazines. NFB-Newsline also offers a job search feature that enables job seekers to create custom searches of the CareerBuilder job database.

The Commission works closely with the New Mexico affiliate of the NFB as well. The NFBNM has opened its annual state convention agenda to enable the Commission to make reports on its programs and services and to hold public hearings in order to gather comments on the state plan, strategic plan, and agency services. The NFBNM has membership on the Commission’s State Rehabilitation Council, representing blind consumers. During prior years, the NFBNM and Commission co-sponsored employer awards to worthy organizations, recognizing the award-winning organizations at the NFBNM’s state convention banquet. The Commission has also had a strong relationship with the American Council of the Blind, another prominent organization of individuals who are blind. As with the NFBNM, the New Mexico affiliate of the ACB has opened its state convention agenda to enable the Commission to make reports and hold public hearings to gather comments on the state plan, strategic plan, and agency services. Representatives of the ACBNM have also served on the Commission’s State Rehabilitation Council, although the ACBNM has been only minimally active in the past few years.
F. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

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

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

In the past, the Agency has worked with the nonprofit organizations listed below for the provision of coordinated supported employment services to consumers who qualify for supported employment. Under the new supported employment provisions of WIOA, the Commission will be able to cover the cost of extended services for up to four years for youth with the most significant disabilities, or until the individuals reach the age of 25 and no longer meet the definition of a "youth with a disability", whichever comes first. Supported employment services begin after job placement. Vocational rehabilitation services such as assessment, job development and job placement are paid for with Title I funds. Although vocational rehabilitation services may be included in agreements/contracts along with supported employment services, Title VI funds are not used to procure VR services, since supported employment services begin at the time of job placement. The Commission will work with the providers listed below to expand the nature of Commission-funded extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities.

Extended services may be provided to consumers after successful case closure in order to maintain job stability. These services may include specialized tools and supplies, specialized training, and costs of needed services not otherwise available from long-term funding sources. Under the new supported employment provisions of WIOA, the Commission will be able to cover the cost of extended services for up to four years for youth with the most significant disabilities. The Commission will work with the providers listed below to expand the nature of Commission-funded extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities.

1. Goodwill Industries of New Mexico, 5000 San Mateo Blvd., Albuquerque, NM. Services included job assessment, job development and placement, intensive on-the-job skills training, and other training and support in order to achieve and maintain job stability. The population served under this agreement included individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of the Commission’s supported employment program.

2. LifeROOTS, 1111 Menaul Blvd N.E., Albuquerque, NM; and 1009 Golf Course Road, Suites 105 & 106, Rio Rancho, NM. LifeROOTS provided job assessment, job development and placement, on-the-job intensive skills training, other training and support in order for the consumer to achieve and maintain job stability, the facilitation of socialization and communication with coworkers, and assistance with transportation arrangements.
The populations served under this agreement included individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of the Commission's supported employment program.

3. New Vistas Supported Employment Services, 2890 Trades West Road, Santa Fe, NM. Services included job assessment, job development and placement, on-the-job intensive skills training, other training and support in order for the consumer to achieve and maintain stability on the job, facilitation of socialization and communication with coworkers, and assistance with transportation arrangements. The population served under this agreement included individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of the Commission’s supported employment program.

4. Tobosa Developmental Services, 1219 West Summit, Roswell, NM, 88201 Tobosa Developmental Services provided job assessment, job development and placement, on-the-job intensive skills training, other training and support in order for the consumer to achieve and maintain job stability, the facilitation of socialization and communication with coworkers, and assistance with transportation arrangements. The populations served under this agreement included individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of the Commission's supported employment program.

5. Zia Therapy Center Inc., 900 W. 1st, Alamogordo, NM. Zia Therapy provided job assessment, job development and placement, on-the-job intensive skills training, other training and support in order for the consumer to achieve and maintain job stability, the facilitation of socialization and communication with coworkers, and assistance with transportation arrangements. The populations served under this agreement included individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of the Commission's supported employment program.

Similar programs in other New Mexico communities will be contacted, as appropriate, to determine their capacity to participate in collaborative efforts regarding the Commission’s supported employment program.

6. Bonnie Harbin-Quintana Harbin & Associates, Phone: (505) 450-8969, Harbin_1@msn.com, Services included job assessment, job development and placement, intensive on-the-job skills training, and other training and support in order to achieve and maintain job stability. The population served under this agreement included individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of the Commission’s supported employment program.

7. Jacqueline P Beck-Manheimer, Phone: 505-948-9266, JacquelineBM17@gmail.com, Services included job assessment, job development and placement, intensive on-the-job skills training, and other training and support in order to achieve and maintain job stability. The population served under this agreement included individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of the Commission’s supported employment program.

8. Center for Function & Creativity, 223 Montano Road NW, Albuquerque, NM 87107, Provided job assessment, job development and placement, on-the-job intensive skills training, other training and support required to achieve and maintain job stability, facilitation of socialization and communication with coworkers, and assistance with transportation arrangements. Individuals served under this agreement are those who meet the eligibility requirements of the Commission’s supported employment program.

9. Mandy’s Farm, 7511 4th Street NW, Los Ranchos, NM 87107, (505) 503-1141, Provided job assessment, job development and placement, on the-job intensive skills training,
other training and support required to achieve and maintain job stability, facilitation of socialization and communication with coworkers, and assistance with transportation arrangements. Individuals served under this agreement are those who meet the eligibility requirements of the Commission’s supported employment program.

10. An Open Door LLC, 2445 Missouri, Suite B, Las Cruces, NM 88001, (575) 382-2107; Provided job assessment, job development and placement, on-the-job intensive skills training, other training and support required to achieve and maintain job stability, facilitation of socialization and communication with coworkers, and assistance with transportation arrangements. Individuals served under this agreement are those who meet the eligibility requirements of the Commission’s supported employment program.

G. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

1. VR SERVICES; AND

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

1. VR services; and

Historically, the commission has eschewed homemaker closures and physical restoration closures, choosing instead to pursue competitive integrated employment and self-employment exclusively. As a result, the Commission has developed effective employer relationships and placement methods that serve adults, students with disabilities, and youth with the most significant disabilities.

Placements

On-the-job training experiences are an effective approach that can result in permanent job placement. This method also helps to overcome doubts that employers have about employing persons with blindness or visual impairments. Summer jobs serve the dual purpose of overcoming employer doubts while at the same time providing youth with valuable work experience. Successful efforts at Job retention for longtime employees losing their vision also help to show employers that, with proper blindness skills, work methods, and technology, can perform work effectively.

Employers

The Commission has relationships with a wide variety of employers across New Mexico. Employers cover the landscape of federal government; state, county, and municipal governments; post-secondary educational institutions; public, charter, and private secondary schools; private non-profit businesses; and private for-profit businesses of all sizes and types.

The Commission will utilize existing relationships and develop new relationships in order to create employment opportunities and work experience opportunities for adults in competitive integrated settings and self-employment.
In an effort to increase employment and work experience opportunities in competitive integrated settings, the Commission will reach out to federal contractors. The new rules in Section 503 of the Rehab Act introduce a hiring goal for federal contractors and subcontractors that 7 percent of each job group in their workforce be qualified individuals with disabilities. This is an area of opportunity that has not been fully utilized by the Commission.

The Commission will also partner with business development specialist in one-stop work centers across the state to connect the Commission with employers in those service territories. Such partnerships will serve to improve OJT and permanent placement opportunities for job-ready Commission adults.

The Commission will also assist consumers interested in self-employment to take advantage of provisions of the New Mexico State Use Act. The New Mexico State Use Act, 13-1C-1 NMSA 1978, is an outgrowth of the state’s continuing efforts to expand opportunities for its citizens with disabilities. The Act opens state service contracts, including contracts to provide service to the state as business owners and entrepreneurs, to persons with disabilities without their having to competitively bid for the contract -- so long as the services are provided at fair market pricing. Again, although the Commission has encouraged self-employment, it has not assisted its self-employed consumers to take full advantage of opportunities afforded by the State Use Act. The Commission will partner with Horizons of New Mexico, the program’s agent, to facilitate additional opportunities for self-employed consumers. The Commission’s executive director serves on the State Use Council.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

2. Transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities.

The Students in Transition to Employment Program (STEP) will continue with its efforts to provide work experience and skills training to blind students during the summer months. STEP continues to provide outreach to recruit students with the most significant disabilities, including students from minority backgrounds, and students who are also unserved or underserved. The STEP program is also operated on a residential basis in Alamogordo, which allows students from even the most economically disadvantaged and rural portions of the state to participate. STEP students are paid during the employment portion of the program. In addition to providing essential job training and experience, this also has the benefit of serving as a significant incentive for many students from economically disadvantaged families, enabling the Commission to reach and attract more individuals into the program. In addition to the residential program in Alamogordo, STEP offers a commuter program that serves students with disabilities within the Albuquerque metropolitan area, and also offers community placements statewide.

The goal of the STEP Program is to give participating students more exposure to the workplace, enabling them to gain a better appreciation of the real-world expectations of employers, to enable them to gain a better understanding of their career options, and to acquire the job skills that will help them to achieve the ultimate goal of becoming employed. The STEP program does this through paid job experience. Job placement will be done based upon availability of work sites and the student’s career interests and ability. Students will be paid for up to 25 hours a week at the Santa Fe Living wage rate, ($11.80 in calendar 2019).

Alamogordo and Albuquerque students will also receive training designed to enhance their employment skills. An emphasis will be placed upon the development of “soft” work skills such
as dressing appropriately for the job site, communication with coworkers and supervisors, timeliness and reliability, and the importance of a positive attitude. STEP students will also receive training in how to use popular computer applications such as Word and Internet Explorer by using assistive technology such as JAWS. Students will also have an opportunity to acquire greater literacy by using Braille. Because the ability to travel independently is essential for successful employment, students will be taught Orientation and Mobility (cane travel).

Students will be taught other essential skills, including how to identify different currency denominations, how to label their clothes and dress appropriately for different job situations, how to shop for groceries, and how to prepare basic meals.

Community-based participants will also receive customized training to serve their individual needs.

Summer employment is a common experience of adults in the workplace. When it comes to the employment of blind and visually-impaired youth, it can be a valuable experience for both the employer and the youth. Although we rarely find blind and visually-impaired youth who are interested in working during the school year, many of them are interested in working during the summer. The Commission has historically been able to fund summer employment opportunities for any youth who were interested, but the Commission will make a greater effort to encourage more youth to take advantage of summer employment opportunities in the future. The Commission supported 29 students in summer employment during summer 2019 and will strive to increase that number to between 40 and 45 in summer 2020 and 2021. Of course, the Commission will use existing employer relationships and develop new employer relationships to facilitate work opportunities for students who do wish to take advantage of work opportunities after school or on weekends when school is in session. As part of an Intergovernmental Agreement with the New Mexico Central Region Educational Cooperative (CREC), CREC staff will provide job development services to STEP consumers.

Employers

The Commission has relationships with a wide variety of employers across New Mexico. Employers cover the landscape of federal government; state, county, and municipal governments; post-secondary educational institutions; public, charter, and private secondary schools; private non-profit businesses; and private for-profit businesses of all sizes and types.

The Commission will utilize existing relationships and develop new relationships in order to create employment opportunities and work experience opportunities for students with disabilities and youth with the most significant disabilities in competitive integrated settings and self-employment.

H. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

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

1. THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

The agency has negotiated a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the New Mexico Human Services Department (HSD). The MOA complies with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.24(f), which requires the agency and HSD to enter into a formal cooperative
agreement. The MOA between the agency and HSD describes how the agency will collaborate, including through the provision of information by the agency to consumers receiving or eligible to receive Medicaid (known in New Mexico as Centennial Care). The Commission surveys all consumers to make sure that all eligible consumers are participating in Centennial Care, and providing consumers with benefits counseling and guidance related to work incentives. The goal of the benefits counseling and guidance is to provide consumers with the Medicaid benefits and other supports needed to enable such consumers to more successfully participate in the Commission’s vocational rehabilitation program, ultimately increasing the likelihood that the consumer will attain economic self-sufficiency and be able to decrease or eliminate reliance on Medicaid and other public benefits. This includes counseling consumers to apply for the Section 1619(b) program when consumers may lose Supplemental Security Income (SSI) due to work activity, and to encourage consumers to apply for the Working Disabled Individual Category program when the consumer’s income is too high to qualify for the 1619(b) program. Of special note is that it was the Commission that came up with the idea of using the Working Disabled Individual category to address the serious problem of the 24-month Medicare waiting period. Many Medicaid recipients lose SSI due to the start of Social Security Disability Insurance or Disabled Adult Child benefits, and thereby also lose Medicaid. The Commission worked with HSD to develop the Medi-Gap portion of the Working Disabled Individual Category, which provides Medicaid to persons who have lost SSI due to the start of SSDI. The Commission also works to make sure that consumers who lose SSI due to the start of Disabled Adult Child benefits maintain Medicaid under Public Law 99-643. In addition, the agency works to make sure that consumers who may be eligible for Qualified Medicare Beneficiaries (QMB) Specified Low Income Medicare Beneficiaries (SLIMB) or Qualified Individuals (QIS) are receiving QMB, SLIMB, or QIS. The Commission also provides consumers with benefits counseling and guidance on SSI, including Work Incentives such as the deduction of Blind Work Expenses and the Student Earned Income Exclusion. The Commission also provides consumers with benefits counseling and guidance on SSI resource rules and the potential benefits of ABLE accounts.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

The agency has negotiated a formal cooperative agreement with the New Mexico Department of Health (DOH) that complies with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.24(f). The Memorandum of Agreement describes how the agency will collaborate, including through the provision of information by the agency to consumers receiving or eligible to receive the Developmental Disabilities Waiver. The Commission surveys all consumers to make sure eligible consumers are participating in the Developmental Disabilities Waiver, and agency employees provide information about the Developmental Disabilities Waiver to parents and guardians during Individualized Education Plan meetings. The goal is to encourage families to apply for the Developmental Disabilities Waiver sufficiently in advance so as to avoid a gap in supports when the student ages out of special education services. New Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provisions will now enable the agency to provide supported employment for up to 24 months and to provide up to 48 months of extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities. The agency also administers the Commission’s Technology for Children Program in partnership with DOH. The program provides assistive technology devices to children who are blind or visually impaired, including blind or visually impaired children who may be eligible for the Developmental Disabilities Waiver. The ultimate goal of such benefits counseling and guidance is to provide consumers with the supports needed to enable such
consumers to more successfully participate in the Commission’s vocational rehabilitation program.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

The agency has negotiated a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the New Mexico Human Services Department (HSD). The MOA complies with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.24(f), which requires the agency and HSD to enter into a formal cooperative agreement. The Behavioral Health Services Division (BHSD) is located within HSD, and BHSD is the Mental Health and Substance Abuse State Authority for New Mexico. The MOA describes how the agencies will collaborate, including in the provision of behavioral health services to persons who are blind or visually impaired. The goal of the MOA is to provide consumers with the supports needed to enable those consumers to more successfully participate in the Commission’s vocational rehabilitation program, ultimately increasing the likelihood that the consumer will attain economic self-sufficiency.

I. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT; DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

Describe the designated State agency’s procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

1. SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

A. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS

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

1. 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;

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

The Commission endeavors to maintain caseload sizes of between 50 and 75 cases per counselor. To ensure the ratio of one counselor to 50-75 consumers, the Agency employs eight counselors. The Commission serves approximately 400 VR consumers at any one time. The Commission’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.

Executive Director, 1, 0, 0
Deputy Agency Director II, 1, 1, 0
Deputy Director for Field Services, 1, 0, 0
Program Manager for Vocational Rehabilitation Programs, 1, 0, 0
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Supervisor, 1, 0, 1
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, 7, 2, 0
Program Manager for Assistive Technology, 1, 0, 0
Assistive Technology Specialist, 4, 2, 0
Program Manager for Business Enterprise Program, 1, 0, 0
IL Staff Manager, 1, 0, 0
Rehab/IL Teacher, 8, 1, 2
Deputy Director for Adult Orientation Center, 1, 0, 0
Orientation Center Instructor Supervisor, 1, 0, 0
Orientation Center Instructor, 6, 0, 2
Orientation Center Dormitory Supervisor, 1, 0, 0
Orientation Center Dormitory Workers, 4, 0, 1
Coordinator of Technology for Children, 1, 0, 0
Technical Support Providers, 2, 0, 0
Step Instructors, 0.675, 0, 0,
Business Operations Specialist, 5, 0, 1
Newsline Coordinator, 1, 0, 0
Newsline Weekend Coordinator, 1, 0, 1,
Maintenance and Repair Worker, 3, 0, 1
Executive Secretary, 1, 0, 1
Secretary, 9, 2, 2
Reader/Driver, 7.6, 3, 3
Deputy Director for Finance and Administration, 1, 0, 0
Accountant/Auditor, 2, 1, 0
Accounts Payable Supervisor, 1, 0, 1
Finance Manager, 1, 0, 0
Financial Specialist, 1, 0, 0
HR, Training, and Labor Specialist, 1, 0, 0
IT Technology Officer, 1, 0, 0

Projections of staff needs in five years based upon current consumer trends would require the continued employment of eight counselors to maintain the present ratio of
one counselor for every 50 to 75 cases. The Commission will maintain the present ratio of one counselor for every 50 to 75 cases in order to assure optimum services to consumers. It is apparent that improvements in service delivery will not necessarily rely upon expanded numbers of staff, but rather upon the qualities and training of personnel in the existing personnel configuration. The Agency will continue to provide annual intensive staff training, as well as periodic training to meet specific identified needs. In addition, the Agency has implemented the Accessible Web-Based Activity and Reporting Environment (AWARE) case management system, which has freed additional time for counselors to serve consumers. Training on the AWARE program began in August of 1999 and is conducted on an ongoing basis. The Agency is serving all consumers that are referred for services, and it is not anticipated that there will be any significant increase in the number of consumers seeking services.

II. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

The Commission'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.

Executive Director, 1, 0, 0
Deputy Agency Director II, 1, 1, 0
Deputy Director for Field Services, 1, 0, 0
Program Manager for Vocational Rehabilitation Programs, 1, 0, 0
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Supervisor, 1, 0, 1
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, 7, 2, 0
Program Manager for Assistive Technology, 1, 0, 0
Assistive Technology Specialist, 4, 2, 0
Program Manager for Business Enterprise Program, 1, 0, 0
IL Staff Manager, 1, 0, 0
Rehab/IL Teacher, 8, 1, 2
Deputy Director for Adult Orientation Center, 1, 0, 0
Orientation Center Instructor Supervisor, 1, 0, 0
Orientation Center Instructor, 6, 0, 2
Orientation Center Dormitory Supervisor, 1, 0, 0
Orientation Center Dormitory Workers, 4, 0, 1
Coordinator of Technology for Children, 1, 0, 0
Technical Support Providers, 2, 0, 0
Step Instructors, 0.675, 0, 0
Business Operations Specialist, 5, 0, 1
III. PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY, WHO WILL BE NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES IN 5 YEARS BASED ON PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL EXPECTED TO RETIRE OR LEAVE THE FIELD, AND OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS.

The Commission endeavors to maintain caseload sizes of between 50 and 75 cases per counselor. To ensure the ratio of one counselor to 50 - 75 consumers, the Agency employs eight counselors. The Commission serves approximately 400 VR consumers at any one time. The Commission'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.

Executive Director, 1, 0, 0
Deputy Agency Director II, 1, 1, 0
Deputy Director for Field Services, 1, 0, 0
Program Manager for Vocational Rehabilitation Programs, 1, 0, 0
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Supervisor, 1, 0, 1
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, 7, 2, 0
Program Manager for Assistive Technology, 1, 0, 0
Assistive Technology Specialist, 4, 2, 0
Program Manager for Business Enterprise Program, 1, 0, 0
IL Staff Manager, 1, 0, 0
Rehab/IL Teacher, 8, 1, 2
Deputy Director for Adult Orientation Center, 1, 0, 0
Orientation Center Instructor Supervisor, 1, 0, 0
Orientation Center Instructor, 6, 0, 2
Orientation Center Dormitory Supervisor, 1, 0, 0
Orientation Center Dormitory Workers, 4, 0, 1
Coordinator of Technology for Children, 1, 0, 0
Technical Support Providers, 2, 0, 0
Step Instructors, 0.675, 0, 0,
Business Operations Specialist, 5, 0, 1
Newsline Coordinator, 1, 0, 0
Newsline Weekend Coordinator, 1, 0, 1
Maintenance and Repair Worker, 3, 0, 1
Executive Secretary, 1, 0, 1
Secretary, 9, 2, 2
Reader/Driver, 7.6, 3, 3
Deputy Director for Finance and Administration, 1, 0, 0
Accountant/Auditor, 2, 1, 0
Accounts Payable Supervisor, 1, 0, 1
Finance Manager, 1, 0, 0
Financial Specialist, 1, 0, 0
HR, Training, and Labor Specialist, 1, 0, 0
IT Technology Officer, 1, 0, 0

B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

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

I. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM;

The Commission has a Memorandum of Understanding with New Mexico Highlands University, located in Las Vegas, New Mexico, which is offering a degree program in vocational rehabilitation counseling. Two of the agency’s current counselor’s either graduated from the New Mexico Highlands program or have taken graduate courses at Highlands. New Mexico Highlands has 25 students currently enrolled in their rehabilitation counseling program. They graduated seven students during calendar 2019, all of whom are eligible for both the New Mexico Licensed Rehabilitation Counselor
and Certified Rehabilitation Counselor certifications. The New Mexico Highlands program is CORE accredited. The MOU with New Mexico Highlands also offers support of intern placements whenever possible, although the agency was unable to host any interns during the past PY. The Commission will continue its positive relationship with New Mexico Highlands University to assure that NMHU students consider employment with the Commission. Graduates from NMHU often include representation from minority populations as well as candidates who speak Spanish. Although the agency encourages its counselor staff to attend the in-state Highlands University program, the agency recognizes that, depending on individual situations, distance education programs offered by other universities may also serve staff education needs. As such, the Commission has also inquired of the counselor training programs at other universities, including the University of North Texas (part of a well-established consortium between the University of North Texas, San Diego State University, and Georgia State University); as well as the counselor program at the University of Arkansas, Little Rock. Two Commission counselors took graduate classes at the University of North Texas program in PY17. Another counselor took graduate courses at the University of Arkansas, Little Rock, during PY16 and PY17. New Mexico State University had sponsored a graduate program in Orientation and Mobility. Two Commission staff members completed the NMSU O and M program. One of these staff members is still with the Commission and provides valuable training expertise for both vocational rehabilitation and independent living consumers. Thirteen students are currently enrolled in the program. Four students graduated in calendar 2019, one of whom tested and received their Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS) certification. The Commission also recruits Orientation and Mobility Specialists and Rehab Teachers from Louisiana Tech University. Their Orientation and Mobility Specialist program emphasizes non-visual instruction and the Structured Discovery Model. This model is consistent with the training philosophy of the Commission’s Orientation Center in Alamogordo. Two students are currently enrolled in the program. During calendar 2019, nine individuals graduated at the Masters or Certificate level and were eligible to obtain national certification. This would be National Orientation and Mobility Certification (NOMC) or National Certification in Rehabilitation Teaching for the Blind (NCRTB). Three Commission employees hold NOMC certification and four hold NCRTB certification. In addition, eleven Commission employees hold the National Certification in Unified English Braille. The Commission has sponsored seminars and exams leading to certification in Braille competency since 2008. This effort has included school teachers, and as a result, New Mexico now has more Braille certified teachers than any other state.

II. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND

The Commission has a Memorandum of Understanding with New Mexico Highlands University, located in Las Vegas, New Mexico, which is offering a degree program in vocational rehabilitation counseling. Two of the agency’s current counselors either graduated from the New Mexico Highlands program or have taken graduate courses at Highlands. New Mexico Highlands has 25 students currently enrolled in their rehabilitation counseling program. They graduated seven students during calendar 2019, all of whom are eligible for both the New Mexico Licensed Rehabilitation Counselor and Certified Rehabilitation Counselor certifications. The New Mexico Highlands program is CORE accredited. The MOU with New Mexico Highlands also offers support of intern placements whenever possible, although the agency was unable to host any interns during the past PY. The Commission will continue its positive relationship with
New Mexico Highlands University to assure that NMHU students consider employment with the Commission. Graduates from NMHU often include representation from minority populations as well as candidates who speak Spanish. Although the agency encourages its counselor staff to attend the in-state Highlands University program, the agency recognizes that, depending on individual situations, distance education programs offered by other universities may also serve staff education needs. New Mexico State University had sponsored a graduate program in Orientation and Mobility. Two Commission staff members completed the NMSU O and M program. One of these staff members is still with the Commission and provides valuable training expertise for both vocational rehabilitation and independent living consumers. Thirteen students are currently enrolled in the program. Four students graduated in calendar 2019, one of whom tested and received their Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS) certification. The Commission also recruits Orientation and Mobility Specialists and Rehab Teachers from Louisiana Tech University. Their Orientation and Mobility Specialist program emphasizes non-visual instruction and the Structured Discovery Model. This model is consistent with the training philosophy of the Commission’s Orientation Center in Alamogordo. Two students are currently enrolled in the program. During calendar 2019, nine individuals graduated at the Masters or Certificate level and were eligible to obtain national certification. This would be National Orientation and Mobility Certification (NOMC) or National Certification in Rehabilitation Teaching for the Blind (NCRTB). Three Commission employees hold NOMC certification and four hold NCRTB certification. In addition, eleven Commission employees hold the National Certification in Unified English Braille. The Commission has sponsored seminars and exams leading to certification in Braille competency since 2008. This effort has included school teachers, and as a result, New Mexico now has more Braille certified teachers than any other state.

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 Commission has a Memorandum of Understanding with New Mexico Highlands University, located in Las Vegas, New Mexico, which is offering a degree program in vocational rehabilitation counseling. Two of the agency’s current counselors either graduated from the New Mexico Highlands program or have taken graduate courses at Highlands. New Mexico Highlands has 25 students currently enrolled in their rehabilitation counseling program. They graduated seven students during calendar 2019, all of whom are eligible for both the New Mexico Licensed Rehabilitation Counselor and Certified Rehabilitation Counselor certifications. The New Mexico Highlands program is CORE accredited. The MOU with New Mexico Highlands also offers support of intern placements whenever possible, although the agency was unable to host any interns during the past PY. The Commission will continue its positive relationship with New Mexico Highlands University to assure that NMHU students consider employment with the Commission. Graduates from NMHU often include representation from minority populations as well as candidates who speak Spanish. Although the agency encourages its counselor staff to attend the in-state Highlands University program, the agency recognizes that, depending on individual situations, distance education programs offered by other universities may also serve staff education needs. New Mexico State University
had sponsored a graduate program in Orientation and Mobility. Two Commission staff members completed the NMSU O and M program. One of these staff members is still with the Commission and provides valuable training expertise for both vocational rehabilitation and independent living consumers. Thirteen students are currently enrolled in the program. Four students graduated in calendar 2019, one of whom tested and received their Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS) certification. The Commission also recruits Orientation and Mobility Specialists and Rehab Teachers from Louisiana Tech University. Their Orientation and Mobility Specialist program emphasizes non-visual instruction and the Structured Discovery Model. This model is consistent with the training philosophy of the Commission’s Orientation Center in Alamogordo. Two students are currently enrolled in the program. During calendar 2019, nine individuals graduated at the Masters or Certificate level and were eligible to obtain national certification. This would be National Orientation and Mobility Certification (NOMC) or National Certification in Rehabilitation Teaching for the Blind (NCRTB). Three Commission employees hold NOMC certification and four hold NCRTB certification. In addition, eleven Commission employees hold the National Certification in Unified English Braille. The Commission has sponsored seminars and exams leading to certification in Braille competency since 2008. This effort has included school teachers, and as a result, New Mexico now has more Braille certified teachers than any other state.

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

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

Commission personnel will meet with public and university personnel to review options for enabling the Commission’s rehabilitation counselors to meet certification requirements. The current and projected personnel needs for vocational rehabilitation counselors are stable, and are not expected to increase. This projection of personnel needs is based on the implementation of the AWARE case management program and a trend towards stable vocational rehabilitation caseloads statewide. However, the Commission is aware of changing demographics which may impact this, including the aging of the work force and an increasing rate of blind infants and children who have disabilities in addition to blindness. There are currently seven counselor positions, one counselor supervisor that carries a caseload, and one program manager over the VR Counselor team in the vocational rehabilitation program. As previously discussed, the Executive Director of the Commission and his/her designee will continue to meet with university personnel to provide appropriate training to the rehabilitation counselor team. The Agency also actively recruits individuals who come from minority backgrounds or who have disabilities, including posting of job announcements on the "blind jobs" and "Rehab Professionals" list services and other blindness related list services. The agency also provides internships and recruits graduates of the New Mexico Highlands rehabilitation counselor program, which generally includes representation from minority populations as well as candidates who speak Spanish and Native American languages. The Commission has a Memorandum of Understanding with New Mexico Highlands University, located in Las Vegas, New Mexico, which is offering a degree program in vocational rehabilitation counseling. The New Mexico Highlands program is CORE accredited. The MOU with New Mexico Highlands also offers support of intern placements whenever possible, although the agency was unable to host any interns during the past PY. The Commission will continue its positive relationship with New
Mexico Highlands University to assure that NMHU students consider employment with the Commission. Graduates from NMHU often include representation from minority populations as well as candidates who speak Spanish. Although the agency encourages its counselor staff to attend the Highlands University program, the agency recognizes that, depending on individual situations, distance education programs offered by other universities may also serve staff education needs. As such, the Commission has also inquired of the counselor training programs at other universities, including the University of North Texas (part of a well-established consortium between the University of North Texas, San Diego State University, and Georgia State University); as well as the counselor program at the University of Arkansas, Little Rock. New Mexico State University had sponsored a graduate program in Orientation and Mobility. Two Commission staff members completed the NMSU O and M program. One of these staff members is still with the Commission and provides valuable training expertise for both vocational rehabilitation and independent living consumers. The Commission also recruits Orientation and Mobility Specialists and Rehab Teachers from Louisiana Tech University. Their Orientation and Mobility Specialist program emphasizes non-visual instruction and the Structured Discovery Model. This model is consistent with the training philosophy of the Commission’s Orientation Center in Alamogordo.

The Commission has sponsored seminars and exams leading to certification in Braille competency since 2008. This effort has included school teachers, and as a result, New Mexico now has more Braille certified teachers than any other state.

Other training for rehabilitation professionals in the fields of blindness, deaf-blind and related disabilities such as diabetes has been continually provided by the Agency to existing professional and support staff. It is anticipated that these efforts will enable the Agency to meet federal certification requirements over the foreseeable future. The Commission will provide additional training in key areas, such as those related to transition services, career assessment, and job placement. The agency currently uses a manual system for the tracking of data related to each counselor, their training programs and data directly pertinent to the CSPD requirements. A record of the transcripts and course work completed by each counselor is maintained in a file and is used to track progress in achieving the necessary academic requirements.

### 3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

Describe the State agency’s policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

**A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND**

The New Mexico Commission for the Blind continues to monitor and update the comprehensive system of personnel development each year, to ensure that an adequate supply of qualified rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals are available to the Commission. Qualified counselors are those that have earned Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) certification, are eligible to sit for the CRC examination, or have attained a New Mexico License in Rehabilitation Counseling under the Master’s level requirements of the state license, as described below.

A. Master’s degree in rehabilitation counseling from a regionally accredited college or university. This requirement shall be satisfied by
meeting the requirements of Paragraphs (1) or (2) of Subsection A below. (1) A master's degree awarded by a New Mexico college or university must incorporate the New Mexico Public Education Department's approved competencies in rehabilitation counseling. (2) A master's degree awarded by a college or university outside of New Mexico must be for a rehabilitation counseling program approved by the New Mexico Public Education Department. B. Master's degree in school counseling, vocational counseling or other related field and the provisions of Paragraphs (1) or (2) of Subsection B below (1) one (1) year of experience in rehabilitation counseling, or (2) fifteen (15) semester hours of credit in the rehabilitation counseling competency areas of vocational/transition assessment, medical aspects of disability, psychosocial and/or psycho-cultural aspects of disability, case management in rehabilitation counseling, issues and practices in rehabilitation counseling, or placement aspects of rehabilitation counseling. All but one of the VR counselors and VR supervisory staff have at least a Master's Degree. At present, two of the Agency's six counselors have CRC certification, one possesses alternative state licensure and is eligible to sit for the CRC, one will be taking classes under CRCC requirements in order to sit for the CRC, one is eligible for state licensure, and one holds a Bachelor's Degree and will be starting a graduate program in VR Counseling during PY 2020. In addition, the program manager over the VR counselor team also holds both CRC and state licensure. The existing staffing configuration will include current staff as well as new staff hired to fill any positions that should become vacant. As turnover occurs due to retirement or staff leaving their positions, the Agency will make it a high priority to promptly fill any vacant counselor positions with CRC Certified Rehabilitation Counselors. The desired academic qualification for a new counselor is a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling. If the pool of candidates does not include a person possessing the desired qualifications, the minimum degree will be a Bachelor's degree with a requirement that the counselor obtain either CRC certification or alternative state licensure within a maximum of four (4) years of the date of hiring. State licensure was enacted in 2000. The agency has set aside funds for counselor training to help counselors meet academic standards.


The agency's State Rehabilitation Council has affirmed its desire that the agency continue to maintain the above qualifications requirements for its VR counselors. In view of new WIOA requirements, the agency will ensure that professional and paraprofessional personnel have a 21st-century understanding of the evolving labor force and needs of individuals with disabilities.

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

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
Vocational rehabilitation counselors attend regular bi-monthly training coordinated by the Program Manager for VR Programs. The training regularly addresses technology issues, training center issues, employment services issues, transition, post-secondary education and training, and training on various state and local services. Recent presentations from national, state and local agencies and organizations included Updates to the New Mexico DD Waiver Program; College Success Program with Learning Ally; Mississippi State University NRTC Service to Businesses; Y-TAC Presentation on WIOA; UNM Valencia Career Services Director on Creating Crosswalks from WOWI to Onet; Horizons of New Mexico on Opportunities through the State Use Act; and Guardianship Issues through the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.

Training on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is being provided to emphasize legal requirements for current and newly hired staff, 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. In addition, training will focus on evidenced-based approaches. Content experts from outside the Agency, including from the technical assistance centers around the country, will be secured in areas where Agency staff does not have the knowledge or expertise necessary to provide the training. This will include training on section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. Commission professionals spend eight weeks at the agency's Orientation Center receiving immersion training. The training is conducted under blindfold, enabling the staff members to learn the same non-visual techniques that their consumers are learning. This creates a belief on the part of the staff that their blind clients really can travel independently, become literate (Braille literate), organize their households and documents, shop and prepare nutritious meals, and keep themselves clean and well-groomed. Counselors also attend conventions of the two consumer organizations. New counselors who have never attended a national convention are given the option to attend either the ACB or NFB convention. Since the Commission encourages and supports consumer attendance at these conventions for a myriad of reasons, the Commission believes it is essential for counselors to attend so they can speak from personal experience when advising consumers. As for state conventions, counselors have historically been required to attend both conventions initially, then required to attend one or the other in subsequent years. The state ACB affiliate has not sponsored a state convention the past few years. A great deal of learning takes place at both the national and state conventions. The Commission intends to continue this practice in future years. The Commission has a staff of five assistive technology specialists. The Commission provides continuing training in assistive technology to both staff and consumers. The Commission operates a technology training lab in the Albuquerque Skills Center which provides instruction in the use of assistive technology. This training uses a hands-on lab setting to provide instruction in a wide variety of applications, including Microsoft Windows, Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, and Internet Explorer. The Commission also provides instruction in the use of different types of video magnifiers, Braille note takers, and in the production of Braille documents through the use of Braille translation software and Braille embossers. Training is also provided on the use of Apple Macintosh computers, iPads, and iPhones. Trainings are made available to consumers, parents of consumers, and school professionals. Consumers attending the Adult Orientation Center in Alamogordo also receive instruction in assistive technology as a regular part of their Center training. The Commission has increased individualized training to consumers
through the addition of remote utilities, contract trainers, and distance education trainers. During FY 2011, the Commission began using textbooks that couple instruction in MS Office applications with specific screen readers and screen magnifiers. Historically, Commission staff members have served on all four of the local workforce boards and the Executive Director has served on the State Workforce Board. Recent staff separations have caused a few vacancies on local boards, but those vacancies are expected to be filled with Commission staff during PY 2020. These staff members have received training as a part of their service on the various boards. The VR counselors have also received training on the availability of services through the One-Stops, and on how to assist consumers to access those services in the most appropriate fashion.

B. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS.

The Commission participated in a research project with the National Research and Training Center at Mississippi State University. The project was entitled "Effectiveness of an Evidence-Based Approach to Rehabilitation Counselor Training on Working with Businesses." Training took place on-site in Albuquerque in Summer 2018. Commission staff receives training in current research through a variety of mechanisms, including attendance at the annual state conference of the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of Persons who are Blind and Visually Impaired (AER), and attendance at the spring and fall meetings of the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind (NCSAB). Commission staff has also received updates on current research through viewing of web casts, Webinars, reading of scholarly journals, and attendance at other relevant conferences.

5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

The Agency provides rehabilitation and independent living services in a State with a large population of persons for whom Spanish is a primary language, and with a significant population of individuals who speak a variety of native languages. The Agency has staff persons who can communicate in some of these languages, and hires interpreters when that is not readily feasible, including a phone-based interpreter service that supports over 150 languages. The Agency has can deliver Braille materials as requested to any consumers throughout New Mexico. Further, the Agency regularly reproduces material on portable media when requested. All Agency word processing software programs can produce text in large print. The Agency also regularly contracts with sign language interpreters whenever there is a need for a sign language interpreter. The agency has experimented with remote video interpreting so as to more-effectively serve deafblind consumers who require sign language support. This is especially effective in rural areas where it is difficult to schedule human interpreters.

Newly hired Agency personnel who work directly with consumers participate in up to two months of intensive training in the skills of blindness at the Commission’s Orientation Center, where two of the classes in the curriculum (Braille and
Communications) deal with modes of communication utilized by individuals who are blind.

6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit’s comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

The Commission coordinates with the State Educational Agency to coordinate the personnel development system under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act with the agency’s comprehensive system of personnel development. On January 28, 2020, the agency entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Public Education Department. The Public Education Department is the State Educational Agency in New Mexico. The Commission regularly attends and presents at transition conferences that are sponsored by the Public Education Department, and the MOA will further this coordination. When appropriate, joint training will be undertaken between the Commission and the Public Education Department to further the coordination of personnel development. The Commission also has an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the Central Region Educational Cooperative. The Central Region Educational Cooperative is a program within the Public Education Department, and the IGA provides for instruction and training to be provided to Teachers of the Blind and Visually Impaired who are located within Local Educational Agencies. The Commission has also worked directly with Local Educational Agencies to provide instruction to Teachers of the Blind and Visually Impaired. This instruction has included training in Unified English Braille (UEB), and the agency has sponsored numerous UEB seminars and NCUEB certification exams. The agency has also provided in-service training on the use of blindness-related assistive technology to Local Educational Agencies, and presented at transition conferences sponsored by both Local Educational Agencies and the Public Education Department. The agency also has a Governmental Services Agreement with the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired that provides for instruction and training to be provided to Teachers of the Blind and Visually Impaired who are located within Local Educational Agencies. The agency will continue to coordinate these types of training activities. The Commission’s State Rehabilitation Council also had an opportunity to review and provide input and comments in the development of the CSPD Plan. The Memorandum of Understanding with the Public Education Department requires that the Public Education Department shall designate at least one representative to serve on the Commission’s State Rehabilitation Council. This representation on the Council will help the agency and the Public Education Department to further enhance the coordination of the personnel development system under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act with the agency’s comprehensive system of personnel development.

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;

Following is a description of the needs assessment process conducted in support of our state plan submission:
Pursuant to 34 CFR Section 361.29, the Commission and the State Rehabilitation Council developed and approved the methodology for the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment at a meeting held on August 9, 2018. The Needs Assessment was discussed at a regular meeting of the Council held on October 22, 2018, and the results were reviewed at a special meeting of the Council held on February 11, 2019, and further reviewed at a special meeting of the Council held on May 16, 2019.

The Statewide Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs of Individuals with Disabilities residing within the State and the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs is conducted jointly by the agency and the State Rehabilitation Council every three years. The assessment process conducted during PY 2018 utilized a variety of sources and methodologies for deriving information about:

a. The rehabilitation needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities and their need for supported employment; b. Individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program; c. Individuals with disabilities served through components of the statewide workforce investment system other than the vocational rehabilitation program; and d. The needs of students and youth with disabilities for vocational rehabilitation services, including the needs of students with disabilities for pre-employment transition services.

b. The need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State.

ADOPTION OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Pursuant to 34 CFR Section 361.29, the Commission and the State Rehabilitation Council developed and approved the methodology for the Needs Assessment Survey at a meeting held on August 9, 2018. The methodology adopted consisted of the following:

1. Survey of Demographic Data

A review shall be conducted of available demographic data, including from the American Community Survey, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and appropriate data sources.

2. Public Meetings and Town Forums

Public meetings shall be conducted throughout New Mexico, with opportunity provided for submission of written comments. The public meetings shall be advertised in newspapers of general circulation, placed on the agency web page, placed on Newsline for the Blind and on NFB-Newsline, through emailing lists maintained by consumer organizations, and sent to Centers for Independent Living.
3. Focused Discussions

Focused discussions shall be conducted with key stakeholder organizations, including centers for independent living, consumer organizations, and community rehabilitation programs.

4. Needs Assessment Survey

The following consumer satisfaction survey shall be conducted:

NEW MEXICO COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND 2018 Consumer Satisfaction Survey

Methodology

Commission staff will randomly select a pool of 10 percent of the Commission’s consumers who have open cases with signed Individualized Plans for Employment, or who have been closed for any reason within the last year. The contracted survey administrator will assign survey identification numbers randomly to the consumer names to protect anonymity of respondents.

All surveys will be conducted by telephone by the survey administrator between the hours of 9:00 AM and 8:30 PM during weekdays, and between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM on Saturdays. To avoid calling during the most likely mealtime hours, no calls will be placed between 12:00 PM and 1:00 PM, and between 5:30 PM and 7:00 PM.

The survey contains 11 questions. Of these, 6 are questions with scaled responses, one of which is applicable only to respondents who had graduated from the Orientation Center training program. The rating scale for these 6 questions consists of 6 levels to express the level of satisfaction: very satisfied, satisfied, somewhat satisfied, neutral, dissatisfied and very dissatisfied. The other questions are Yes/No questions, and the final question is an open ended solicitation of a narrative comment from respondents.

Script

Hello. My name is ________, and I have been contracted to conduct a survey for the Commission for the Blind. This survey is to assess the level of satisfaction with
Commission services. You were selected randomly for this confidential survey, which will take about 5 minutes to complete. May we begin?

1. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Commission’s services?

   Very satisfied

   Satisfied

   Somewhat satisfied

   Neutral (neither satisfied or dissatisfied)

   Dissatisfied

   Very Dissatisfied

2. How satisfied are you that you were able to select and pursue your desired employment goal?

   Very satisfied

   Satisfied

   Somewhat satisfied

   Neutral (neither satisfied or dissatisfied)

   Dissatisfied

   Very Dissatisfied
3. How satisfied are you with the promptness of your counselor’s responses to your calls and emails?

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Somewhat satisfied

Neutral (neither satisfied or dissatisfied)

Dissatisfied

Very Dissatisfied

4. How satisfied are you with the technology and technology services you received?

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Somewhat satisfied

Neutral (neither satisfied or dissatisfied)

Dissatisfied

Very Dissatisfied

5. Did you graduate from the Orientation Center in Alamogordo?

Yes
No

Not Yet

Questions 6 and 7 are to be asked only if the consumer said “yes” to question 5. 6. How satisfied were you with the training at the Orientation Center?

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Somewhat satisfied

Neutral (neither satisfied or dissatisfied)

Dissatisfied

Very Dissatisfied

7. Do you believe you are achieving greater success than you would have achieved if you had not graduated from the Orientation Center?

Yes

No

Not sure

8. Are you currently employed?

Yes
No

Question 9 is to be asked only if the consumer said “yes” to question 8. 9. Do you believe that the Commission assisted you in any way to achieve your current employment?

Yes

No

Not sure

10. Do you believe you are currently achieving greater success in your employment, training, or education than you would have achieved if the Commission had not been involved?

Yes

No

Not sure

11. Were you told about the availability of assistance from CAP, or the Client Assistance Program?

Yes

No

Not sure

Respondent Narrative Comments

Is there anything you would like to say or add about your satisfaction with the Commission and its services?
Following is a summary of results of the needs assessment process:

1.
   a.
      i. 1. Review of Strategic Plan and Demographic data.

The State Rehabilitation Council reviewed the current Strategic Plan, the prior needs assessment, the American Community Survey results for New Mexico for persons who report “serious difficulty seeing," and other appropriate demographic data.

The following needs were identified through this process:

A need for more transition services to youth with disabilities in order to meet the increased population in New Mexico, in particular for the growing population of youth with Optic Nerve Hypoplasia, youth with diabetes, youth who are blind as a result of premature birth, and youth with multiple disabilities.

A need to provide additional transition services to combat the Decreasing rates of literacy among blind youth, including in both print and Braille;

A need to provide additional transition services to upgrade the technology and assistive technology skills required for blind and visually impaired youth to succeed in secondary education, post-secondary vocational training/education, and employment.

A need to provide transition services to address the delayed maturation or “failure to launch” syndrome among blind and visually impaired youth.

A need to provide additional academic, social, and independent living skills to youth.

A need for more services to ethnic and racial minority groups which have a greater likelihood for diabetes, which is the leading cause of blindness in adults.

A need to provide services to adults for a longer period of time as a result of the slow economic recovery in New Mexico.
A need to provide a broader set of services to an increasing population of adults with multiple disabilities.

A need to provide Braille skills to adults who did not get the Braille training that they should have received in elementary and secondary school.

A need for technology and assistive technology training to help adults achieve the proficiency that is required to become and remain employed.

A need to provide older individuals with services that will assist them to become and remain employed.

2. Public Meetings and Town Forums

The Commission and State Rehabilitation Council jointly held public meetings as follows:

- October 16, 2019, in Hobbs
- October 17, 2019, in Clovis
- November 25, 2019, in Santa Fe
- November 27, 2019, in Albuquerque
- December 02, 2019, in Las Cruces
- December 03, 2019, in Alamogordo

Notices were widely distributed, including being published in local newspapers, being posted on Newsline for the Blind, being placed on the Commission web page, and being placed on the New Mexico State Government Sunshine Portal. The meetings and town forums were designed specifically for the purpose of soliciting input on statewide needs.

The public meeting and town forum process resulted in the following needs being identified:

A need for collaboration, but strongly against consolidation of services. Commenters expressed an overwhelming call for continuing separate services for the blind in New Mexico. Commenters pointed to a homogenization of services which would not serve blind individuals effectively; an increase of caseload sizes by vocational counselor staff; a
reduction in resources available to serve blind persons, whose services generally require more money and longer time horizons; concern that consolidation would lead to more hierarchy, more bureaucracy and less autonomy, resulting in reduced flexibility to direct services where they are needed; reduced expertise; a need to maintain its own identity and its own State Rehabilitation Council; and commenters who pointed to research studies that separate services for the blind are more efficient and more effective than combined services. The National Federation of the Blind is the largest organization of blind persons in the United States and the NFB of New Mexico is a strong affiliate of the national organization. Finally, commenters asked what would be done about the Commission’s Independent Living Program, which predominantly serves older individuals who are blind across the state and has nothing to do with vocational training and employment.

A need for a liaison between the Commission and the one-stops.
A need for more blind staff at the Orientation Center.
A need for more teachers who are trained to work with blind students.
A need for more Braille and orientation and mobility services.
A need for more training, both in Albuquerque and throughout the state.
A need for more job certification training.
A need for more services for individuals with both hearing and vision loss.
A need for more outreach to consumers, to parents, and to parents who speak other languages.

3. Focused Discussions

Focused discussions were conducted with key stakeholder organizations, in particular consumer organizations and community rehabilitation programs.

Focused discussions were held with the National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico during their annual convention April 5-7, 2019, in Albuquerque. Almost 200 individuals registered for the convention. Discussions were held with other stakeholder groups throughout Calendar 2019 as well.

A need for an updated curriculum for BEP training, as well as a way to identify and fund new locations for blind business owners.

A need for more technology training at the Orientation Center, as well as a need to coordinate training received at the Orientation Center with projected equipment and software to be received by consumers.

A need to recruit and retain VR counselors, technology specialists, rehab teachers, and staff with specialized experience related to serving individuals who are blind and visually impaired.
4. Consumer Satisfaction Survey

The consumer satisfaction survey was based on a sample size of 10 percent of open and recently closed cases, totaling 34 persons. A contractor was enlisted to conduct the survey.

Thirteen individuals responded, two persons declined to participate, there were eight non-working phone numbers, and she was unable to reach ten individuals after between 7 and 10 attempts. Of the thirteen persons who responded, six answered the open-ended questions. She said that everyone seemed happy, and that there were no dissatisfied or very dissatisfied responses.

Overall, 38 percent reported being very satisfied with Commission services, 38 percent were satisfied, 7 percent were somewhat satisfied, and 15 percent were neutral (neither satisfied or dissatisfied).

The following needs were identified as a result of the survey:

A need to recruit and retain more rehab counselors in order to reduce the need to transfer consumers from counselor to counselor, resulting in more consistent service.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

The needs assessment yielded some information related to Commission staff, such as a need for more bilingual staff. There was also data related to minority consumers, those being to provide more services to Latinos and Native American adults and youth. Native Americans often wish to stay close to home, which often means reservations and pueblos which have inadequate infrastructure, jobs, and transportation resources.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

The needs assessment identified a need for more funding and more staff to reach rural and underserved areas of the state. Data also identified a need for more transportation, education, transition, and employment services; as well as a need to provide more services to older individuals with vision and hearing loss.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

There was support for collaboration with the one-stops, but against consolidation of the Commission within the workforce development system. The views were consistent among various stakeholders that separate services for blind adults and youth should be maintained. Data also identified a need for increased collaboration with local education agencies, state colleges and universities, and state transportation providers.
E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

Needs identified include technology, technology training, math skills, Braille skills, cane travel skills, independent living skills, and work opportunities.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

The assessment indicated a need to expand the agency’s Orientation Center in order to serve the growing number of blind and visually impaired individuals in New Mexico. In particular, there is support for the construction of apartments on property adjacent to the dormitory which was donated to the Commission. The apartments would provide an independent living experience that is currently being provided through rental apartments 1.5 miles away. The apartments would enable the Commission to teach real independent living skills, which would be better than the dorms, would attract consumers who currently choose to attend expensive out-of-state training centers which have apartments, would provide a more convenient opportunity for consumers with families to participate, and would provide a fully accessible independent living opportunity for individuals with physical disabilities. The Commission has received a capital outlay appropriation for the apartments, with construction expected to begin in PY 2020 or 2021.

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 needs assessment identified the need to improve the skills of blind and visually impaired youth, in particular in the areas of reading and writing since many are leaving school and do not know how to write a paper; students should be able to stay in their local school district with proper supports; “There is a crisis around braille. Technology can’t do it all, students need to learn to read, and research shows changes in the brain when learning to read that help people be more flexible over their lifespan. There are a myriad of things that students who are blind need to learn in order to be successful as adults and they can’t learn them in a 6-hour day at school. They need to learn from an integrated system, home services, early intervention, family, school, and sometimes a residential setting, transition services (from the Commission), adult services in addition if needed. We need to address the whole student. In education we say there is an expanded core curriculum around blindness. And students can be at risk if they don’t learn the extra specific things.” There is research to indicate a lack of effective services in elementary and secondary education today, including literacy, math, technology, independent living, socialization, independent mobility, independent living, expectations, students with Optic Nerve Hypoplasia, and students with multiple disabilities. There is also a need for additional work opportunities for transition-age youth.
K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Describe:

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES

In determining the number of individuals that might be eligible for services during PY 2020 and PY 2021, the Commission reviewed a variety of data sources.

According to the 2016 American Community Survey, there are 67,313 persons residing in New Mexico who are blind or report having serious difficulty seeing. Of that number, 31,750 are in the traditional prime working age of 18 to 64. There are also 12,618 persons aged 65 to 74 residing in New Mexico who are blind or report serious difficulty seeing. The number of visually impaired persons aged 65 to 74 is of increasing relevance given that almost half of Americans report that they expect to work beyond age 65, and since 23 percent of Americans report that they expect to never retire. The Commission’s Goals and Priorities have also identified the need to serve a growing population of older workers.

The Commission is seeing a dramatic increase in the number of consumers with Optic Nerve Hypoplasia. Optic Nerve Hypoplasia (ONH) has increased significantly over the last thirty years, and ONH is now the leading cause of blindness in children. There is also a significant increase in the rate of diabetes in children. According to the National Institutes of Health, from 2002 to 2012, there was an annual increase of type 1 diabetes in youth of 1.8 percent, and an increase in youth of 4.8 percent for type 2 diabetes. The lifetime risk of diabetes has doubled in the last 20 years, with males born in 2000 having a 32.8 percent lifetime chance of developing diabetes, and females born in 2000 having a 38.5 percent lifetime chance of developing diabetes. For Hispanics born in 2000, the lifetime risk for males is 45.4 percent, and 52.5 percent for females. The increasing prevalence of diabetes will likely result in a growing number of consumers with blindness due to diabetic retinopathy.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

FFY2020 370; FFY2021 377

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

FFY2020 30; FFY2021 33

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION.

na

3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

na

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.

FFY2020 $6,781,368; FFY2021 $6,916,995
L. STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The designated State unit must:

1. IDENTIFY IF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES WERE JOINTLY DEVELOPED AND AGREED TO BY THE STATE VR AGENCY AND THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, IF THE STATE HAS A COUNCIL, AND JOINTLY AGREED TO ANY REVISIONS

The designated State unit must: 1. Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions.

The goals and priorities described below were jointly developed and agreed to by the Commission for the Blind and our State Rehabilitation Council.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

In the context of the Agency’s mission statement, a goal of the VR Program is integrated, competitive employment, or supported employment placements. The Agency’s goal is having blind individuals employed and contributing members of society. The Agency strives to find, in the words of our former Executive Director and former Rehabilitation Services Administration Commissioner, "real jobs for real blind people." The mission of the New Mexico Commission for the Blind is to enable persons who are blind to achieve vocational, economic and social equality by providing career preparation, training in the skills of blindness and above all, promoting and conveying the belief that blindness is not a barrier to successful employment, or to living an independent and meaningful life. The Agency’s priorities include serving individuals with the most significant disabilities. As a result of current funding levels, all eligible individuals seeking rehabilitation services are being served. Should funding levels change, the Commission may adopt an Order of Selection, pursuant to applicable provisions of the Rehabilitation Act. Cooperative agreements have been established with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Aging and Long Term Services Department, Department of Health Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, Governor's Commission on Disability, Public Education Department, and Higher Education Department, New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons (CDHH), and New Mexico Highlands University. Input received by the State Rehabilitation Council and Commission staff, including the comprehensive needs assessment conducted during PY 2018, as well as a review of new performance indicators under WIOA, identified operational priorities in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs:

The following goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the Commission for the Blind and the State Rehabilitation Council. Public meetings were held to gather comments in Hobbs on October 16, 2019; in Clovis on October 17, 2019; in Santa Fe on November 25, 2019; in Albuquerque on November 27, 2019; in Las Cruces on December 2, 2019; and in Alamogordo on December 3, 2019. The Goals and Priorities were reviewed and discussed at a regular meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council.
held in Santa Fe on October 21, 2019, and approved at a special meeting of the Council held in Albuquerque on December 16, 2019. Additional public meetings were subsequently conducted in Las Cruces on February 12, 2020; in Albuquerque on February 20, 2020; in Santa Fe on February 24, 2020; and in Farmington on March 5, 2020. In addition, the Workforce Solutions Department conducted two community forums, one in Albuquerque on February 21, 2020, and the other in Las Cruces on February 27, 2020. The results of the February 12, February 20, February 24, and March 5 public meetings were summarized and presented to the Executive Committee of the State Rehabilitation Council, which met on March 5, 2020. The results of the February 21 and February 27 community forum events were also summarized and presented to the Executive Committee during the March 5, 2020 meeting. The Executive Committee made no changes to the goals and priorities during the March 5, 2020 meeting.

a. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by proactively working to recruit, hire, and retain qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors, thereby providing greater continuity and consistency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services.

Agency Response: There is a national shortage of qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors, and the agency is engaging in maximum efforts to recruit, hire, and retain qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors.

b. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by providing appropriate vocational rehabilitation services to the growing population of older workers, many of whom will be unable or unwilling to retrain for work in a field different from their current occupations, thereby enabling these older workers to become or remain successfully employed.

Agency Response: The Commission is committed to serve the increasing population of older workers. The aging population has resulted in an aging workforce, and 50 percent of workers report that they plan on working beyond age 65. In addition, 25 percent of workers do not plan on retiring. These older workers will require intensive training to remain or become employed.

c. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by providing appropriate vocational rehabilitation services that support the maintaining of a healthy lifestyle that is conducive to becoming and remaining successfully employed, thereby enabling a greater portion of agency consumers to become and remain successfully employed.

Agency Response: The Commission recognizes that maintaining a healthy lifestyle can be conducive to obtaining and retaining an employment outcome, and will provide services designed to support healthy lifestyles when such services are necessary to obtaining and retaining employment.

d. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by providing vocational rehabilitation training and counseling that is designed to enhance and improve the soft skills of our consumers, which are becoming an increasing barrier to our consumers
becoming and remaining successfully employed. Agency Response: The Commission recognizes that having appropriate soft skills is essential to obtaining and retaining employment. The Commission will continue to use the Orientation Center and Skills Center to provide instruction in the area of soft skills, and will explore additional ways to enhance instruction in soft skills as a part of Pre-Employment Transition Services.

e. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by partnering and working with community colleges and One-Stop centers to more effectively utilize services available through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner-Peyser programs.

Agency Response: The agency has been participating in monthly partner meetings that have enhanced the coordination between the Commission and the partners. The Commission will continue to work cooperatively with the partners by designating specific points of contact, by providing appropriate information, and by entering into cooperative agreements where appropriate.

f. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by working cooperatively with the New Mexico Department of Health so as to develop opportunities for competitive and integrated employment for persons who are blind or visually impaired, which will be accomplished by working in partnership with the Medical Assistance Division, the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, and the Behavioral Health Services Division.

Agency Response: The agency will work cooperatively with the Department of Health, with the Medical Assistance Division, with the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, and with the Behavioral Health Services Division. The agency will designate specific points of contact for each of these entities, will provide information as appropriate, and will enter into a cooperative agreement with the Department of Health.

g. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by using the Orientation Center to provide employment preparation training for adults and transition students, including through the addition of an apartment training facility to be constructed adjacent to the Center. The proposed apartment facility will increase the capacity of the Orientation Center, will enable the Orientation Center to provide more realistic training, will eliminate the need to rent costly and less appropriate private apartments, and will reduce the number of instances in which costly out-of-state training will be necessary to meet the needs of consumers.

Agency Response: The proposed apartment project has been fully funded with state appropriations, and construction should start during calendar year 2020.

h. Increase the number of consumers served through enhanced Outreach Activities; including media outreach, use of paid advertising, through increased collaboration with ophthalmologists and optometrists, and through the use of the Technology for Children program to conduct outreach to school districts.
Agency Response: The agency will continue to work to increase outreach to the identified groups using the recommended methods.

i. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes of transition consumers by providing enhanced Pre-Employment Transition Services, including assistive technology where appropriate as a part of an Individualized Plan for Employment, by providing assistive technology through the Technology for Children Program, by conducting increased outreach activities, by conducting educational activities to meet the specific needs of transition students, and by increasing proficient use of Braille and Braille math.

Agency Response: The agency will continue to work to increase services to Pre-Employment Transition Students using the identified methods. The agency already seeks to be involved in Individualized Education Plan meetings for transition consumers starting at age 14, and the agency operates the Students in Transition to Employment Program in Albuquerque and in Alamogordo. On February 2, 2019, the agency sponsored a workshop on Unified English Braille, and the agency will continue to sponsor Unified English Braille workshops and National Certification in Unified English Braille exams. The agency is also renewing agreements with state and local educational officials.

j. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers by providing services in a way that genuinely honors the "informed choice" provisions of the Rehabilitation Act, enabling Commission consumers to have the opportunity to obtain employment at higher levels of compensation.

Agency Response: The agency continues to provide services in a way that enables consumers to set and obtain high employment goals. For the federal fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, the average starting wage for consumers was $16.47.

k. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers by providing a quality and expanding Newsline system that gives consumers access to employment listings, business news, and other important information, including through both local Newsline and through NFB-Newsline.

Agency Response: The agency is committed to providing a quality Newsline service. The agency will continue to sponsor NFB-Newsline in New Mexico, which provides access to over 400 national publications.

l. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by innovatively using the Skills Center to meet the needs of vocational rehabilitation consumers and potential vocational rehabilitation consumers, including using it for provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services.

Agency Response: The agency is committed to using the Skills Center to meet the needs of vocational rehabilitation consumers, and especially consumers receiving Pre-Employment Transition Services. As a result, the agency used the Skills Center to provide training to participants in the Students in Transition to Employment Program, as well as student and Braille seminars. The Skills Center was also used to provide training to
individual students, and was used as a meeting place for programs related to vocational rehabilitation.

m. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes for consumers who are Deaf-Blind through collaboration and partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, with the Community Outreach Programs for the Deaf, and with the Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, including through the delivery of assistive technology to consumers who are Deaf-Blind.

Agency Response: The agency has assigned a vocational rehabilitation counselor to take the lead on services related to consumers who are Deaf-Blind. The agency also works with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to coordinate provision of services to persons who are Deaf-Blind. The agency works with a variety of other partners, including the Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Community Outreach Program for the Deaf, the Helen Keller National Center, and the Deaf-Blind Task Force. The agency also participates in the annual Deaf-Blind Awareness Day at the Roundhouse.

n. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes through the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) by shortening the time required for vendors to complete the required training, including by using Randolph-Sheppard Act training offered by the Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Agency Response: The agency has adopted the Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired as the training provider for BEP vendors, and is working with New Mexico programs to create a local provider so that food preparation and cooking methods can be taught locally.

o. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by strengthening administrative services so as to timely and accurately submit federal reports, to assure compliance with all applicable fiscal regulations, and to comply with all applicable accounting standards.

Agency Response: The agency recognizes the need to have strong fiscal programs so as to maximize the receipt of federal funds, and to otherwise provide appropriate vocational rehabilitation services to our consumers. To do this, the agency must have in place a sufficient number of qualified fiscal staff to comply with federal fiscal rules, and to appropriately respond to changing fiscal requirements.

p. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by enhancing overall performance and productivity by engaging in activities designed to mitigate and ameliorate the impacts of blindness and visual impairment, and by engaging in outreach and other activities designed to identify additional potential consumers, and by making the public and medical community more aware of Commission services.

Agency Response: The agency is engaging in new and innovative approaches to provide services and conduct outreach. The agency has a new web page that allows for referrals
to be made by health care professionals, and the web page enables members of the public to sign up to automatically be emailed meeting notices, agendas, and minutes.

q. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes for consumers by providing enhanced benefits counseling and guidance to reduce concerns related to the loss or reduction of benefits.

Agency Response: The Commission continues to provide benefits counseling and guidance through a contract with the New Mexico Legal Aid Society. The agency has also provided training on benefits to vocational rehabilitation counselors and consumers.

The goals and priorities described above were jointly developed and agreed to by the Commission for the Blind and the State Rehabilitation Council.

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;

Input received by the State Rehabilitation Council and Commission staff, including the comprehensive needs assessment conducted during PY 2018, as well as a review of new performance indicators under WIOA, identified operational priorities in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs:

The goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the Commission for the Blind and the State Rehabilitation Council. Public meetings were held to gather comments in Hobbs on October 16, 2019; in Clovis on October 17, 2019; in Santa Fe on November 25, 2019; in Albuquerque on November 27, 2019; in Las Cruces on December 2, 2019; and in Alamogordo on December 3, 2019. The Goals and Priorities were reviewed and discussed at a regular meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council held in Santa Fe on October 21, 2019, and approved at a special meeting of the Council held in Albuquerque on December 16, 2019.

B. THE STATE’S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

Performance measures have been baseline during PY 2016 through PY 2019 for Title IV entities, and, except for Measurable Skill Gain, continue as baseline for Title IV entities during PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, the goals and priorities established for PY 2020, including recruiting and retention of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, supporting older workers, promoting healthy lifestyles, promoting soft skills training, utilizing community colleges and one-stop centers, working with Department of Health, utilizing Commission Orientation Center, conducting outreach, delivering transition services, promoting informed choice, promoting Newsline, utilizing Commission Skills Center, supporting deaf-blind services, supporting the Business Enterprise program, delivering benefits counseling, and improving internal administrative services support the performance measures. All of the goals and priorities factor directly into skill gain, credential attainment, and employer supports, which themselves factor into the quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers.
C. OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON THE OPERATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VR PROGRAM, INCLUDING ANY REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MONITORING ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED UNDER SECTION 107.

The agency’s last Section 107 Monitoring took place in 2010. Pursuant to that Monitoring, the agency developed and implemented a Corrective Action Plan. The Corrective Action Plan was approved by the Rehabilitation Services Administration, and all corrective action has been completed. The agency anticipates that it may be monitored in Federal Fiscal Year 2020 or 2021. In preparation of being monitored and as a part of the agency internal control process, the agency has contracted with an external fiscal specialist to conduct test monitoring of the Commission. The test monitoring utilizes the most current Federal Monitoring and Technical Assistance Guide (MTAG). The most recent such test monitoring took place March 25 to March 29, 2019. All of the questions on the RSA Monitoring Instrument for Financial Management were covered during the review, and the prior Section 107 Monitoring Report was also reviewed. The SF-425 Federal Financial Reports and the RSA-2 Annual Vocational Rehabilitation Program Cost Reports were also reviewed. A focus area of the review was on Pre-Employment Transition Services. No significant issues were identified during the test monitoring. This test monitoring process has been used to assist the agency to identify and correct potential fiscal issues. The results of this test monitoring were reported at a special meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council held on May 16, 2019. At that same Council meeting, the Commission reviewed the agency Allowable Cost Policy and Procedure. The agency continues to be audited under the Single Audit process as required by 2 CFR 200.501 Audit Requirements, and pursuant to 2.2.2 NMAC, Requirements for Contracting and Conducting Governmental Audits. It should be noted that the agency has been audited by the Office of the State Auditor (OSA) since SFY 2017, and that the OSA applies a more rigorous review than what is typical of most single audits. The agency has only had minor findings in recent Single Audits. The last Single Audit was for State Fiscal Year 2019. The audit has been submitted to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse in compliance with 2 CFR Part 200.512 Report submission. The agency had one minor finding in the SFY 2019 audit. The finding was 2019-001, and concerned capital assets which were disposed of in prior years and not properly removed from the capital asset listing. The Commission had identified the issue, and has implemented internal controls to ensure that disposed of assets are properly removed from the capital asset listing.

M. ORDER OF SELECTION

Describe:

1. WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

A. THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES

The Commission believes that it has enough resources to serve all applicants for services and is not on an order of selection.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

No Response

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS
D. TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER; AND

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

2. IF THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS ELECTED TO SERVE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS, REGARDLESS OF ANY ESTABLISHED ORDER OF SELECTION, WHO REQUIRE SPECIFIC SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT

N. 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 Commission has set forth as a top priority the goal of serving individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities, with a quality employment outcome as the end result. A supported employment outcome for individuals with multiple or severe disabilities is a priority with these individuals being served in competitive integrated settings pursuant to the Olmstead decision and WIOA. Some of these individuals have recently been de-institutionalized and some live in isolated rural settings. The Commission has sought to enhance supported employment placements in the consumer’s own community to provide employment in familiar surroundings and close proximity to natural supports. This activity is intended to address the lack of placement options in rural portions of the State. The Commission will continue to work with Community Rehabilitation Programs, Native American VR Programs, consumer organizations, disability groups, advocates and other stakeholders to assess the degree to which current staffing patterns and service delivery activities achieve the goal of improving employment outcomes, in competitive integrated settings, in rural portions of the State. These groups will advise Agency management in designing, as necessary, new Agency service patterns to provide a continuum of services to this population. The Agency will seek to increase the number of supported employment consumers during the next year and will continue to review cases for appropriate identification for supported employment. Services typically identified for these consumers include training, transportation, comprehensive assessments, appropriate assistive technology, job coaching, interpreting, and other vocational services. These services will be provided through purchase of direct services using regular VR funds. Following job placement, services can be provided using both Title I and Title VI funds.

Extended services have historically been provided through various methods, including the Developmental Disabilities Waiver, the Home & Community Based Medicaid Waiver, the Brain Injury Services Fund, 1619(b), the Working Disabled Individual category of Medicaid, subsidized employment, Employment-Related Work Expenses, Blind Work Expenses, and by arranging for natural supports. The Agency focuses on developing natural supports through co-workers, family members, and friends whenever possible, and by providing training to potential job coaches, who in turn provide services to enable consumers to obtain and maintain employment. The Commission is able to fund extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities for up to four years or until the individual turns age 25, whichever comes
first. Youth services offered under Supported Employment are determined on an individual basis depending on the needs of the consumer. Services to youth with the most significant disabilities begin at age 14, and include representation by Commission counselors at IEP meetings, support in school-based transition programs for youth age 18-21, and summer job experiences. The Commission provides summer employment experiences for youth with the most significant disabilities through its Students in Transition to Employment Program, which provides employment and training experiences at its Alamogordo training center, its Albuquerque Skills Center, and community-based placements throughout New Mexico.

Specific goals for PY 2020 include: 1. At least three closures in competitive integrated settings; 2. Closures averaging at least minimum wage (varies from $9.00 to $11.80 per hour); 3. Closures averaging at least fifteen hours worked per week.

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 Commission provides extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities following the closure of their VR case for a period of up to four years or until the individual turns age 25, whichever comes first. The Commission believes this is a particularly beneficial improvement within WIOA. The Commission will use supported employment funds, as well as regular VR funds, to provide extended services.

B. HOW THE STATE WILL LEVERAGE OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDS TO INCREASE RESOURCES FOR EXTENDED SERVICES AND EXPANDED SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

The Commission provides extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities following the closure of their VR case for a period of up to four years or until the individual turns age 25, whichever comes first. As the consumer approaches the limit for Commission funding of extended services, the Commission will assist in the transition to other sources of funding and natural supports for the provision of extended services. Sources may include the Developmental Disabilities Waiver, the Home & Community Based Medicaid Waiver, the Brain Injury Services Fund, 1619(b), the Working Disabled Individual Category of Medicaid, subsidized employment, Employment-Related Work Expenses, Blind Work Expenses, and by arranging for natural supports. The Agency focuses on developing natural supports through co-workers, family members, and friends whenever possible, and by providing training to potential job coaches, who in turn provide services to enable consumers to obtain and maintain employment.

O. STATE’S STRATEGIES

Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The Mission of the New Mexico Commission for the Blind is to enable persons who are blind to achieve vocational, economic and social equality by providing career
preparation, training in the skills of blindness and above all, promoting and conveying the belief that blindness is not a barrier to successful employment, or to living an independent and meaningful life. The Commission will make every effort to meet and exceed the performance accountability indicators outlined by WIOA. The Commission’s efforts are also directed toward accomplishment of the goals and priorities identified in description (I), State Goals and Priorities, and description (n), Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI Funds: Services provided to accomplish these objectives include rehabilitation counseling, individualized training, comprehensive blindness training in a residential setting, independent living services provided to vocational rehabilitation consumers, educational and support services, and meaningful opportunities for employment in competitive integrated work settings supported through the provision of assistive technology and other workplace modifications. The Agency also provides career training, training in a variety of blindness skills, and above all, promotes and conveys the philosophy that blindness is not a barrier to employment or any other aspect of a full, meaningful life.

The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities. The Commission is committed to expanding and improving services to blind and visually-impaired New Mexicans who are interested in obtaining, retaining, or advancing in employment. The Commission believes that the first step in this process is to build and improve relationships with core partners under WIOA. Partnerships of this kind will serve to leverage resources of each agency. The first benefit of these relationships will be an opportunity to identify additional consumers who might not have been aware of the availability of Commission services and their potential to engage in integrated and competitive employment. This could include supported employment and non-supported employment consumers as well as students with disabilities and youth with the most significant disabilities. It can also include individuals who could benefit from training at the Orientation Center, including those who might benefit from the proposed apartment facility at the Orientation Center. The Commission recognizes that there is a need to expand its assistive technology training services, but is constrained by the lack of qualified trainers with experience in the assistive technology used by persons who are blind or visually impaired. Consequently, the Commission will engage in activities designed to identify additional methods and resources that can help to improve assistive technology training. This will include providing training to existing employees to expand capacity, and use of external contracted trainers who can be brought to New Mexico to provide intensive technology training. When it comes to placements, the Commission has positive relationships with many employers and employment organizations. However, to improve the opportunity for placements in competitive and integrated settings, the Commission will engage in additional work with federal contractors, which now have goals for hiring persons with disabilities. The Commission will also expand support of self-employment goals, which can be the most appropriate option for many individuals. New Mexico has a strong state use law which provides for “qualified individuals” to engage in competitive and integrated work with state and governmental entities. The agency Executive Director is a member of the New Mexico Council for Purchasing from Persons with Disabilities, which administers the state use program. Accordingly, the Commission will explore ways to more fully utilize the employment opportunities presented by the State Use Act.
The Commission believes that assistive technology is an important way to level the playing field for its blind and visually impaired consumers. The agency has an effective process for evaluating consumers to determine their technology and assistive technology needs and purchasing those items, whether they be needed for home, school, or work sites. The software and hardware cover the landscape of traditional technology, including computers, printers, monitors, scanners, tablets, and smart phones; plus assistive technology that includes magnification, speech output, Braille, optical character recognition, book readers, and accessible smart phone apps. The Commission will evaluate its technology staff to better utilize their respective skills and assign training tasks to those who are particularly skilled in that area. Additionally, the Commission will recruit contract trainers who can provide in-person and remote training. Remote training is necessary since New Mexico is a very large state with a relatively small population. The Commission will continue purchasing subscriptions to digital training materials which pair the software application with the assistive technology solution, such as teaching Microsoft Word 2019 with JAWS (JAWS is a popular screen reading program). Although these textbooks are efficient for the self-starter and also serve as an excellent reference, consumers who are not self-starters need a human option. The Commission will also use resources such as the Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired to provide training on specific applications and operating systems. Finally, the Commission will work on expanding assistive technology training provided at the Orientation Center in Alamogordo through the construction of the proposed apartment facility which will attract additional consumers and expand capacity at the Center. The apartment facility will also enable the Commission to provide assistive technology training to consumers during the summer STEP program, during which time the dormitory is occupied by transition students age 14 to 21. PY 2020 marks the fourteenth year of a MOA with the Department of Health and the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The MOA administers an allocation from DOH of $80,000, designed to provide assistive technology that, for a disability other than blindness, would be considered durable medical equipment. This initiative serves blind children that are both transition-age and those not yet transition-age. The Coordinator of the Technology for Children program, along with members of her team, are thus able to provide assistive technology support to transition consumers, including those residing in economically disadvantaged and rural school districts. The Coordinator of the Technology for Children program and one of her staff members also speaks Spanish. The agency will promote the program and solicit applications for program services through its annual letter to the special education directors of all 89 school districts in New Mexico; through new MOUs with individual school districts; and through communication with transition specialist, Teachers of the Visually Impaired, and Orientation and Mobility Specialists throughout the state. The Commission also works with Community Outreach Programs for the Deaf to register Commission consumers for the iCanConnect program. iCanConnect is another name for the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program (NDBEDP), a federal program designed to provide distance communications technology and training for people with combined hearing and vision disabilities, and to increase opportunities for independence for this underserved population to stay connected with family, friends, service providers, and their communities. There is a wide range of equipment available depending on client needs. Some examples include: Braille devices, Computers, Mobile devices, Phones, and
Signalers. A member of the Commission’s Skills Center staff serves on the New Mexico Technology Assistance Program (NMTAP) advisory board, publicizing Commission services and providing consultant services regarding specialized technology for the blind and visually impaired. NMTAP offers free services to New Mexicans with disabilities to help them get the assistive technology services they need. NMTAP is a statewide program designed to increase knowledge of, access to, and acquisition of assistive or adaptive technology for anyone with any disability, of any age, anywhere in the state. Their mission is to help individuals with disabilities enhance their quality of life through the use of assistive technology. To fulfill this mission, the NMTAP staff provides many services to individuals with disabilities, their family members, and service providers, including support to individuals transitioning into higher education, work, or community living. The Commission received a grant of $75,000 from NMTAP in FY 2014 to outfit its Skills Center. The grant enabled the commission to purchase a variety of computers (both Mac and Windows) and assistive technology, (Braille displays, cameras for optical character recognition systems, note-taking devices, and screen reading and screen magnification software and hardware). The equipment makes it possible for Commission consumers to compare competing products from manufacturers so as to make an informed choice when choosing the technology tools that will work best for their individual situation. The technology is also used to support training in the Skills Center, including specialized workshops for adults/youth and the Students in Transition to Employment summer program for students with disabilities and youth with the most significant disabilities. The Commission operates the Students in Transition to Employment Program (STEP) to provide training and actual work experiences to students and youth who are blind or visually impaired. The Commission will continue to provide the STEP program in Albuquerque, Alamogordo, and through community placements across the state. The Commission recognizes the need to address growing deficiencies in the computer and Braille skills of students attending public schools, and is developing strategies to address these deficiencies. These strategies include topical seminars, classes conducted at the Skills Center, and use of programs such as the Hadley School for the Blind.

3. THE OUTREACH PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED TO IDENTIFY AND SERVE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE MINORITIES, INCLUDING THOSE WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM

The Commission plans to conduct outreach to identify and serve individuals who are minorities, including those who have most significant disabilities, and those who are unserved or underserved. The Agency will focus on the following comprehensive initiatives during the upcoming year: Newsline is an important part of the Commission’s outreach program to identify and serve most significantly disabled persons who are minorities, and individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation or supported employment program. Newsline provides access free of charge to state and national publications to individuals in all portions of New Mexico, including in the most rural portions of the state. The local Newsline and NFB-Newsline have publications that include newspapers from Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Los Alamos, Alamogordo, Farmington, Roswell, and Las Cruces, as well as a job search utility that provides blind job seekers with access to the CareerBuilder jobs database. NFB-Newsline also provides publications and prompts in Spanish. NFB-Newsline voices can also be
customized to meet the needs of individuals who are hard of hearing, and NFB-Newsline offers the ability to download publications for reading on a Braille display. This feature enables individuals who are deaf-blind to access the more than 400 national newspapers and magazines on NFB-Newsline. Commission counselors, technology specialists, Orientation Center teachers, Business Enterprise Program consultants, and rehab teachers will promote and demonstrate the program to Commission consumers. In an effort to reach out to populations that have been unserved or underserved, the Commission will continue the operation of field offices, four of which are located in rural portions of the state where there is a greater portion of persons who are unserved or underserved. For example, the northwest section of the State is served by the Farmington office, and is primarily rural and includes a large portion of the Navajo, Jicarilla Apache, and pueblo Native American communities. The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and Rehab Teacher in Farmington are sensitive to the cultural aspects of the communities they serve. The Rehab Teacher is himself Navajo and speaks Dine Bizaadthe, the Navajo language. The staff in the Las Vegas office is likewise sensitive to the unique cultural aspects of northern New Mexico, and is fluent in Spanish. This is also the case for the Las Cruces office and southern New Mexico, where the technology specialist is bilingual. The Coordinator of the Technology for Children program and a member of her staff are bilingual, and there are several teachers and employees at the Orientation Center who are bilingual. The Vocational Rehabilitation program will establish a process to review cases that have been closed as unsuccessful. The goal will be to reach out to individuals who have exited the system and inquire if they would like their case re-opened. This will enable the Commission to reach additional individuals who come from minority or unserved or underserved populations, giving them an additional opportunity to receive services. The Commission also has a significant percentage of staff members who speak Spanish, enabling the agency to better reach individuals who are monolingual Spanish speakers, or who speak Spanish as their primary language. The Students in Transition to Employment Program (STEP) will continue with its efforts to provide work experience and skills training to blind students during the summer months, including to students who are from unserved or underserved populations. STEP will continue to engage in outreach to recruit students with the most significant disabilities, including students from minority backgrounds, and students who are also unserved or underserved. The STEP program is also operated on a residential basis in Alamogordo, which allows students from even the most economically disadvantaged and rural portions of the state to participate. STEP students earn a salary during the employment portion of the program. In addition to providing essential job training and experience, this also has the benefit of serving as a significant incentive for many students from economically disadvantaged families, enabling the Commission to reach and attract more individuals into the program. After making 29 placements in Summer 2019, the Commission will strive to place 40 students and youth in summer jobs in 2020. There are 89 school districts in New Mexico, most of which are in economically disadvantaged and rural portions of the state. Most of these districts do not have teachers who are specifically trained to instruct students who are blind or visually impaired. The Commission will continue sending annual letters to special education directors at each of these school districts in order to make them aware of Commission transition services. Rehabilitation counselors will contact local public school transition coordinators, guidance counselors, or other appropriate personnel to identify children age 13 or over with visual impairments. Counselors will also attend transition-related events, where they can meet school personnel from around New Mexico. The Commission will also make parents aware of Commission services by making presentations and distributing information to
members of parent organizations, such as the National Federation of the Blind Parents of Blind Children Division. These outreach activities will result in additional contacts with teachers and parents, and increase familiarity with Commission services. The Technology for Children Coordinator will continue to provide services to students from unserved or underserved backgrounds, and to build relationships with school districts that serve students who are unserved or underserved. The Technology for Children program is an important outreach activity, and is also a frequent point of first contact with the agency. It provides information to the public, parents, and schools about the Commission’s vocational rehabilitation program in a way that significantly enhances the agency transition services. It also provides technical assistance and support services that enhance the agency’s ability to work cooperatively with school districts. The agency has a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Department of Health and the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The MOA will administer an allocation from DOH of $80,000, designed to provide assistive technology that, for a disability other than blindness, would be considered durable medical equipment. The individual who coordinates the Technology for Children program and one of her staff members also speak Spanish. The Commission recognizes that individuals who are Deaf-Blind are often unserved or underserved, as are eligible individuals who have a hearing impairment. To address this need, the Commission has obtained an affiliate status with the Helen Keller National Center. The Commission will continue to participate in regular meetings held around the state with an HKNC consultant, local/regional school counselors, and community rehabilitation providers. The agency will work to have the regional representative from Helen Keller travel to New Mexico in PY 2020 to deliver training to Commission counselors. The Agency has also entered into a Joint Powers Agreement and a Memorandum of Understanding with the New Mexico Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing to identify and serve eligible individuals who also have hearing impairments. In addition, the Commission has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation on how the agencies will serve this population. The MOU is designed to streamline services and avoid unnecessary service delays. The OneStop employment system faces special challenges in New Mexico due to the rural nature of the state and the state’s very large geographic area. As a result, there are relatively few OneStop offices that serve the state. The Commission currently has representation on two of the four local Workforce Development Boards in addition to the executive director serving on the state board. Appointments of commission staff members to the other two local boards are expected during PY 2020. Commission representatives on these boards promote Commission services, represent vocational rehabilitation perspectives, educate board members (especially board members from businesses), help Commission consumers to better access the One-Stop services, and also help to make the employees of the One-Stop more aware of Commission services. The agency has nine Rehab Teacher positions (one is currently vacant), which enables the agency to reduce the geographic coverage of each teacher and improve the quality of service delivery statewide. Rehab Teachers are required to assist and participate in local support groups, which help the Commission to identify and serve persons who are from minority backgrounds, or who are otherwise unserved or underserved. The Commission will continue this support group effort, with a special focus on outreach to Native Americans, rural minority populations, and other areas that contain communities of individuals who are unserved or underserved. Approximately 15 support groups are operating throughout the State, with ongoing facilitation being provided in several groups by consumers or former consumers. The majority of the support groups serve consumers in very rural areas with large populations of persons who are minorities, or who are otherwise unserved or
underserved. Examples include Farmington, Silver City, Clovis, and Carlsbad. In addition to the outreach methods identified above, the Commission will research other methods to reach blind and visually impaired youth and adults who could benefit from Commission services. The Commission will also work to expand services at the orientation Center in Alamogordo, which serves many individuals from unserved or underserved backgrounds. Many of these individuals come from rural portions of the state, where they did not receive appropriate blindness skills training from their local schools. The agency will work to expand these services through the construction of an apartment facility at the orientation Center in Alamogordo. This proposed apartment facility will enable the Orientation Center to expand capacity and serve more individuals from unserved or underserved backgrounds.

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 Commission recognizes the need to expand and improve transition services. Counselors regularly communicate with special education directors, transition specialists, orientation and mobility specialists, and teachers of the visually impaired in their service territories. The Commission communicates each year with each of the special education directors in the 89 school districts throughout New Mexico and has signed MOUs with 17 of those school districts so far in an effort to improve transition services. Counselors also attend training on transition issues when available. The Deputy Director for Vocational Rehabilitation Programs has served on the Statewide Transition Coordinating Council for many years, and will encourage the STCC to become more active. In an effort to improve its transition program, the commission has reclassified one of its vocational rehabilitation counselor positions into a counselor supervisor position responsible for transition services. Effective with PY 2017, the Commission partnered with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation on a contract with the New Mexico Central Region Educational Cooperative (CREC) to deliver pre-employment transition services to high school students across New Mexico. Effective in PY 2019, the Commission negotiated its own Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with CREC. Under the agreement, Commission high school-age clients will be included in job exploration counseling, counseling on post-secondary opportunities, self-advocacy training, and job skills training delivered by CREC. CREC job developers will help to place Commission high school students interested in work-based learning experiences, primarily during summers, but also in after-school or weekend jobs during the regular school year. Although the Students in Transition to Employment program has been the centerpiece for providing summer work experiences to students with disabilities and youth with the most significant disabilities, the Commission will work with its counselors, local education agencies, and the business development specialists from one-stop centers to expand work opportunities throughout New Mexico. These opportunities will include job shadowing, after-school, weekend, and summer employment. The commission will also deliver employment readiness workshops throughout the year.
The Commission signed a Governmental Services Agreement (GSA) with the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NMSBI) in May of 2019. Under this GSA, the Commission funds the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services that are provided by NMSBVI. The purpose is to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from the receipt of educational and Pre-Employment Transition Services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services from the Commission.

Although support of careers requiring post-secondary education, especially graduate education, appears to be an area of newly increased emphasis under WIOA, it has been an emphasis of Commission services for many years. The Commission has identified a trend of an increasing number of blind and visually-impaired students leaving the public school system who are not prepared for post-secondary programs. Consequently, the reading, math, and English literacy classes offered through Adult Basic Education are necessary to prepare these Commission consumers for the post-secondary vocational training and education programs that will ultimately lead to successful careers. The Commission will work with community colleges to ensure that these programs are accessible to blind and visually-impaired students. The Commission will address the five required Pre-Employment Transition Services as follows: a. Job exploration counseling: The commission has historically focused exclusively on employment in competitive integrated settings and self-employment. A large part of the career assessment process is helping the consumer to identify a career that is the best fit for them. The Commission’s Career Choice Questionnaire is a template for consumers to research prospective careers, including interviewing individuals currently working in those fields, identifying prospective industry mentors, and job shadowing. The Commission will continue to encourage students and youth to actively research careers in order to find the career that is the right fit. Commission high school clients will also be supported by the CREC IGA and the NMSBVI GSA. b. Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities, or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible; In addition to the Students in Transition to Employment Program (STEP) summer program, the Commission will expand its transition services to support in-school, weekend and after-school work opportunities for students with disabilities and youth with the most significant disabilities throughout New Mexico. The Commission will partner with local education agencies and one-stops to facilitate these work opportunities. Commission high school clients will also be supported by the CREC IGA and the NMSBVI GSA. c. Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education; The Commission has long supported careers requiring post-secondary education, including graduate education. The Commission will continue this practice since careers requiring post-secondary education, including graduate education, often command good salaries and good benefits. Commission high school clients will also be supported by the CREC IGA and the NMSBVI GSA. d. Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living; In addition to a summer job in a competitive integrated setting, The Commission’s Students in Transition to Employment Program includes a significant workplace readiness training component. However, in order to expand workplace readiness training services, the Commission will begin offering additional workshops and seminars. The Commission has recently added staff to its Albuquerque Skills Center specifically for this purpose. The Skills Center will offer seminars and workshops for high school students, college students, and parents. Training will be delivered throughout the
year, during summers, school breaks, after school, and through distance delivery methods. Topics cover the landscape, including parent participation, MS Windows, Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook, mobile technology, computer operator maintenance, and training on various assistive technology software and hardware; notetaking skills, Braille, math, college success, summer employment preparation, Hadley support days, job readiness, professional dress and appearance, resume writing, job search strategies, mock interviews, Newsline resources (newspapers, magazines, research capabilities, and job search functions); transportation options, and financial literacy. Commission high school clients will also be supported by the CREC IGA and the NMSBVI GSA. e. Instruction in self-advocacy, which may include peer mentoring. Although self-advocacy is a regular part of counseling/guidance services, the Commission will develop a more-structured approach to self-advocacy training in order to provide more consistency in this area. Commission high school clients will also be supported by the CREC IGA and the NMSBVI GSA. Technology will be an added service in support of each of the above approaches. The Commission has observed that many blind and visually impaired high school students are unable to use a computer sufficiently to take and retrieve their own class notes, conduct Internet research, compose and edit writing assignments, prepare PowerPoint presentations, and manage email. Technology training will be enhanced to fill this need using agency staff, contract trainers, and digital self-paced training materials.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE

The Commission plans to build a four unit apartment facility on donated property adjacent to the dormitory at our Orientation Center in Alamogordo and a capital outlay funding request has been approved for its construction. Currently, the dormitory can accommodate up to 15 students. Typical of many dormitory facilities, the Orientation Center dorm provides meal service to students attending the training center. The Commission does rent apartments in a complex approximately 1.5 miles away in order to provide an independent living opportunity for students nearing the end of their center training experience. There is broad agreement that such independent living experiences are essential for center students as they transition from living with parents or family members to living independently. Goals in Building the Apartment Facility: After the proposed apartments have been built, the Orientation Center will increase overall capacity by 3 to 4 individuals at any one time, allowing for as many as 6 to 8 individuals to be served during any one year. This will help further the integration and competitive employment of persons who are blind or visually impaired. After the proposed apartments have been built, the Orientation Center will acquire the ability to provide continued training for up to 3 to 4 adult during the months of June and July when the Orientation Center and dormitory are otherwise being used to provide training to transition students aged 14 to 21 as part of the Commission’s Students in Transition to Employment (STEP) program. Because of the particular circumstances required to make such continued training appropriate for adults, it is projected that 2 adults will on the average receive such training in any one year. By receiving such continued training, these adults will be able to graduate sooner and with a higher likelihood of success. This will help further the integration and competitive employment of persons who are blind or visually impaired. After the proposed apartments have been built, the Orientation Center will have an increased number of persons electing to attend training at the Orientation Center rather than decline training or attend more expensive training at an out-of-state training center. It is anticipated that 3 to 4 individuals will elect to attend training each year at the
Orientation Center who would not have otherwise elected to receive training, and that an average of 1 to 2 individuals per year will attend training at the Orientation Center rather than attend an out-of-state training center. Because these persons will be served closer to their homes and families and other sources of natural supports, this will help further the integration and competitive employment of persons who are blind or visually impaired.

Results of Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, The Commission for the Blind conducted a Comprehensive Statewide Needs assessment (CSNA) in PY 2018 that identified the need to “improve the Orientation Center in Alamogordo through the construction of an apartment facility.” The CSNA consisted of the following: a. Results from public hearings and town forums, and b. A review of the Commission’s Strategic Plan and a review of relevant demographic data. CSNA Results, The Strategic Plan and the demographic data showed an increasing need for additional capacity at the Orientation Center. The Strategic Plan has as a Goal and Priority the building of the apartment facility. The Strategic Plan also identifies a growing population of persons who are blind or visually impaired, and especially of transition age consumers. The demographic data showed a rapidly increasing population of persons who are blind, and especially persons who are under 18. According to the American Community Survey results for the last two years, the population of persons under 18 in New Mexico increased by 34.6% in just one year. This constitutes a dramatically growing population of young persons who will require training at the Orientation Center in the coming years. This is likely due in significant part to the increasing population of persons with Optic Nerve hypoplasia and the increasing rate of children with Retinopathy of Prematurity. In addition, there is a significant one-year increase for persons aged 18 to 64. This increase reflects a growing population of working-age persons who will require training at the Orientation Center. With the population of persons with diabetes growing dramatically, including for Hispanics who have nearly a 50 percent lifetime risk of diabetes, the orientation Center can expect to see increasing numbers of persons with diabetic retinopathy.

Reasonableness and Effectiveness In considering the need for apartment facilities, the results of the CSNA were considered with respect to other options for provision of such training. The proposed apartment facility was determined to be an especially effective and reasonable method of providing such training considering the cost of providing out-of-state training to an average of 1 to 2 persons per year who would otherwise decide to receive training at the Orientation Center if the proposed apartment facility is constructed. Because such training costs an average of approximately $4,000 per month, and because the training typically takes 6 to 9 months, and because such training also requires additional travel and associated costs, the proposed apartment facility is a more reasonable and cost effective method of providing such training when the long-term costs are considered. In addition, the proposed apartments will eliminate the need to rent a corresponding number of apartments in Alamogordo, saving up to $3,000 per month in rental expenses alone. The proposed apartments will also be designed and maintained in compliance with modern building codes and accessibility requirements, reducing the potential liability associated with placing students at older and less well-maintained private facilities. This is especially significant since the New Mexico Tort Claims Act has waived sovereign immunity for negligent maintenance, meaning that the Commission for the Blind would have significant liability if a student was injured while staying at a privately rented apartment. As mentioned in the introduction, the Commission currently rents apartments that are 1.5 miles away from the center, requiring additional expenditures for staff time when transporting students, as well as additional vehicle
mileage. The proximity of the proposed apartment facility to the center will also translate to more prompt and reliable attendance, making for more efficient training. The proximity of the proposed apartment facility to the existing dormitory also allows for better peer mentoring and socialization amongst students, which is an important aspect of the training. Finally, the proposed apartment facility will allow for the Center to serve a greater number of students, increasing the overall effectiveness of the Center. Fortunately, a capital outlay appropriation from the New Mexico Legislature will enable construction of the apartments to begin during PY 2020 or PY 2021. Strategies The New Mexico Commission for the Blind is the only training center in the country that is certified by both the Commission on Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and the National Blindness Professional Certification Board (NBPCB). The Orientation Center will continue to seek accreditation by CARF. After the apartment facility has been built, the CARF visit and accreditation process will include an examination of the apartment facility. CARF has a strong belief in the integration and competitive employment of persons with disabilities, and the apartment facility will help the Orientation Center to continue to be CARF accredited. The Orientation Center will continue to seek certification from the NBPCB. After the apartment facility has been built, the NBPCB certification process will include an examination of the apartment facility. Because the NBPCB has an especially strong belief in the integration and competitive employment of persons who are blind or visually impaired, the apartment facility will help the Orientation Center to continue to be NBPCB certified as a greater number of students attending the Orientation center will have more opportunities to practice independent living skills. The Orientation Center will explore new and innovative methods of using the apartment facility that will further the integration and competitive employment of persons who are blind, including using the apartment facility to house consumers during the summer who will receive refresher training or other short term instruction on concentrated areas of need, such as technology or orientation and mobility. The Orientation Center will encourage students who have not lived on their own, or who have fears associated with living on their own, to transition into the apartment facility as a way of encouraging and fostering independence. Because such independent living is usually necessary for individuals who are attending a college or university, and since independent travel and lodging is a requirement of many professions, the use of the proposed apartments in this manner will further the integration and competitive employment of persons who are blind or visually impaired. The Orientation Center will engage in specific activities related to the apartment facility that will further the integration and competitive employment of persons who are blind or visually impaired, including using the apartment facility to better meet the individualized needs of persons with disabilities in addition to blindness, including disabilities and medical conditions that might make it difficult for such persons to reside in the dormitory.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

The Commission has reviewed data and has identified targets for Measurable Skill Gain.

a. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program

Baseline
b. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program -- This statutory language requires States to measure the employment rate of participants in the fourth quarter after exit from the program without regard to whether those participants were employed in the second quarter after exit from the program.

Baseline

c. The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit. -- This PM measures median earnings at the same time frame as the first PM measures the employment rate of participants:

Baseline

d. Credential attainment rate; -- Measures post-secondary credential attainment and high school completion of program participants during participation in the program or within 1 year after exit.

Baseline

Target PY 20 Negotiated 24%; PY 21 Negotiated 25% The Commission has historically encouraged pursuit of careers requiring post-secondary vocational training and education, including graduate education. Commission consumers, however, sometimes need more time to achieve post-secondary college degrees at the Associate’s, Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Doctorate levels. Reasons vary from needing more time to acquire the blindness skills necessary to be successful in post-secondary education environments, resulting in more semesters where the consumer is taking less than a full course load while ramping up to a full course load; breaks to get blindness skills training; and breaks to address medical conditions or secondary disabilities. Generally, this means that a smaller percentage of Commission consumers enrolled in post-secondary education programs are able to successfully complete the number of semester hours necessary to get credit for a Measurable Skill Gain each program year. As a result, the Commission believes that the negotiated targets are appropriate. The Commission will continue working to identify and address the barriers to employment in a way that will improve performance on this measure.

f. Effectiveness in serving employers: The State partners have chosen two approaches for this measure:

1. Employer penetration Rate; and

2. Repeat business customers.

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions is the lead agency on this measure. The Commission for the Blind has not captured data on this measure, but will look to do so in the future.
7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The Commission believes that the primary way it can assist other components of the statewide workforce development system to assist persons with disabilities is to make them aware of Commission programs through training and technical assistance, and to identify specific points of contact within the Commission. These points of contact, training, and technical assistance will enable workforce partners to refer prospective clients to the Commission when necessary, and for such referrals to be handled more efficiently and with less delay due to questions of eligibility.

8. HOW THE AGENCY’S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

Input received by the State Rehabilitation Council and Commission staff, including the comprehensive needs assessment conducted during PY 2018, as well as a review of new performance indicators under WIOA, identified operational priorities in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs:

a. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by proactively working to recruit, hire, and retain qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors, thereby providing greater continuity and consistency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services.

Agency Response: There is a national shortage of qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors, and the agency is engaging in maximum efforts to recruit, hire, and retain qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors.

b. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by providing appropriate vocational rehabilitation services to the growing population of older workers, many of whom will be unable or unwilling to retrain for work in a field different from their current occupations, thereby enabling these older workers to become or remain successfully employed.

Agency Response: The Commission is committed to serve the increasing population of older workers. The aging population has resulted in an aging workforce, and 50 percent of workers report that they plan on working beyond age 65. In addition, 25 percent of workers do not plan on retiring. These older workers will require intensive training to remain or become employed.

c. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by providing appropriate vocational rehabilitation services that support the maintaining of a healthy lifestyle that is conducive to becoming and remaining successfully employed, thereby enabling a greater portion of agency consumers to become and remain successfully employed.

Agency Response: The Commission recognizes that maintaining a healthy lifestyle can be conducive to obtaining and retaining an employment outcome, and will provide services...
designed to support healthy lifestyles when such services are necessary to obtaining and retaining employment.

d. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by providing vocational rehabilitation training and counseling that is designed to enhance and improve the soft skills of our consumers, which are becoming an increasing barrier to our consumers becoming and remaining successfully employed.

Agency Response: The Commission recognizes that having appropriate soft skills is essential to obtaining and retaining employment. The Commission will continue to use the Orientation Center and Skills Center to provide instruction in the area of soft skills, and will explore additional ways to enhance instruction in soft skills as a part of Pre-Employment Transition Services.

e. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by partnering and working with community colleges and One-Stop centers to more effectively utilize services available through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner-Peyser programs.

Agency Response: The agency has been participating in monthly partner meetings that have enhanced the coordination between the Commission and the partners. The Commission will continue to work cooperatively with the partners by designating specific points of contact, by providing appropriate information, and by entering into cooperative agreements where appropriate.

f. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by working cooperatively with the New Mexico Department of Health so as to develop opportunities for competitive and integrated employment for persons who are blind or visually impaired, which will be accomplished by working in partnership with the Medical Assistance Division, the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, and the Behavioral Health Services Division.

Agency Response: The agency will work cooperatively with the Department of Health, with the Medical Assistance Division, with the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, and with the Behavioral Health Services Division. The agency will designate specific points of contact for each of these entities, will provide information as appropriate, and will enter into a cooperative agreement with the Department of Health.

g. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by using the Orientation Center to provide employment preparation training for adults and transition students, including through the addition of an apartment training facility to be constructed adjacent to the Center. The proposed apartment facility will increase the capacity of the
Orientation Center, will enable the Orientation Center to provide more realistic training, will eliminate the need to rent costly and less appropriate private apartments, and will reduce the number of instances in which costly out-of-state training will be necessary to meet the needs of consumers.

Agency Response: The proposed apartment project has been fully funded with state appropriations, and construction should start during calendar year 2020.

h. Increase the number of consumers served through enhanced Outreach Activities; including media outreach, use of paid advertising, through increased collaboration with ophthalmologists and optometrists, and through the use of the Technology for Children program to conduct outreach to school districts.

Agency Response: The agency will continue to work to increase outreach to the identified groups using the recommended methods.

i. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes of transition consumers by providing enhanced Pre-Employment Transition Services, including assistive technology where appropriate as a part of an Individualized Plan for Employment, by providing assistive technology through the Technology for Children Program, by conducting increased outreach activities, by conducting educational activities to meet the specific needs of transition students, and by increasing proficient use of Braille and Braille math.

Agency Response: The agency will continue to work to increase services to Pre-Employment Transition Students using the identified methods. The agency already seeks to be involved in Individualized Education Plan meetings for transition consumers starting at age 14, and the agency operates the Students in Transition to Employment Program in Albuquerque and in Alamogordo. On February 2, 2019, the agency sponsored a workshop on Unified English Braille, and the agency will continue to sponsor Unified English Braille workshops and National Certification in Unified English Braille exams. The agency is also renewing agreements with state and local educational officials.

j. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers by providing services in a way that genuinely honors the “informed choice” provisions of the Rehabilitation Act, enabling Commission consumers to have the opportunity to obtain employment at higher levels of compensation.

Agency Response: The agency continues to provide services in a way that enables consumers to set and obtain high employment goals. For the federal fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, the average starting wage for consumers was $16.47.
k. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers by providing a quality and expanding Newsline system that gives consumers access to employment listings, business news, and other important information, including through both local Newsline and through NFB-Newsline.

Agency Response: The agency is committed to providing a quality Newsline service. The agency will continue to sponsor NFB-Newsline in New Mexico, which provides access to over 400 national publications.

l. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by innovatively using the Skills Center to meet the needs of vocational rehabilitation consumers and potential vocational rehabilitation consumers, including using it for provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services.

Agency Response: The agency is committed to using the Skills Center to meet the needs of vocational rehabilitation consumers, and especially consumers receiving Pre-Employment Transition Services. As a result, the agency used the Skills Center to provide training to participants in the Students in Transition to Employment Program, as well as student and Braille seminars. The Skills Center was also used to provide training to individual students, and was used as a meeting place for programs related to vocational rehabilitation.

m. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes for consumers who are Deaf-Blind through collaboration and partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, with the Community Outreach Programs for the Deaf, and with the Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, including through the delivery of assistive technology to consumers who are Deaf-Blind.

Agency Response: The agency has assigned a vocational rehabilitation counselor to take the lead on services related to consumers who are Deaf-Blind. The agency also works with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to coordinate provision of services to persons who are Deaf-Blind. The agency works with a variety of other partners, including the Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Community Outreach Program for the Deaf, the Helen Keller National Center, and the Deaf-Blind Task Force. The agency also participates in the annual Deaf-Blind Awareness Day at the Roundhouse.

n. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes through the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) by shortening the time required for vendors to complete the required training, including by using Randolph-Sheppard Act training offered by the Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Agency Response: The agency has adopted the Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired as the training provider for BEP vendors, and is working with New Mexico
programs to create a local provider so that food preparation and cooking methods can be taught locally.

o. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by strengthening administrative services so as to timely and accurately submit federal reports, to assure compliance with all applicable fiscal regulations, and to comply with all applicable accounting standards.

Agency Response: The agency recognizes the need to have strong fiscal programs so as to maximize the receipt of federal funds, and to otherwise provide appropriate vocational rehabilitation services to our consumers. To do this, the agency must have in place a sufficient number of qualified fiscal staff to comply with federal fiscal rules, and to appropriately respond to changing fiscal requirements.

p. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by enhancing overall performance and productivity by engaging in activities designed to mitigate and ameliorate the impacts of blindness and visual impairment, and by engaging in outreach and other activities designed to identify additional potential consumers, and by making the public and medical community more aware of Commission services.

Agency Response: The agency is engaging in new and innovative approaches to provide services and conduct outreach. The agency has a new web page that allows for referrals to be made by health care professionals, and the web page enables members of the public to sign up to automatically be emailed meeting notices, agendas, and minutes.

q. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes for consumers by providing enhanced benefits counseling and guidance to reduce concerns related to the loss or reduction of benefits.

Agency Response: The Commission continues to provide benefits counseling and guidance through a contract with the New Mexico Legal Aid Society. The agency has also provided training on benefits to vocational rehabilitation counselors and consumers.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

The agency supports the funding and program activities of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The Agency assumes all costs incurred for all regularly scheduled meetings, subcommittees and special meetings. This includes expenses related to securing meeting facilities, members’ travel and per diem expenses, interpreters, clerical support, office supplies, and materials. The Agency provides a staff person who prepares the agendas, minutes, and other materials as necessary for each scheduled meeting. The Agency provides a staff person to schedule and make all necessary arrangements for Public Hearings. The SRC is active in providing input into the Agency’s State Plan, Manual of Operating Procedures, and other matters pertaining to the Agency’s program of
activities. The Commission has sponsored NFB Newsline. This is an augment to our existing Newsline for the Blind. NFB Newsline enables our consumers to read over 400 national and international newspapers and magazines, four of which are Spanish-language publications, plus New Mexico newspapers, enhancing their ability to access information that is essential for success in both the academic and professional environments, as well as improving the quality of employment outcomes. The agency has also created the Skills Center, a training site to meet the needs of vocational rehabilitation consumers and potential vocational rehabilitation consumers. The agency is scheduling a variety of activities in the Skills Center. These activities include meetings, workshops, seminars, and other training events such as the summer Students in Transition to Employment Program. The Commission has recently added staff to its Albuquerque Skills Center specifically for this purpose. The Skills Center will offer seminars and workshops for high school students, college students, adults, and parents. Training will be delivered throughout the year. To meet the particular needs of transition students, training will be scheduled during summers, school breaks, after school, and through distance delivery methods. Topics cover the landscape, including parent participation, MS Windows, Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Outlook, mobile technology, computer operator maintenance, and assistive technology hardware and software; Braille, math, note-taking skills, college success, STEP prep, Hadley support days, job readiness, professional dress and appearance, resume writing, job search strategies, mock interviews, Newsline resources (newspapers, magazines, research capabilities, and job search functions); transportation options, and financial literacy. The Commission has adopted a policy to support consumer attendance at the division/special interest group meetings and relevant seminars/workshops held during national consumer organization conventions. In order to receive the support, the consumer's vocational goal must be directly related to the particular division/special interest group meeting. The Commission, with the support of the SRC, believes that attendance at related division/special interest group meetings and relevant seminar/workshops can enhance the consumer's ability to achieve their vocational goal. Benefits would include learning about current developments in their field, meeting and networking with individuals who are successful in their fields, learning about the use and accessibility of career-specific technology, learning how blind and visually impaired individuals in the field use assistive technology successfully, and learning techniques that would enable them to succeed in their vocational training/education program and ultimately in their chosen field. The Commission also supports annual attendance at the state conventions of both consumer organizations. PY 2020 will mark the fourteenth year of a MOA with the Department of Health and the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The MOA administers an allocation from DOH of $80,000, designed to provide assistive technology that, for a disability other than blindness, would be considered durable medical equipment. This initiative serves blind children that are both transition-age and those not yet transition-age.

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.

The Commission has adopted policies that prohibit discrimination, including discrimination based on gender, race, national origin, color, disability, and age. The Commission Outreach efforts also comprise a major portion of overcoming identified
barriers relating to equitable access in participation of programs and services. Newsline is an important part of the Commission’s activities that overcome barriers and has increased access to the printed word, including announcements of the meetings of the Commission and State Rehabilitation Council. Newsline also provides access to information required during university study, information related to particular professions or occupations, information of interest to the business community, and employment ads. NFB-Newsline has several Spanish publications as well as a job search utility. NFB-Newsline voices can also be customized to meet the needs of individuals who are hard of hearing, and NFB-Newsline offers the ability to download publications for reading on a Braille display. This feature enables individuals who are deaf-blind to access the entire selection of more than 400 national and international newspapers and magazines. New Mexico is mirroring the nation in experiencing a serious problem relating to a lack of appropriate Braille instruction for students who are blind or visually impaired. Due to the rural and economically disadvantaged nature of the state, this problem is even more serious in New Mexico. As a result, the agency is finding that an increasing number of blind children are entering the vocational rehabilitation program without adequate Braille or literacy skills. This problem constitutes a significant barrier for these children in terms of their ability to equitably participate in the Commission’s vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs. This barrier is a new development that is largely related to the shift away from residential schools, and is therefore prevalent in the younger generation of blind persons. Accordingly, The Commission’s Technology for Children program is an important part of the Commission’s strategy to overcome this barrier. By providing assistive technology to blind and visually impaired children, these children are being given the tools necessary to acquire Braille and literacy skills. The Commission has also recently added staff to its Albuquerque Skills Center and will be delivering additional programming to address this need. With regard to language barriers, approximately 40% of the Agency’s staff is bilingual. This makes it possible in most cases for the agency to directly communicate with consumers in their own language. If an interpreter is needed, in either American Sign Language or other language, the agency secures the services of an appropriate interpreter. When human interpreters are not available on-site, the Commission utilizes a phone-based interpreter service with support for more than 150 languages. The Agency also regularly contracts with sign language interpreters whenever there is a need for a sign language interpreter. The agency has been experimenting with video remote interpreting so as to more-effectively serve deaf-blind consumers who require sign language support. This is especially effective in rural areas where it is difficult to schedule on-site interpreters. The Commission has created a video describing the Orientation Center, which is available in both a captioned and Spanish language format. The Agency is ADA compliant. All facilities of the Agency are wheelchair accessible and free of physical barriers for the mobility impaired. TDD and TTY devices are in place for persons who are deaf or hearing impaired. All Agency materials are available in accessible formats, or staff is available to assist individuals with completion of any necessary state forms. The Agency makes every effort to fully comply with whatever needs or desires the consumer may have. The Agency employs several reader-drivers for Agency staff who require this accommodation. Reader/drivers are also available to transport consumers to job interviews and other related appointments as necessary. The Agency has identified a vocational rehabilitation counselor to take the lead on services related to clients who are Deaf-Blind. The agency also has a cooperative agreement with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and coordinates provision of services to persons who are Deaf-Blind. The agency works with a variety of other partners, including the Commission for Deaf and
Hard of Hearing, the Community Outreach programs for the Deaf, the Helen Keller National Center, and the Deaf-Blind Task Force. The agency also participates in the annual DeafBlind Awareness Day at the Roundhouse. The agency will work cooperatively with the Department of Health, with the Medical Assistance Division, with the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, and with the Behavioral Health Services Division. The agency will designate specific liaisons and points of contact for each of these entities, will provide information as appropriate, and will enter into a cooperative agreement with the Department of Health. The agency is committed to using the Skills Center to meet the needs of vocational rehabilitation clients. As a result, the agency used the Skills Center to provide training to Students in Transition to Employment Program in 2018 and 2019, and will continue this activity in 2020. Beginning in summer 2016, the Commission began offering its STEP One program. STEP one is designed to serve students who have significant disabilities in addition to blindness or visual impairment. This program is designed for consumers who might not be able to handle the rigorous STEP work and training schedule. The STEP One program will offer two half-days of training with a lower student to teacher ratio that will allow for more one-on-one training. It will also offer a work schedule that would meet the individual needs of each consumer. A workplace readiness aide will be hired to support each of the students in the STEP One program as necessary. The Skills Center was also used to provide support in the area of Braille and technology training, as well as to function as a meeting place for programs related to vocational rehabilitation. The agency continues to refer vocational rehabilitation clients to receive independent living services, recognizing the need for clients to be able to function independently to become employed. The agency recognizes the benefit of providing training at the Orientation Center that is realistic and appropriate to the individual needs of clients, and has received a capital outlay appropriation to build apartments that can be used to provide more realistic and appropriate training. The agency is engaging in new and innovative approaches to provide services and engage in outreach. The agency has improved its web page and the way in which notices of meetings are communicated, and has developed an entirely new web page that has a more modern appearance, and that will allow for referrals to be made by health care professionals through the web page.

P. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

Describe:

1. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE VR PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE APPROVED VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS

The Commission for the Blind conducted a comprehensive series of strategic planning discussions, town forums, and public hearings in PY 2019. This was done in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council. The Commission has identified areas of future need, and identified new and innovative approaches to the meeting of existing needs. Of prime concern is a projected dramatic increase in blindness due to the aging of the population, as well as the newer trend of significant increases in the number of blind children, and the need to serve this population through vocational rehabilitation services. According to the 2016 American Community Survey, there are 67,313 persons in New Mexico who report having serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses or contact lenses. Of that number, 4,471 are under age 18; 31,750 are 18 to 64; and 31,092
are 65 and Older. Increase in blind children is due to Optic Nerve Hypoplasia, which has increased 600% in the last 30 years. The Commission is actively preparing for an increase in the number of vocational rehabilitation consumers entering the program with Optic Nerve Hypoplasia (ONH). ONH is now the leading cause of blindness in children, and it often causes cognitive impairment and developmental delays in addition to blindness. GOALS AND PRIORITIES The Commission has made the following progress with regard to meeting the goals and priorities identified in the PY 2018/2019 State Plan:

a. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by partnering and working with community colleges and One-Stop centers to more effectively utilize services available through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner-Peyser programs.

Results and Progress: The agency will work cooperatively with the identified partner entities by designating specific liaisons and points of contact, by providing information, and by entering into cooperative agreements where appropriate.

b. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by working cooperatively with the New Mexico Department of Health so as to develop opportunities for competitive and integrated employment for persons who are blind or visually impaired, which will be accomplished by working in partnership with the Medical Assistance Division, the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, and the Behavioral Health Services Division.

Results and Progress: The agency will work cooperatively with the Department of Health, with the Medical Assistance Division, with the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, and with the Behavioral Health Services Division. The agency will designate specific liaisons and points of contact for each of these entities, will provide information as appropriate, and will enter into a cooperative agreement with the Department of Health.

c. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by using the Orientation Center to provide employment preparation training for adults and transition students, including through the addition of an apartment training facility to be constructed adjacent to the Center. The proposed apartment facility will increase the capacity of the Orientation Center, will enable the Orientation Center to provide more realistic training, will eliminate the need to rent costly and less appropriate private apartments, and will reduce the number of instances in which costly out-of-state training will be necessary to meet the needs of consumers.

Results and Progress: Fifteen adults and ten Students with Disabilities were served at the Orientation Center during PY 2018. The proposed apartment project has been funded
through a capital outlay appropriation from the New Mexico Legislature. The agency has obtained architectural drawings of the proposed apartments, and is working with the Facilities Management Division with the goal of beginning construction during PY 2020 or PY 2021.

d. Increase the number of consumers served through enhanced Outreach Activities; including media outreach, use of paid advertising, through increased collaboration with ophthalmologists and optometrists, and through the use of the Technology for Children program to conduct outreach to school districts.

Results and Progress: The agency will continue to work to increase outreach to the identified groups using the recommended outreach methods. Counselors visit ophthalmologists in their territories to ensure that the medical community is aware of the Commission and the services that are provided.

Another important outreach activity is the Technology for Children program, which is also a frequent point of first contact with the agency. The Technology for Children program provides information to the public, parents, and schools about the Commission’s vocational rehabilitation program and services in a way that significantly enhances the agency transition services. It also provides technical assistance and support services that enhance the agency’s ability to work cooperatively with school districts, including assisting in the establishment of cooperative agreements with the Commission. The agency has a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Department of Health and the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The MOA administers an annual allocation from DOH of $80,000, designed to provide assistive technology that, for a disability other than blindness, would be considered durable medical equipment. The Technology for Children program places a special emphasis on providing assistive technology to economically disadvantaged and rural school districts. The Coordinator of the Technology for Children program and a member of her staff also speaks Spanish.

To further enhance the number of consumers and improve transition services, the Commission has signed 17 cooperative agreements with New Mexico school districts. These school districts include Aztec, Bloomfield, Carlsbad, Cloudcroft, Clovis, Deming, Española, Farmington, Gadsden, Gallup-McKinley County, Las Cruces, Los Lunas, Moriarty-Edgewood, Pecos, Portales, Roswell, and Taos.

The agreements were signed by the Executive Director in meetings with the Special Education Director of each school district. The Commission is also actively working to obtain cooperative agreements with additional school districts, including Albuquerque Public Schools, Alamogordo Public Schools, and Santa Fe Public Schools. The Commission also has a cooperative agreement with the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
e. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes of transition consumers by providing enhanced Pre-Employment Transition Services, including assistive technology where appropriate as a part of an Individualized Plan for Employment, by providing assistive technology through the Technology for Children Program, by conducting increased outreach activities, by conducting educational activities to meet the specific needs of transition students, and by increasing proficient use of Braille and Braille math.

Results and Progress: On February 2, 2019, the agency sponsored a workshop on Unified English Braille and will be sponsoring a National Certification in Unified English Braille exam during PY 2019. The state of New Mexico now has 29 persons with NCUEB certification (eleven Commission staff and 18 K-12 teachers), giving New Mexico the highest portion of NCUEB certified teachers in the nation.

The Commission and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) have agreed that the MINIMUM appropriate age for provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services in New Mexico is 14, unless special or extraordinary circumstances exist that make an earlier age appropriate. Should special circumstances exist that make an earlier age appropriate, the minimum age for the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services shall be 10 years of age. Should extraordinary circumstances exist that make an even earlier age appropriate, the minimum age for the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services shall be 8 years of age.

The Commission has sought to be involved in Individualized Education Plan meetings for transition consumers starting at age 14 for many years. The agency also operates the Students in Transition to Employment Program in Albuquerque, Alamogordo, and through community placements throughout New Mexico.

Beginning in PY 2017, the Commission partnered with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation on a contract with the Central Region Education Cooperative (CREC) to deliver pre-employment transition services to high school students across New Mexico. Under the agreement, Commission high school-age clients were included in job exploration counseling, counseling on post-secondary opportunities, self-advocacy training, and job skills training delivered by CREC staff. CREC job developers helped to place Commission high school students interested in work-based learning experiences, primarily during summers, but also in after-school or weekend jobs during the regular school year.

Effective in PY 2019, The Commission entered into its own Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with CREC. The purpose of the IGA is to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from the receipt of educational and Pre-Employment Transition Services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services from the Commission.

Additionally, the Commission signed a Governmental Services Agreement (GSA) with the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NMSBVI) in May of 2019. Under this GSA, the Commission funds the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services that are provided by NMSBVI. The purpose is to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from the receipt of educational and Pre-Employment Transition Services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services from the Commission.
f. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers by providing services in a way that genuinely honors the "informed choice" provisions of the Rehabilitation Act, enabling Commission consumers to have the opportunity to obtain employment at higher levels of compensation.

Results and Progress: The Commission uses a number of tools to "inform" the career choice of consumers, including career assessments, the Career Choice Questionnaire, job shadowing, and on-the-job training experiences. The Career Choice Questionnaire guides consumers in researching careers that they have identified, helping them to ultimately select a career that is the best fit for themselves. The Commission encourages and supports careers requiring graduate education and careers in self-employment.

g. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers by providing a quality and expanding Newsline system that gives consumers access to employment listings, business news, and other important information, including through both local Newsline and through NFB-Newsline.

Results and Progress: The Commission has provided access to NFB-Newsline, including in coordination with the Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons. NEWSLINE for the Blind continues to grow yearly, relying on a staff of one and over 100 volunteers. The Agency incorporated NFB Newsline as a part of Newsline services in 2002, and intends to continue NFB Newsline in PY 2020. Newsline is an important part of the Commission’s outreach program to identify and serve most significantly disabled persons who are minorities, and individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation or supported employment program. Newsline provides access to state and national publications to individuals in all portions of New Mexico, including in the most rural portions of the state. Newsline started with 200 listeners in the Albuquerque area in 1991, and has grown to more than 5000 listeners. The local Newsline and NFB-Newsline have publications that include newspapers from Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Los Alamos, Alamogordo, Farmington, Las Cruces, and Roswell, and recently added the Gallup Independent. NEWSLINE also has a Spanish language news category. NFB-Newsline offers prompts in Spanish and has several Spanish language publications, including the recent addition of CNN News in Spanish. NFBNewsline voices can also be customized to meet the needs of individuals who are hard of hearing, and NFBNewsline offers the ability to download publications for reading on a Braille display. This feature enables individuals who are deaf-blind to access the entire selection of more than 400 national newspapers and magazines.

h. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by innovatively using the Skills Center to meet the needs of vocational rehabilitation consumers and potential vocational rehabilitation consumers, including using it for provision of services to transition students.

Results and Progress: The Skills Center was dedicated in April 2012 and has been used to host a number of events over the years. The Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP) is a summer employment and training program for youth between the ages of 14
and 21. STEP utilized the Skills Center during the summers of 2018 and 2019 and will continue as the training location for the Albuquerque STEP program in coming years. The Skills Center also hosted a number of meetings and trainings for blind entrepreneurs for the Business Enterprise Program, including entrepreneur trainings, facility selection evaluations, Committee meetings, and the semi-annual meetings of BEP blind entrepreneurs. The facility was also used for vocational evaluations and testing, student seminars, Braille seminars, and college prep workshops. The Skills Center was also used as a meeting place for the State Rehabilitation Council and for programs related to vocational rehabilitation. Additional staff was added during PY 2016 and 2017 in order to expand VR related trainings to be offered at the Skills Center.

During 2013, the agency's executive director began discussions with the Governor's Commission on Disability (GCD), the administrator of the New Mexico Technology Assistance Program (NMTAP), to allocate NMTAP funds to the Commission for the Blind. The allocation of $75,000, was used to purchase a variety of Computers (including Macintosh), Pearl cameras, note-takers, Braille displays, Braille embossers, Braille translation software, screen readers, optical character recognition packages, and magnification hardware/software. The purpose of the technology acquisition was twofold: 1. To demonstrate options available to VR consumers when it comes to technology; and 2. To train consumers on the use of the chosen technology. The actual funding and acquisition took place in FY14. New equipment and software was purchased in Summer 2018 and Summer 2019 in order to keep the Skills Center Technology Lab current.

i. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes through the provision of independent living training to vocational rehabilitation consumers, including through the proposed apartment

ii. Training facility at the Orientation Center.

Results and Progress: VR consumers have options for receiving necessary independent living skills training: they can receive it in their home communities by rehab teachers assigned to each community, receive services at our residential training center in Alamogordo, or receive training at out-of-state training centers. The Skills Center in Albuquerque is also increasing capacity to deliver needed training. Technology training can also be delivered remotely. In these ways, VR consumers throughout New Mexico can receive the VR related independent living skills training that they need.

In each case, counselors refer consumers to the rehab teachers, specifying the VR-related tasks that need to be completed so that the rehab teachers can develop lessons that will build the skills necessary to complete those tasks.

The Staff Manager who supervises the Independent Living Program possesses both National Orientation and Mobility Certification (NOMC) as well as National Certification in Unified English Braille (NCUEB). The Rehab Teachers are the front line staff providing the initial instruction in Orientation & Mobility for vocational rehabilitation consumers.
The Commission also contracts with private O&M instructors as necessary to meet the needs of vocational rehabilitation consumers across the state. The Commission has also provided professional O&M training to the teachers at the Orientation Center.

The agency recognizes the benefit of providing training at the Orientation Center that is realistic and appropriate to the individual needs of consumers, and will be building apartments that can be used to provide more realistic and appropriate training beginning in PY 2020 or PY 2021. The agency also hosted independent living trainings at the Skills Center during PY 2018. One of these trainings focused on IOS and Android smart phones, enabling rehab teachers to then teach VR consumers how to more-effectively use their personal smart phone technology.

j. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes for consumers who are Deaf-Blind through collaboration and partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, with the Community Outreach Programs for the Deaf, and with the Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, including through the delivery of assistive technology to consumers who are Deaf-Blind.

Results and Progress: The agency has assigned a vocational rehabilitation counselor to take the lead on services related to consumers who are Deaf-Blind. The agency also works with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to coordinate provision of services to persons who are Deaf-Blind. The agency works with a variety of other partners, including the Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Community Outreach Program for the Deaf, the Helen Keller National Center, and the Deaf-Blind Task Force. The agency also participates in the annual Deaf-Blind Awareness Day at the State Capitol.

The Commission maintains good working relationships with the Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, as well as the Community Outreach Program for the Deaf (COPD). The goal is to support the needs of deafblind consumers in the state. An important part of the relationship is ICANConnect, which is a part of the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program (NDBEDP). The Commission entered into an agreement with COPD to administer the program in New Mexico. Also, in 2006, the Commission entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired designed to further enhance transition services for students who are Deaf-Blind. The Commission also serves on the New Mexico Deaf-Blind Task Force, which brings together stakeholders to discuss ways to improve services to deaf-blind individuals in the state. During PY 2018, the Commission utilized these MOUs to provide enhanced services to deaf-blind consumers. NFB Newsline will also provide deaf-blind persons with access to a variety of New Mexico newspapers, including those in Farmington, Las Cruces, Albuquerque, and Roswell.

k. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes through the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) by shortening the time required for vendors to complete the required training, including by using Randolph-Sheppard Act training offered by the Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
Results and Progress: The agency has adopted the Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired as the training provider for BEP vendors, and is working with New Mexico programs to create a local provider so that food preparation and cooking methods can be taught locally.

l. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by strengthening administrative services so as to timely and accurately submit federal reports, to assure compliance with all applicable fiscal regulations, and to comply with all applicable accounting standards.

Results and Progress: The agency recognizes the need to have strong fiscal programs so as to maximize the receipt of federal funds, and to otherwise provide appropriate vocational rehabilitation services to our consumers. To do this, the agency must have in place a sufficient number of qualified fiscal staff to comply with federal fiscal rules, and to appropriately respond to changing fiscal requirements. To that end, the Commission has hired additional staff, provided additional training to existing staff, and is improving its case management capacity for the VR Program and the BEP Program.

m. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by enhancing overall performance and productivity by engaging in activities designed to mitigate and ameliorate the impacts of blindness and visual impairment, and by engaging in outreach and other activities designed to identify additional potential consumers, and by making the public and medical community more aware of Commission services.

Results and Progress: The agency is engaging in new and innovative approaches to provide services and conduct outreach. The agency has a new web page that allows for referrals to be made by health care professionals, and the web page enables members of the public to sign up to automatically be emailed meeting notices, agendas, and minutes. The agency has worked to improve training designed to minimize the impact of blindness and visual impairments on consumers. One initiative was designed to improve the effectiveness of IL teachers who work with VR consumers. Training at the residential training center was also improved in two ways: first by improving the physical plant to provide a more modern and pleasant learning environment; and second by improving the effectiveness of the training itself. The agency improved the ability of consumers to gain necessary technology skills by providing instructional materials to each consumer. The materials provide step-by-step instruction on the use of Microsoft Office applications paired with the specific access technology (screen reader or screen magnifier) used by the consumer. The instructional materials are also provided in Word, text, html, audio, and audio/visual formats, meaning that each consumer can access the instructional materials in a format that is most effective for them. The agency continues to promote the Technology for Children program, which, in addition to providing needed assistive technology, often serves as an important first contact to the agency for blind and visually-impaired children and youth who will later become consumers of the agency. The Commission regularly participates in the annual New Mexico Academy of Ophthalmology conference in Albuquerque.
Counselors also visit ophthalmologists in their territories to ensure that the medical community is aware of the Commission and the services that are provided.

n. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes for consumers by providing enhanced benefits counseling and guidance to reduce concerns related to the loss or reduction of benefits.

Results and Progress: The Commission continues to provide benefits counseling and guidance through the New Mexico Legal Aid Society. The agency has also provided training on benefits to vocational rehabilitation counselors and consumers. In addition to the training, counselors received a desk reference which contains valuable information regarding each program as well as sample letters that can be used to report earnings. The agency continues to utilize a comparable benefits survey, designed to identify benefit program eligibility for eligible VR consumers.

The goals and priorities described above were jointly developed and agreed to by the Commission for the Blind and the State Rehabilitation Council.

STRATEGIES Effective strategies focus on meeting the needs of consumers, both in terms of State Plan Goals and Priorities and WIOA performance measures. Establishing a firm and reassuring foundation of monthly income and medical insurance is important to the fundamental job-readiness of each consumer, so the Commission contracted with New Mexico Legal Aid to provide assistance to consumers that needed help with guidance and counseling with respect to SSI and SSDI work incentives. A great deal of emphasis is placed on consumers possessing skills that will help them overcome their vision loss, and the Commission encourages attendance at the Orientation Center. All interested consumers are taken on a tour of the center by their counselor. Those who choose not to attend the center are provided training in their own communities by the Commission’s Independent Living Teachers. Counselors spend a great deal of time and effort assisting the consumer to identify their own career goal, and counselors ask that consumers’ research identified career goals to determine whether a contemplated career is a good fit. The research also helps to solidify the path (vocational training, education, licenses, certifications,) that are necessary to achieve the career goal. The Commission recognizes careers requiring graduate education, working hard to utilize comparable benefits where appropriate. For example, counselors make a particular effort to utilize the Free Application for Federal Student Aid to access Pell and other grant funding to cover costs for college undergraduates. Effective use of comparable benefits, especially school grants, means that more money is available for services with no comparable benefit options, such as assistive technology. Use of assistive technology is encouraged and resources are made available to purchase needed hardware and software tools and provide necessary training. On-the-job (OJT) placements of three-six months are used whenever appropriate, such as to help employers overcome any doubts they may have about employing a blind or visually-impaired individual. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT Supported employment cases continue to be a high priority. During PY 2018, the Commission served 29 supported employment consumers and achieved three
employment outcomes in integrated/competitive settings. The Commission continues to work closely with family members, community organizations, and other state agencies in an effort to provide the most comprehensive services possible. The Commission has worked closely and creatively with each of these groups to fund and deliver training services, transportation services, job development services, job coaching services, and a variety of other ongoing services.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Staff shortages and duty reassignments have impeded the Commission's ability to pursue some of the desired relationships with WIOA partners, the Department of Health, the Medical Assistance Division, the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, and the Behavioral Health Services Division. Position reclassifications and filling of positions should create more capacity in PY 2020 that will enable the Commission to accomplish these objectives.

* The proposed apartment project at the Commission's Orientation Center has been funded through a capital outlay appropriation. The agency has obtained architectural drawings of the proposed apartments, and is working with the Facilities Management Division to accomplish the construction.

* The small number of Students with visual impairments and the rural nature of New Mexico, coupled with the restrictive scope of allowable Pre-ETS services, have impeded the agency's ability to spend the entire Pre-ETS reserve. Agreements were negotiated with the Central Region Education Cooperative (CREC) and the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NMSBVI) that enabled the Commission to provide more Pre-ETS services to blind and visually impaired Students across New Mexico during PY 2019 and will enable the Commission to deliver even more Pre-ETS services during PY 2020 and PY 2021.

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 PY 2018 State Plan identified the following goals: 1. At least three closures in integrated settings; 2. Closures averaging at least $7.50 per hour; 3. Closures averaging at least fifteen hours worked per week. During PY 2018, the Commission served 29 supported employment consumers at some point during the year and achieved three employment outcomes in integrated/competitive settings. The average wage for the three closures was $9.38 per hour with an average of 6.3 hours worked per week. The Commission continues to work closely with family members, community organizations, and other state agencies in an effort to provide the most comprehensive services possible. The Commission has worked closely and creatively with each of these groups to fund and deliver training services, transportation services, job development services, job coaching services, and a variety of other ongoing services.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

A number of factors impeded our ability to meet our goals in PY 2018, including the following:
* Counselor staff shortages: The agency has had a significant turnover of counselors in the past five years, having lost nine counselors for a variety of reasons. In addition to undertaking a significant training effort for new counselors, the agency has not been able to fill all of the positions as quickly as would be preferred. This has been due to new hiring procedures implemented by the state. As a result, existing staff have been required to cover larger caseloads and larger geographic areas, leading to less contact time for each consumer. This also means less time to conduct job development for job-ready consumers.

* Ineffective job developers: The agency has found only limited success employing private job developers. Even job developers that have been successful in placing VR consumers of the general agency have had only limited success placing consumers of the Commission. Job development has thus fallen to Commission VR counselors, and, as noted above, current Commission counselors are by-and-large very inexperienced as a group and over-extended due to staffing shortages.

* Consumers no longer interested in work: Often, consumers that would otherwise require supported employment services say they are interested in work and a VR case is opened. Unfortunately, their interest is often the result of suggestions and pressure from family members or service providers. Despite offers of support in the process of transitioning to employment, their interest in employment sometimes wanes as they come to understand the changes that are forthcoming when employment becomes part of their regular schedule.

* Many supported employment youth: Currently, the agency has 16 consumers coded supported employment, 11 of whom are youth with the most significant disabilities, 5 of whom are in the 14-21 age group. We expect some of these consumers will participate in our summer Students in Transition to Employment Program (STEP) as well as our STEP One program, specifically designed for youth that might require additional supports.

3. THE VR PROGRAM’S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

Data in this section is currently being collected using the AWARE case management system from Alliance Enterprises.

* 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

* Effectiveness in serving employers

* Measurable skill gain. The following targets have been negotiated for PY 20 and PY 21: PY 20 Negotiated 24%; PY 21 Negotiated 25%
The Commission has engaged in several innovation and expansion activities in PY 2018. The funding of these activities exceeded the 1.5% of 110 dollars generally allocated to innovation and expansion efforts. These activities will continue in PY 2020. The agency supports the funding and program activities of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The agency recognizes that the SRC is an integral and valuable partner in its efforts to provide services to vocational rehabilitation consumers. The Agency assumes all costs incurred for all regularly scheduled meetings, subcommittees and special meetings. This includes expenses related to securing meeting facilities, members’ travel and per diem expenses, teleconference meetings, interpreters, clerical support, and office supplies and materials. The Agency provides a staff person who prepares the agendas, minutes, and other materials as necessary for each scheduled meeting. The Agency provides a staff person to schedule and make all necessary arrangements for Public Hearings and town forums. The SRC is an equal partner in the development of the State Plan, and actively provides input for the Manual of Operating Procedures, agency policies, Orientation Center, and other matters pertaining to the Agency's programs and activities. The Commission sponsors NFB Newsline. This is an augment to the existing NEWSLINE for the Blind. NFB Newsline enables consumers to read over 400 national newspapers, five of which are Spanish-language publications, plus New Mexico newspapers, enhancing their ability to rapidly access information that is increasingly essential for success in both the academic and professional environments. A capital improvement appropriation of $750,000 from the New Mexico Legislature was used to support the initiative to transform the Employment Development Center into a skills training site to meet the needs of vocational rehabilitation consumers, as well as potential vocational rehabilitation consumers. The agency is scheduling a variety of activities in the Skills Center. These activities include meetings, workshops, seminars, and other training events such as the summer Students in Transition to Employment Program. The Commission has adopted a policy to support consumer attendance at division/special interest group meetings and seminars/workshops held during national consumer organization conventions. In order to receive the support, the consumer's vocational goal must be directly related to the particular division/special interest group meeting or seminar/workshop. The Commission, with the support of our SRC, believes that attendance at related division/special interest group meetings and seminar/workshops can enhance the consumer's ability to achieve their vocational goal. Benefits would include learning about current developments in their field, meeting and networking with individuals who are successful in their fields, learning about the use and accessibility of career-specific technology, learning how blind and visually impaired individuals in the field use assistive technology successfully, and learning techniques that would enable them to succeed in their vocational training/education program and ultimately in their chosen field. PY 2018 marked the twelfth year of a MOA with the Department of Health and the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The MOA administers an allocation from DOH of $80,000, designed to provide assistive technology that, for a disability other than blindness, would be considered durable medical equipment. This initiative serves blind children that are both transition-age and those not yet transition-age. A total of eleven children were served by this initiative in PY 2018.
Q. QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Include the following:

1. THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES

Vocational rehabilitation services may include a comprehensive assessment as provided under the basic vocational rehabilitation program, job site assessment, and other evaluations to determine possible benefits from supported employment to consumers with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities. Supported employment services include job coaching, intensive job skills training and related certifications, social skills training, tools and supplies, transportation services, regular observation and supervision of the individual, and regular contact with the employer, consumer, parent, family members, guardians, advocates or other authorized representatives of the individual and other suitable professionals. The utilization of natural support systems as well as the provision of appropriate services under the basic vocational rehabilitation program is available to supported employment consumers.

Extent of Services: The adult services offered under Supported Employment are determined on an individualized basis depending on the needs of the consumer. Supported employment services generally do not extend beyond a 24-month period of time, an increase of six months as a result of WIOA. However, in some unusual circumstances, Supported Employment Services may be extended if it is determined appropriate and agreed upon in the IPE. To be determined appropriate, there must be a reasonable basis to believe that ongoing supports can be obtained within a relatively brief period of time, and that a disruption or loss of employment would be avoided by the brief continuation of the Supported Employment Services. Individuals who have stabilized on the job may be transitioned to extended services prior to reaching the 24 month limit, provided that the individual is receiving necessary on-going support services and other appropriate services provided by another state agency, a private non-profit organization, or an employer. The primary source of such support is through the Developmental Disabilities Waiver (DD Waiver). In the event that the consumer requires additional job development/placement services after a successful closure, support will be made available for additional training, work tools, and job development services through a post-employment services plan. The Commission will use supported employment funds as well as regular VR funds to provide supported employment services. As the consumer approaches the 24-month limit for supported employment services, the Commission will assist in the transition to DD Waiver funding and natural supports for the provision of extended services. As with adult services, the youth services offered under Supported Employment are determined on an individual basis depending on the needs of the consumer. Services to youth with the most significant disabilities begin at age 14, and include representation by Commission counselors at IEP meetings, support in school-based transition programs for youth age 18-21, and summer job experiences. The Commission provides summer employment experiences for supported employment youth through its Students in Transition to Employment Program, which provides employment and training experiences at its Alamogordo training center, its Albuquerque Skills Center, and community-based placements throughout New Mexico.

The Commission provides extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities following the closure of their VR case for a period of up to four years or until the individual turns age 25. The Commission believes this is a particularly beneficial improvement within WIOA. The Commission will use supported employment funds as well as regular VR funds to
provide extended services. As the consumer approaches the limit for Commission funding of extended services, the Commission will assist in the transition to DD Waiver funding and natural supports for the provision of extended services.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES

The Commission provides extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities following the closure of their VR case for a period of up to four years or until the individual turns age 25. The Commission believes this is a particularly beneficial improvement provided by WIOA. The Commission will use supported employment funds as well as regular VR funds to provide extended services. As the consumer approaches the limit for Commission funding of extended services, the Commission will assist in the transition to DD Waiver funding and natural supports for the provision of extended services.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (BLIND) CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

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

New Mexico Commission for the Blind


   ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

New Mexico Commission 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 AUTHO-
RITY 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 AUTHORIZER REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Greg Trapp

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

Executive 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

[15] Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as
amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.
[16] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to
the agency identified in this paragraph.
[17] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR
services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the
Rehabilitation Act.
[18] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative
Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR
part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations.
[19] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved
supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State
Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.
[20] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 6.

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE
Signatory information

Name of Signatory: Greg D. Trapp
Title of Signatory: Executive Director
Date Signed: March 6, 2020

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances: The State Plan must provide assurances that:

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<tr>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>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:</td>
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<td>3.a. The establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>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):</td>
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<td>3.b.(A) “is an independent State commission” (Yes/No)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>3.b.(B) “has established a State Rehabilitation Council” (Yes/No)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
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The State Plan must include

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)

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)

3.g. Statewide and waivers of statewide requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of 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
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<td>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)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>4.d. Determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
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<td>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</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
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<td>4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,</td>
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<td>4.j.i. Has developed and will implement,</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.j.i.I. Strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.j.ii. Has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(25))</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
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</table>
The State Plan must include individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.

5.c. The designated state unit will coordinate activities with any other State agency that is functioning as an employment network under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act.

6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program:

6.a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State’s allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act.

6.b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D) of the Rehabilitation Act.

7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:

Yes

7.a. The Designated State Agency Assures That it Will Provide Supported Employment Services as Defined in Section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.

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 Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction...
with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
• Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA." The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as "baseline" for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

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

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as "baseline" for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as "baseline." Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>PY 2020 Expected Level</th>
<th>PY 2020 Negotiated Level</th>
<th>PY 2021 Expected Level</th>
<th>PY 2021 Negotiated Level</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
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<td>Baseline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)</td>
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<td>Not Applicable ¹</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ "Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.
VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult program, Dislocated Worker program, Youth program, Wagner-Peyser Act program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation program—and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it elects to include in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program. If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the “common planning elements” in Sections II-IV of this document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program.

[24] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

States that include TANF in the Combined State Plan must outline how the State will meet the requirements of section 402 of the Social Security Act including how it will:

(OMB Control Number: 0970-0145)

A. CONDUCT A PROGRAM DESIGNED TO SERVE ALL POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS IN THE STATE (NOT NECESSARILY IN A UNIFORM MANNER) THAT PROVIDES ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY FAMILIES WITH (OR EXPECTING) CHILDREN AND PROVIDES PARENTS WITH JOB PREPARATION, WORK, AND SUPPORT SERVICES TO ENABLE THEM TO LEAVE THE PROGRAM, SPECIFICALLY CASH ASSISTANCE, AND BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(I) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

The TANF program is administered by the State of New Mexico Human Services Department (HSD). The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) approved the State of New Mexico TANF State Plan on September 21, 2018, under the sections of 402(a)(2)-(7).

TANF in the State of New Mexico is referred to as New Mexico Works Program (NMW). NMW will help increase family’s income through employment and receipt of child support income to enable and assist parents to participate in employment activities Cash assistance is a support service. The TANF program is funded through a block grant, the State Family Assistance Grant (SFAG). The purpose of the NMW program is to change the culture of welfare, both on the part of the state agency and the recipients so that the focus is on addressing barriers so the participants can successfully complete work activities in order to meet the goal of getting New Mexicans sufficient work. The goals of the NMW program are:

- Develop a program focus and environment that supports self-reliance and personal responsibility;
• Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes;
• End family dependence on public benefits by promoting work;
• Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies;
• Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families;
• Increase the number of TANF recipients engaged in work activities by increasing engagement in suitable job-readiness programs for participants that are state-defined exempt through limited work participation activities;
• Require the NMW program to contract services that promote work activities;
• Ensure participants are engaged in work activity and have access to work support services through collaborations with private and public sector entities.
• Foster an environment of self-sufficiency and work participation for clients that are about to be sanctioned; and
• Review hardship extension of participants that are motivated to be self-sufficient and encourage them to fully participate in work activities.

The Human Services Department (HSD) intends to carry out the purpose of the TANF program by achieving the following objectives:

Develop and implement the New Mexico Works (NMW) program, a TANF focused program designed to provide cash assistance, child care, and supportive services to New Mexico’s Needy families to assist them in achieving self-sufficiency. The state will:

a. Assist recipients to obtain and keep employment that is sufficient to sustain and strengthen the family;

b. Provide parents with education and training, job preparation and readiness, and work and support services to enable them to obtain and retain employment, which thereby assists them to leave the program;

c. Move program participants into the workforce and off cash assistance and provide transitional services and program features supporting employment retention;

d. Provide assistance and services to recipients that focus on addressing and overcoming barriers to participation in work activities;

e. Provide a reasonable level and duration of support for those who are not able to transition into employment in the near term;

f. Allow for NMW assistance and services to be available in all geographic areas of the state;

g. Encourage family formation by rule and policy formulation supportive of two-parent families; and

h. Align certain NMW and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provisions in order to simplify the programs and to control the program’s administrative costs.
Implement the Family Violence Option under TANF

- Implement separate state programs using Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds.
- Implement the state’s statutory rape prevention education plan for law enforcement officers.
- Implement out-of-wedlock birth reduction plan for the state.

B. REQUIRE A PARENT OR CARETAKER RECEIVING ASSISTANCE TO ENGAGE IN WORK (DEFINED BY THE STATE) ONCE THE STATE DETERMINES THE PARENT OR CARETAKER IS READY TO ENGAGE IN WORK, OR ONCE HE OR SHE HAS RECEIVED 24 MONTHS OF ASSISTANCE, WHICHERVER IS EARLIER, CONSISTENT WITH THE CHILD CARE EXCEPTION AT 407(E)(2) (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(II) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

- The NMW Cash Assistance Program operates statewide. Program services and assistance are available to all families meeting program eligibility criteria. Program eligibility and payment standards are uniform throughout the state.
- Work program activities, training and educational services operate statewide. Such activities and services may vary regionally depending in large part upon the availability of community resources.
- Work program activities, training and educational services are administered by service providers under contract with HSD. HSD may delegate the provision of work program services with other public agencies such as the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions or with private for-profit or non-profit entities.
- The NMW defines the benefit group as pregnant woman or a group of people that includes a dependent child, all of that dependent child’s full, half, step- or adopted siblings living with the dependent child’s parent or relative within the fifth degree of relationship and the parent with whom the child lives.
- During her last trimester of pregnancy, a woman with no other dependent children is considered as having a dependent child for eligibility purposes, but is treated as only one person in determining payment. The father of the unborn child is also included in the benefit group if he lives in the home.
- To be eligible for NMW, the head of household must reside in New Mexico with intent to remain. Persons traveling through, employed for a short-term, present for medical care, or in similar situations do not meet residency requirements. The residence of the dependent child is based on the residence of the child’s parent, relative or caretaker.
- All adults and minor head of household participants are required to complete an Assessment, Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP), Work Participation Agreement (WPA) and applicable participation requirement hours. Allowable work and work program activities. Allowable work and work program activities includes any of the following core work activities:
  - Unsubsidized employment, including self-employment;
  - Subsidized private sector employment, including self-employment;
Subsidized public sector employment;

- Work experience – monthly hours limited to Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA);
- On-the-Job Training

- Job search and work readiness assistance. Job search hours are limited to no more than 20 hours a week and 120 hours with the preceding 12 month period for work eligible single custodial parent with a child under the age of six and 30 hours a week and 180 hours (the equivalent of six weeks) within the preceding 12 month period for all other work eligible individuals. A participant can be placed in this activity for no more than four consecutive weeks. A week constitutes seven days and the first day of the first week begins on the first day in which job search and/or work readiness is used;
- Community service: monthly hours limited to FLSA
- Vocational Education Training for a period not to exceed the 12 month lifetime limit; and
- Providing child care services to a TANF recipient participating in a community service program.

- All NMW participants are required to engage in work program activities at federal statutory requirements (Section 407 of the SSA) or by FSLA Standards, unless they have requested limited work participation. Provisions in the NMWA allow for a work participation standard that does not exceed four hours of the federal statutory levels.

- Under Section 412 of the federal act, Indian tribes are authorized to operate their own TANF programs through direct grants from the federal government. Tribes are authorized to define a TANF service delivery area. Funding for these programs is deducted from the state grant amount based on the tribe’s share of federal fiscal year. Native Americans living within a tribal TANF service delivery area may not receive benefit concurrently from the tribal program and the NMW cash assistance program. HSD will continue to provide supplemental nutrition assistance and Medicaid benefits to tribal members.

C. ENSURE THAT PARENTS AND CARETAKERS RECEIVING ASSISTANCE ENGAGE IN WORK IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 407 (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(II) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT). CONSISTENT WITH THE REQUIRED STRATEGIC ELEMENTS DISCUSSED IN SECTION II (A)(2) HEREIN, PROVIDE A SPECIFIC ANALYSIS OF HOW THE STATE’S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ARE ADDRESSING EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES FOR PARENTS OR CARETAKERS RECEIVING ASSISTANCE

All adults and minor head of household participants are required to complete an Assessment, Individual Responsibility Plan, Work Participation Agreement and applicable participant requirement hours. Allowable work and work program activities include any of the work activities described above. Each participant activity is documented in a Work Participation agreement and the hours of participation are monitored through periodic monitoring as approved in a NMW Work Verification Plan, currently available to the public on the HSD website.
All NMW participants are required to engage in work program activities at federal statutory requirements consistent with Section 407 of the Social Security Act or by FLSA Standards, unless they have requested limited work participation. Provision in the NMW program allow for a work participation that does not exceed four hours of the federal statutory levels. Sanction for failure to participate at required levels are defined and shared with the participant.

A participant may request a limited work participation status exempting them from meeting the federal statutory levels, requiring the participant to engage in an activity for no less than one hour per week as determine by HSD and described in NMAC 8.102.420. Individuals who demonstrate extraordinary circumstances may be granted zero hour limited work participation status. Failure to complete the assessment, individual responsibility plan and work participation agreement will be considered non-compliance with program requirements. The incapacity Review Unit (RUI) of the NMW service provider will establish participation requirements specific to the participant’s condition or circumstances, such as substance abuse services, mental health services, domestic violence services, pursuit of disability benefits, job readiness, or education directly related to employment. The activities determined are to address the participants' barriers and strategies to improve the participant’s capacity to improve income and strengthen family. Each participant activity is documented in a Work Participation Agreement and the hours of participation are monitored through periodic monitoring as described in the approved NMW Work Verification Plan (WVP). The current WVP is available to the public on the HSD website.

D. TAKE SUCH REASONABLE STEPS AS THE STATE DEEMS NECESSARY TO RESTRICT THE USE AND DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION ABOUT INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES RECEIVING ASSISTANCE UNDER THE PROGRAM ATTRIBUTABLE TO FUNDS PROVIDED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(IV) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Confidentiality of Information: information collected regarding applicants for and recipients of NMW is kept confidential except as otherwise allowed under NMW program regulations. Under certain circumstances, confidential information is released to their agencies or individuals involved in the administration of a state federal, or federally assisted program which provides assistance in cash, in-kind, or in services directly to individuals on the basis of need. If the information will be used for establishing eligibility and benefit amount or services, the receiving agency must have standards of confidentiality comparable to those of HSD. The agency or individual must have the actual or implied consent of the applicant or recipient to release the information. Consent is considered implied if a recipient or member of the benefit group has made application to the inquiring agency.

E. ESTABLISH GOALS AND TAKE ACTION TO PREVENT AND REDUCE OUT-OF-WEDLOCK PREGNANCIES, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON TEENAGE PREGNANCIES (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(V) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

HSD seeks to reduce the ratio of illegitimate births in New Mexico. Of particular importance is the significant rate of pregnancy among the state's teenage population resulting in an excessive number of teens bearing children they are not prepared to care for. HSD anticipates that activities to reduce the illegitimacy ratio of the State will be funded through state and/or federal funds and may include funding from the TANF block grant.
To address the State’s illegitimacy ratio, HSD, in consultation with Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD), Department of Health (DOH), and Public Education Department (PED) and other agencies such as schools, and faith-based or community organizations, will seek to develop and implement an educational plan for New Mexico’s population and with special emphasis on teen pregnancy prevention program.

The Department will seek to include all entities in the state that deal with teenage individuals and/or their parents or guardians, including CYFD, DOH, PED, Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS), juvenile detention facilities, hospitals, and schools.

Teen prevention programs and activities emphasizing abstinence and responsibility may include but are not limited to, posters informing young teens and abstinence and pregnancy prevention, informational brochures and pamphlets distributed statewide and outreach by qualified counselors to children in the public schools.

Through these efforts, the Department seeks to reduce the illegitimacy ration for the State by up to three percent in the time period covered by this State Plan.

F. CONDUCT A PROGRAM DESIGNED TO REACH STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS, THE EDUCATION SYSTEM, AND RELEVANT COUNSELING SERVICES, THAT PROVIDES EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON THE PROBLEM OF STATUTORY RAPE SO THAT TEENAGE PREGNANCY PREVENTION PROGRAMS MAY BE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE MEN (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(VI) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Victims of Statutory Rape can access county mental health programs, community mental health center or Core Service Agencies for services in 32 counties across New Mexico. A Core Service Agency (CSA) coordinates care and provides the essential services such as counseling services to children, youth and adults who have a serious mental illness, severe emotional disturbance, or dependence on alcohol or drugs. Each New Mexico Judicial District also has victim advocates that refer and coordinate services with Rape Crisis Center where individual and group counseling is provided for the victim, the family members, friends, or anyone affected by the assault.

The New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Program provides education, training and technical assistance to service providers, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, medical practitioners and mental health professionals to reduce sexual abuse and sexual violence for any individual including men.

G. IMPLEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AS NECESSARY TO PREVENT ACCESS TO ASSISTANCE PROVIDED UNDER THE STATE PROGRAM FUNDED UNDER THIS PART THROUGH ANY ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSACTION IN AN AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINE OR POINT-OF-SALE DEVICE LOCATED IN A PLACE DESCRIBED IN SECTION 408(A)(12), INCLUDING A PLAN TO ENSURE THAT RECIPIENTS OF THE ASSISTANCE HAVE ADEQUATE ACCESS TO THEIR CASH ASSISTANCE (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(VII) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

NMW cash assistance payments are issued through Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system for the Department, EBT is an arrangement under which the Department transfers funds to a fiscal
agent who creates a bank account for each NMW benefit group. The funds can then be withdrawn through Automated Teller Machines (ATM) or by cash issuance made by food retailers federally certified to participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The Section 4004 of Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (P.L. 112-96) requires states receiving TANF grants to "maintain policies and practices as necessary to prevent assistance provided under the State program from being used in any electronic benefit transfer transaction in any liquor store; any casino, gambling casino, or gaming establishment; or any retail establishment which provides adult-oriented entertainment in which performers disrobe or perform in an unclothed state for entertainment. New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC) was updated to reflect the changes to prohibit the use of EBT cards in any liquor store; any casino, gambling casino, or gaming establishment; or any retail establishment which provides adult-oriented entertainment in which performers disrobe or perform in an unclothed state for entertainment effective April 14, 2014. Should a TANF recipient report a problem with accessing TANF benefits based on the new law restriction, HSD will, on a case by case basis, assist them with information and assistance in getting free or low cost access to cash assistance benefits. Posters notifying EBT card users of the change were posted in all county Income Support Field Offices.

TANF recipients can use the EBT card at a retail and grocery store where you are allowed to get cash back or at an ATM. There is never a fee charged for using cash benefits to buy food or get cash at a POC device at a retail or grocery store, but there is a transaction fee charge of $0.50 (plus other possible fees) for a cash withdrawal at an ATM machine. This information is given to clients upon receipt of their EBT card. This information can also be found on the HSD website. EBT cards are accepted at all FNS approved locations, this allows recipients that are in rural areas adequate access to cash benefits. If there are issues with clients accessing benefits, HSD, along with our EBT vendor, will work with recipients and assist them in accessing their benefits free or at a low cost.

Families residing in New Mexico 12 months or less are not treated different from those who have resided in the state for more than 12 months with respect to NMW benefits. To be eligible for NMW, they must have an intent to reside in New Mexico. Persons traveling through, employed for a short term, present for medical care, or in similar situation do not meet residency requirements. The residence of the dependent child is based on the residence of the child's parent, relative or caretaker.
J. Indicate whether it intends to provide assistance to non-citizens, and if so include an overview of the assistance (Section 402(A)(1)(B)(II) of the Social Security Act)

Individuals who are not citizens of the United States are eligible for inclusion in the NMW benefit group, with respect to qualified alien status, in accordance with the provisions of Title IV of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996.

A qualified non-citizen means an individual:

- Who is lawfully admitted for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA);
- Who is granted asylum under section 201A of the INA;
- Who is admitted to the US as a refugee under section 207 of the INA;
- Who is paroled into the US under section 212(d)(5) of the INA for a period of at least one year;
- Whose deportation is withheld under section 241(b)(3) of 243(h) of the INA;
- Who is granted conditional entry into the US pursuant to section 203(a)(7) of the INA as in effect prior to April 1, 1980;
- Is Cuban or Haitian entrant as defined in section 501(e) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980.

Battered or submitted to extreme cruelty: A qualified non-citizen also includes an individual who has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty by a spouse or parent, an alien who is a parent of a battered child or a non-citizen who is the child of a battered parent. The requisite abuse can also be caused by a member of the family residing in the household if the spouse or parent consented to or acquiesced to battery or cruelty. Such individuals must meet all conditions for treatment of non-citizens who have been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty as qualified non-citizens set forth in Title 8 U.S.C. 1641 (c).

Victims of Trafficking: A victim of a severe form of trafficking shall be eligible for NMW cash assistance, without regard to the actual immigration status of the individual and to the same extent as a non-citizen who is admitted to United States as a refugee under section 207 of the INA. In order to allow eligibility for a victim of trafficking, HSD will require a certification from the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) that an adult is a victim of severe trafficking or that a child has been determined eligible as a minor victim of severe trafficking.

State funded non-citizens is an individual who arrived in the US on or after August 22, 1996, and who meets the definition of a qualified non-citizen is not eligible for federally funded TANF assistance under the terms of Title IV of the PRWORA of 1996 (five years from date of entry into the US with a qualified non-citizen status). The qualified non-citizen may be included in the NMW benefit group, if otherwise eligible, and may receive cash assistance, with the costs of the
non-citizen’s benefits paid entirely by state funds. Benefits paid to these individuals are claimed as part of the state’s MOE requirement.

Ineligible Non-Citizens are undocumented individuals who are not qualified non-citizen, non-citizens who are in the US temporarily, or non-citizens who are not authorized to work in the US, are not eligible for inclusion in the NMW benefit group.

K. SET FORTH OBJECTIVE CRITERIA FOR THE DELIVERY OF BENEFITS AND THE DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND FOR FAIR AND EQUITABLE TREATMENT, INCLUDING AN EXPLANATION OF HOW IT WILL PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECIPIENTS WHO HAVE BEEN ADVERSELY AFFECTED TO BE HEARD IN A STATE ADMINISTRATIVE OR APPEAL PROCESS (SECTION 402(A)(1)(B)(III) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Fair Hearing Rights:

- The fair hearing process is available to a benefit group who believes that an HSD decision affecting benefit group or individual eligibility, amount of benefit or procedures related to eligibility and/or benefit calculation is based on incorrect information or represents a faulty application of program regulations. Failure by HSD to take action within established time frames is also subject to the fair hearing process.

- Applicants are informed verbally and in writing of their rights and the procedures for requesting a fair hearing.

- Time Limit for Requesting a Hearing. An applicant or recipient has 90 days from the date on the notice of adverse action to request a fair hearing. To be considered timely, the request must be received by the HSD Fair Hearings Bureau or the local county office no later than the close of business on the 90th day.

- Continuing Benefits during the Hearing Process. If the recipient files a fair hearing request prior to expiration of the 13-day adverse action time period, the change is not made pending completion the fair hearing process. If an individual files a fair hearing request within 13 days of issuance of a concurrent notice, benefits are restored pending completion of the fair hearing process. Excess benefits issued during the fair hearing process must be repaid if the hearing is decided in favor of the Department.

- Applicant or Recipient Rights during the Hearing Process. An applicant or recipient has the following rights with respect to the conduct of a fair hearing. The claimant has the right to:
  - Review the household's case file prior to, during and after the hearing;
  - Request and receive copies of documents in the case file for use during the hearing process;
  - Request an agency review conference to be scheduled prior to the hearing to discuss the issues involved in the hearing. The agency conference is optional and does not delay or replace the hearing process;
Present his/her case or have it presented by an attorney or other representative;

Bring witnesses to present information that is relevant to the case;

Submit evidence to establish facts and circumstances in the case;

Advance arguments without undue interference; and

Question or contradict any testimony or evidence, including the opportunity to confront and cross-examine the Department's witnesses.

Who Conducts the Hearing. The hearing is conducted by an independent hearing officer who makes a recommendation to the Director of the Income Support Division or designee. The ISD Director makes the fair hearing decision for the Department. Fair hearings are most frequently conducted telephonically but, a face-to-face hearing may be held at the applicant's request.

Appealing a Decision of the Director. If the applicant or recipient does not agree with the fair hearing decision, the decision may be appealed to the New Mexico Court of Appeals. NMSA 1978, Section 27-2B-B(F).

Costs for Copying Documents. The costs of the fair hearing and costs for copying relevant Department records to be used by the applicant or recipient in the fair hearing are met by HSD. HSD is not responsible for meeting any other costs incurred by the applicant or recipient in either the fair hearing or judicial appeals process.

L. INDICATE WHETHER THE STATE INTENDS TO ASSIST INDIVIDUALS TO TRAIN FOR, SEEK, AND MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT (SECTION 402(A)(1)(B)(V) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)—

1. PROVIDING DIRECT CARE IN A LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY (AS SUCH TERMS ARE DEFINED UNDER SECTION 1397J OF THIS TITLE); OR

2. IN OTHER OCCUPATIONS RELATED TO ELDER CARE, HIGH-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS, OR OCCUPATIONS EXPECTED TO EXPERIENCE LABOR SHORTAGES AS, DETERMINED APPROPRIATE BY THE STATE FOR WHICH THE STATE IDENTIFIES AN UNMET NEED FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL, AND, IF SO, SHALL INCLUDE AN OVERVIEW OF SUCH ASSISTANCE.

HSD NMW service provider is responsible for identifying training opportunities and job development in emerging professions. To comply with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, the State intends to assist participants to seek employment in elder care professions such as Home Care Attendants as identified by the Aging and Long-Term Service Department as being a growing profession.

The NMW contractor uses individually tailored employment assessments and plans to meet the needs of families and the business community. The employment plans provide parents an opportunity to gain job skills and experience through an array of work readiness programs. The
The program strives to develop self-sufficiency through employment with benefits and wages that will enable adults to support their families.

The NMW contractor also used job developers who are skilled and experienced in developing, locating, and securing subsidized or unsubsidized employment opportunities for NMW parents. Job developers identify employers who are hiring and collect data from employers related to job orders including job requirements and skills, match job requirements with qualifications of job-ready NMW parents, refers qualified applicants to employers, participate in and/or coordinate job fairs, and provide job search internet resources, where available.

In partnership with The Department and the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD), HSD has instituted training programs for NMW recipients to become licensed daycare providers. New Mexico utilizes both state and federal funds in program administration of these services. CYFD also provides several other programs that are essential to eligible TANF recipients who have at least one child in the home such as:

- Child care TANF: Available to all families receiving TANF and TANF eligible families. Child care is provided through the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF). The purpose of this program is to assist and support low-income families in caring for their children while the adult family members work or are engaged in training or other work-related activities. The relevant TANF purpose is to provide assistance to families in need so children may remain in their homes or the homes of relatives.

- Child care for low-income non-TANF households: Available to low income families receiving non-TANF funded child care assistance through the CCDF and the New Mexico State general fund.

M. PROVIDE FOR ALL MOE-FUNDED SERVICES THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: THE NAME OF THE PROGRAM BENEFIT OR SERVICE, AND THE FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA THAT FAMILIES MUST MEET IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THAT BENEFIT OR SERVICE. IN ADDITION, FOR TANF MOE-FUNDED SERVICES (CO-MINGLED OR SEGREGATED MOE) DESCRIBE THE PROGRAM BENEFIT PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE FAMILIES (SSP SERVICES DO NOT HAVE TO INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION BUT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ENCOURAGES IT) (§263.2(B)(3) & §263.2(C) PREAMBLE PAGES 17826-7)

**TANF MAINTENANCE-OF-EFFORT PROGRAMS**

As a part of its state general fund appropriations, the New Mexico Legislature has funded programs in agencies other than the New Mexico Human Services Department that are intended to provide support services to eligible low income families. The New Mexico Human Services Department has also identified other programs funded locally that provide support services to low income families or that provide pro-family activities that meet TANF purposes three or four. To participate in these programs, individuals and families must meet the low income as specified in "Section B: Eligibility for NMW and Section C: Need and Payment." Families who are not considered "eligible families" may only participate in programs designed to meet TANF purposes three or four. Related general funds expended in most of these programs may be claimed as a part of the state’s TANF MOE requirement in accordance with federal guidelines. Other low-income programs that are not specific to the definition of support service may also be claimed as MOE.
The requirements for application processing, determination and re-determination of eligibility and other similar procedural requirements may vary from program to program.

The following funds listed below are state expenditures that are counted towards the state's MOE requirement for eligible families only.

**Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP):** is a federally funded program, funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The objectives of LIHEAP are to provide assistance to low-income households in meeting their home energy costs, intervene in energy crisis situations, and provide low-cost residential weatherization and other cost-effective energy-related home repairs.

**State Funded Aliens:** An alien who arrived in the United States on or after August 22, 1996, and who meets the definition of qualified alien is not eligible for federally-funded TANF assistance under the terms of Title IV of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (five years from date of entry into the U.S. with a qualified alien status or five years from the date the non-citizen residing in the U.S. received qualified alien status). The qualified alien may be included in the NMW benefit group, if otherwise eligible, and may receive cash assistance, with the costs of the alien's benefits paid entirely by State funds.

**Child Support Disregard:** The first $100 in child support collected by the Child Support Enforcement Division is passed on to the TANF benefit group. This money is disregarded, or not counted as income in determining eligibility. This has the effect of increasing the monthly benefit amount. The total expenditure for that child support disregard is paid with State MOE dollars.

The following is a list of additional community based programs and services are counted toward the state's MOE for eligible families. New Mexico uses both state and federal funds in program administration to support these services.

**Community Based Partnerships and Services:** The purpose of these programs is to improve and enhance the emotional, mental and behavioral health of children, youth and eligible families served. The outcomes of this program include improved child behavioral and emotional functioning, reduced substance abuse, and improved school performance, improvement in family functioning, increased home stability/safety, and decrease in involvement in the legal system. For TANF, these services provide assistance to families in need so children may remain in their own homes or the homes of relatives.

**Department of Health, Public Health Division**

- Family Planning Program: This program promotes and provides comprehensive family planning services, including clinic-based services and community education and
outreach, to promote health and reproductive responsibility. Family Planning is an integral component of the Department of Health's efforts to reduce teen pregnancy, prevent unintended pregnancies and STDs, reduce infant mortality and morbidity, and improve the health of women and men of all ages.

- Vaccines for Children: Targets children birth through 18 years of age, who are uninsured, underinsured, or are American Indian/Alaskan native.

- Family FIRST: Families FIRST is a case management program of the New Mexico Department of Health, Public Health Division and it is funded by Medicaid to provide targeted case management to Medicaid eligible pregnant women and children 0-3 years old. The purposes of the case management are to provide a voluntary home visit, to establish a medical home, to assist clients in gaining access to needed medical, social and educational services, to improve pregnancy outcomes, and to promote healthy infants, children, and families. Case management is provided by licensed social workers and registered nurses.

**Taxation and Revenue Department**

- Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit: The Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit is 40% of the expenses incurred during the tax year. This credit helps families with a modified gross income of $30,160 or less to pay for the child care they need in order to work or look for work.

- Low Income Comprehensive Tax Rebate: The Low Income Comprehensive Tax Rebate allows a rebate to households with a modified gross income of $22,000 or less. Many low income New Mexicans qualify for this rebate as it is not an income-based credit. It rebates a portion of the gross receipts tax on necessities. The rebate amount ranges depending on a taxpayer’s modified gross income and number of exceptions claimed on the state income tax return.

- The Working Families Tax Credit: A New Mexico resident who qualifies for the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit may claim a credit against their New Mexico tax liability. This is called the Working Families Tax Credit. Any amount more than the tax liability is refunded to the taxpayer.

- Property Tax to Low Income: The Property Tax Rebate for low-income residents who file a return and incur a property tax liability on their principle place of residence during the tax year and who are not dependents of other person. The rebate is based on modified gross income on a sliding scale from $0 to $24,000 and results in a rebate of a percentage of the taxpayer's property tax liability.

- Special Needs Child Credit: Special Needs Child Credit allows rebate to taxpayers who adopted a special needs child.

**Public Education Department**

- Pre-Kindergarten: The Pre-Kindergarten or the Pre-K program is a voluntary developmental readiness program for children who have attained their fourth birthday prior to September 1. The Pre-K program is a voluntary program (not part of the public school system) for the provision of Pre-K services throughout the state. CYFD and PED have collaborated to develop and implement this program.
• Kindergarten - 3 Plus: This voluntary program (not part of the public school system) extends the school year for kindergarten through third grade for up to two months for participating students and measures the effectiveness of additional time on literacy, numeracy, and social skills development. The purpose is to demonstrate that increased time in kindergarten and the early grades narrows the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and other students and increases cognitive skills and leads to higher test scores for all participants.

• Graduation Reality and Dual Roles Skills (GRADS): The mission of the multi component New Mexico GRADS system is to facilitate parenting teen's graduation and economic independence; promote healthy multi-generational families; and reduce risk-taking behaviors.

Other Community Based Programs

• S.A.F.E. House: The shelter provides a safe haven from domestic violence where residents receive nutritious meals, clothing and personal needs; health care; individual and group counseling; employment and housing referrals; transportation; legal advocacy and information; counseling for children and parental support. S.A.F.E. House services are available to all victims of domestic violence, regardless of gender. Services are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

• Haven House: Haven House is the domestic violence provider and emergency shelter serving all of Sandoval County, Rio Rancho, NM. The shelter can provide housing for approximately 20 women and children. It provides an array of services to victims of domestic violence, including 24/7 crisis intervention, legal advocacy, case management, community and shelter support groups, individual counseling for victims and child-witnesses, life skill programs for victims and their children, and community education and training. Haven House also conducts a 52-week Batterer's Intervention Program for perpetrators of domestic violence that holds abusers accountable for their acts of violence and abuse.

• Care Net Pregnancy Center of Albuquerque: Care Net provides parenting and life skills education, professional counseling to assist with emotional and relationship issues, and a clothing closet to provide clothing, diapers, formulas and other essentials for children Oto 2 years old.

• Rio Grande Food Project: This program is one of the largest and longest operating food pantries in Albuquerque, NM. It is a federally-designated 501(c)3 organization dedicated to providing emergency food relief to hungry individuals and families throughout the Albuquerque metro area. Persons in need are given a week's worth of food for the entire household.

• ECHO, Inc.: This program provides a varied assortment of food programs throughout the northern half of New Mexico. These services range from USDA Commodity Food Programs to individual emergency assistance, including a kid’s elementary school backpack program, to being the food bank for other non-profit organizations feeding hungry and/or displaced individuals. ECHO also assists persons with emergency situations. This assistance may take various forms ranging from case management to actual financial help with rent, medical bills, prescriptions, etc.
• **Crisis Center of Northern New Mexico:** The mission of this program is to educate people to make positive choices that help build and sustain healthy families and a violence-free environment. The Crisis Center provides emergency shelter for victims and children escaping domestic violence, a 52-week batterer’s intervention group, counseling for children of victims, and skills and knowledge services for job readiness, and other issues affecting victims of domestic violence, such as self-esteem. This program centers on developing innovative programming that drives results in the long term for victims, perpetrators, and children who have lived in environments affected by domestic violence, and to fulfill emergency needs for victims and their children.

• **Girls, Inc., of Santa Fe:** Girls, Inc. offers programs to girls from ages 5-18 focusing on building self-esteem, fostering creativity, and promoting critical thinking skills. The program also provides girls and young women with the skills, insights, values, motivation, and support to postpone sexual activity and to use effective protection. The Mind+ Body program educates girls on drug prevention and healthy nutrition, while providing healthy snacks for all of its programs and food assistance to families when possible and as needed.

• **St. Felix Pantry, Inc.:** As a ministry under the sponsorship of the Felician Sisters, St. Felix Pantry, Inc., provides food, clothing, utility and rental assistance during difficult times to needy individuals and families in the central region of the state.

• **Big Brothers Big Sisters Mountain Region:** Big Brother Big Sisters Mentoring program provides professional support to youth through one on one mentoring services.

• **Youth Shelters and Family Services, Inc.:** Transitional Living Program-provides supervised apartment setting for Homeless Youth; Street Outreach- Street based critical services such as food, water and clothing; and Pregnant and Parenting Youth Initiative provides support for young families.

• **Samaritan House, Inc.:** Food Pantry - assists people with food; Casa de Samaritan assists people with food and shelter; and Rental Assistance - assist people with getting housing programs.

• **CareNet Pregnancy:** Care Net is committed to providing women and men with accurate up to date information in order to make informed decision about pregnancy, sexual health and relationships. These services are provided through five centers in Albuquerque.

• **Youth Development Inc. (YDI):** YDI provides service to children and youth who were referred and deemed high risk with mentorship program and also provides life skill services.

### TANF CERTIFICATIONS

States that include TANF in the Combined State Plan must provide a certification by the chief executive officer of that State, that during the fiscal year, the State will:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>The State Plan must include</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Operate a child support enforcement program under the State Plan approved under part D. (section 402(a)(2) of the Social Security Act);</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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The State Plan must include

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<td>2.</td>
<td>Operate a foster care and adoption assistance program under the State Plan approved under part E, and that the State will take such actions as are necessary to ensure that children receiving assistance under such part are eligible for medical assistance under the State Plan under title XIX. (section 402(a)(3) of the Social Security Act);</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Specify which State agency or agencies will administer and supervise the program referred to in paragraph (1) for the fiscal year, which shall include assurances that local governments and private sector organizations (section 402(a)(4) of the Social Security Act) —</td>
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<td>3. (A)</td>
<td>have been consulted regarding the plan and design of welfare services in the State so that services are provided in a manner appropriate to local populations; and</td>
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<td>3. (B)</td>
<td>have had at least 45 days to submit comments on the plan and the design of such services;</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Provide each member of an Indian tribe, who is domiciled in the State and is not eligible for assistance under a tribal family assistance plan approved under section 412, with equitable access to assistance under the State program funded under this part attributable to funds provided by the Federal Government. (section 402(a)(5) of the Social Security Act);</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Establish and enforce standards and procedures to ensure against program fraud and abuse, including standards and procedures concerning nepotism, conflicts of interest among individuals responsible for the administration and supervision of the State program, kickbacks, and the use of political patronage. (section 402(a)(6) of the Social Security Act);</td>
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<td>6. (optional)</td>
<td>Establish and Enforcing standards and procedures to (section 402(a)(7) of the Social Security Act). —</td>
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<td>6.i.</td>
<td>screen and identify individuals receiving assistance under this part with a history of domestic violence while maintaining the confidentiality of such individuals;</td>
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<td>6.ii.</td>
<td>refer such individuals to counseling and supportive services; and</td>
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<td>6.iii.</td>
<td>waive, pursuant to a determination of good cause, other program requirements such as time limits (for so long as necessary) for individuals receiving assistance, residency requirements, child support cooperation requirements, and family cap provisions, in cases where compliance with such requirements would make it more difficult for individuals receiving assistance under this part to escape domestic violence or unfairly penalize such individuals who are or have been victimized by such violence, or individuals who are at risk of further domestic violence.</td>
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The Jobs for Veterans' State Grants (JVSG) are mandatory, formula-based staffing grants to States (including DC, PR, VI and Guam). The JVSG is funded annually in accordance with a funding formula defined in the statute (38 U.S.C. 4102A (c) (2) (B) and regulation and operates on a fiscal year (not program year) basis, however, performance metrics are collected and reported quarterly on a Program Year basis (as with the ETA-9002 Series). Currently, VETS JVSG operates on a multi-year grant approval cycle modified and funded annually.

In accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(b)(5) and § 4102A(c), the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training (ASVET) makes grant funds available for use in each State to support Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) staff. As a condition to receive funding, 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(c)(2) requires States to submit an application for a grant that contains a State Plan narrative, which includes:

A. HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES TO VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS UNDER THE JVSG;

The State intends to provide employment, training and job placement services for veterans and eligible persons under the JVSG in accordance with the Priority of Service for covered persons (20 CFR Part 1010, Final Rule) and VPLs 03-14, 03-14 Ch. 1 & 2, 03-19, or current guidance. Covered persons receive priority of service for qualified job training program or service for workforce preparation, development, or delivery that is directly funded (in whole or in part) by the Department of Labor. Qualified job training programs consists of universal access, discretionary targeting, and statutory targeting.

Veterans and eligible persons will be assessed upon entry to determine if they meet the requirements to be served under JVSG and have one or more significant barriers to employment (SBE). If so, they will be immediately referred to the DVOP or next available AJC staff person. If no SBEs are determined, or they do not meet the eligibility requirements to be seen by a DVOP, per Priority of Service requirements, they will be referred to the next available AJC staff person. SBE veterans/eligible persons will then be provided individualized career services to help overcome their barriers, to include being placed into case management when appropriate. The DVOP/AJC staff will make referrals to partner programs for additional assistance needed and any training opportunities that the veteran/eligible person has identified as having an interest in. Eligible persons are provided employment services that include assistance in completing universal access registration, attendance to the workforce center orientation and assessments to determine their employment or training needs.

All qualified job training programs will have policy or policies in place to ensure covered persons are identified at the point of entry and given the opportunity to take full advantage of priority of service, their entitlement of priority of service, the full array of employment, training, and placement services available under priority of service and/or services, and any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/or services.
Veterans and eligible persons with SBE that are referred to DVOP specialist will have their Objective Assessment Summary (OAS) and Individual Employment Plan (IEP) completed in the Workforce Connection Online System (WCOS). DVOP specialist will assign veterans and eligible persons for participation in career planning, provide them individualized career services and conduct follow-up meeting on a bi-weekly basis for a preferred successful employment or training outcome is achieved.

When the veteran/eligible person is found to be job ready, the DVOP/AJC staff will work with the LVER and BSTs to identify employment opportunities that match the veteran’s/eligible person’s skill set and make the appropriate referral to the employer(s).

B. THE DUTIES ASSIGNED TO DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF BY THE STATE; SPECIFICALLY IMPLEMENTING DVOP AND LVER DUTIES OR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS OUTLINED IN 38 U.S.C. § 4103A AND 4104. THESE DUTIES MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT GUIDANCE;

DVOP specialists provide individualized career services to eligible veterans and eligible persons experiencing significant barriers to employment, with an emphasis on assisting eligible veterans who are economically or educationally disadvantaged. VPL 03-14 with Changes 1 and 2, 03-19, or current guidance provides policy guidance on eligible veterans/eligible persons with significant barriers to employment and include the following:

- A special disabled or disabled veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 U.S.C §4211 (l) and (3); special disabled and disabled veterans are those:
  - who are entitled to compensation (or who, but for the receipt of military retired pay, would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; or,
  - were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability;

- A homeless person, as defined in Sections 103(a) and (b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a) and (b)), as amended;

- A recently-separated service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(6), who has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks in the previous 12 months;

- An offender, as defined by WIOA Section 3 (38), who is currently incarcerated or who has been released from incarceration;

- A veteran lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate; or

- A low-income individual (as defined by WIOA Section 3 (36)).

- Veterans aged 18-24;

- Vietnam-era Veterans;

- Transitioning members of the Armed Forces who have been identified as in need of intensive services (now referred to as Individualized Career Services);
• Members of the Armed Forces who are wounded, ill, or injured and receiving treatment in military treatment facilities (MTF) or warrior transition units (WTU); and

• The spouses and other family caregivers of such wounded, ill, or injured members.

DVOP specialists individualized career services provided to eligible veterans, eligible persons and additional populations are:

- Comprehensive assessment interviews
- Career guidance services
- Individual Employment Plans (IEP)
- Staff-assisted job search activities
- Labor Market Information

Eligible veterans and eligible persons who are identified as having a SBE must be immediately referred to a DVOP specialists or, in instances where a DVOP specialist is not available, another WCC staff representative to provide individualized career services.

Eligible veterans and eligible persons who do not fall into one of the categories that are served by DVOP specialists are eligible to be served by other WCC staff, including WIOA, WP and other WCC program staff.

Case management (career planning) continues to be an appropriate service delivery strategy or framework within which individualized career services may be delivered, particularly for covered persons. Individualized career services should be delivered following career planning framework in most cases.

Managing the DVOP Caseload. In the event that a DVOP specialist does not have a full case-load of covered persons who meet the SBE categories or prioritized additional categories, the DVOP specialist may perform additional activities, in the order specified below:

- Review all open case files of current participants with a SBE or in a priority category and perform career planning duties.
- Conduct relationship building, outreach and recruitment activities with other service provider in the local area, to enroll SBE and priority category veterans in WCC.
LVER staff conduct outreach to employers and business associations and engage in advocacy efforts with hiring executives to increase employment opportunities for veterans and encourage the hiring of disabled veterans. VPL 03-14, paragraph 6 provides policy guidance on LVER staff activities and included below:

- Planning and participating in job and career fairs
- Conducting employer outreach
- In conjunction with employers, conducting job searches and workshops, and establishing job search groups
- Coordinating with unions, apprenticeship programs, and businesses or business organizations to promote and secure employment and training programs for veterans
- Informing federal contractors of the process to recruit qualified veterans
- Coordinating and participating with other business outreach efforts

LVER staff are members of the business services team. They are responsible for “facilitating employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans in the employment service delivery system.

Consolidated DVOP/LVER staff perform both the duties of a DVOP specialist and a LVER staff and this position promotes a more efficient administration of services to veterans with a particular emphasis on services to disabled veterans; and does not hinder the provision of services to veterans and employers. Consolidated DVOP/LVER staff positions provides individualized career services to eligible veterans and eligible persons. There no Consolidated DVOP/LVER staff approved in our current staffing grant currently.

VPL 01-20 provides policy guidance on utilization of Consolidated DVOP/LVER staff positions.

C. THE MANNER IN WHICH DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF ARE INTEGRATED INTO THE STATE’S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM OR AMERICAN JOB CENTER;

DVOP specialists and LVER staff (there are no Consolidated DVOP/LVER staff are approved in the current staffing grant) are an essential part of and fully integrated employment service delivery system or network. They are included among the service delivery partner staff, which consists of all staff employed by programs or activities operated by the partners listed in 29 U.S.C. 2841(b) that provide online and/or in-person workforce development or related support services as part of the workforce development system. Other partner staff members included staff of WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, and other network partner programs.
Section 241 of the VOW (Veterans Opportunity to Work) to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 (VOW Act, Title II of Public Law 112-56) amended 38 U.S.C 4103A and 4104. The VOW Act amendments specifically prohibit DVOP specialists and LVERs from performing non-veteran related duties that detract from their ability to perform their statutorily-defined duties related to meeting the employment needs of eligible veterans.

The State’s employment service delivery staff members makes the initial contact with the veteran. They conduct an assessment to determine Priority of Service and determine whether a veteran has significant barriers to employment (SBE) or belong to an additional population of veterans as designed by the Secretary as cited in paragraph b. above. Veterans that are determined to have SBE are referred to the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist assigned to that service delivery office for individualized career services and other DVOP role responsibilities. If the veteran does not have SBE, an employment services interviewer can assist them with receiving basic career services that are available at that service delivery office.

LVER staff are integrated into the State’s employment service delivery system to perform a wide range of duties on behalf of veterans specifically related to outreach to the employer community and facilitation within the service delivery system. LVER staff are assigned duties that promote the advantages of hiring veterans to employers, employer associations, and business groups. LVERs advocate for all veterans served by the service delivery system with business, industry, and other community-based organizations by participating in appropriate business activities above.

NMDWS ensures that the New Mexico Jobs for Veterans’ State Grant staff of DVOP specialists and LVER staff are properly integrated at the local Workforce Connection Centers (WCC). The integration brings together workforce partners and other key stakeholders through policy and planning. The integration utilizes the State’s registration and intake process; service delivery offerings; co-enrollment policies and practices; specific program requirements for worker profiling and reemployment services; and, its communication plan to conduct outreach and engagement of customers. DVOP specialists and LVERs are an essential part of and fully integrated into the WCC. They are included among the WCC partner staff, which consists of all staff employed by programs or activities operated by WCC that provide online and/or in-person workforce development or related support service as part of the workforce development system. Although the DVOP specialists and LVERs are integrated in WCC, the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 prohibit DVOPs and LVERs from performing non-veteran related duties that detract from their ability to perform their statutorily-defined duties related to meeting the employment needs of eligible veterans.

- NMDWS makes optimal use of the services and linkages to other veteran service providers in the state to enhance the employability and placement of veterans seeking employment and training related services. The methods of delivery of these services include:
Partnerships with other veterans’ service providers by co-facilitation with representatives from the NM Department of Veterans Services (DVS), Employer Support for the Guard and Reserves (ESGR), state rehabilitation program, college’s veterans’ resource centers when possible, or by maintaining close working relationships when location differences make co-facilitation impractical. We have formalized partnerships through Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) with the VA Vocational and Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) program office, Veterans Court in the 2nd Judicial District Court, Goodwill Industries-HVRP, NM Veterans Integration Center, UNM Veterans’ Resource Center, Los Alamos National Laboratories and continue to seek collaboration with other federal, state, local, tribal governments, non-profit organizations and employers to fulfill our Jobs for Veterans mandates.

The State Veterans’ Coordinator (SVC) facilitates workshops with statewide organizations and professional groups on topics of veterans and disabled veterans’ employment; the value of hiring veterans, GI Bill benefits for apprenticeships, OJT and work-study programs.

DVOP specialists are out-stationed to VA Medical Center’s Supportive Employment Programs (Work and Compensated Therapy); Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program, Supportive Services to Veterans and Families and veteran per diem grant recipient's, wounded warrior military treatment locations, veterans’ court and correctional facilities (minimum level). A DVOP specialist is designated as the Intensive Services Coordinator and located at the VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program office. DVOP specialists’ supports and attends the Stand Down events and other community homeless events as part of their outreach. Additionally, they schedule and conduct outreach to Native American veterans located on tribal lands.

LVERs are team members in the WCC Business Section to meet with and assist employers with posting job orders. They assist with the organization of job fairs and meet with employers to identify job vacancies and skills needed for in-demand, high-demand or high-wage careers. They work closely with WIOA partners, institutions of higher learning, other governmental, non-profit agencies and the private sector that provides training or education benefits to prepare veterans with careers or job opportunities.

The NMDWS web site www.dws.state.nm.us provides public information activities and frequent press releases to inform veterans of services available through the WCC, including employment and job training opportunities. Information includes Job Seeker (Jobs and Careers, Licensed Occupations, and Career Exploration), Business (Apprenticeships, Start-ups, Work Opportunity Tax Credits, Work Keys, and Wage & Hour), Labor Relations (Public Works, Human Rights), Veterans (Resource Guide, Priority of Service), Labor Market Information (Data/Statistics, Labor Market Reviews). The NMDWS web includes, job fair and community events, small business expositions, WCC locations and contact information, links to workforce partners and available frequently asked questions.

D. THE INCENTIVE AWARD PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED USING THE 1% GRANT ALLOCATION SET ASIDE FOR THIS PURPOSE, AS APPLICABLE;
1. **Total Percentage Designated for Performance Incentive Award:** Per Title 38, U.S.C. Section 4102A(c)(7) and USDOL Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (VETS) Veterans Program Letter 04-19 dated March 20, 2019, no more than one percent of the Jobs for Veterans State Grant allocation that States receive is designated for the purposes of performance incentive awards for eligible employees and employment service offices.

1. **Objectives to be Achieved Through the State’s Incentive Awards Program:** The Incentive Awards Program was established to:

   - Encourage the improvement and modernization of employment, training, and placement services for veterans, and

   - Recognize eligible employees and employment service offices for excellence in the provision of such services, or for having made demonstrable improvements in the provision of services to veterans.

1. **Planned Selection and Award Process:** The agency Workforce Services Division provides the administration of the JVSG Incentive Awards Program. The award process will be inclusive of the full spectrum of Department of Labor employment and training-related programs and non-Federal partners.

1. **Eligibility.**

1. **Individual.** Eligible recipients for individual incentive awards are Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists, Local Veterans’ Employment Representative (LVER) staff, and any other individual who provides employment, training, and placement services to veterans under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), include labor exchanges funded by the Wagner-Peyser Act or staff of American Job Center partner agencies.

1. **Employment Service Offices.** Employment Service Offices are eligible to receive incentive awards include any service delivery point that provides exemplary public employment and training services to veterans; American Job Centers operated by the State Workforce Agencies or offices that contract with the State or Local Workforce Development Boards. Incentive awards may be used by employment service office recipients for any purpose. Awards to offices should be reserved for instances where most, if not all, employees in an office contribute to improving employment or training services offered and provided to veterans.
1. **Selection Criteria.** Selection criteria for award recipients must be based on performance or activities during the fiscal year for which the award is given. The award consideration are for employees and offices that demonstrates outstanding outreach on behalf of veterans who have barriers to employment, especially homeless, incarcerated, disabled, and recently separated veterans. The incentive awards are for individuals and offices that promote employment opportunities for veterans within the local community or enhance provider awareness of veterans’ issues and resources.

Selection criteria for attitude, motivation, program improvement, positive feedback, and other indicators of outstanding performance should be given consideration in additional to numerical data. The Veterans Incentive Awards Program Nomination Form will be used to nominate individuals that will describe their exemplary and innovative approach to assisting veterans. All nominations will be considered for awards and for those nominations submitted from various specialized programs that serve certain target groups of veterans.

1. **Planned Disbursement of Incentive Award Funds:** The Workforce Services Division will conduct the administration of the Incentive Award funds, facilitated by the State Veterans Coordinator with the agency Budget and Human Resources Bureau staff members. The facilitation consists of establishing the process to promote the JVSG Incentive Awards Program to workforce, agency and community partners; accepting the nominations, empanelling staff to review and approve nominations and the timely distribution of cash awards only. The cash award amounts are provided below:

   1. **Level I,** Maximum Award amount is $750.00.
   1. **Level II,** Maximum Award amount is $1,000.00.
   1. **Level III,** Maximum Award amount is $1,250.00.

A grant modification request will be submitted with new or revised incentive award plans for the current fiscal year in the annual funding modification and/or a mid-year modification. The request will be submitted to the Director Veterans’ Employment and Training (DVET) no later than the second Friday in August to ensure sufficient processing time prior to the close of the fiscal year.

The approved incentive award plans must obligate incentive award funds by September 30th of each year and liquidate these obligations by December 31st of the same year. Any unspent incentive award funding will be de-obligated during the grant close out of the applicable fiscal year. Incentive award funds are not allowable for other use.
E. THE POPULATIONS OF ELIGIBLE VETERANS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING ANY ADDITIONAL POPULATIONS DESIGNATED BY THE SECRETARY AS ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES, AND ANY ADDITIONAL POPULATIONS SPECIFICALLY TARGETED BY THE STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY FOR SERVICES FROM ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM PARTNERS (E.G., NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS; VETERANS IN REMOTE RURAL COUNTIES OR PARISHES);

DVOP specialists must limit their activities to providing services to covered persons who:

- meet the definition of an individual with a Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE), or
- are members of a veteran population identified by the Secretary as eligible for DVOP specialist services.

Covered persons determined to have a SBE attest to belonging to at least one of the six criteria below.

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

Designation of Additional Populations Eligible for Services from DVOP Specialists. The populations described in this section are eligible to be served by DVOP specialists, in addition to those populations of covered persons with Significant Barriers to Employment.

- Veterans aged 18-24. Veterans aged 18-24 possess limited civilian work history which can make transitioning to the civilian labor force difficult. Based on this fact, veterans between the ages of 18 to 24 may benefit from individualized career services provided by a DVOP specialist.
• Vietnam-era Veterans. Pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 4211, the term “Veteran of the Vietnam Era” is an eligible veteran any part of whose active military, naval, or air service was during the Vietnam era. The Bureau of Labor Statistics and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) data indicate that there are still a sizeable number of Vietnam-era Veterans in the workforce, and many face difficulty in finding and maintaining employment.

  o 38 U.S.C. 101(29) defines “Vietnam Era” to mean the period beginning on February 28, 1961, and ending on May 7, 1975, in the case of a veteran who served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period, and the period beginning on August 5, 1964, and ending on May 7, 1975, in all other cases,

• Eligible Transitioning Service Members, Spouses, and Caregivers. In annual appropriation bills since the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014, Congress authorized JVSG grants to support services as described in VPL 07-14 to:

  o Transitioning members of the Armed Forces who have been identified as in need of individualized career services;
  o Members of the Armed Forces who are wounded, ill, or injured and receiving treatment in Military Treatment Facilities (MTF) or Warrior Transition Units (WTU); and
  o The spouses or other family caregivers of such wounded, ill or injured members.

Authorization to serve these specific populations is contingent upon the appropriations acts continuing to provide authorization.

The term “family caregiver” is defined as follows at 38 U.S.C. 1720G(d):

1. The term “caregiver,” with respect to an eligible veteran ...means an individual who provides personal care services to the veteran.

2. The term “family caregiver,” with respect to an eligible veteran ...means a family member who is a caregiver of the veterans.

1. The term “family member,” with respect to an eligible veteran ...means an individual who-

   a. Is a member of the family of the veteran, including-

      (i) a parent;
      (ii) a spouse;
      (iii) a child;
      (iv) a step-family member; and
      (v) an extended family member; or

   b. lives with, but is not a member of the family of the veteran.
F. HOW THE STATE IMPLEMENTS AND MONITORS THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRIORITY OF SERVICE TO COVERED PERSONS;

Per Grant Officer Memorandum 01-20, Subject: Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) State Plan Submission under WIOA Combined and Unified State Plans dated March 4, 2020, a response to this section is not required.

G. HOW THE STATE PROVIDES OR INTENDS TO PROVIDE AND MEASURE, THROUGH BOTH THE DVOP AND AMERICAN JOB CENTER STAFF:

1. JOB AND JOB TRAINING INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES,

Per Grant Officer Memorandum 01-20, Subject: Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) State Plan Submission under WIOA Combined and Unified State Plans dated March 4, 2020, a response to this section is not required.

2. EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT SERVICES, AND

Per Grant Officer Memorandum 01-20, Subject: Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) State Plan Submission under WIOA Combined and Unified State Plans dated March 4, 2020, a response to this section is not required.

3. JOB-DRIVEN TRAINING AND SUBSEQUENT PLACEMENT SERVICE PROGRAM FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS;

Per Grant Officer Memorandum 01-20, Subject: Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) State Plan Submission under WIOA Combined and Unified State Plans dated March 4, 2020, a response to this section is not required.

H. THE HIRE DATE ALONG WITH MANDATORY TRAINING COMPLETION DATES FOR ALL DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF; AND

The NM JVSG program employees who are assigned to perform DVOP specialist, LVER staff or Consolidated DVOP/LVER staff and their assignment date and completion of required training are provided:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee Name</th>
<th>Program (DVOP, LVER, or Consolidated)</th>
<th>Date Assigned</th>
<th>Completed all required Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ernestine Alston</td>
<td>DVOP</td>
<td>3/2/2020</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy Beck</td>
<td>LVER</td>
<td>3/28/2016</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Name</td>
<td>Program (DVOP, LVER, or Consolidated)</td>
<td>Date Assigned</td>
<td>Completed all required Training</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Michele Bertrand</td>
<td>LVER</td>
<td>12/31/2018</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabitha Bush</td>
<td>DVOP</td>
<td>12/31/2018</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Bodley</td>
<td>LVER</td>
<td>11/27/2017</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leticia Cano</td>
<td>DVOP</td>
<td>6/4/2018</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro Carreras</td>
<td>DVOP</td>
<td>6/18/2018</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roberto Christian</td>
<td>*ISC/DVOP</td>
<td>3/23/2019</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamara Davis</td>
<td>DVOP</td>
<td>1/13/2020</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Henley</td>
<td>DVOP</td>
<td>5/22/2017</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benjamin Mendoza</td>
<td>DVOP</td>
<td>6/10/2019</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Morrison</td>
<td>DVOP</td>
<td>9/21/2018</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilbert Olivas</td>
<td>DVOP</td>
<td>2/13/2006</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ronald Pitts</td>
<td>DVOP</td>
<td>9/23/2019</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicole Roa</td>
<td>DVOP</td>
<td>3/25/2019</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Trigg</td>
<td>LVER</td>
<td>1/13/2020</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Zafra</td>
<td>*SVC/LVER</td>
<td>8/13/2011</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: ISC (Intensive Services Coordinator) and SVC (State Veterans Coordinator)

I. SUCH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AS THE SECRETARY MAY REQUIRE.

Per Grant Officer Memorandum 01-20, Subject: Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) State Plan Submission under WIOA Combined and Unified State Plans dated March 4, 2020, a response to this section is not required.
SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SCSEP)

(OMB Control No. 1205-0040)

A. ECONOMIC PROJECTIONS AND IMPACT

1. DISCUSS LONG-TERM PROJECTIONS FOR JOBS IN INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS IN THE STATE THAT MAY PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER WORKERS. (20 CFR 641.302(D)) (MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN.)

The following industries (listed alphabetically) include the highest percentages of older workers in New Mexico. After each industry the projections for the percentage of change in employment from 2016 to 2026 are listed:

Accommodation and Food Services—6.68% increase; Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation—4.37% increase; Educational Services—4.85% increase; Health Care and Social Assistance—19.45% increase; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services—11.21% increase; Public Administration—loss of 0.25%; and Retail—0.28% increase. Of these, the industry projected to grow the most by 2026 is Health Care and Social Assistance (19.45% from 2016 to 2026).

These industries are related to the following Occupations (also listed alphabetically with their employment change projections):


Of these occupations, the one projected to grow the most by 2026 is Personal Care and Service (25.09% from 2016 to 2026).

2. DISCUSS HOW THE LONG-TERM JOB PROJECTIONS DISCUSSED IN THE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN RELATE TO THE TYPES OF UNSUBSIDIZED JOBS FOR WHICH SCSEP PARTICIPANTS WILL BE TRAINED AND THE TYPES OF SKILL TRAINING TO BE PROVIDED. (20 CFR 641.302(D))

The discussion above suggests that training low-income older workers for positions in Personal Care and Service within the Health Care and Social Assistance industry would be ideal because this is the sector of the economy projected to grow most. This is the plan of the New Mexico SCSEP. The New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department (ALTSD), the agency where New Mexico SCSEP is located, also holds the New Mexico Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (Ombudsman), The New Mexico Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) and the New Mexico Adult Protective Services (APS). Each of these other programs has clients who are referred to the programs repeatedly. Such clients may be medically frail, cognitively challenged and/or deal with behavioral health issues. New Mexico currently has two models of support for
such individuals; Peer Support Workers and Community Health Workers. Both of these programs can receive Medicaid reimbursement for the services that they provide.

New Mexico SCSEP proposes to provide training to older workers in both of these program models, as well as the special needs of recurrent clients of the Ombudsman, the ADRC and APS. Such training will include classroom and on-the-job components. National certifications for Peer Support Workers and Community Health Workers will be sought as the training approaches completion. This initiative is part of a larger program that provides the same training to individuals who are not eligible for the SCSEP either because of age or income.

3. DISCUSS CURRENT AND PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE STATE (SUCH AS BY PROVIDING INFORMATION AVAILABLE UNDER §15 OF THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT (29 U.S.C. 491-2) BY OCCUPATION), AND THE TYPES OF SKILLS POSSESSED BY ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS. (20 CFR 641.325(C))

Older workers, who are eligible for SCSEP, often have experience caring for elders in their families. In addition, they usually receive benefits from one or more government and non-profit programs and have experience navigating this complex array of services. These skills will be useful in the roles of Peer Support Workers and/or Community Health Workers. When training and certification for these jobs are complete, Medicaid Managed Care Organizations are looking for individuals to hire to assist difficult clients in order to reduce hospital and nursing home recidivism. These jobs do not entail heavy physical labor, they are about assisting these clients to receive services from the systems that are in place to serve them, but which they have difficulty understanding and accessing themselves.

Training for peer support and Community Health Workers is a new initiative for New Mexico’s SCSEP. In addition, it continues to train and place individuals in food service, education, administrative support, sales, janitorial and maintenance positions.

B. SERVICE DELIVERY AND COORDINATION

1. A DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER PROGRAMS. THIS MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE STATE STRATEGIES SECTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN, BUT REGARDLESS OF PLACEMENT IN DOCUMENT, MUST INCLUDE:

A. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF SCSEP GRANTEES WITH WIOA TITLE I PROGRAMS, INCLUDING PLANS FOR USING THE WIOA ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND ITS PARTNERS TO SERVE INDIVIDUALS AGED 55 AND OLDER. (20 CFR 641.302(G), 641.325(E))

New Mexico has three SCSEP grantees, the state grantee, Goodwill Industries of New Mexico, and the National Indian Council on Aging. These three organizations will meet at least twice per year to consider issues of equitable distribution, shared host agencies and the state of collaboration and cooperation between SCSEP and WIOA Title I programs, the one-stop system and its partners.

The equitable distribution plan for New Mexico has remained stable since the last national competition. The current distribution seems to be working well. Even so, regular consideration and discussion of this plan is a useful exercise and any changes that result from the current competition will only serve to heighten its value.

While sharing of host agencies between SCSEP grantees is discouraged, certain large and key agencies, such as the one-stops, will often be shared. Any issues that arise from this sharing will be discussed at the local level, and brought to the state meeting of grantees as necessary.
WIOA Title I programs that provide services to adults, dislocated workers, Native Americans and seasonal farm workers may also serve SCSEP-eligible individuals. Current examples of such service include High School Equivalency Certificate Programs and English for Speakers of Other Languages, especially those operated through Adult Basic Education within the community college system. Increased collaboration with community colleges for such programs as computer literacy, work readiness and specific skill tracks is a goal of the SCSEP grantees in New Mexico. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) programs are another frequent co-enrollment for SCSEP participants. New Mexico’s VR system is committed to co-location in the one-stops; this will make increased referrals and collaborations easier to achieve. It is a goal of SCSEP grantees to increase the co-enrollments between SCSEP and VR. Registering at the one-stops to receive Wagner-Peyser services is required of every SCSEP participant. The job search and job counselling services offered in this program are key to participant’s search for unsubsidized employment. It is a goal of SCSEP programs to continue to educate one-stop staff on the unique needs of older workers, not only SCSEP participants, in order to ease the way for 55-plus workers to continue, or return to, gainful employment.

These programs are overseen by a system of state and regional workforce boards. While SCSEP representation is not required on these boards New Mexico SCSEP grantees attend the state workforce board and the Director of the state program serves on the central workforce board, which covers a four-county area that includes the Albuquerque metropolitan area. Participation on these boards enables SCSEP to present proposals gained from the collaborations described above, and to forward the goals expressed above. All of these goals are focused on increasing SCSEPs integration into the one-stop system and the growth of new and innovative collaborations between SCSEP grantees and other WIOA Title I programs and their partners.

B. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF SCSEP GRANTEES WITH THE ACTIVITIES BEING CARRIED OUT IN THE STATE UNDER THE OTHER TITLES OF THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT (OAA). (20 CFR 641.302(H))

ALTSD is the designated State Unit on Aging under the Older Americans Act. As such, collaboration with area agencies on aging and their subcontractors is facilitated naturally. ALTSD places SCSEP participants in senior centers around the state to train as cooks’ helpers, drivers delivering meals to the home bound, and receptionists. ALTSD requires senior center staff to assess SCSEP participants for benefit eligibility. A new initiative will coordinate SCSEP activities with the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, the Aging and Disability Resource Center and the Adult Protective Services. All of these are OAA Programs. SCSEP participants will assist in assessment and support of frail and vulnerable seniors.

C. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER PRIVATE AND PUBLIC ENTITIES AND PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE SERVICES TO OLDER AMERICANS, SUCH AS COMMUNITY AND FAITH- BASED ORGANIZATIONS, TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS, AND PROGRAMS FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES. (20 CFR 641.302(I))

ALTSD is engaged with a number of public and private organizations that serve older adults with low incomes.

In Bernalillo County: SCSEP providers coordinate training and outreach with the Community College of Central New Mexico (CNM), the City of Albuquerque, The Storehouse, Valle de Oro Urban Wildlife Refuge, and the Unites States Marshals’ Office.

In Dona Ana County: SCSEP providers collaborate with the City of Las Cruces, Las Cruces Railroad Museum, St. Luke’s Public Health Department, and the Long-Term Ombudsman and Consumer and Elder Rights Programs.
In McKinley County: SCSEP providers collaborate with the Community Pantry, Adult Basic Education at UNM-Gallup North Campus, the Shiwi Ts’ana Elementary School in Zuni Pueblo, Zuni Elderly Services and All Together in Dignity (ATD) 4th World Movement.

In Sandoval County: SCSEP providers collaborate with Zia Pueblo, and the Placitas, Meadowlark, and Corrales senior centers.

In San Juan County: SCSEP providers collaborate with the City of Farmington, the City of Aztec, Aztec Ruins, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Farmington Regional Animal Shelter, the Frontline Mission, Catholic Charities, the City of Farmington Museum, and the Northwest New Mexico Arts Council as well as several senior centers in Farmington, Upper and Lower Fruitland, and Aztec.

In Santa Fe County: SCSEP providers collaborate with the City of Santa Fe's Nutrition Program, Picuris Pueblo senior center, the School for Advanced Research, and Assistance Dogs of the West, as well as several senior centers.

In Valencia County: SCSEP providers collaborate with the Belen Art League and the City of Belen's senior center.

D. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER LABOR MARKET AND JOB TRAINING INITIATIVES. (20 CFR 641.302(J))

The Department works with Adult Education programs in McKinley County (UNM) and Bernalillo County (CNM) in order to provide SCSEP participants with adult basic education, computer literacy, customer service skills and English for Speakers of Other Languages training. The goal is to train older workers to match the needs of employers in their respective areas. Toward that end, SCSEP providers continue to follow research published nationally regarding the Survey of Adult Skills, literacy initiatives, Career Pathway Evaluations, and Integrated Education and Training.

E. ACTIONS TO ENSURE THAT SCSEP IS AN ACTIVE PARTNER IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND THE STEPS THE STATE WILL TAKE TO ENCOURAGE AND IMPROVE COORDINATION WITH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. (20 CFR 641.335)

Registering at the one-stops to receive Wagner-Peyser services is required of every SCSEP participant. The job search and job counselling services offered in this program are key to participant’s search for unsubsidized employment. It is a goal of SCSEP programs to continue to educate one-stop staff on the unique needs of older workers, not only SCSEP participants, in order to ease the way for 55-plus workers to continue, or return to, gainful employment.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) programs are another frequent co-enrollment for SCSEP participants. New Mexico’s VR system is committed to co-location in the one-stops; this increases referrals and makes collaborations easier to achieve. It is a goal of SCSEP grantees to increase the co-enrollments between SCSEP and VR.

Participation on regional and state workforce boards enables SCSEP grantees to present proposals focused on increasing SCSEPs integration into the one-stop system and the growth of new and innovative collaborations between SCSEP grantees and other WIOA Title I programs and their partners. It is a goal of SCSEP grantees in New Mexico to ensure that all boards in the state are aware of the needs and gifts of older workers, and to encourage their inclusion in economic considerations, especially as the older population of New Mexico is projected to increase dramatically in the next ten years.
F. EFFORTS TO WORK WITH LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICES IN RURAL LOCATIONS.

Several economic development organizations are already partners with SCSEP. Some are host agencies, some have provided training for SCSEP participants, and some provide supportive services. The North Central New Mexico Economic Development District is a very important partner to SCSEP. This organization operates the Non-Metro Area Agency on Aging (AAA), which oversees the provision of Older Americans Act services for all counties in New Mexico except Bernalillo. It also contracts with the ALTSD to provide Senior Employment Services, funded by state general funds.

2. THE STATE’S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR ENGAGING EMPLOYERS TO DEVELOP AND PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PLACEMENT OF SCSEP PARTICIPANTS IN UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT. (20 CFR 641.302(E)) (MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE STATE STRATEGIES SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN.)

The New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department (ALTSD), the agency where New Mexico SCSEP is located, also houses the New Mexico Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (Ombudsman), The New Mexico Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) and the New Mexico Adult Protective Services (APS). Each of these other programs has clients who are referred to the programs repeatedly. Such clients may be medically frail, cognitively challenged and/or deal with behavioral health issues. New Mexico currently has two models of support for such individuals; Peer Support Workers and Community Health Workers. Both of these programs can receive Medicaid reimbursement for the services that they provide.

New Mexico SCSEP proposes to provide training to older workers in both of these program models, as well as the special needs of recurrent clients of the Ombudsman, the ADRC and APS. Such training will include classroom and on-the-job components. National certifications for Peer Support Workers and Community Health Workers will be sought as the training approaches completion.

When training and certification for these jobs are complete, Medicaid Managed Care Organizations and the Aging and Long-Term Services Department are looking for individuals to hire to assist difficult clients in order to reduce hospital and nursing home recidivism. These jobs do not entail heavy physical labor, they are about caregiving, companionship, and support for connection to resources.

3. THE STATE’S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR SERVING MINORITY OLDER INDIVIDUALS UNDER SCSEP. (20 CFR 641.302(C))

The final Quarterly Progress Report for ALTSD’s 2018 program year shows that the populations served were 60% white, 30% Native American Indian and 2% multi-racial. Of those served, 22% were Hispanic.

Nearly half of ALTSD’s authorized positions (21 out of 46) are in San Juan and McKinley Counties. Demographics indicate that San Juan County’s population is 54.6% White (38.0% White, non-Hispanic) and 41.1% Native American Indian, predominantly Navajo. Those of Hispanic ethnicity comprise 20.5%. McKinley’s population is 16.6% White (8.4% White, non-Hispanic) and 79.2% Native American Indian, majority Navajo. 14.4% are of Hispanic or Latino origin. To assist staff with serving the large Native American Indian population in these counties, ALTSD requires cultural competency training for all department staff that work with native clients, including SCSEP personnel.
New Mexico SCSEP’s plan to train participants to become Peer Support Workers and Community Health Workers will serve minorities well. Peer Support Workers and Community Health Workers are chosen because they represent their communities and have local knowledge of resources, cultural issues and languages. Minority participants trained for these occupations will be able to serve the minorities represented in their communities with excellence.


Need for community services in New Mexico is great. In 2018, 19.5% of New Mexicans had income below the federal poverty level. The need is widespread, though certain areas bear a disproportionate amount of the burden. Two counties served by New Mexico SCSEP show particularly high poverty rates. Luna County’s poverty rate was 27.2% in the 2018 five-year estimates from the American Community Survey. McKinley County’s rate was even higher, at 32.3%.

While the need is widespread, organizations working to meet the need also cover the state. The New Mexico Aging and Disability Resource Center maintains a database with over 3,700 national, state and local resources to assist those in need in New Mexico. Its Resource Directory lists 40 providers serving Deming, the main city in Luna County. These provide financial, caregiving, nutrition and health services. For Gallup, the major city in McKinley County, the database lists 102 service providers, offering an even broader array of services.

Specific services widely recognized in order to promote economic development in New Mexico’s rural areas are transportation and broadband access. Broadband access is a priority for the New Mexico Department of Information Technology. The department also has been working to coordinate governmental and private sector stakeholders through a working group and a new advisory committee. Regarding transportation, dialogue is taking place among organizations discussing the sharing of vehicles. Schools, senior centers, and other care providers are conversing about maximizing the sharing of vehicles to offer transportation to those not normally afforded this service. Issues of insurance and liability must be overcome if this possibility is to be realized.

5. THE STATE’S LONG-TERM STRATEGY TO IMPROVE SCSEP SERVICES, INCLUDING PLANNED LONG-TERM CHANGES TO THE DESIGN OF THE PROGRAM WITHIN THE STATE, AND PLANNED CHANGES IN THE USE OF SCSEP GRANTEES AND PROGRAM OPERATORS TO BETTER ACHIEVE THE GOALS OF THE PROGRAM. THIS MAY INCLUDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT AS APPROPRIATE. (20 CFR 641.302(K))

New Mexico’s long-term strategy to improve SCSEP services includes: a) increased technical capability for confidentially storing and accessing all information and documentation on-line; b) increased use of targeted training for participants, enabling them to quickly experience new, applicable knowledge; and c) more frequent one-on-one contact by SCSEP program operators with host agencies and participants.

a) The current hard copy files and system used by ALTSD and other New Mexico providers of SCSEP services, ties staff to an office for many hours per week. Obtaining professional case management software, with the accompanying hardware to implement it, would enable more time to be spent with participants and host agencies, as well as improving oversight of case documentation.
b) Participants in New Mexico’s SCSEP have received most of their training from on-the-job coaching received at the host agency. Promptly placing new trainees in classroom settings can expand their experiences and increase their perspectives on what they are learning. In classroom settings they may also discover gifts they have to offer, in ways that may never occur in a workplace. Such dual-track training may improve self-esteem and encourage participants to seek unsubsidized employment more quickly.

c) A side benefit of improved technology will be more field time for SCSEP program operators, allowing a more nuanced understanding of the challenges and successes of participants.


New Mexico’s SCSEP will continue to pursue continuous improvement. All measures will be monitored at quarterly in-service meetings with case managers. All measures falling below the level of exceeding will be discussed and strategies for improvement implemented. SCSEP was reauthorized in 2016 and there were significant changes to the performance indicators. Three of the six core measures were changed and a new measure was added. These changes are:

"Entry into unsubsidized employment" was changed to "The percentage of project participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the project." To achieve this new measure and continuously improve, New Mexico’s SCSEP will follow-up with each exited participant at least once per quarter, to determine if they are employed, and if there is assistance that could move them toward employment or assist them to retain employment.

"Retention in Unsubsidized Employment" has been changed to "The percentage of project participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the project." To achieve this new measure and continuously improve, New Mexico’s SCSEP will follow-up with each exited participant at least once per quarter for the four quarters after exit from the program. These contacts will determine if the participant is employed and what services might be offered to move the participant towards employment or assist in retaining employment.

"Earnings" has changed to "The median earnings of project participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the project." To achieve this new measure and continuously improve, New Mexico’s SCSEP will contact each employer of a participant who exited the program for unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after their exit. During this contact the employer will be asked if there is any service that could be offered to the participant to improve their performance and probably retention.

"Indicators of effectiveness in serving employers, host agencies, and project participants” is a new measure. Previously satisfaction of participants, employers and host agencies was measured. New Mexico’s SCSEP will prepare participants, host agencies and employers to complete satisfaction surveys, until new measures of effectiveness are devised.

C. LOCATION AND POPULATION SERVED, INCLUDING EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION

1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCALITIES AND POPULATIONS FOR WHICH PROJECTS OF THE TYPE AUTHORIZED BY TITLE V ARE MOST NEEDED. (20 CFR 641.325 (D))

Need for community services in New Mexico is great. In 2018, 19.5% of New Mexicans had income below the federal poverty level. The need is widespread, thought certain areas bear a
A disproportionate amount of the burden. Two counties served by New Mexico SCSEP show particularly high poverty rates. Luna County’s poverty rate was 27.2% in the 2018 five-year estimates from the American Community Survey. McKinley County’s rate was even higher, 32.3%, according to the same report.

While the need is widespread, organizations working to meet the need also cover the state. The New Mexico Aging and Disability Resource Center maintains a database with over 3,700 national, state and local resources to assist those in need in New Mexico. Its Resource Directory lists 40 providers serving Deming, the main city in Luna County. These provide financial, caregiving, nutrition and health services. For Gallup, the major city in McKinley County, the database lists 102 service providers, offering an even broader array of services.

2. LIST THE CITIES AND COUNTIES WHERE THE PROJECT WILL BE CONDUCTED. INCLUDE THE NUMBER OF SCSEP AUTHORIZED POSITIONS AND INDICATE WHERE THE POSITIONS CHANGED FROM THE PRIOR YEAR.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
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<td>Eddy</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Lovington &amp; Hobbs</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Deming</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>---------------------</td>
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<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Tucumcari</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>Portales</td>
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<td>Rio Rancho</td>
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<tr>
<td>San Juan</td>
<td>Farmington &amp; Aztec</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>San Miguel</td>
<td>Las Vegas</td>
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<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe</td>
<td>Santa Fe</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>Truth or Consequences</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socorro</td>
<td>Socorro</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taos</td>
<td>Taos</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torrance</td>
<td>Moriarty</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>none</td>
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<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td>Clayton</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valencia</td>
<td>Los Lunas &amp; Belen</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>none</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>237</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. DESCRIBE CURRENT SLOT IMBALANCES AND PROPOSED STEPS TO CORRECT INEQUITIES TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.

Regarding the state program, two counties are out of balance regarding actual service. San Juan County is over-served and Luna County is under-served. Service in San Juan County will be reduced by attrition. As participants exit from SCSEP in San Juan County, they will not be replaced until equitable distribution levels are reached. Development of new placements in Luna County is a challenge. Host agencies have been difficult to recruit, and those that have agreed to participate have not been successful. Continued steady work with local residents should build the program to the level of equitable distribution.

4. THE STATE’S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING AN EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF SCSEP POSITIONS WITHIN THE STATE THAT:

A. MOVES POSITIONS FROM OVER-SERVED TO UNDERSERVED LOCATIONS WITHIN THE STATE IN COMPLIANCE WITH 20 CFR 641.365.
SCSEP positions in New Mexico are currently distributed according to the distribution formula. No shifting of authorized positions is necessary. As participants in areas of over-service exit the program, these positions are moved to under-served areas.

B. EQUITABLY SERVES RURAL AND URBAN AREAS.

New Mexico's population was 22.6% rural according to the 2010 census. The New Mexico State SCSEP served 44% rural clients in PY 2018. Overall, New Mexico SCSEP contractors served 20% rural clients in PY 2018, which is in line with the state's population.

C. SERVES INDIVIDUALS AFFORDED PRIORITY FOR SERVICE UNDER 20 CFR 641.520. (20 CFR 641.302(A), 641.365, 641.520)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>ALTSD</th>
<th>NICOA</th>
<th>GII</th>
<th>New Mexico</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75+</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited English/Low Literacy</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran/Spouse</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Employment Prospects</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Success with WIOA Title II</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless or at Risk</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greatest Economic Need</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Individuals</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greatest Social Need</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. THE RATIO OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN EACH SERVICE AREA TO THE TOTAL ELIGIBLE POPULATION IN THE STATE. (20 CFR 641.325(A))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bernalillo</td>
<td>24.11%</td>
<td>Doña Ana</td>
<td>10.27%</td>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>0.89%</td>
<td>Rio Arriba</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
<td>Socorro</td>
<td>1.34%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catron</td>
<td>0.45%</td>
<td>Eddy</td>
<td>2.68%</td>
<td>Los Alamos</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>1.34%</td>
<td>Taos</td>
<td>2.23%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaves</td>
<td>4.46%</td>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>1.34%</td>
<td>Luna</td>
<td>2.23%</td>
<td>San Juan</td>
<td>6.25%</td>
<td>Torrance</td>
<td>0.89%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cibola</td>
<td>1.79%</td>
<td>Guadalupe</td>
<td>0.45%</td>
<td>McKinley</td>
<td>5.80%</td>
<td>San Miguel</td>
<td>2.68%</td>
<td>Union</td>
<td>0.45%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colfax</td>
<td>0.89%</td>
<td>Harding</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>Mora</td>
<td>0.45%</td>
<td>Sandoval</td>
<td>4.91%</td>
<td>Valencia</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curry</td>
<td>2.23%</td>
<td>Hidalgo</td>
<td>0.45%</td>
<td>Otero</td>
<td>3.57%</td>
<td>Santa Fe</td>
<td>5.80%</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Baca</td>
<td>0.45%</td>
<td>Lea</td>
<td>2.68%</td>
<td>Quay</td>
<td>0.89%</td>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>1.79%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. THE RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO:

A. RESIDE IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS WITHIN THE STATE
Of those New Mexicans 55 years old or older with incomes at or below the federal poverty level, 67.7% reside in urban areas, while 32.3% live in rural locations. It is reasonable to project that approximately two-thirds of all SCSEP eligible New Mexicans reside in urban areas. This statistic comes from the American Community Survey five-year estimates for 2010 through 2014.

B. HAVE THE GREATEST ECONOMIC NEED

According to the American Community Survey from 2010 to 2014, it is estimated that there are 102,279 individuals who are 55 years of age or older and at or below 125% of the federal poverty level in New Mexico. The same source estimates that 72,993 of these people are below the federal poverty level (a measure for greatest economic need). The percentage of eligible individuals who have the greatest economic need is 71.4%.

C. ARE MINORITIES

Data regarding minority status are only available from the US Census for those below or above poverty level. These data show that 63.2% of those individuals over 55 years old, with incomes below the federal poverty level, identify themselves as racial and/or ethnic minorities. The figure for the total New Mexico population is 60.2% minority. It is likely that the eligible SCSEP population has slightly fewer individuals of minority status than those below the poverty level, but more than the general population. A good estimate is that 63% of SCSEP-eligible individuals in New Mexico are of minority status.

D. ARE LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT

In 2013 9.8% of New Mexicans over the age of five spoke English "less than very well", according to the American Community Survey. This percentage is not broken out by age or by income, so it is not possible to get specifics for the SCSEP-eligible population. An estimate of 10% with limited English proficiency is a reasonable projection.

E. HAVE THE GREATEST SOCIAL NEED. (20 CFR 641.325(B))

Despite about two-thirds of SCSEP-eligible New Mexicans living in “urban” areas, this statistic can be misleading. Twenty-six of New Mexico’s thirty-three counties are considered “frontier”, they have six or fewer people per square mile. While these counties may have an urban area, those living in such urban centers are still isolated from many services.

New Mexico is also a “majority minority” state, that is, over 60% of New Mexicans claim racial/ethnic minority status. While such groups may have strong family ties, they are also burdened with health disparities, lower incomes on average and limited access to quality services.

The interaction of these two dynamics in New Mexico contributes to a high percentage of those with greatest social need. While this is not quantifiable, with at least one-third of SCSEP-eligible individuals living in rural areas and over 60% claiming minority status, a majority of SCSEP-eligible New Mexicans appear to fit this category. Even those who live in urban areas in New Mexico may face isolation, so the category of greatest social need is likely much more frequent than the statistics might indicate.

7. A DESCRIPTION OF THE STEPS TAKEN TO AVOID DISRUPTIONS TO THE GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE, WHEN POSITIONS ARE REDISTRIBUTED, AS PROVIDED IN 20 CFR 641.365; WHEN NEW CENSUS OR OTHER RELIABLE DATA BECOME AVAILABLE; OR WHEN THERE IS OVER-ENROLLMENT FOR ANY OTHER REASON. (20 CFR 641.325(I), 641.302(B))
If the ALTSD loses SCSEP positions every effort will be made to address this within the parameters of attrition. If this is not possible, and some trainee positions must be eliminated, the following plan will be implemented:

(1) Participants will be notified in writing at least 30 days in advance of termination.

(2) If a participant’s position is being terminated, efforts will be made to place the individual in unsubsidized employment, or another training opportunity, such as with the Foster Grandparent or Senior Companion Programs. Local One-Stop Centers will be utilized, along with other local contacts and resources, to identify potential jobs or other programs for which any terminated participants may be eligible.

(3) From the time it is known that positions are to be eliminated, participants will be encouraged to use work time to seek employment or a new placement. The ALTSD will research the possibilities in each affected community and communicate the possibilities to participants who need assistance. Final payroll payments will be sent to participants by the normal method used, unless specific instructions to the contrary are received from a participant. The notification letter will include a request for such instructions.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR APPENDIX

ALL WIOA CORE PROGRAMS

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>PY 2020 Expected Level</th>
<th>PY 2020 Negotiated Level</th>
<th>PY 2021 Expected Level</th>
<th>PY 2021 Negotiated Level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness in Serving Employers</td>
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<td>Not Applicable¹</td>
<td>Not Applicable¹</td>
<td>Not Applicable¹</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ “Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Indicators of Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No additional indicator appendices will be added</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional Indicators of Performance

OTHER APPENDICES

No additional appendices will be included