

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)
UNIFIED STATE PLAN
PY 2024-2027**



(Awaiting on a revised letter from the Mayor)

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Commonly Used Acronyms

ACS	U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey
AEFLA	Adult Education and Family Literacy Act
AJC	American Job Center
AWS	Amazon Web Services
CASAS	Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System
CFSA	Child and Family Services Agency
CRC	Certified Rehabilitation Counselor
CSAVR	Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation
CSBG	Community Services Block Grant
CSNA	Comprehensive State Needs Assessment
CSOSA	Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency
CSPD	Comprehensive System of Personnel Development
CTE	Career and Technical Education
DBH	Department of Behavioral Health
DCHA	District of Columbia Housing Authority
DCHR	DC Department of Human Resources
DCMR	District of Columbia Municipal Regulations
DCPS	District of Columbia Public Schools
DCRA	Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
DCRSA	District of Columbia Rehabilitation Services Administration
DCWIC	District of Columbia Workforce Investment Council
DDA	Developmental Disabilities Administration
DDOT	District Department of Transportation
DDS	Department on Disability Services
DHS	Department of Human Services
DME	Deputy Mayor for Education
DMGEO	Deputy Mayor for Greater Economic Opportunity
DMPED	Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development
DOEE	Department of Energy & Environment
DOES	Department of Employment Services
DOL	U.S. Department of Labor
DOLETA	U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration
DPW	Department of Public Works
DSLBD	Department of Small and Local Business Development
DYRS	Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services
E&T	Employment and Training
ESL	English as a Second Language
ETPL	Eligible Training Provider List
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Administration
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974
FSET	Food Stamp Employment and Training program
ID	Intellectual Disabilities
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IE&T	Integrated Education Training

IEP	Individualized Education Plan
IPE	Individualized Plan for Employment
ISY	In-School Youth
ITA	Individual Training Accounts
JVSG	Jobs for Veterans State Grants
LMI	Labor Market Information
MOAPIA	Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs
MOLA	Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs
MORCA	Mayor's Office on Returning Citizens
MSG	Measurable Skills Gains
NEDP	National External Diploma Program
NOFA	Notice of Funds Availability
NRS	National Reporting System
OAIT	Office of Apprenticeship, Information and Training
OCTO	Office of the Chief Technology Officer DC
OCTFME	Office of Cable Television, Film, Music and Entertainment
OJT	On-the-Job training
OPGS	DC Office of Partnerships and Grant Services
OPM	Office of Performance Monitoring
ORCA	Office of Returning Citizens Administration
OSO	One-Stop Operator
OSSE	Office of the State Superintendent of Education
OSY	Out-of-school youth
OYP	DOES Office of Youth Programs
PCE	OSSE Division of Postsecondary and Career Education
REC	OSSE Reengagement Center
RESEA	Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment
RFA	Request for Application
RR	Rapid Response
RSA	Rehabilitation Services Administration
SCSEP	Senior Community Service and Employment Program
SE	Supported Employment
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
SWIS	State Wage Interchange System
TAA	Trade Adjustment Assistance
TANF	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
TCS	Talent & Client Services
TEGL	DOL Training and Employment Guidance Letter
TEP	TANF Education & Employment Program
UDC	University of the District of Columbia
UDC-CC	University of the District of Columbia-Community College
VOS	Virtual One Stop
VR	Vocational Rehabilitation
WDLL	UDC-CC Division of Workforce Development and Lifelong Learning
WDS	Workforce Development Specialist
WIA	Workforce Investment Act
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE and EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Governor of each State must submit a 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 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 a global economy. States must have approved 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, 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. One of WIOA's principal areas of reform is to require States to plan across core programs and include this planning process in the Combined State Plans. This reform promotes a shared understanding of the workforce needs within each State and fosters the 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 Combined State Plans.

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE and EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(a) Plan Type. Select whether the State is submitting a 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, Vocational Rehabilitation programs, and one or more of the optional Combined State Plan partner programs.

The District of Columbia Workforce Investment Council (DC WIC) serves as the State and Local Workforce Board, overseeing the overall workforce system. The DC WIC is submitting this Combined State Plan, covering the period of July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2027. It represents a workforce system in which all core programs set forth in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) are under the purview of the DC WIC. Through this plan, the DC WIC proposes to implement jointly administered activities concerning the following core programs and six optional programs authorized by WIOA:

- The Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs
- The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service (ES)
- The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act

➤ The Vocational Rehabilitation

Additionally, the workforce system in the District of Columbia collaborates with partners to include programs such as:

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

These additional programs complement the core programs outlined in the WIOA and further support the District's efforts to provide comprehensive workforce development services to residents and businesses in need.

(b) Plan Introduction/Executive Summary. The Combined State Plan may include an introduction or executive summary. This element is optional.

The District serves as the economic powerhouse of the Washington metropolitan region and holds national significance in economic terms. However, to sustain its strength, the District must maintain a high growth rate and continue diversifying its economy. Despite this, unemployment rates remain unequal across the city, with recent analysis revealing disparities, particularly affecting Black residents, where rates soar as high as 10.1 percent compared to the overall District's rate of 5.1 percent as of December 2023.

In March 2020, the District, like the rest of the United States, faced the complex impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, disrupting various sectors profoundly. This challenging period also prompted discussions highlighting the inequities faced by Black Americans, underscoring the disproportionate impact of policies, programs, and economic components in both public and private spheres.

Fast forward to 2022, the emergence of the "Great Resignation" phenomenon, alongside the widespread adoption of flexible work schedules and telework options, significantly reshaped the economic landscape. This shift towards remote work prompted a reevaluation of traditional employment structures, presenting new challenges and opportunities for the workforce system.

In response, the District's workforce system is actively addressing growing gaps in outcomes across race, gender, place-based demographic groups, and the impact of flexible work schedules. Many goals and strategies outlined in the District's WIOA Combined State Plan for 2024-2027 are developed to comprehensively address these issues. These strategies, informed by data analysis, including the effects of flexible work schedules on workforce participation and equity considerations, aim to ensure an inclusive and resilient workforce.

The city's dedication stems from the Mayor's belief in the city as the nation's strongest and most promising city and as the Nation's Capital. Recognizing the significance of public safety, initiatives have been implemented to establish recovery-friendly communities and task forces that support the health and wellness of the entire District.

WIOA core partners, including the Department of Employment Services, the State Office of Superintendent, and the Department of Disability Services, collaborated on the development of the plan. The state developed this Combined State Plan with the intent to integrate the programs listed below (including the non-core programs) into the strategies outlined in the Plan:

- **DC Department of Employment Services**
 - Adult (Title I)
 - Dislocated Worker (Title I)
 - Youth (Title I)
 - Wagner-Peyser (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by Title III)
 - Jobs for Veterans State Grants (Title 38, Chapter 41)
 - Senior Community Service Employment Program (Title V Older Americans Act)
- **District of Columbia Office of State Superintendent**
 - Adult Education and Family Literacy (WIOA Title II)
 - Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education
- **District of Columbia's Department of Human Services**
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program (42 U.S.C.)
 - 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)))
- **Vocational Rehabilitation**
 - Vocational Rehabilitation (Title I Rehabilitation, as amended by Title IV)

In addition to the requirements of WIOA addressed in this plan, the District of Columbia is committed to developing innovative strategies and promoting data-driven, evidence-based policies to connect the District's workforce to high-quality jobs and develop skills to meet the state's ever-changing workforce and economic development landscape. The next steps initiatives include:

- Exploring opportunities to further strengthen education and workforce development services by taking full advantage of the historic investments made possible through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), the Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) and Science Act, Broadband Equity Access Program (BEAD), and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).
- Establishing a "Creating a Business Engagement Blueprint Committee" to focus on policies and program initiatives with the creation of an advisory action plan that recommends policy directions and investments related to workforce development and educational systems to capitalize on transforming the ecosystem.
- Creating a centralized system to increase access to career-building opportunities through diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility efforts as the District focuses on good jobs and quality careers across all sectors.

Building upon these initiatives, the District envisions a future where every resident is empowered to achieve their fullest potential, businesses thrive through access to skilled talent, and communities flourish through coordinated efforts across all sectors.

Vision

The District of Columbia's workforce development system envisions a seamless statewide infrastructure that cultivates economic opportunity and sustainability for businesses and where residents can access robust career pathways to secure employment.

This vision is guided by three core principles that are the underpinning for the District's commitment to empowering residents, connecting businesses, and fostering community growth.

1. Businesses are intricately connected to the skilled workforce they require to compete globally, actively engaging in the workforce system and catalyzing the District's economic expansion.
2. Every DC resident is equipped, empowered, and encouraged to explore and achieve their utmost potential through continuous learning, secure employment, and steadfast economic stability.
3. Residents and businesses across all wards benefit from a seamlessly coordinated network of government agencies and collaborative partners, dedicated to fostering thriving communities and sustainable growth.

As the District embarks on its journey to fortify the city's workforce ecosystem, the partners are guided by a clear vision and core principles aimed at empowering residents, fostering economic growth, and cultivating thriving communities across all wards. These principles support the strategic plan, which comprises of five overarching goals designed to enhance training opportunities, promote economic security, and ensure equitable access to high-quality jobs. Through collaborative partnerships and evidence-based strategies, all partners are committed to building a robust workforce infrastructure that meets the diverse needs of District residents and businesses. Together, agencies will chart a course toward a prosperous and sustainable future for all in the District of Columbia as outlined in the five goals below:

- Goal 1:** Enhance Training Opportunities and Ensure Quality for Residents and Students
- Goal 2:** Increase the talent pool available to businesses by developing targeted training programs and partnerships that directly align with industry needs, fostering a skilled workforce ready to fill employment opportunities and contribute to economic growth.
- Goal 3:** Target Populations/Ensuring Equity
- Goal 4:** Unified Workforce System Integration: Creating a "One Workforce System" in the District, streamlining services and resources across agencies and organizations to provide residents and students with easier access to training, education, and employment opportunities.
- Goal 5:** Telling the District's Story: Using Data Outcomes to Measure Success

As the District charts its course toward bolstering its workforce ecosystem, it does so with a resolute vision and an unyielding commitment to empowering residents, driving economic growth, and fostering vibrant communities across every neighborhood. Rooted deeply in this vision are three foundational principles that guide the District's strategic approach: recognizing the symbiotic relationship between businesses and a skilled workforce, ensuring the empowerment of each DC resident, and orchestrating seamless coordination among government agencies and partners to fuel community growth.

Transitioning from this visionary perspective to the strategic blueprint of the District's plan, concrete initiatives are articulated across diverse sectors, each strategically crafted to align with overarching goals. From expanding training opportunities and cultivating robust partnerships to streamlining access to services and rigorously measuring workforce development success, the plan epitomizes a comprehensive and integrated strategy to meet the dynamic needs of residents

and businesses alike. Through collaborative partnerships, evidence-based strategies, and a steadfast commitment to data-driven decision-making, the District pledges to construct an unparalleled workforce infrastructure that propels toward an era of unparalleled prosperity and enduring sustainability.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

(A) ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

(B) WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

Economic Analysis will be included in the Plan by March 29 which will include:-

1. General Economic Conditions
 - Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.
2. Existing Demand – Industry Sectors and Occupations
 - Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.
3. Emerging Demand – Industry Sectors and Occupations
 - Employers’ Employment Needs. Regarding the industry sectors and occupations identified and, provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.
4. Employers Needs
4. Workforce Analysis. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce in the state and within various state regions. Provide key analytical conclusions in aggregate as well as disaggregated among populations to identify potential disparities in employment and educational attainment and understand labor force conditions. Populations analyzed must include individuals with barriers to employment. Analysis must include—
 - Employment and Unemployment. Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the State.
5. Employment and Unemployment
 - Labor Market Trends. Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.
 - Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce by providing an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.
6. Comparison of Economic and Workforce Analytical Conclusion. Describe areas of opportunity for meeting hiring, education, and skills needs identified in the economy compared to the assets available in the labor force in the state.

2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

(A) THE STATE'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Activities Overview

Core WIOA programming is administered by three District agencies: the Department of Employment Services (DOES) administers Titles I and III; the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, Adult and Family Education Department (OSSE AFE) receives and administers Title II funds; and the Department on Disability Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration (DDS/RSA) administers Title IV. Each of these entities is represented at AJCs. The District is committed to prioritizing a unified workforce system - "One Workforce System" expanding existing service coordination efforts among these partners through interagency agreements, collaboration, increased co-location, and ongoing staff professional development training.

In addition to the core programs, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the one-stops either in-person or through direct linkage: Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Job Corps serving at-risk youth, National Caucus and Center on Aging serving low-income older workers, Department of Human Services enrolling eligible residents in TANF and SNAP services, HUD Employment and Training programs, Community Services Block Grant, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, and Unemployment Compensation programs. Workforce development activities may include a wide variety of programs and partners, including educational institutions, community-based organizations, and human services.

The DC workforce investment system is overseen by the DC Workforce Investment Council (WIC), which is the District's state and local workforce board and serves to facilitate and coordinate efforts across system-wide agency partners and programs. As the coordinating and leadership entity over the workforce development system, the DC WIC oversees the activities outlined in Table 23 below and certifies DC's American Jobs Centers (AJCs).

In addition, the WIC submits an annual report that includes programmatic outcomes of workforce development programs administered by WIOA core partners and agencies receiving federal and/or local workforce funds. The report outlines program funding and services provided to District residents and the outcomes, including support services, employment services, and workforce education and training programs.

Among the DC WIC's activities is the following:

- *Strategic Sector Partnerships* that foster intentional collaboration among stakeholders to form strong sectoral partnerships, ensuring representation from key players and actively seeking out necessary partners for successful workforce development initiatives.
- *Establishment of Career Pathways* that utilizes an industry-specific and equity-centered approach, aligned to priority sectors to develop Career Pathways Maps that strategically guide the delivery system. Specific components of the work include analyzing and aggregating labor market information, identifying in-demand occupations, organizing those occupations into a "pathway map" to indicate the number and requirements for

specific opportunities, what training and or credentialing is needed, and what is needed to support advancement and wage gain, ultimately leading to economic security.

- *Coordinated Training Strategies, Activities, and Investments* to guide the workforce system's and partners' approaches to talent pipeline development and ensuring residents have the experience, skills, and credentials necessary to remain competitive for employment and advancement. The development of a District-wide landscape analysis and training strategy is designed to strengthen and expand the training provider community's ability to develop local talent by fostering deeper alignment, collaboration, and coordination between industry sectors and education. Findings from the training analysis and strategy will inform our investments in occupations skills training on an annual basis.
- *Establishment of Memoranda of Understanding for Agency Partners* responsible for delivering services through the American Job Centers, including cost sharing agreements in support of Center operations.
- *Enhanced Oversight of the District's AJCs* through certification policies and reviews to promote service quality and consistency and partner engagement throughout the District.
- *Equal Opportunity* review and technical assistance to partners to ensure compliance with federal requirements while improving coordinated services and supports for individuals with disabilities.
- *WIOA Performance and Excellence* by leading quarterly milestone review meetings with all stakeholders to review outcomes, celebrate accomplishments, identify challenges and gaps, and strategize methods for overcoming programmatic or service delivery barriers. The WIC will be responsible for reporting quarterly milestones to the Workforce Board to ensure they have the required information to make strategic decisions regarding the direction of the District's workforce system and its success in serving residents and employers.
- *Data System Infrastructure Modernization and Development*, which seeks to improve, standardize, and modernize data management and use practices across the DC workforce system to ensure that data is accurate and reliable, readily available to all of staff in the system, and informs strategies and continuous improvement. Modernization seeks to incorporate disparate data sets, integrate systems, improve reporting, and apply advanced analytics to workforce programming both internally at agencies and externally with DC system partners. In order to achieve this, the DC WIC is leveraging technology and advanced analytics to better align data collection and performance reporting.

Table 23 lists workforce development programs by agency and program, the services provided, and the populations and industry sectors served.

Activities Analysis

Program Type	Agency	Program	Population	Services	Industry Sectors
Core program	DOES	WIOA - (Dislocated Worker & Adult)	Persons ages 18 and older, with priority for veterans and eligible spouses, public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals	Credential Preparation; Workforce Preparation; Occupational Training; Case Management; Job Search and Job Placement; Occupational Skills	Construction; Health Care and Social Assistance; Educational Services; Hospitality; Infrastructure and Transportation; IT and Business Administration; Law and Security; Other
Core program	DOES	WIOA - (Youth)	WIOA-eligible youth: in-school youth ages 14-21 and out-of-school youth ages 16- 24	Academic enrichment activities, work-readiness skills, project-based learning, life skills, and leadership development, occupational skills training, career awareness counseling, work readiness modules, basic education, GED preparation, supported internship experiences, vocational skills training	Hospitality; Infrastructure and Transportation; IT and Business Administration; Other
Core program	OSSE	OSSE Adult Education and Family Literacy Act	Persons ages 18 and older who have basic skills deficiencies	Post-Secondary Education; Credential Preparation; Workforce Training; Work-Readiness or Job-Readiness Training; Workforce Preparation; Occupational Skills Training; Unsubsidized Work Experience; Job Search and Job Placement; Case Management	Construction; Health Care; Educational Services; Hospitality; Business Administration and IT; Law and Security, Other

Program Type	Agency	Program	Population	Services	Industry Sectors
Core program	DOES	Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service Program	All jobseekers and employers	Job search assistance, referral, job placement assistance, re-employment services for unemployment insurance	"All with an emphasis on the District's high-growth industries. List the high growth industries
Core program	DDS	DDS - RSA - Occupational & Vocational Training	Individuals with disabilities	Credential Preparation; Occupational Skills Training	Business Administration and Information Technology; Construction; Health Care; Hospitality; Infrastructure: Transportation and Logistics; Law and Security; Other
Core program	DDS	DDS- RSA- Evidence Based Supported Employment Services	Individuals with disabilities	Evidence Based and Supported Employment Services	Variety of sectors
AJC Partner organizations	Potomac Job Corps	Job Corps	Youth ages 16 - 24	Occupational training, high school / GED completion, career counseling, job search assistance, supportive services (housing, childcare, transportation)	Business Administration and Information Technology; Construction; Health Care; Hospitality; Infrastructure: Transportation and Logistics; Law and Security
Core Program	DOES	Senior Community Service and Employment Program (SCSEP)	Adults ages 55 and older	Subsidized Work-based training; Credential Preparation; Workforce Preparation; Occupational Skills Training; Case Management; Job Search and Job Placement	Variety of identified high-demand industry sectors

Program Type	Agency	Program	Population	Services	Industry Sectors
AJC partner organization program	NCBA	Senior Community Service and Employment Program (SCSEP)	Adults ages 55 and older	Subsidized Work-based training; Credential Preparation; Workforce Preparation; Occupational Skills Training; Case Management; Job Search and Job Placement	Variety of identified high-demand industry sectors
Core Program	OSSE	Division of Postsecondary and Career Education/ Perkins	Secondary school-age youth and adults	Post-Secondary Education; Credential Preparation; Workforce Training; Work-Readiness or Job-Readiness Training; Workforce Preparation; Occupational Skills Training; Unsubsidized Work Experience; Job Search and Job Placement; Case Management	Variety of identified high-demand industry sectors
Core Program	DOES	Jobs For Veterans State Grants (JVSG)	Veterans and eligible persons With significant barriers to employment	Priority of Service; Employer Engagement/ Business Development targeting Veterans; Credential Preparation; Workforce Preparation ;Occupational Skills Training; Case Management; Job Search and Job Placement	Variety of identified high-demand industry sectors
AJC Partner Organization AJC Partner	DHS	Career MAP program information: "... Career coaching and connections to employment, training, and education; family		Career MAP program information: "... Career coaching and connections to employment, training, and education; family support services; subsidized housing;	

Program Type	Agency	Program	Population	Services	Industry Sectors
		support services; subsidized housing; and benefits cliffs remediation (combination of rent discounts and cash payments)."		and benefits cliffs remediation (combination of rent discounts and cash payments)."	
AJC Partner Organization	DHS	Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	Persons ages 18 years or older with high school diploma or GED	Occupational training courses leading to industry-recognized credentials and foundational skills courses	Construction and Property Management; Early Childhood Education (CDA); Healthcare Direct Care and Administration; Hospitality and Tourism; Information Technology and Office Administration
AJC Partner Agency	DCHA	HUD E&T EnVision Center	Public housing residents, Housing Choice Voucher Program participants, and other low-income individuals	Occupational training courses, job readiness services, job placement and retention services	Construction and Property Management; Early Childhood Education (CDA); Healthcare Direct Care and Administration; Hospitality and Tourism; Information Technology and Office Administration
Core Program	DOES	Unemployment Compensation	Unemployed individuals	Referrals AJC programs	All
AJC Partner Agency	DHS	TANF Employment & Education Program (TEP)	Work-eligible TANF recipients	Post-Secondary Education; Workforce Training; Work-Readiness or Job-Readiness Training; Workforce Preparation; Unsubsidized Work Experience; Job Search and Job Placement; Case	Construction; Health Care and Social Assistance; Educational Services; Hospitality; Infrastructure and Transportation; IT and Business

Program Type	Agency	Program	Population	Services	Industry Sectors
				Management	Administration; Law and Security
AJC Partner Agency	UDC-CC	Workforce Development and Lifelong Learning program	Persons ages 18 years or older with high school diploma or GED	Occupational training courses leading to industry-recognized credentials and foundational skills courses	Construction and Property Management; Early Childhood Education (CDA); Healthcare Direct Care and Administration; Hospitality and Tourism; Information Technology and Office Administration

Table 23: DC Workforce Development Programs

(B) THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

The District looks to build upon a foundation of excellence in service delivery and customer service to businesses and job seekers/workers by focusing on stronger and better aligned partnerships and an integrated service delivery structure between the four titles of WIOA and the workforce efforts of the TANF and Career and Technical Education programs along with those organizations that support services in the American Job Centers.

Partner agencies are committed to a strong vision for an equitable and enhanced service and system integration and have implemented activities to achieve this vision through data sharing and continuous improvement, coordinated case management, integrated sector strategies, and aligned career pathways utilized across the workforce system.

The District has many excellent providers of workforce development, education, and social services—including government agencies, the AJCs, private sector organizations, and CBOs. To improve upon the coordination and work of all partners, and as part of an ongoing commitment to build upon strengths and address weaknesses in delivering workforce development activities, the DC WIC and program partners will create an implementation and tracking process to ensure the goals set forth in the plan reflect efforts across the workforce system that align with each goal including measurable outcomes. The WIC will lead quarterly benchmark convenings by which all stakeholders will be responsible for reporting their measurable contribution to the goals of the plan.

The District's state plan expands the workforce vision and outcomes to include local efforts set forth by the Mayor, specific outcomes in the Perkins plan that align with workforce development outcomes, efforts in the area of Infrastructure including occupational training and employment outcomes, Data integration and tracking activities across both workforce and education, and local plans for increasing digital access, employment and education. The

District seeks to expand collaboration and integration of workforce-related efforts across the system to improve service delivery, partnership activities and business relationships.

Opportunities for System Improvements

The District's workforce system is committed to continuous improvements in the following areas:

- Expand the number and quality of eligible training providers across all high growth industries, increasing talent pipelines for industries that express challenges in recruiting skilled, qualified talent.
- Align high-growth industry and career pathways to all workforce system programs thus meeting business talent needs and increasing the potential for economic security for District residents.
- Access to a wider range of data that enables informed decision-making, aiding in crafting more effective strategies and interventions.
- Expanded opportunities to connect with staff, other agencies by increasing interaction and engagement with the workforce system, that encourages the emergence of issues and opportunities from bottom up, allowing for better collaboration and understanding among the partners.
- Emphasize and encourage partnerships further fostering collaboration between different stakeholders which can lead to more comprehensive solutions and better resource allocation.
- A proactive approach towards coordination through a collective commitment to streamlining efforts and resources for more efficient outcomes.
- Committed and well trained staff from all levels, including core partner staff, program providers, community-based organizations and others that are dedicated to their roles and providing opportunities for DC residents and businesses.

(C) STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

The District has significant capacity to provide workforce development activities, given the combination of federally- and locally funded workforce programs throughout Washington, DC. The District's workforce development appropriations are distributed among over a dozen different District agencies that all participate in system activities and services.

The American Job Centers continue to battle a reduction in customer traffic due to a combination of lack of awareness and residual concerns resulting from the pandemic. These challenges appear to be consistent nationwide.

In a study conducted by the Department of Labor on customer experience in the workforce, the following themes emerged:

- Generally, customers appear to have positive experiences at the AJCs. With some exceptions, customers were satisfied with center staff and services. Job/training seekers explained that being unemployed is emotionally taxing, and that stress and uncertainty may persist during their job search. Customers said that the quality of their experience, especially staff interactions, can mitigate the stress and contribute to a positive experience.
- Individual, one-on-one interactions with staff can shape a customer's whole experience. Customers' initial encounters with individual reception staff, as well as their one-on-one conversations with case managers and service providers, play a significant role in how customers feel about their overall AJC experience.

- New customers do not know what to expect from, or have misconceptions about, their AJCs. After their first visit, customers were often pleasantly surprised by the services offered by the AJCs. However, customers were also often disappointed to learn that the AJC could not immediately provide them with a job.
- Many customers are not aware of the full extent of AJC services. Even regular customers often lack an understanding of the extent of available services. Almost all job/training seekers reported learning about a service or program through one-on-one conversations with specific staff or through interactions with other customers.
- Program registration and enrollment processes and requirements can feel overwhelming or arbitrary to customers. New customers spend time registering online and filling out paperwork — activities that may feel distant from their immediate needs. Customer frustration with these processes can be exacerbated when customers feel that processes are opaque or arbitrary. This opacity can result from centers' efforts to streamline multiple service and funding streams.
- Most employer customers have one point of contact at the center who caters to their specific needs. Employer customers said that they had established rapport with a specific AJC staff member who understands their needs and minimizes their administrative burden.

These findings align with the ongoing challenges the District's workforce system faces in the Career Centers have identified promising strategies to, a) increase awareness of the services offered in the AJCs by increasing marketing efforts; b) manage expectations of what is offered and what customers are able to access by offering orientations that explain the services in the AJCs; c) improve employer relationships to ensure that they are aware of the services offered to help increase their talent pool. .

DCRSA continues to expand and improve services provided to people with disabilities via outreach methods throughout the District of Columbia. The agency expands and directs its outreach activities to reach people who are identified as unserved and underserved in the state. According to the 2020 CSNA, unserved and underserved populations include people with autism and significant cognitive disabilities, including those who live in Wards 7 and 8, and those with co-existing behavioral health conditions. Therefore, DCRSA continues its efforts to further expand outreach to these population groups in order to ensure that services are available, inclusive, and accessible. DCRSA currently has 12 active outreach sites in the community and is working with 9 District and community-based agencies to initiate the MOA process. Due to the lasting effects of the COVID-19 public health emergency, many of RSA's previous community outreach sites are no longer available to host RSA VR Specialists. Virtual services have been maintained as well as an expedited referral process. Additional community partners continue to be identified.

Additionally, in FY23, DCRSA established a Memorandum of Understanding with the Workforce Investment Council to enhance the workforce system through a presence in each of the American Job Centers in the District where District Residents can start the intake process for eligibility as well as receive continued services with a VR Specialist. DCRSA has drafted the FY24 MOU for full execution.

In FY 2020-21, OSSE AFE awarded funding to 11 sub-grantees to implement and expand upon the Integrated Education and Training (IE&T) service models introduced in the FY 2017 grant competition and continued in the FY 2020 grant competition. OSSE AFE providers that meet the state's expected levels for performance are eligible to receive continuation funding through FY 2024-25. The models include the provision of adult education and literacy, workforce preparation, and training services for a specific occupation or occupational cluster to 1,000 District residents annually for educational and career advancement. In FY 2023, 1,385 adult learners received services in OSSE AFE funded

programs. Of this number, 1,221 learners met the National Reporting System (NRS) guidelines of having a valid assessment and 12 or more instructional hours in the program year to be reportable to the U.S. Department of Education. The remaining 164 adult learners engaged in one to 11 instructional hours. Based on OSSE's student enrollment audit, the District's adult-serving public schools and public charter schools served at least 5,069 adult learners in FY22 and at least 5,598 in FY23.

When the number of funded slots are compared to the approximately 50,000 adult residents in the District who do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent, and the unknown number (likely tens of thousands) of residents who have a secondary credential but don't have the requisite skills to successfully compete in the labor market, it is clear that the existing capacity is insufficient to meet the District's needs through this model alone. However, the District's robust economy over the last several years has allowed more residents with limited educational credentials to obtain entry-level, low-wage, and temporary employment and/or increase hours worked, which has put some downward pressure on the demand for education and training opportunities. This tension between employment and education/training is a well-documented trend across the country. The DC WIC will work with OSSE and other partners focused on adult basic education to identify additional approaches and investments that may enable more of the residents without a high school diploma to increase their educational attainment.

Potomac Job Corps leads industry roundtables that support understanding their talent needs. By engaging in these roundtables and industry-specific partnerships, PJC will have third-party validation of the effectiveness of Job Corps in preparing the next workforce generation. Businesses are listening and recognizing the need for a new model of attracting the younger workforce into job opportunities.

The District of Columbia's Temporary Assistance for Families (TANF) program provides cash assistance, subsidized childcare, employment, education, and training resources to help families and children facing economic hardship. The DC Department of Human Services (DHS) operates the TANF Employment and Education Program (TEP) through a mix of federal and local funds. As of August 2023, approximately 14,259 families representing 39,298 individuals (26,180 children) received TANF cash assistance.

Beyond direct service provision through District agencies, additional workforce funding is distributed to more than 140 external service providers. The diversity in service providers allows the District to provide access to many programs and resources via non-governmental entities which can be targeted to meet specific needs of customers and subpopulations. However, this distributed system can be difficult for residents to navigate. It also can make it difficult to ensure that consistent provision, measurement and reporting of high-quality services occurs. The various grants and other procurements that fund these providers also often have different performance measures and expectations, making it difficult to compare services across programs and agencies. The Goals outlined in the 2024-2027 plan describe the measures and strategies the District's workforce system will employ to demonstrate marked improvements in these areas.

The main access point to WIOA core programs is through the District's American Job Center (AJC) system, which includes four centers, as well as through Virtual One Stop (VOS), DC Networks. The AJC system has increased its links to required and non-required programs in recent years, but additional coordination efforts will be needed to help ensure that all job seekers and businesses can access the full range of resources available.

The DC WIC is focused on monitoring and oversight, evaluating and increasing the District's capacity to improve coordination of services and alignment of resources across workforce

system partners, including an ongoing assessment of the role of the OSO, establish data sharing agreements, and increase co-enrollment efforts. In addition, the WIC will serve as the convenor of key sectors representing the District's high growth industries to inform the workforce system of the talent development requirements for creating a skilled talent pool along with other workforce-related needs that the District's workforce system can deliver in support businesses retention. DC WIC has established an annual Workforce Summit to build the capacity of our workforce system staff. The Summit will issue "certificates of completion," allowing the WIC to track upskilling efforts across the workforce system, thus improving service delivery and increase their awareness about our local sectors and their workforce needs. A quarterly "Community of Practice" hosted by the WIC will also provide education and guidance on service delivery strategies and processes. The WIC ensure that community-based organizations, additional government agencies and regional workforce partners are at the table and included in discussions that help identify needs, gaps, and opportunities for supporting a "one workforce system" model in the District.

B. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

1. VISION

Economic Goals for the District

DC Economic Vision and Goals: A Framework for Workforce Development

Every five years, the District of Columbia updates its economic development strategy. The strategy is a tool for identifying challenges and opportunities, setting goals and priorities, guiding action and investments, and aligning stakeholders to achieve a shared vision. DC's 2023-2027 economic development strategy focuses on retaining and growing DC's tax base, supporting business vitality, strengthening neighborhoods, and supporting economic mobility of DC residents. DC's Comeback Plan includes the following vision: (<https://www.obviouslydc.com/dcs-comeback-plan/>)

In a concerted effort to bolster economic growth and enhance the overall prosperity of the District of Columbia, the city updates its economic development strategy every five years. This strategy serves as a vital tool for identifying challenges and opportunities, setting clear goals and priorities, guiding actionable steps and investments, and aligning stakeholders to collectively achieve a shared vision. The 2023-2027 economic development strategy of DC is notably focused on several key objectives, including retaining and expanding the city's tax base, bolstering business vitality, fortifying neighborhoods, and promoting economic mobility among DC residents.

Aligned with the broader vision of DC's Comeback Plan, the economic development strategy seeks to transform the District to be highly attractive to innovators, job creators, and visitors alike. This vision entails creating an environment where people choose to live, work, visit, and thrive. To realize this ambitious vision, the city is committed to nurturing successful businesses, aiming to position itself as a leading city in the United States for starting and running businesses, particularly for resident and Black and Hispanic-owned enterprises. This entails improving the regulatory environment and enhancing access to capital while nurturing high-growth sectors, attracting investments, fostering innovation clusters, and developing talent pipelines.

Furthermore, leveraging DC's robust federal presence is identified as a crucial aspect of the strategy, with a focus on maximizing benefits for residents and businesses alike through job creation, leasing opportunities, contracts, and small business spending. By 2028, the city aims to

create 35,000 new jobs in high-growth target sectors while increasing the share of minority-owned employer businesses to 33% of all employer businesses. Additionally, the strategy prioritizes the development of opportunity-rich neighborhoods, emphasizing strategic investments in essential amenities such as broadband infrastructure, grocery stores, affordable housing, transit options, and green spaces.

Moreover, efforts are underway to transform Downtown into a mixed-use neighborhood and vibrant entertainment, cultural, and retail hubs. The city also aims to eliminate key amenity gaps across all neighborhoods, ensuring equitable access to essential services such as grocery stores, high-speed internet, and affordable housing. By 2028, the goal is to retain current residents and reach a population of 725,000 while increasing economic prosperity by lifting the median household income of Black residents by \$25,000.

Furthermore, the strategy places a strong emphasis on fostering thriving people by establishing robust education-to-workforce pathways, expanding economic stability and wealth-building opportunities for BIPOC residents, and enhancing access to family and well-being supports. These efforts are geared towards retaining residents, reaching specific population targets, and increasing economic prosperity across the city. Additionally, with a focus on workforce development, DC aims to create 35,000 new jobs in high-growth sectors, prioritizing industries such as education and research, consulting services, communications and design, hospitality, tourism, entertainment, life sciences, health tech, and technology, with a particular focus on cybersecurity and artificial intelligence. Through strategic initiatives and investments, the city endeavors to ensure that the benefits of economic growth are equitably distributed among its residents, providing ample opportunities for higher wages and sustained economic mobility.

The goals outlined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) state plan are designed to support the economic development efforts of the District of Columbia by aligning with the strategic vision for its workforce development system.

Vision for the District's Workforce Development System

With the DC Economic Vision and Goals providing the Framework for Workforce Development and supports and structure from the Mayor's office, the District's strategic vision for its workforce development system consists of the following three tenets:

- Every DC resident is ready, able, and empowered to discover and attain their fullest potential through lifelong learning, sustained employment, and economic security.
- Businesses are connected to the skilled DC residents they need to compete globally, are full participants in the workforce system, and drive the District's economic growth.
- Residents and businesses in all wards are supported by coordinated, cohesive, and integrated government agencies and partners working to help communities thrive.

2. GOALS

(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

The District has five sub-goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment and other populations along with meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers. These goals will align with programs and services across

the workforce system that play a critical role in meeting the strategic vision and goals in the District's plan. The five goals include:

Goal 1: Increase Training Opportunities and Address Quality for Residents and Students

Establish and promote diverse pathways to quality jobs, including registered apprenticeships and other work-based learning models, tailored to develop specific skills and competencies for varied occupational opportunities. Increase stackable credentials (i.e. CNA and Phlebotomy credentials)

The District has the opportunity to improve the way they help residents find the appropriate training and training and providers that align with their career goals and thus, establishing skilled and credentialed talent pools available to District businesses.

The Workforce Investment Council and Office of State Superintendent for Education regularly attend cross-agency working groups to develop the WIOA and Perkins state plans to strengthen alignment between agencies and create connections to ensure residents' experience within the education-to-employment continuum is seamless and supportive. Through the coordinated effort of the State Plan working groups, the WIC and OSSE have identified a set of joint strategies to achieve the goals outlined in each plan.

- Establish diverse pathways to quality jobs, including registered apprenticeships and work-based learning models.
- Strengthen alignment between career and technical education pathways and workforce options.
- Develop a system-wide approach to career readiness and measure the quality of work-based learning opportunities.
- Increase stackable credentials and streamline the training provider application process.

Goal 2: Increase the Talent Pool Available to Businesses

The District must engage employers substantively to help employers achieve their business objectives and prepare job seekers with the skills, experience, and certification to become qualified candidates.

- Foster strategic sector partnerships and create job opportunities in high-growth sectors.
- Encourage skills-based hiring and prioritize pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, and on-the-job training strategies.
- Train workforce staff on industry goals and recruitment practices.

Goal 3: Target Populations and Ensure Equity

The District will deepen its focus on demographics where workforce development efforts can have the largest economic impact through co-enrollment, shared resources, and co-case management.

- Establish partnerships with the Mayor's offices to support targeted populations.
- Provide targeted reemployment, training, and support services.
- Advocate for affordable childcare options and improve childcare affordability and accessibility.

Goal 4: Unified Workforce System Integration

Establish a comprehensive and cohesive "One Workforce System" in the District, streamlining services and resources across agencies and organizations to provide residents and students with easier access to training, education, and employment opportunities. The District's plan will represent a groundbreaking, collaborative approach to serving workforce system customers. This becomes a shared vision for the system ensuring that workforce partner agencies collaborate

beyond organizational-level missions to make a system-wide commitment of putting our customers at the center of decision-making including service provision and resource allocation.

- Create a Pathways Portal for government services and increase customer co-enrollments.
- Identify infrastructure funding to increase access to digital services and technology.
- Establish local "Access Points" for workforce development services.

Goal 5: Using Data Outcomes to Measure Success

Create a Pathways Portal to provide residents a one-stop shop for services that support economic mobility, potentially complemented by AI powered concierge service, case management, and "street team" outreach; portal will connect existing public-facing efforts such as the WIC's My Journey DC for workforce development that includes links to Career Coach DC Lightcast managed and overseen by OSSE, OCTO's social services portal, The Lab@DC/DMPED's Front Door, OSSE's My Child Care DC, and OSSE's My School DC. Also develop protocols for information sharing across agencies. (OCTO) (DC Comeback Plan).

- Develop a consistent methodology for measuring workforce development success and utilize quarterly customer performance outcomes.
- Establish data sharing agreements with core partners and integrate education and workforce plan outcomes.
- Monitor and improve key indicators of community well-being to ensure initiatives effectively address residents' needs.

II.b. 3. PERFORMANCE GOALS

The District's Performance Goals are provided in the Core Partner Programs section.

II.b.4. ASSESSMENT

The DC WIC and program partners use several means to assess and monitor progress towards accomplishing the Mayor's strategic vision and goals for the workforce development system. These efforts have heightened and been reinforced because of the COVID-19 pandemic and enhanced focus on ensuring that equity and inclusion, digital access and education are foundations to economic security and ensuring our residents have access to quality jobs.

DC WIC Oversight: The DC WIC holds quarterly Workforce Board meetings to discuss, analyze inform and solve critical issues that impact both residents and businesses. Additionally, the DC WIC's Executive Committee meets regularly on behalf of the full DC WIC Board to focus extensively on monitoring, oversight, policy compliance, performance management, budget and fiscal oversight, and administrative issues related to the local workforce development system and American Job Centers (AJC). These meetings provide the opportunity to present the Board with assessment results for input and to make policy-related changes. Further, to provide oversight and monitor steps toward meeting the goals of the *WIOA Unified State Plan 2024-2027*, the Steering Committee will continue to convene on other key WIOA required activities including AJC certification processes and policy development.

Convene Required Partners: The DC WIC convenes bi-weekly core agency and AJC required partners to deliver updates on new policies and procedures, review customer referral-related reports, review AJC customer activities and services and other system-related issues. This is in addition to regular coordination and implementation meetings that will be held with relevant agencies and other partners required to support individual components of the plan and supporting programs.

Convene All Partners: The DC WIC will convene core agency partners and required AJC partners along with other key workforce development stakeholders that are accountable for the activities outlined in the WIOA Unified State Plan. These quarterly meetings will review the five goals and the specific strategies or programs that align with the goal. Using measurable milestones, these quarterly meetings will require individual agency report submission for which the WIC will compile into a dashboard report. The report will provide a visual of progress to date. The report will be used to uplift successes and analyze and develop solutions/course corrections in areas where we are falling short of the milestone for the quarter. The results of the quarterly meetings will include a report submitted to the Workforce Board for further discussion and support.

Convene Sectors in High Growth Industries: Quarterly, the DC WIC will convene sector representatives within the District's high growth industries to better understand the workforce needs of businesses within the sector. Collecting this information will allow the WIC to inform agency partners and organizations of the activities, services and interventions required to meet the talent acquisition needs of businesses. In addition, sector meetings will discuss future labor force projects which will allow the District to prepare residents for future jobs by connecting them with training methods (OJT, Occupational Training, Apprenticeships).

Quarterly Customer Performance Data Reports: The function of the One Stop Operator is to collect quarterly customer performance data from core agency partners and those partners providing services within the American Job Centers. These quarterly reports inform the WIC of progress against WIOA common measures as well as AJC Center performance. of program partner agencies engage in a performance accountability process that is informed by data and is aligned to the vision and goals for the District's workforce development system.

II.c. STATE STRATEGY

The District has focused efforts to create a unified public workforce system. This includes efforts to further enhance alignment across core partners; expand that alignment to other strategic workforce partners; strengthen the public workforce system's alignment and responsiveness to the business community; develop seamless pathways to in-demand careers; and assess the provision of workforce services.

The District's focus on equity and inclusion and ensuring its workforce development system meets the needs of all its residents and businesses, the DC Executive Office of the Mayor, DC WIC, and agency leaders and program partners have aligned investments in workforce development strategies. These strategies define and reinforce the efforts toward meeting the five major goals for workforce development.

Strategies Aligned to Workforce Development Goals

Inclusive Recovery Investments Supporting WIOA Unified State Plan Goals and Strategies With support of the Mayor's Office, the District's workforce system is investing resources and efforts to serve those residents that require most assistance with both navigating the workforce system to meet their needs and coordinating programs and services that are customized to their daily needs (childcare, food, transportation). The District is improving coordination of efforts across multiple plans that impact the workforce system and the residents and businesses that seek its services. The 2024-2027 DC Unified State Plan has incorporated efforts outlined in the Mayor's DC Comeback Plan, https://www.obviouslydc.com/s/DCs-Comeback-Plan_Full1923.pdf, the Perkins Plan, the

District's Build Back Better Plan, <https://infrastructure.dc.gov> focused on the District's Infrastructure activities and the Upward Mobility Plan, <https://upwardmobility.dc.gov>, that seeks to increase upward economic mobility and make pathways to prosperity more accessible for our residents.

Description of WIOA State Plan Goals Aligned with Core and Required Partner Goals

In response to the economic shifts and evolving needs of job seekers post-COVID, the District strategically modified its service delivery approach. As part of the implementation of the 2020-2024 Plan, the District established Working Groups aligned with key goals, including System Integration, Improving Quality Access to Workforce and Education Services, Expanding the Talent Pool for Businesses, Improving Youth Services, and Increasing Performance and Accountability. These efforts aimed to support an inclusive recovery. Here are some highlights of the activities undertaken to achieve these goals.

Establishing Stronger Partnerships

In support of providing jobseekers with their career, education goals and support needed, the workforce system expanded CBO relationships to include their respective services (wrap-around, training, job-readiness support) in the My Journey DC Community Catalog. To align the District as one workforce system, CBOs participate in the DC WIC-led Community of Practice which provides ongoing instruction around promising practices and processes that elevate the customer experience and desired outcomes (employment, access to training, etc.)

Establishment of a Participant Portal

DC WIC and OSSE partnered to establish the Participant Portal of My Journey DC and links to Career Coach DC, an EMSI/Lightcast product that assisted residents with resume writing, access

Department of Employment Services established the booking system which allows residents to make virtual appointments with AJC Workforce Development Specialists as well as core and required partners that offer services within the Center. Virtual services helped address the concerns some residents have about social distancing concerns along with transportation and childcare challenges.

Professional Development

Led by the DC WIC, the workforce system engaged in the DC Workforce Summit in June. This annual event will ensure that workforce system staff have the tools and resources to position the District as a gold standard in helping residents and businesses achieve their workforce-related goals. The District will ensure continuous collaboration in creating and providing staff development opportunities for partner agencies and community-based organizations, including AJC staff, training, workforce development, and social service professionals throughout the District. Staff development will be offered annually and will focus on current workforce policy, service provision for targeted populations and addressing the impact of economic conditions on the jobseeker population supplemented by informational resources and tools made available through a variety of media used as reference documents for staff and supervisors to ensure implementation fidelity. This universal training and access to shared resources and tools promotes a "no wrong-door approach" to accessing workforce development services.

All District residents—including individuals with disabilities, people with multiple barriers to employment, and those who are underemployed—need improved access to jobs, education, training, career information, and support services necessary to advance in their career

pathway. This has become even more critical in light of the data showing disparate impacts on people with less educational attainment as a result of COVID-19.

Training Quality Standards

The development of nine Training Quality Standards by the DC WIC represents a significant step towards ensuring high-quality workforce training programs in the District. These standards, designed to measure both qualitative and quantitative performance, serve as a benchmark for assessing the effectiveness and excellence of training providers. By establishing clear criteria for evaluating training programs, the standards enable the workforce system to identify providers who excel in meeting or exceeding these benchmarks, thereby showcasing their achievements and best practices.

Monitoring training providers beyond WIOA performance is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, while WIOA performance metrics provide valuable insights into the outcomes of training programs, they may not capture all aspects of program quality. By implementing additional quality standards, the DC WIC can ensure that training programs meet rigorous criteria in areas such as curriculum relevance, instructional quality, learner engagement, and post-program outcomes. By examining factors beyond traditional performance metrics, such as participant satisfaction, employer feedback, and long-term career outcomes, the DC WIC can gain a more nuanced understanding of the quality of training programs and their contributions to workforce development and economic growth.

Additionally, ongoing monitoring of training providers helps to foster continuous improvement and innovation within the workforce development system. By identifying areas for enhancement and sharing best practices across the training provider landscape, the DC WIC can drive excellence and efficiency in program delivery, ultimately benefiting job seekers, employers, and the District agencies.

Employer Partnership Grants

Employer Partnership grants funding to businesses, enabling them to upskill their workforce and address skill gaps. This focus on upskilling current employees created pathways for career advancement within organizations and helped fill entry-level positions with newly trained individuals, enhancing overall job satisfaction and retention. These grants also targeted barriers faced by individuals, offering tailored training aligned with employer needs, ensuring participants acquire the necessary skills to thrive in their fields. Supported employed worker training programs contributed to workforce resilience and adaptability, benefiting both employees and businesses. In essence, Employer Partnership Grants foster mutually beneficial relationships between employers and employees, driving economic growth and creating a dynamic labor market.

Healthcare and Information Technology Grants

Healthcare and Information Technology training grants were directly in line with conversation during the Healthcare Sector Partnership Intermediary program and Information Technology Occupational Advisory board meeting created to advance the mission of the pathways to good jobs, particularly for individuals facing barriers to employment. These grants offer financial

support for individuals to access high-quality training programs, often leading to certifications and qualifications necessary for well-paying positions.

In the healthcare sector, Training Grants enable individuals to pursue certifications in fields like Home Health Aide and Certified Nursing, which offer competitive wages and opportunities for career advancement. This addresses critical shortages in the healthcare workforce and empowers individuals, especially those from marginalized communities, to access higher-paying jobs and achieve economic security.

Similarly, in information technology, Training Grants support individuals, including women and people of color, in gaining skills and certifications that are in high demand. This enhances diversity and representation within the tech industry and ensures that underserved communities have access to lucrative career opportunities with competitive salaries.

By investing in Training Grants that lead to good jobs in sectors with high demand and competitive wages, WIOA promotes equality by providing pathways to economic mobility for individuals facing barriers to employment. These programs address immediate workforce needs and contribute to building a more inclusive and prosperous economy for all.

The Talent Development Technical Assistance (TDTA) Initiative assists businesses and workforce development organizations in enhancing employment outcomes for individuals by promoting skills-based hiring practices. Over three months, more than 60 businesses participated in training sessions to revise job postings, restructure interviews, and establish partnerships with other district agencies to recruit individuals for available positions. By emphasizing skills over formal degrees, the initiative addresses barriers such as discrimination or bias in the hiring process, ensuring that individuals are evaluated based on their competencies. Through targeted training sessions and collaborative efforts with district agencies, the TDTA Initiative empowers businesses to adopt more inclusive hiring practices, offering meaningful employment opportunities to a broader pool of skilled workers and fostering a more equitable labor market in the district.

High Demand Sectors

Every four years, the DC Workforce Investment Council (WIC) undertakes the task of updating the economic conditions of the District, identifying high-growth industries, and determining the High-Demand Sectors and Occupations List accordingly. In line with this endeavor, Career Pathway Maps were revised to align with the newly identified high-demand sectors. Notably, the High-Demand Sector list expanded from 6 to 8 for the first time since 2016, with a deliberate focus on occupations with 50 or more positions. This update serves to underscore the priority sectors for education and training initiatives, ensuring that workforce development efforts are strategically aligned with the evolving economic landscape of the District. All Sectors are vetted by the employers to ensure real time openings to ensure education and training programs support the needs of the business community.

Training Provider List to include Registered Apprenticeship

In partnership with the Department of Employment Services, the DC Workforce Investment Council has made significant strides in expanding apprenticeship opportunities and enhancing the Training Provider landscape to better serve the needs of residents and businesses. Six new apprenticeships were added to the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), bringing the total to 23 apprenticeship programs of study. This represents a notable increase of five apprenticeships and

21 programs since early 2020, demonstrating a commitment to fostering hands-on learning experiences and preparing individuals for high-demand careers.

Training Provider Landscape

The DC Workforce Investment Council conducted three comprehensive rounds of Training Provider landscape surveys involving 45 different organizations offering over 100 distinct programs of study. These surveys were instrumental in gaining insights into the capacity of training providers in the District, identifying potential gaps in training offerings, and highlighting opportunities for strategic investment in workforce development initiatives. By systematically assessing the training provider landscape, the DC WIC can ensure that resources are allocated effectively to address the evolving needs of the workforce and the labor market.

Technical Assistance

DC Workforce Investment Council (WIC) recently established regular office hours dedicated to providing technical assistance. These office hours serve as a platform for training providers and agency partners to access guidance, resources, and support from WIC representatives, fostering collaboration and addressing challenges in real-time. By offering consistent and accessible avenues for technical assistance, the WIC aims to enhance the capacity and effectiveness of workforce development initiatives across the District, ultimately strengthening the workforce and promoting economic growth.

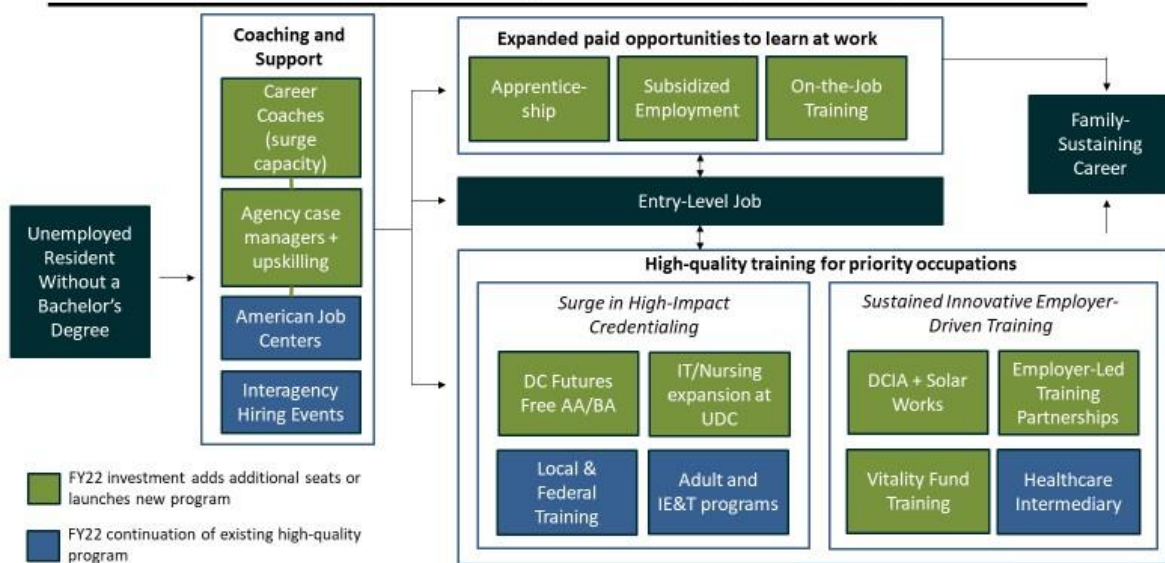
The pandemic introduced an increased need to provide services in the comfort of a jobseeker's home. This initiated virtual options for customers while enhancing coordination of online resources. Users were able to obtain information and access workforce services, education, and online training at their convenience. Currently, District residents and program providers have access to a variety of online resources and tools, including DC Networks and the virtual one-stop using a virtual booking appointment system and the one-stop resource center, My Journey DC that provides over 200 wrap-around services along with access to employment and training.

Implement strong case management for jobseekers by focusing on enhanced coordination and communication between caseworkers and/or workforce specialists who are supporting an individual customer. Many District job seekers were enrolled in multiple local and federal programs that provide case management. Greater coordination and information-sharing around case management components ensured resources were accessible and maximized.

Figure 18 highlights enhancements to the work in support of Goal 2. These include focused career coaching, initiatives aimed at focusing on jobs for low income and marginalized residents so they can gain work experience and improved earnings along a career pathway, and work-based learning opportunities.

Figure 19: Holistic Pathways for District Residents to Gain Skills and Employment

Our investments will help DC residents gain access to our priority occupations.




Business Engagement

The DC WIC is working with core program partners to streamline business engagement and services. In 2023, the DC WIC conducted an inventory of business outreach activities across District agencies. The assessment included a survey and in-depth interviews with more than 12 agencies to capture information about their programs and services, targeted sectors and businesses, outreach strategy, and capacity. This information, as well as insights gained during stakeholder engagement in the development of the WIOA State Plan, are being used to enhance collaboration and coordination across the workforce system and implement a sector strategies approach to the work.

Additionally, the DC WIC, through its Career Pathways Task Force and related initiatives, engaged business leaders and training providers in nine focus groups held in the summer of 2021 to refine and update thirteen career pathway maps for the District's identified high-demand industries. In 2023 the pathways were updated to represent the new high -demand industry sectors and 18 pathways were developed in those eight new sectors.

The career pathway maps are contained in the Appendix.

Industry Profile: Business Administration



	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	Billing and Posting Clerks	Accountants and Auditors	Budget Analysts	Financial Managers
Hourly Wage Range (10th -90th Percentile)	\$21.18–\$39.69	\$22.09–\$46.71	\$30.79–\$78.89	\$36.03–\$66.76	\$58.56–\$115.00+
Job Training	Previous work-related skill, knowledge, or experience is required for these occupations	Previous work-related skill, knowledge, or experience is required for these occupations	A considerable amount of work-related skill, knowledge, or experience is needed for these occupations	A considerable amount of work-related skill, knowledge, or experience is needed for these occupations	A considerable amount of work-related skill, knowledge, or experience is needed for these occupations
On-the-Job Requirements	One or two years of training involving both on-the-job experience and informal training with experienced workers	One or two years of training involving both on-the-job experience and informal training with experienced workers	Several years of work-related experience, on-the-job training, and/or vocational training	Several years of work-related experience, on-the-job training, and/or vocational training	Several years of work-related experience, on-the-job training, and/or vocational training
Education/Certification	Vocational schools, related on-the-job experience, or an associate's degree Accounting and Bookkeeping Certification	Vocational schools, related on-the-job experience, or an associate's degree	Most of these occupations require a four-year bachelor's degree, but some do not Certified Auditor	Most of these occupations require a four-year bachelor's degree, but some do not	Most of these occupations require a four-year bachelor's degree, but some do not
Average Annual Job Openings (2022-2032)	460	115	1,184	152	78
Attainability	Intermediate Level	Intermediate Level	Intermediate Level	Intermediate Level	Intermediate Level
Zone Information	Zone 3	Zone 3	Zone 4	Zone 4	Zone 4
Occupation Job Titles	Account Services Representative, Billing Clerk, Billing Coordinator, Item Processing Clerk (IP Clerk), Medical Biller	Account Services Representative (Accounts Services Rep), Billing Clerk, Billing Coordinator, Item Processing Clerk	Accountant, Accounting Officer, Audit Partner, Auditor, Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Cost Accountant, Financial Auditor,	Budget Analyst, Budget Coordinator, Budget Officer, Financial Services Officer, Policy Analyst	Accounting Supervisor, Banking Center Manager (BCM), Branch Manager, Business Banking Manager, Credit Administration Manager
Foundational Skills	Customer and Personal Service, Administrative, Mathematics, Economics and Accounting, Customer and Personal Service.				

In partnership with Training and Skills development working group members, these maps are being deployed across the AJCs and the District's workforce system for use virtually and in-person to assist job seekers and training providers in understanding and accessing career pathways and employment opportunities. Additional analysis is being conducted by the DC WIC to identify gaps in services and capacity and inform investment in expanding access to high-quality education and training aligned with the high-demand occupations within each pathway.

In addition to the engagement referenced above, in early 2021 the District launched a Healthcare Sector Partnership (HSP). The HSP is comprised of over 15 industry members, has seven distinct action teams, and utilizes a sector strategies approach to addressing the need for skilled workers in high demand occupations in the District. The HSP has developed a Healthcare Occupations Report, which serves to inform healthcare related funding and investments made by the District. The HSP provides a roadmap for an IT-focused initiative launching in 2022 and future sector-specific priorities.

The District has also taken several steps to develop business-driven workforce preparation and workforce training for residents with low literacy skills, and individuals with limited English proficiency. OSSE provides technical assistance, professional development, monitoring and support to its sub-grantees on the implementation of integrated education and training (IE&T) program models. IE&T providers are required to align their program offerings with one or more of the DC WIC's high demand industries to prepare adult learners to pursue a career in their desired career path. Both OSSE's AFE and CTE have made work-based learning (WBL) a priority in their programmatic models, and OSSE focuses on work-based learning in their ongoing rounds of IE&T grants. OSSE CTE has done this by not only incorporating WBL into the industry-validated academic standards for CTE programs of study, but they have also created and expanded opportunities for CTE students in enrolled in a third and/or fourth level CTE course to participate in a summer internship (Career Ready Internship program) and/or a school-year internship (Advanced Internship Program) aligned to their CTE program of study. and OSSE AFE has recently enhanced their support of WBL by specifically allocating grant funding allow to sub-grantees to use awards to provide incentives/stipends to those adult learners participating in internships, externships, practicum hours, or apprenticeships. work-based learning opportunities.

The District continues to possess robust apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship program offerings to address the long-term skill needs of local businesses in the construction and information technology sectors, and has taken significant steps to expand Registered Apprenticeships in existing programs and in the creation of programs in non-traditional occupations. Emphasis has been placed on leveraging the District's access to government jobs, and apprenticeship programs have been initiated with the Department of Public Works (DPW), the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCRA), and the DC Water (a quasi-governmental entity). The Office of Apprenticeship, Information and Training (OAIT) received and implemented the Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. Grant activities include expansion of apprenticeship opportunities for under-served populations, such as minority youth.

A barrier some District residents face while attempting to enter or progress in the labor market by accessing education and training is the competing need to earn income immediately and consistently, in order to support themselves or their families. As a result, District agencies will continue to emphasize and seek opportunities to expand investment in earn-and-learn opportunities such as on the job training and paid work experience. Other common barriers individuals may face, including access to affordable housing, transportation, healthcare, and childcare, will be addressed through increased coordination with the Department of Behavioral Health, the Department of Human Services, and OSSE's Division of Early Learning.

Inclusive Recovery in Support of Goal 3: The DC WIC is leading efforts to invest in, and expand, work-based learning opportunities (earn and learn, apprenticeships, internships, job shadowing, mentoring, etc.) for District residents to increase their exposure to work environments while gaining critical skills needed for unsubsidized employment.

The DC WIC is emphasizing work-based learning opportunities in updating and streamlining processes for training providers to apply for the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The DC WIC will encourage the inclusion of current and new apprenticeship programs on the ETPL, along with training programs that incorporate work-based learning as an integral part of the curriculum. Investments in work-based learning are highlighted in Figure 20. **Figure 20: Inclusive Recovery Through Investments in Work-Based Learning**

FY22 Expansion of Critical Programming



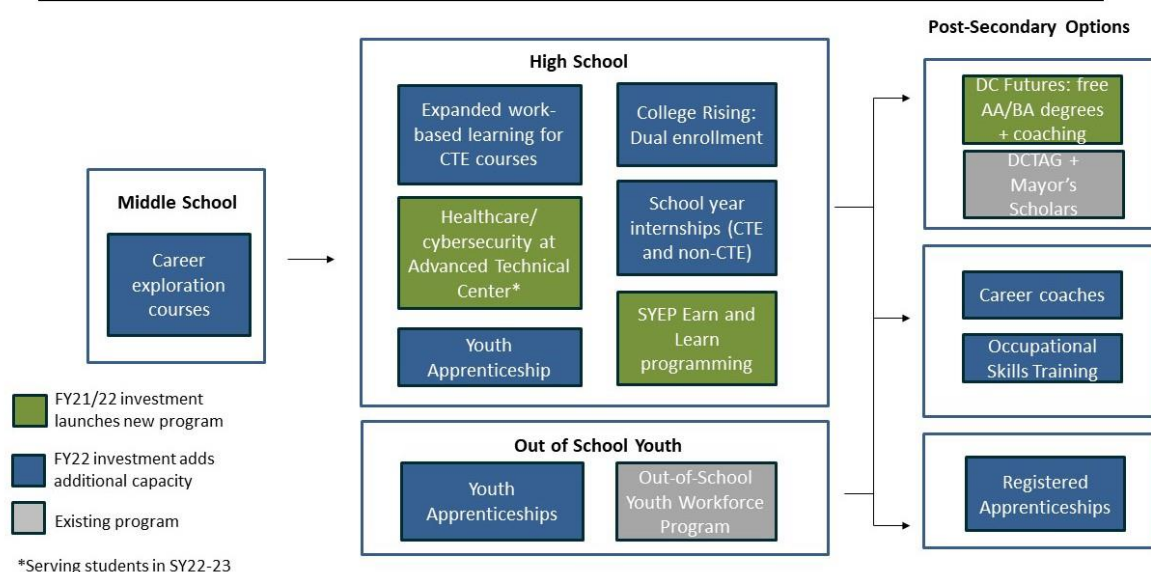
- The long-term goal in the District is to create seamless pathways for students from primary and secondary education, through college and/or training, into successful careers regardless of zip code. This work included among other efforts, increasing the level of communication and collaboration between educational and training programs in

the District; improving the early exposure students have to industry and career options; and analyzing District policies to advance this work.

- The DC WIC worked strategically with core partners, DCPS, DC public charter schools and community-based organizations to increase access to career awareness in middle schools; career and technical education in high schools; training and paid work experiences aligned to education and career goals; and clear connections to credentialing and postsecondary options aligned to desired career pathways. This work is displayed in Figure 21.

Figure 21: Inclusive Recovery Pathways for Youth

Through recovery investments, we will help DC youth along their path to college and career.



- DC WIC in collaboration with DOES hosted a youth hiring event bringing over 10 businesses seeking jobseekers with entry-level experience. These models of target population-specific hiring events have proven to be successful and will be a method the District uses in the future as outlined in the plan.
- The District's workforce development system has been working towards establishing a data infrastructure that enables the Mayor to look across federally and locally funded workforce training and support programs, and uses customer input and outcome data with common measures and definitions to 1) identify and better understand the needs of customers; 2) inform continuous improvement at the program- and system-level; and 3) Inform strategic investments designed to ensure that the District's most vulnerable residents achieve workforce-related goals. These priorities have resulted in the establishment of a commitment in the 2024-2027 plan to create common outcome measures for better outcome comparison; develop a data dictionary with common workforce-related terminology; and data sharing agreements that allow the system to review individual customer progress and outcomes.
- My Journey DC serves as the workforce system's intake and referral platform allowing for seamless supportive and wrap-around service delivery. The platform's "Community Catalog" has expanded to include community-based organizations that provide services for targeted populations experiencing barriers to employment. My Journey DC serves as a coordinate workforce system of services and incorporates partners who are not traditionally included in the workforce system but whose

services are accessed by residents. Using the My Journey DC tool allows professionals to augment their ability to serve customers within their community.

- To better provide residents with the best decision-making tools possible, the District uses the Workforce Development System Expenditure Guide to collect, synthesize, and report data on service providers (including ETPL and integrated education and training providers funded by OSSE) effectiveness and facilitate informed customer choices. This online tool allows residents to search service providers and make informed decisions about which providers meet their needs. The DC WIC is working with all core partners and relevant providers/partners to provide appropriate and important contextual information.

Integration with Perkins Plan

- Working in partnership to connect CTE pathways to workforce options, including workforce development programs, pre/youth apprenticeship programs and registered apprenticeships.
- Expanding shared data practices by disaggregating postsecondary placement data for CTE students.
- Developing a statewide approach to career readiness with the alignment of industry-recognized credentials, employability skills, and digital literacy competencies.
- Developing and implementing a statewide approach to measuring the quality of WBL opportunities.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

a. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

1. STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS

The DC Workforce Investment Council (DC WIC) operates with a committee structure comprised of standing committees and ad hoc committees. The Chairperson, together with the Executive Committee, may establish subcommittees and task forces as deemed necessary. Currently, the DC WIC Board has five committees that enable the DC WIC to effectively carry out its required functions within the District's workforce system.

Executive Committee: This leadership body is empowered to make decisions and act on behalf of the DC WIC on all policy, performance management, fiscal, and administrative issues related to the local workforce system.

Youth Committee: This group is focused on youth policy, programming, and performance, and supports connection and alignment among other youth-focused organizing bodies operating throughout the District (i.e., the DC Career Academy Network and Raise DC).

Education and Workforce Alignment Committee: This group is focused on the administration of district-specific programming and service delivery (including WIOA performance, state/local policy, and review of providers on the Eligible Training Provider List).

Business Engagement Blueprint Committee: This group is focused on the administration of Labor Market Information, Demand Occupation List evaluation, Sector Strategies, Career Pathways, Workforce Intermediary, and employment-related outcomes.

Implementation Committee: This is a separate, non-voting advisory committee comprised of representatives from relevant community and workforce organizations, established by the

Mayor's Order in the DC WIC's authorizing language to monitor the activities of all external committees and WIOA-funded programs that impact the workforce system. This committee provides updates and input directly to the Executive Committee.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

(A) CORE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE'S STRATEGY

Leadership from agencies responsible for the core programs collaborate to set goals that guide the District's delivery and alignment of workforce services. These goals include: 1) Unified Workforce System; 2) Increase Training Opportunities and Address Quality for Residents and Students; 3) Increase Talent Pool for Businesses that Lead Directly to Employment Opportunities; 4) "Telling the District's Story": Using Data Outcomes to Measure Success and 5) Target Populations/Ensuring Equity Implementation of these strategies will be achieved as the result of the following activities:

Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs provide funding for On-the-Job Training (OJT); Occupational Skills Training (OST) with a provider on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) in a program of study that can be completed within two years; Registered Apprenticeship programs with DOL; work experiences, youth incentives, and supportive services. These programs also offer career counseling, mock interviews, leadership development opportunities, job shadow opportunities, and training for the National Career Readiness Certificate.

Title II Adult and Family Education programs offer Integrated Education and Training (adult education and literacy, workforce preparation and workforce training services) as well as supportive and transition services to District residents. OSSE AFE's use of Section 231 funding for Adult Education and Literacy Activities, Section 225 funding for Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals and Section 243 funding for English Literacy and Civics Education align to the District's strategy to provide access to education, training and other related services to District residents with multiple barriers to employment, including individuals with low levels of literacy skills, English Language Learners and individuals who are institutionalized. Program offerings align to the established high demand industries and occupations developed by the WIC for the District's workforce system, every four years. Eligible providers support eligible participants in gaining the knowledge, skills, competencies, and credentials that are needed to pursue their desired career path, secure competitive employment, engage in training and/or advanced training, and/or transition to postsecondary education. For individuals who are institutionalized, eligible providers assist eligible individuals in accessing needed resources, programs and services that help facilitate their successful re-integration into the community.

Title III Wagner-Peyser services are the “front-door” of the AJC system. These services provide universal access to all customers seeking employment and career services. Services include job search assistance, job placement assistance, re-employment services for unemployment insurance claimants, use of the AJC’s resource rooms, and provision of labor market information. Referrals to partner programs and reemployment services are also provided for individuals receiving UI.

Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) offers a variety of employment services for persons with disabilities, including: assessments, vocational counseling and guidance, job development services, job coaching, employment follow-along, work readiness training, on-the job training, tuition assistance for postsecondary education leading to an employment goal, independent living skills training, pre-employment transition services for youth, disability-related skills training, benefits counseling, assistive technology, supported employment services, customized employment, and post-employment services. The activities offered and funded by the DCRSA Vocational Rehabilitation Program directly align with other WIOA core partner activities and tie in to meet the overall Unified State Plan goals and activities. DCRSA Vocational Rehabilitation Program activities are meant to lead consumers to prepare for secure, retain, or advance in competitive integrated employment. Additionally, like the other core WIOA partners, DCRSA activities are measured and reconciled by the federal oversight partner DOE/RSA, and DCRSA must meet and report on the six mandatory indicators under WIOA.

Core Program Partnerships

The District agencies responsible for carrying out core programs—the Department of Employment Services (DOES), the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), and the Department of Disability Services-Rehabilitation Services Administration (DDS/RSA)—are committed to working together, integrating services, and aligning programs to form a cohesive workforce development system, as outlined in the state goals and strategies. The above-mentioned activities for each of the core programs will be aligned to the District’s strategy to meet the diverse needs of District residents as follows:

- AJC partner MOUs describe the workforce development system vision and goals, how each program ensures full access to AJC services, and how costs are shared among required partners. As AJC service provision has been impacted by the pandemic, both in-person appointment services and direct linkage services are available.
- The DC WIC, through the One-Stop Operator, monitors AJC Partner MOUs for compliance and technical assistance and convenes weekly partner agency leadership meetings to discuss and strategize ways to align workforce system goals and services and blend, braid, or leverage human, material and/or fiscal resources to reduce service duplication and enhance service efficacy.
- The One Stop Operator aligns resident access to services through the development of common intake fields, tracking referral activities and outcomes and other service delivery processes and tools.
 - To further refine customer performance review and analysis, the WIC is engaged in establishing data sharing among the four core programs.

The District is committed to establishing a common data dictionary and align methods of measurement. Through cross-agency data alignment efforts, workforce leadership will have more accurate data to use to determine resource allocation priorities, more targeted goals that achieve a higher rate of programmatic success.

The WIC leads staff development for the District's workforce system staff. These trainings seek to increase the awareness and knowledge of front-line staff that support the workforce needs of District residents and businesses. As a result, workforce system staff will improve service provision and case management as well as improve resource diversification through co-enrollment opportunities for District residents.

The DC WIC will also continue to develop and implement a unified business services strategy including streamlined communication tools and inter-agency operating procedures. This plan includes a comprehensive plan for improving sector partnerships for the District.

Partners will continue to develop a business-driven, job seeker-centered career pathways including articulating and connecting the full range of K-12, adult education, post-secondary, and other education and training, with seamless transitions between "levels" and no "dead ends"; providing integrated supports like education and career coaching and advising and wrap-around services like childcare and transportation assistance, especially at education and career transition points; promoting continuous, life-long learning and professional development opportunities that meet people where they are; and operationalizing residents' access to and progress along identified career pathways.

Sector Strategies Approach

Sector strategies are the main drivers of the workforce ecosystem, directly addressing the specific employment needs of key industries. The strategies foster collaboration among employers, training providers, and government agencies to ensure that job seekers are equipped with the skills required for high-demand industries. The DC Workforce Investment Council aligns workforce development efforts with industry requirements, and sector strategies anticipate skills gaps and drive economic growth.

Over the last year, the Business Engagement Working Group, which meets quarterly, has been made up of agency representatives who provide insight into the agency's activities. The working group will continue but will be informed by the newly established DC Workforce Investment Council (WIC) Business Engagement Blueprint Committee, comprising board members representing businesses across eight High-Demand Industry Sectors. This committee provides insights into sector workforce needs, guiding the direction and priorities of the workforce ecosystem. By leveraging industry expertise, the committee ensures alignment between strategies and business needs, enhancing the effectiveness of workforce initiatives.

Under the Business Engagement Working Group, the DC WIC takes actionable steps to implement strategies aligned with WIOA. Quarterly meetings provide guidance and commit to specific actions, focusing on employer-driven activities. Collaboration is enhanced through developing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between agencies, supporting the alignment of efforts. Additionally, this group will support the Business Engagement performance metrics outlined by WIOA.

Over the next four years, concrete tactics will be deployed to achieve ambitious goals. Businesses will be engaged through sector partnerships and statewide business services teams. One-stop partner programs will integrate, and common procedure manuals will be developed to ensure seamless coordination. This approach maximizes resource utilization to effectively serve businesses. Through intensive technical assistance, workforce areas will focus on key industries to drive economic vitality. The DC WIC convenes local decision-makers to address recruitment and retention challenges within these sectors. Sector partnerships align with career pathways strategies, including initiatives with the University of the District of Columbia Community College, fostering actionable workforce development and economic growth for a direct pathway to the middle class.

Career Pathways Taskforce

The DC WIC also convenes a Career Pathways Task Force, which is a locally mandated body consisting of representatives from District government, community workforce, and education organizations, that advises and has led the development of recommendations regarding policies and programs that ensure that all adult learners have access to career pathways. DC WIC meetings are held quarterly and are open to the public, while committee and task force meetings occur on an ad hoc basis more frequently, to enable decision-making as needed. Meeting agendas are developed with guidance from the Executive Committee with the assistance of DC WIC staff, and DC WIC Board decisions on workforce system policies and other considerations are determined through votes approved by the majority of members present during times that a quorum of the Board is in session.

Information Technology Occupational Advisory Board

The Information Technology Occupational Advisory Board (ITOAB), convened by the DC Workforce Investment Council (DC WIC), was established at the request of the DC Council to address the District's talent pipeline gaps and promote equity and inclusion within the Information Technology sector as part of the broader goals for the workforce development ecosystem. Using the Next Generation Sector Partnership model, ITOAB brings together thirty-six individuals employed by Information Technology companies from Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia to identify challenges and opportunities in the industry. During its inception, the ITOAB formed three workgroups focused on Education and Training, serving individuals with barriers, and understanding the business pathway, to develop an advisory report on Information Technology to inform stakeholders across the region. This report will provide insights into industry trends, challenges, and opportunities, along with recommendations to bridge the gap between workforce supply and industry demand, thus fostering self-sufficiency and equity within the sector. Additionally, ITOAB is implementing strategies such as targeted outreach efforts, diversity and inclusion training programs, and partnerships with community organizations to promote equity and inclusion. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation ensure progress towards these goals, with a focus on enhancing collaboration and information sharing among stakeholders. The initiatives identified by the workgroups also aim to improve education and training programs, support individuals with barriers to employment, and align talent pipeline needs with industry demands, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and self-sustaining workforce development ecosystem.

(B) ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

In supporting the activities identified in (A) above, the District will leverage programs outside of the Unified Plan to accomplish District strategies and goals for WIOA. These include, but are not limited to, services provided by the one-stop partner programs and other taxpayer-funded, and private and non-profit-led programs that provide employment-related services. Through coordination across existing networks of education and workforce system groups, the District continues to further align efforts, particularly in order to serve individuals for whom multiple services or supports may be required to successfully enter and progress in the workforce.

In supporting the activities identified in (A) above, the District will leverage programs outside of the Unified Plan to accomplish District strategies and goals for WIOA. These include, but are not limited to, services provided by the one-stop partner programs and other taxpayer-funded, and private and non-profit-led programs that provide employment-related services. Through the leadership of the DC WIC and its committees, and through coordination across existing networks of education and workforce system groups, the District continues to further align efforts, particularly in order to serve individuals for whom multiple different services or supports may be required for them to successfully enter and progress in the workforce.

Alignment with Perkins/Career Technical Education

OSSE's Division of Postsecondary and Career Education (PCE) funds (through both Federal Perkins Grant and local dollars) multiple Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and UDC-CC to develop and offer CTE programs of study in high-wage, high-skill, and in-demand career sectors. PCE has also funded the initial development of Career Academies which has led to the development of 480 Career Academies across the city and multiple LEAs. These programs should be considered the front end of the District's education to employment continuum, in which CTE, adult education, and traditional workforce development are coordinated components of a larger continuum. As such, there has been intentional coordination between OSSE and the WIC to identify aligned strategies between the WIOA state plan and the Perkins V State plan to ensure residents have access to quality education and training to achieve a career in a high-wage, in-demand fields and, in turn, accelerate inclusive economic growth for all District residents.

Staff from OSSE (AFE and CTE) and the WIC regularly attended cross-agency working groups to develop the WIOA and Perkins state plans to strengthen alignment between agencies and create connections to ensure residents' experience within the education-to-employment continuum is seamless and supportive. Through the coordinated effort of the State Plan working groups, the WIC and OSSE have identified a set of joint strategies to achieve the goals outlined in each plan. These strategies include:

- Working in partnership to connect CTE pathways to workforce options, including workforce development programs, pre/youth-apprenticeship programs, and registered apprenticeships. In alignment with the Perkins performance indicator for postsecondary placement and WIOA Title I Youth Education and Employment Rates, OSSE will work with DOES, other workforce providers, and LEAs to build articulated pathways that include workforce development programs, pre/youth-apprenticeship programs, and registered apprenticeships as alternative next steps to traditional postsecondary education. This effort will initially focus on the District's top 8 high-demand career sectors and will be aligned with the WIC's Career Pathway maps.
- Expanding shared data practices by disaggregating postsecondary placement data. OSSE will attempt to expand our partnership with the DOES to enhance data-sharing practices to capture the extent to which residents completing a CTE program matriculate to a registered workforce development program in the District. In alignment with the Perkins performance indicator for postsecondary placement and WIOA Title I and II Education and Employment Rates, OSSE will examine the rate of which CTE participants and concentrators successfully enroll in a postsecondary opportunity, inclusive of and broken out by postsecondary education, pre/youth apprenticeships, registered apprenticeships, and workforce development programs. In addition to placement OSSE will review wage data as aligned with the WIOA Title I Median Earnings.
- Developing a Statewide approach to career readiness with the alignment of in-demand industries, industry recognized credentials and employability skills: OSSE CTE and AFE in coordination with the WIC, other workforce development partners, and industry representatives, will work to identify high-leverage credentials and skillsets (including both technical skills and general employability skills) that align with the in-demand careers in the District. OSSE will refine the State standards for CTE programs of study to incorporate the alignment of these credentials and skills. Alignment of industry recognized credentials will support the Perkins performance indicator for recognized postsecondary industry credential and WIOA Title I and II Credential Attainment, thus allowing DC to collect and report credential attainment rates that are more aligned and comparable. This effort will also include identifying or developing an agreed upon rubric and/or assessment to measure the employability skills identified by DC's employers and that the CTE, adult education, and workforce development system can incorporate into their programming. Once

implemented, tracking performance on this metric will help inform how these skills are taught and will allow the District to set specific performance targets regarding DC resident's mastery of key employability skills.

- Developing and implementing a Statewide approach to measuring the quality of work-based learning opportunities. Work-based learning is a critical component to any education or training program aligned to specific career sectors. OSSE, in collaboration with the WIC, other workforce development partners and City Works DC have begun developing a shared work-based learning toolkit that helps government agencies and workforce partners throughout the education to employment continuum think about work-based learning the same way and evaluate these opportunities based on a shared rubric. Moving forward, this work will shift to incorporating these tools into program implementation and evaluation across all partners. For OSSE, this will include adopting and/or adapting the rubric into our program monitoring for both Perkins funded CTE programming and WIOA Title II funded adult education programming.

Also, as outlined in the Perkins V State Plan and the WIOA State Plan, OSSE has capitalized on the industry advisory boards (IABs) that were initially established to support just the Career Academies and has now expanded their scope to support all OSSE-funded CTE programs of study offered in DC. These IABs are made up of local employers from the relevant industry sectors. Currently there are IABs for nine industry themes associated with the most common CTE programs of study and more IABs will be developed as the number and type of programs of study require it.

Additionally, given the overlap of industries and employers participating in the advisory boards and engaging with the DC WIC, we will continue to explore connecting and aligning their respective efforts and priorities.

Additionally, to ensure young people's work experiences are as meaningful as possible and relate to their long-term goals, DOES, OSSE, and participating LEAs maintained and expanded an existing partnership that uses the SYEP infrastructure and funding to place CTE concentrators into summer work experiences aligned to their CTE program of study. This partnership has helped thousands of students access paid internships over the years. Despite the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic forced a pivot to remote internships for the past two years the scope of this partnership has expanded to support all interested/eligible CTE concentrators. In the FY22 budget the Mayor provided funding for OSSE to work with participating LEAs and DOES to capitalize on the success of this partnership to allow CTE students who are in their fourth year of a program of study to similarly participate in a school-year internships aligned to industries related to their CTE program of study. This new initiative is called the CTE Advanced Internship Program and over three years is projected to offer 1,200 high school students access to these internship opportunities that will be paid and will grant CTE course credits to participating interns. Given the extensive network of employers that participate in these and other work-based learning opportunities, OSSE established the Industry Engagement unit to support this work. This team collaborates with DCPS, DC PCSB, DOES, and the DC WIC, as well as with other AJC partners, to support greater alignment in outreach, engagement, and delivery of services to employers participating in these and other talent pipeline development programs. The focus is on reducing duplication of outreach, as many employers working with youth programs also seek individuals skilled through adult and dislocated worker, and adult education programs.

Low Income Individuals, including TANF and SNAP Participants

The District of Columbia's (District) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program provides cash assistance, subsidized childcare, employment, education, and training resources to help families with children facing economic hardship. The DC Department of Human Services (DHS) operates the TANF Employment and Education Program (TEP) through a mix of federal and local funds. As of August 2023, approximately 14,259 families representing 39,298 individuals (26,180 children) received TANF cash assistance.

DHS provides case management and navigation assistance, career exploration and workforce development services, and financial incentives for TANF participants actively engaging and participating in career pathways work through the TEP program. DHS has integrated the six (6) nationally recognized pillars of this '2Gen' framework developed by Ascend as Aspen Institute into the TEP model. (2Gen Approach, 2024) The '2Gen' framework is an approach that centers case management, career development, education planning, and social exploration and mapping on the entire family, not just the parent(s) engaged in the TEP program. Specifically, the TEP program includes the expanded domains of the '2Gen' framework, which include economic assets, social capital, health - including mental health, post-secondary & employment pathways, early childhood education, and K through 12 education and support, into its service-delivery model.

DHS also administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) on behalf of the District. As of August 2023, approximately 83,316 low-income District households received SNAP assistance. These households include approximately 48,801 children, 23,239 seniors, and 67,445 adults. Like TANF, SNAP recipients receive access to employment, education, and training services through the SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) program. The District's SNAP E&T Program currently partners with 20 organizations, including three interagency partners – D.C. Department of Employment Services (DOES), Mayor's Office on Returning Citizens Affairs (MORCA), and Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (ONSE) – to offer training and employment opportunities across D.C.'s high demand sectors.

People Experiencing or Having Recent History of Homelessness

The 2023 annual homeless enumeration report, which includes the results of the Point-in-Time (PIT) count, revealed a total of 4,922 individuals experiencing homelessness in the District of Columbia. After several years of consecutive declines in the PIT counts, the count in 2023 increased by roughly 12 percent from 2022 but is 23 percent lower than the 2020 count, the last PIT recorded prior to the public health emergency. Although homelessness among single unaccompanied adults increased, the District successfully achieved a 57% rise in the number of people exiting homelessness to permanent housing.

Of the 4,922 people counted as experiencing homelessness in the District of Columbia annual point-in-time (PIT) count conducted on January 25, 2023. This includes:

1. 3,750 individuals:
 - a. 3,741 unaccompanied adults including 825 persons who were unsheltered, i.e., living on the street or in places not meant for habitation.
 - b. 9 unaccompanied minors.
2. 1,172 persons living in families:
 - a. 466 adults and 706 minors.

Career Mobility Action Plan (Career MAP) Program

The DHS Career Mobility Action Plan (Career MAP) pilot launched in 2022 and focuses on providing 600 families that have experienced homelessness and participated in a rapid re-housing program with a chance to advance in a career. For up to five years, the pilot provides career and family support services, subsidized housing, and other resources to offset losses of cash, food, health care, childcare, and housing benefits that can phase out more quickly than a family's income can cover these lost resources (also known as benefits cliffs).

University of the District of Columbia – Community College (UDC-CC)

Through its Division of Workforce Development and Lifelong Learning (WDLL), UDC-CC provides residents with skills training to enable them to pursue employment in high-demand careers. WDLL focuses on industries that provide the highest number of local and regional employment opportunities, which include: Construction and Property Management; Early Childhood Education; Healthcare Direct Care and Administration; Hospitality and Tourism; Information Technology; and Office Administration. For students completing career pathway programs, UDC-CC provides direct support in job searches, and leverages relationships with local and regional companies of all types and sizes, including Amazon, which recently recruited and hired students from UDC-CC's Cloud Computing course. Many District agencies refer clients to UDC-CC for training, and the development of common intake and referral tools will further ensure residents are easily connected with their array of programs. In addition, WDLL representatives regularly interact with core partners, providing UDC-CC students with a wide range of employment and support services to enable the successful attainment of their educational and career goals.

Alignment with Registered Apprenticeships

The Office of Apprenticeship, Information and Training (OAIT) is one of 27 State Apprenticeship Agencies recognized by the DOL. OAIT is responsible for administering the District's apprenticeship system, which includes promoting and expanding registered apprenticeship programs in traditional and non-traditional industries. Services include outreach to core partner programs, schools, and community agencies; regular apprenticeship information sessions at the AJCs and shared throughout the workforce system; processing new apprenticeship registration agreements; conducting marketing and outreach efforts to employers to become apprenticeship sponsors; providing oversight and technical assistance in developing apprenticeship standards that conform to federal and local regulations; and monitoring to ensure compliance with federal and state laws. OAIT will continue to advance the District's apprenticeship efforts in three primary ways, as part of the broader priority for expansion of work-based learning programs in the District:

Pre-Apprenticeships

In an effort to expand apprenticeship opportunities for DC residents, OAIT coordinates pre-apprenticeship training initiatives, which prepares District residents to qualify for established registered apprenticeship programs and apprenticeship opportunities. These programs target residents lacking prerequisites for apprenticeship and provide an opportunity to gain necessary skills, and receive services such as basic skills remediation, aptitude testing and job readiness training. Pre-apprentices receive on-the-job work experience at job sites and/or hands-on shop training in sponsors' training facilities. Pre-apprenticeship training is an effective tool to increase the number of residents in registered apprenticeships. The District is one of the few jurisdictions that directly coordinates and funds pre-apprenticeship programs with apprenticeship sponsors.

Youth Apprenticeships

OAIT coordinates youth apprenticeship partnerships with DC Public and Charter High School to include but not limited to IDEA Public Charter School, Thurgood Marshall Academy, Luke C. Moore, Ballou High School etc. This effort includes outreach to participating high schools to inform students and educators about the apprenticeship system. Other youth apprenticeship initiatives include a partnership with the DOES Office of Youth Programs (OYP) to connect MBSYEP participants, ages 18-24, with apprenticeship sponsors during a six-week pre-apprenticeship training period. Youth completing training have gained acceptance into registered apprenticeships with the local Sheet Metal Workers, Plumbers and Steamfitters unions various Registered Apprenticeship Sponsors.. Youth apprenticeships will continue to be an important part of the District's overall workforce system strategies.

The District of Columbia is currently recognized by the US Department of Labor to operate as a State Apprenticeship Agency pursuant to Title 29 CFR, part 29.13, and has been since 1946. In 1978, the District of Columbia established a local mandatory apprenticeship law (D.C. Law 2-156) that requires contractors, who are awarded contracts to perform work on District government-assisted construction projects, to register apprenticeship programs with the District of Columbia. The law was amended in 2004 to require a minimum of 35% apprenticeship hours on all government assisted projects to be performed by DC residents. Any contractor who fails to comply with the amended apprenticeship law is subject to a fine of 5% of direct and indirect labor cost of their contract amount. D.C. Official Code § 32-1431(c)(1). Since the amended law took effect in 2005, there was an immediate impact on the percentages of DC residents employed on District government assisted projects. The results of the amended apprenticeship law continue to be evidence of its effectiveness in generating apprenticeship opportunities for residents on many major city projects:

To complement its long history of apprenticeship programs in the construction industry, the District of Columbia continues to succeed in its expansion efforts to add more non-traditional sectors as apprenticeship career options. These efforts resulted in five (5) new non-traditional registered apprenticeship programs in the hospitality and allied health industries during FYs 20-21. In FY21 OAIT registered two (2) healthcare apprenticeship sponsors in the occupations of medical assistant, pharmacy technician, phlebotomy technician, medical coder, and advance certified nursing assistant. OAIT and the YAAC have begun working together to connect the health care apprenticeship programs with participating DC Public School/DC Public Charter Schools that offer healthcare CTE training that will connect those students to registered apprenticeship in the healthcare industry during FY-22-23.

DOES continues to expose youth to Apprenticeship as early as middle school through the Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program and other locally funding pre-apprenticeship opportunities through Year-Round Program partnerships with DCPS and DCPCS (including but not limited to Luke C. Moore, IDEA PCS, Thurgood Marshall, Ballou STAY High School and more). For over three years DOES has offered 100 young people in the MBSYEP the opportunity to connect with Pre-Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPS) to gain exposure and first hand training opportunities that led to full-time apprenticeship placements at the end of the 6 week program.

Along with previous government programs prior to legislation, during FY 20 -Present, the District was successful in the roll out of the "Pathway to District Government Career Amendment Act of 2018". The amendment allows partnerships between the Department of Human Resources and DC Public High Schools to promote pathways to government employment to DC high school graduates, who are DC residents with consideration priority for entry level govern jobs as apprentices. Under the Department of Human Resources registered program, DC registered three (3) new District government agencies for DC resident employees to participate in apprenticeship programs. The District agencies include: Department of Human Resources (DCHR), Department Healthcare finance, Department of Employment Services and Department of Parks and Recreation. The occupation areas include information technology, administrative assistant, human resource assistant, medical coder, etc. There are other District government agencies in which apprenticeship can be implemented. Expanding the apprenticeship system to include more programs in District government agencies will increase and retain more DC residents in its workforce and reduce the need to seek skilled workers from outside of Washington, DC when existing seasoned workers retire. DOES and the Department of Employment Services continues to expand the government apprenticeship program offerings in the future years ahead.

There are other District government agencies in which apprenticeship can be implemented. Expanding the apprenticeship system to include more programs in District government agencies will increase and retain more DC residents in its workforce and reduce the need to seek skilled workers from outside of Washington, DC when existing seasoned workers retire. Examples of other DC agencies, in which apprenticeship can be implemented in occupations certified by the Department of Labor:

- Department of Transportation - equipment operator
- DC Public Schools - teacher aide; this is an area in which a high school graduate can enter as an apprentice, while taking college courses at UDC towards eventually earning a degree in education or certification in childcare. This could also assist residents participating in TANF.
- Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) in information technology
- Other apprentice-able occupations in the health-care field can be applied to Washington, DC's hospital such as, medical assistant, medical laboratory technician, medical coder, and nurse assistant.

- Apprenticeship can also be implemented for DC Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department in Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). The related instruction for the occupation can be held at UDC.

In support of the efforts of the Career Pathways Task Force and other partner-led initiatives has added new agencies—Department of Parks & Recreation, Department of Healthcare Finance, Department of Human Resources and Department of Employment Services—as registered programs under DCHR’s registered apprenticeship program approved in FY20. DOES has convened with education, workforce, and economic development partners such as, businesses and industry intermediaries. The partnerships and planning sessions have been purposed to better align systems and increase resident accessibility to pathways and earn-as-you-learn opportunities, including apprenticeship, in both traditional and non-tradition industry sectors.

DOES currently leverages federal, state, and private resources to develop registered apprenticeship programs, to provide general tuition assistance, and to support enrolled registered apprentices with supportive services. DOES encourages the enrollment of registered apprentices in WIOA and ensures registered apprentices consistently have the opportunity to enroll throughout their participation. Strategies to support registered apprentices through OJT and ITAs have also been developed. Private resources have been and will continue to be used in the development of employer-based apprenticeship programs. Local grants have been utilized for pre-apprenticeship training in both construction and non-construction industries.

The DOES Office of Talent and Client Services, in conjunction with the OAIT, continues to serve as the primary connection to assist residents in entering registered apprenticeship programs and positions. To ensure the inclusion of underrepresented groups in these efforts, DOES currently has referral partnerships with IDEA Charter School, DC Public Schools, the American Job Centers, The Office of Youth Programs, Division of State Initiatives, Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that service TANF and Food Stamp Employment and Training program (FSET) participants, and various workforce programs throughout the District. To further increase inclusion, DOES has actively identified and met with agencies and organizations committed to serving women, veterans, individuals with disabilities, communities of color, and economically disadvantaged groups.

(C) COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT, AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

The District’s American Job Centers are the primary hub of service delivery in the workforce system. The AJCs ensure job seekers receive comprehensive, coordinated, and high-quality services that help customers navigate the expansive array of programs and services, all in support of achieving workforce and education goals. In each Center, both core partners and other required stakeholders offer services that provide other support in the workforce. All partners describe their services and contributions into the American Job Center through the memoranda of understanding (MOUs) required by WIOA. The One-Stop Operator (OSO) leads partner coordination activities under the direction of the DC WIC and in accordance with the established MOUs. DOES manages and operates the four AJCs, which are certified in accordance with federal and DC WIC requirements.

Partner staff collaborate extensively with the AJC staff, and customers are frequently referred to and/or co-enrolled in programs offered both within the AJC and around the city, using the My Journey DC platform. The OSO convenes weekly meetings with AJC partners and the DC WIC to discuss Center-related issues and customer traffic, marketing and outreach opportunities, review monthly referral data, review quarterly customer performance data and inform partners of upcoming activities and/or programs for which their customers can take advantage.

All DC residents have access to all the one-stop centers throughout the District. The District has one comprehensive one-stop center and three affiliate sites. All of the District's AJCs, including comprehensive and affiliates sites, provide career, employment, and training services specified in Section 134 of WIOA and provide job seeker and employer access to AJC partner services listed in Section 121(b). In addition, all partners are either co-located in each of the sites or provide services via direct linkage. DOES established the bookings system on the AJC website for residents can make appointments for on-site or virtual appointments. This function was established during the pandemic and has served as an effective method for residents to have easy access to the Centers.

Each of the WIOA core partner agencies provide Title I, II, III and IV funding to eligible providers to offer education, training, workforce and other related services to District residents. As part of the intake process, eligible providers develop in collaboration with each customer an individual plan (e.g., Individual Employment Plan (DOES), Individual Plan for Employment (DDS/RSA), Individual Career Pathway Transition Plan (OSSE AFE), Individual Service Responsibility Plan (DHS), etc.) that specifies the student's educational functioning/grade level, learning needs, career interests, goals and plans for achieving economic self-sufficiency. Additionally, eligible providers provide and/or link students to supportive services, which may include subsidized childcare, the District of Columbia adult learner transit subsidy, public benefits, and other supports that ameliorate and/or eliminate barriers that may impede their ability to make measurable skill gains, earn industry recognized certifications, obtain employment, attain their goals and/or achieve economic self-sufficiency while enrolled in and/or upon exit from the program. Eligible providers also link customers to other resources, programs and services to address their diverse needs and/or that assist them in transitioning to the next step on the education, training and/or workforce continuum towards their desired career path, inclusive of their successful transition to training, advanced training, employment and/or postsecondary education. Through regularly scheduled meetings and convenings by the DC WIC, WIOA core partner agencies are afforded opportunities to discuss and strategize ways to streamline, integrate and coordinate the provision of these services to District residents to eliminate duplication of effort, enhanced service delivery, and greater system alignment.

System partners are committed to serving customers based on their individual goals, readiness, and needs, and will develop a process and identify tools that facilitate this approach. The DC WIC, OSO, and DOES continue to coordinate with partners to increase the flexibility of one-stop services to ensure customers receive direct access to the services which best fit the individual's identified need(s) and to improve services to customers by decreasing duplication of services and streamlining process. To complement and enhance the delivery of career and training services through the one-stop centers, the District is further integrating programs for targeted populations into the one-stop system, including virtual services through direct linkage and other on-line services, for customers that prefer not to attend in-person.

AJC partners collaborated to develop marketing and outreach information to increase awareness and traffic in the AJC and its affiliates. The *DCNetworks* brochure informs customers of the portal to register and receive employment and training-related information and services. This brochure is available across the District including the libraries and TANF/SNAP offices. *My Journey DC* has a flyer available for customers to learn about the platform that serves as a "one stop" on programs and services available across the District along with career navigation support. In addition, partners have created sidewalk banners that describe the additional services available in the AJCs offered by core and required partners.

(D) COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT, AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

Sector Strategies

DC Healthcare Intermediary Partnership

The DC Hospital Association (DCHA) is an industry sector partnership, convened by DC WIC, with the mission of identifying and responding to workforce development policy issues for entry level and middle positions in the healthcare industry. DCHA is an employer-driven, employer-led table that meets quarterly to address the workforce needs of healthcare institutions in the District. Taskforce members support strategic initiatives that bridge the gap between training programs and job placement efforts, ensuring that healthcare providers have access to a highly qualified workforce.

The DCHA partnership is further developing and supporting pipeline efforts to prepare qualified workers for career placement in healthcare. The need for short-term training in industry-based certification programs is critical for healthcare employers throughout the District. The partnership has launched a community healthcare network for healthcare workers aimed at advancing healthcare occupations through pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities.

Information Technology Advisory Board

DC WIC convenes the Information Technology Advisory Board (ITAB) using the Next Generation Sector Partnership model. ITAB comprises 36 IT/Technology companies with the Region which is comprised of Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. Since the first convening in the spring of 2021, ITAB businesses have identified talent pipeline gaps as the most critical and constraining challenges in the District.

Given the pressing reality, numerous firms are reassessing their talent sourcing strategies and exploring non-traditional populations, presenting a substantial opportunity to champion equity and justice-driven workforce development initiatives. To comprehensively tackle various aspects of this challenge, ITAB is in the process of establishing three workgroups: Education and Training, serving individuals with barriers, and understand the business pathway and will develop an advisory report on Information Technology to inform the system.

In June 2023, the DC WIC met with the Department of Employment Services' Chief Labor Economist to discuss the District's long-term industry and occupational projection data. The DC WIC examined each of the six high-demand sectors based on occupational areas of growth and utilized the DC Comeback Plan published by the Deputy Mayor of Planning and Economic Development Council (DMPED), pertaining to the District's long-term industry and occupational projections for 2022–2032.

After reviewing the labor market information and conducting group analysis, and considering stakeholder feedback, the areas to be supported, developed, or improved in the District have been expanded from six to eight demand sectors. These sectors include Construction, Business Management and Administration, Utilities, Finance, Health Science, Hospitality and Tourism, Entertainment, Information Technology, Manufacturing, Life Sciences, Transportation, Distribution, Logistics, Security, and Law.

In October 2023, the DC WIC partnered with the Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE) and convened a core Perkins V leadership group consisting of key stakeholders to analyze the District's workforce needs, establish program career clusters and pathways, and inform the CTE Transition and State Plans.

Furthermore, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Perkins V goals align to Title IV, Part B connects with in-demand fields of the local workforce competencies and career readiness.

Career Pathways and Workforce Pipeline

The District's strategy includes enabling progressive skills development through education and training programs using multiple entry and exit points, so that each level of skills developed coordinates with labor market gains for those being trained through work-based learning models or educated using post-secondary education or occupational training. The DC WIC will train partnering agencies on Career Pathways. Career Pathways will be utilized to facilitate incremental and progressive skills attainment overtime, in clear segmented of blocks, to show progression based on the foundation prior to the engagement of prior learning efforts.

The DC WIC provides technical assistance to the Department of Employment Services, facilitating partnerships with industry and training providers. These partnerships focus on implementing career pathways that equip participants with a packaged set of skills, each stage of which holds labor market value. Starting in May 2024, the DC WIC will be convening quarterly community of practice sessions aimed at introducing new and proven-to-be-effective service provision strategies, updated information that impacts customer support, and best practices for serving target populations. The Community of Practice knits together the District's workforce system, further efforts to align how residents and businesses receive services from the workforce system.

The DC WIC developed customized career pathway maps using updated labor market information of the high growth and in-demand occupations that chart a path on entering an occupation within an industry and the services, certifications, licenses required along with details on current and projected wages. The WIC is leading ongoing in-depth training for front-line staff on using the maps as a tool during career coaching sessions.

Skills Based Hiring

The DC Workforce Investment Council initiated a transformative initiative aimed at advancing skills-based hiring and training systems within the District of Columbia. This endeavor commenced with the launch of a 10-series self-paced video session through Skills DC, a skills-based hiring pilot initiative in 2022. Subsequently, the program expanded its reach to include the District of Columbia Human Resources Department (DCHR). Following the successful implementation and knowledge acquisition from the pilot, DCHR committed to scaling skills-based hiring practices district-wide as of September 2023.

Skills DC aims to promote a skills-based hiring and training environment that prioritizes equity and accessibility while setting new standards for training vendors and businesses. By focusing on individuals' skills and abilities rather than traditional credentials, the program seeks to facilitate more efficient and effective matches between qualified job seekers and employers, ultimately leading to immediate economic benefits for workers, employers, and communities alike.

To further support this endeavor, the DC Workforce Investment Council will establish a skills-based hiring working group under the Business Engagement Blueprint committee will be tasked with developing comprehensive plans for integrating skills-based approaches across both public and private sectors. Additionally, the program will leverage the resources of the American Job Center, integrating the Afold AI resume generating system to highlight and emphasize the skills and abilities of job seekers, thereby enhancing their competitiveness in the job market. Through these concerted efforts, the DC Workforce Investment Council aims to usher in a new era of workforce development marked by greater inclusivity, efficiency, and economic opportunity for all stakeholders involved.

Each of the core program partners (DOES for Titles I and III, OSSE for Title II and DDS for Title IV) has implemented strategies and approaches to ensure that the workforce needs of District based businesses are met and that residents are prepared to meet labor market demands, particularly those of high-growth industries.

As amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Rehabilitation Act requires Vocational Rehabilitation state agencies to conduct a comprehensive statewide needs assessment every three years. The purpose of the assessment is to provide current and relevant

information on the needs of individuals with disabilities in the District so that DCRSA can develop programs and allocate resources that will address the identified needs. The comprehensive statewide needs assessment establishes VR program priorities and will help inform the Unified State Plan developed by the core partners in The District's Workforce Development System including strategies for employer engagement.

In tandem with core partner programs, a wide range of other District agencies, community-based organizations and private enterprises provide employment-related services and training to support companies' increasing needs for talent. In order to better serve employer customers, the District has made responding to business needs a central goal of the system and has laid out these strategies.

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(E) PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The DC WIC partners with UDC-CC to continually add credentialing and high-growth programs to the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Enhancements include the expansion of credentialing programs that are offered in traditional classroom settings, through blended learning, and through the creation of distance learning programs. Community college offerings will reflect an assessment of demand and market analysis indicating current and future industry demands.

The District provides funding to DCPS and public charter high schools and UDC-CC to support the implementation of state approved CTE programs of study. Many of these CTE offerings are structured as Career Academies, a proven approach that results in improved grades, attendance rates, and graduation rates for participating students. These programs of study align with the District's high-wage, high-skill, and in-demand careers. Students enrolled in CTE programs have the opportunity to complete a four-year course sequence of courses that meet specific course level standards that were developed and validated by over 100 representatives from the relevant industries, which incorporate work-based learning with District employers at every level, and many of which provide opportunities for the student to earn industry-recognized credentials and postsecondary credit. In FY22, OSSE is also launching a new Advanced Technical Center (ATC), which will serve as a citywide CTE hub for students across Local Education Agencies (LEAs). The ATC enrolled 96 students in its first year of operations across two dual-credit pathways in will offer courses focused on the fields of healthcare in nursing and cybersecurity. 72 students completed both courses in their first year cumulatively earning 740 college credits worth over \$600,000 at no cost to the students or parents. In SY23/24 the ATC continued to work with Trinity Washington University for its' nursing program, added UDC as the instructional partner for its' cybersecurity program, and enrolled 191 students, including 57 students returning from year one to complete their program of study. OSSE is also launching the Advanced Internship Program (AIP), which will provides students enrolled in their third or fourth year of CTE courses an opportunity to participate in a paid for-credit internship aligned to their program of study during the school year. This program has grown from placing 110 students in SY21/22 to placing 291 students in SY23/24.

Furthermore, as state above, OSSE and the WIC have coordinate their planning efforts to strengthen alignment between education system and the workforce development system to ensure residents' experience within the education-to-employment continuum is seamless and supportive. Through this coordination the WIC and OSSE have identified a set of joint strategies to achieve the goals outlined in each plan. These strategies include:

- Working in partnership to connect CTE pathways to workforce options, including workforce development programs, pre/youth apprenticeship programs and registered apprenticeships.
- Expanding shared data practices by disaggregating postsecondary placement data for CTE students.
- Developing a Statewide approach to career readiness with the alignment of industry-recognized credentials, employability skills, and digital literacy competencies.
- Developing and implementing a Statewide approach to measuring the quality of work-based learning opportunities.

In collaboration with OSSE's Office of CTE, DCPS, relevant charter high schools, and UDC-CC, the DC WIC and DOES are developing natural transition opportunities to allow for students in their final year to continue to earn stackable credentials and continue their industry education and expedited advancement along their chosen career pathway. These transition points will maximize the traditional and non-traditional postsecondary options, including UDC-CC, the District's ETPL, and DC Apprenticeship programs to ensure that students are equipped with the most relevant skillset for the in-demand industries in the District of Columbia.

(F) PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

In addition to efforts to expand partnerships with UDC-CC and other institutions of higher education, the District engages with training providers and businesses to expand access to high quality, in-demand training provided by other education and training providers—including Registered Apprenticeship programs, ETPL programs, and OSSE IE&T AFE programs— through outreach, grant awards, technical support, and the provision of other supports such as labor market information.

The DC WIC continues to focus on increasing access to high-quality training and credential attainment in the District. The priorities include expanding the ETPL, revising and updating quality standards and operational procedures to streamline approval, and access to training and looking at ways to provide technical assistance to both current and potential training providers to increase capacity and ensure alignment to industry demand. The DC WIC is revising the ETPL Policy to include reciprocity with other jurisdictions to add capacity.

The DC WIC has continued to conduct outreach and provide guidance to other organizations and anticipates ongoing increases in apprenticeship programs and training providers added to the ETPL. Orientation sessions are held for new providers and are required annually for all active providers to ensure expectations are understood on such topics as ETPL eligibility, current and new policy, the application and evaluation processes, and training best practices. The DC WIC is also developing a comprehensive list of technical assistance topics based upon conversations with stakeholders and partners that will inform activities in the next few months.

The DC WIC continues to move forward on the development of equity-centered quality standards, which include both quantitative and qualitative metrics and indicators for training providers. As part of the landscape analysis of best practices in the creation and implementation of these standards, the DC WIC has been in conversations with other jurisdictions, such as NJ and IN, as well as engaging partners, such as the Markle Foundation, McKinsey, and Credential Engine.

(G) LEVERAGING RESOURCES TO INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

WIOA core programs enable residents to access a wide range of training and skills development resources from eligible providers. To supplement these federal investments, the District annually allocates significant funding to UDC-CC to increase the availability of education and training opportunities, including labor market demand-focused career pathways courses provided by UDC-CC's Division of Workforce Development and Lifelong Learning (WDLL).

WDLL courses provide skills training focused on established high-growth industries in the District.

(H) IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

There are significant opportunities to provide and improve access to postsecondary credentials. As mentioned above in Goal 2 (Improve Community Access to Workforce and Education Services), the DC WIC has engaged business leaders in high-demand industries to develop career pathway maps that provide information on the knowledge, skills, competencies, and credentials required to secure initial employment and progress in selected careers. These maps will be deployed across the AJCs and other relevant parties to assist job seekers and training providers in understanding and accessing existing pathways. Additionally, they will drive further analysis by the DC WIC to identify gaps in services and the need to expand access to high-quality training providers that align course offerings with the high-demand, high-growth occupations within each pathway.

Career Counseling. Career counseling services, for adults and youth emphasize access to a wide range of training providers and post-secondary credentials as the gateway to high-quality jobs that continue to grow in the District, such as those offered through UDC-CC, Workforce

Development Lifelong Learning and eligible training provider programs (ETPL). Online tools, such as Career Coach DC, allow adults and youth to survey their interests, learn about careers for which their interests may be a good fit, and to identify training and education programs in those fields.

Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship. OAIT is expanding pre-apprenticeship programs for DC residents, particularly those who are disadvantaged and hard-to-employ. Pre-apprenticeship programs enable participants to secure nationally recognized credentials. The pre-apprenticeship initiatives in FYs 2021-2024 enable residents to secure nationally recognized credentials to enhance their eligibility for available apprenticeship opportunities in traditional and non-traditional programs. This programming also expands access to in-school and out-of-school youth in partnership with LEAs.

Integrated Education and Training (IE&T). OSSE AFE providers are required to offer IE&T services, a best practice model of instruction that research and District performance data show leads to an increase in attainment of measurable skill gains and industry-recognized credentials. Through their engagement in IE&T programs, District residents will have an opportunity to receive adult education and literacy instruction, concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. These and other related services (e.g., supportive and transition services) will be offered to District residents for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Adult learners will have an opportunity to attain measurable skill gains, earn a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, attain one or more entry level and/or industry-recognized certifications, transition to postsecondary education, engage in work-based learning and/or be placed in unsubsidized employment in an in-demand industry and occupation that pays a family sustaining wage and/or that leads to economic self-sufficiency. To achieve these goals, eligible providers will partner with educational providers, workforce training providers, employers, postsecondary institutions and other entities to meet the diverse needs of adult learners and support them in the pursuit of their desired career path. Furthermore, IE&T's inclusion of industry-specific training typically incorporates instruction towards an industry-recognized certification which are considered postsecondary credentials. Therefore, adult learners enrolled in IE&T programs are frequently able to attain a valued postsecondary credential without having to navigate any change to program placement. This model has allowed the District to achieve a 54.7355.64% measurable skill gains attainment rate and 29.2444.87% credential attainment rate which puts us in the highest performing quartile when compared to all other states in the country in FY23. Additionally, in the last quarter of FY23, OSSE AFE, in collaboration with the WIC, provided WIC Career Pathways funding to OSSE AFE IE&T providers to pilot the Career Up DC Project. Through this project, students close to receiving their secondary, entry-level and/or industry recognized credential or nearing completion of an OSSE AFE IE&T program are afforded an opportunity to earn a stipend (minimum wage) or incentive during their participation in a work-based learning activity (e.g., internship, externship, practicum, apprenticeship, etc.). Moreover, OSSE AFE is implementing a pilot partnership with DOES which will allow adult learners to participate in paid internships/externships/apprenticeships aligned to the industry they are studying through a collaboration with DOES's subsidized employment programs. This partnership will tighten up the transition from IE&T programming to employment for the District's adult learners.

(I) COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Representatives from the Deputy Mayor for Economic Planning and Development (DMPED) and the Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) are on the DC WIC Board and ensure that workforce development policies are aligned with the District's economic development strategies. Specific efforts that link economic development strategies to workforce system strategies include those that follow.

The First Source Employment Program has been an important part of the District's strategy to align economic and workforce development and reduce unemployment in Washington, DC since 1984. The program is designed to ensure that District residents are given priority for new jobs created by municipal financing and development programs. Under this law, employers must ensure that at least 51 percent of all new hires on any government-assisted project or contract valued at \$300,000 or more are District residents. First Source is promoted by core program and other system partners and provides an excellent opportunity for residents to secure employment leading to family-supporting wages.

In addition, numerous publicly and privately financed development projects include community workforce agreements, many of which include efforts such as project-related job training. DOES has a long history of working closely with DMPED and DSLBD. The DOES Office of Labor Market Information provides data and analysis to all stakeholders. In addition, the DMPED Economic Intelligence Dashboard (<http://dmped.dc.gov/dashboard>) is a public-facing effort to provide key economic data to government and external stakeholders. It includes a section on employment and workforce that is constantly growing with additional data. DC Networks and the Washington DC Economic Partnership have significant data related to the labor market that is valuable for business partners looking to locate, relocate, or expand in the District.

III. B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

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

The District uses a variety of operating systems to conduct workforce development activities. These include systems for data gathering, information sharing, and data analysis and reporting. As the District continues to move towards a more integrated service model, core program and one-stop partner agencies are using common systems, including My Journey DC, specifically as a customer referral tool.

(A) STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS

Systems used by the Department of Employment Services (DOES)

DC Networks. DC Networks, known internally as Virtual One Stop (VOS), provides integrated services via the Internet for individuals, employers, training providers, workforce staff, and AJC partners. The electronic linkages improve customer satisfaction, staff efficiency, and overall program performance. DC Networks provides job seekers with access to real-time labor market information, allowing them to research information about available jobs, skill requirements, and wage rates. It provides employers with online recruiting tools, including advanced candidate search options, automated correspondence, and applicant tracking. DOES uses DC Networks as its workforce development management information system, documenting and meeting the accountability and reporting elements required under WIOA. State Wage Interchange System (SWIS). SWIS allows DOES to secure wage data of individuals who have participated in public workforce services in one state, then subsequently secured employment in another. The system provides core partners with a robust picture of the District's workforce programs effectiveness, improving its ability to report comprehensive outcomes against its performance measures.

Systems used by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)

Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLED). The OSSE's Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLED) is a repository of student and education related data. SLED provides extensive PreK-3 to Postsecondary and Workforce educational data to schools and the District that enable better planning, trend analysis, performance projections, program evaluation, and stakeholder empowerment and, in turn, improve educational outcomes of DC students. Over the past four years, OSSE has been conducting data matching activities with GED Testing Services, CASAS National Office (NEDP Online), the National Student Clearinghouse and the Department of Employment Services on student attainment of core indicators of performance. Additionally, OSSE is using the SWIS data-sharing agreement, to expand the scope of wage data matching to most of the country and federal government/military.

Literacy Adult Community Education System (LACES). OSSE AFE uses LACES to meet the accountability and reporting requirements of Sections 212(c), 231(e)(2) and 212(a) of the Adult and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. OSSE AFE mandates that local program providers collect, maintain and report local program and student performance, progress, and outcome data to the state using LACES.

Systems used by the Department on Disability Services/Rehabilitation Services Administration (DDS/RSA)

System 7. DDS/RSA uses Libera's System 7 for case management and tracking information (except post-closure data) to prepare all required federal reports related to its vocational rehabilitation and supported employment grants from the U.S. Department of Education.

DDS/RSA continues to collaborate to establish a memorandum of agreement with OSSE. DDSRSA finalized its agreement with DOES to collect and report on the State Wage and Interstate System (SWIS) to include post-closure employment wage earnings.

Systems used by the Department of Human Services (DHS)

District of Columbia Access System (DCAS). DHS uses DCAS to make eligibility determinations for major public benefit programs, including Food Stamps (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Medical Assistance. DCAS also serves as the system of record for public benefit cases for District residents.

Customer Assessment Tracking and Case History (CATCH). CATCH is an Internet-based case management system that uses data from DCAS. It enables DHS to track comprehensive TANF assessments, summarize outcomes, and refer customers to TANF Employment Program (TEP) service providers. Moreover, CATCH allows TEP service providers, sister agency providers (Department of Behavioral Health, Child and Family Services Administration), housing providers, and the University of the District of Columbia to track and record customers' participation in work activities and generate monthly invoices based on that participation.

Systems used by the University of the District of Columbia, Community College (UDC-CC)

Banner. Banner is the student information system for credit programs. It is used by UDC-CC to create ad hoc retention and graduation reports, track enrollment, class completion, financial aid eligibility, and human resources. The UDC-CC Division of Workforce Development and Lifelong Learning (WDLL) students are included in the Banner system so that they can receive UDC identification cards and email addresses.

XenDirect. XenDirect is used by the UDC-CC Division of WDLL to collect and report student demographics, course completion, certification, and attendance.

(B) DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING PROCESSES

The District is establishing a more integrated service model across that supports the goal of "One Workforce System" by coordinating customer performance and information navigation that allows decisionmakers to track and analyze programmatic effectiveness. The District through a

coordinated partnership are leveraging multiple data sources to develop more accurate and strategic data to determine our success in meeting the career and education goals of our residents and fulfilling the workforce-related needs of businesses. Data sources include:

My Journey DC

My Journey DC is a data system that helps District agencies augment access to services in support of customer needs including education, training, wrap-around and supportive services. These services are offered through a “Community Catalog.” To date My Journey DC offers over 250 services residents can access.

My Journey DC: 1) facilitates the referral of District residents to and from agencies for services; 2) allows staff to schedule and register customers for assessments; 3) filters programs based on customer interests, preferences and needs; 4) links customers to programs and monitors their receipt of services; 5) allows staff to upload, maintain and share customer eligibility documents; 6) provides access to customer information and notifications to key staff; 7) generates customer profiles; 8) tracks customer progress and outcomes; and 9) facilitates cross-agency communication and collaboration for services for District residents.

Through this functionality, My Journey DC achieves a “no wrong door” approach to coordinated services that puts the focus on what the customer needs from the overall system and complements what an agency is able to offer in their services. My Journey DC provides the user with the full array of service offered around the city, in one place.

My Journey Participant Portal

In 2022, the WIC added a Participant Portal to the My Journey platform. The participant portal helps the user establish their workforce goals, identify the steps to achieving the goal and links the user to tools and resources including resume builder support, career pathway instruction, education opportunities, linkage to jobs posted on Indeed and more. Career Coach DC is supported by OSSE and managed through the Lightcast platform. The WIC in partnership with OSSE can track customer traffic, the most sought-after resources and services. This data allows the workforce system to customize content to support a jobseeker’s ever-changing needs.

Department of Employment Services Labor Market Reporting

The Department of Employment Services (DOES) offers reliable labor statistics for the District of Columbia and the surrounding metropolitan area. DOES, produces, analyzes and delivers timely and reliable labor data to improve economic decision-making.

DOES provides a variety of labor market, economic and demographic data such as:

- Employment and Wages - current employment, projections and wages by industry and occupation, occupational profiles and career information.
- Labor Force - labor force, employment, unemployment and unemployment rates.
- Economic Indicators - income and unemployment claims data.
- Population - age, race, gender, income, veteran's status and education information.

These resources are used to inform economic patterns that help identify areas of greatest needs (services, programming, resource allocation, outreach).

Employment Through Pathways

The Office of Education Through Employment Pathways (ETEP) is focused on ensuring that DC youth and adults are on a path to economic mobility and prosperity through access to education and workforce programming that provide the skills and experience necessary to thrive.

Working collaboratively with stakeholders across the District's workforce system, ETEP seeks to:

- Build a clear picture of opportunities and supports that are setting DC residents up for economic mobility through the creation of the District's Education through Employment Data project, which will build a longitudinal picture of how residents are served by District education and workforce programming throughout their lifetime;
- Leverage data-driven insights to inform District investments and policymaking focused on aligned pathways from education through employment, post-secondary planning and support, and industry-responsive continuous improvement;
- Empower residents and the organizations that serve them to make informed decisions about the education and workforce programs that best fit their needs through access to public information on program outcomes; and
- Supporting employers in building a local talent pipeline through access to public information about aligned programs, training opportunities, and outcomes from the education and workforce systems.

The Education Through Employment Data System will measure the impact of PK-12 education, higher education, and public workforce programs on access to family-sustaining careers and economic mobility. This project will produce insights that allow District program providers, policymakers, agency leaders, educators, and the public to better understand the impact of education and workforce programs on employment outcomes for District residents.

2. STATE POLICIES THAT SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S STRATEGIES

The DC WIC is responsible for establishing policies that impact the District's workforce system, and those of the District of Columbia's one-stop system's structure and functions. The manual is available on the DC WIC website at <https://dcworks.dc.gov>. Policy updates and changes are communicated through Workforce Implementation Guidance Letters (WIGLs). When WIGLs are released, staff from workforce system agencies can review and ask questions during technical assistance calls that include relevant program specialists and division directors. The DC WIC will continue to invest time and capacity to ensure policy issuances and technical assistance meet the needs of WIOA and the District's workforce system, including any required to support the implementation of the WIOA Unified State Plan strategies, such as on intake, referrals, and co-enrollment. The District's guidelines for one-stop partner programs' contributions to the one-stop delivery system may be found in DC-WIGL-2018-001.

Staff development for the District's workforce system staff is a critical component to establishing excellence in service delivery. The WIC has established an annual DC Workforce Summit that introduces staff to best practices in service delivery, new approaches to case management, a review of programs and services offered across the city, career pathways and how it serves as a tool for navigating customers to careers that ensure long-term economic security. In 2023 over 150 DC workforce system partners attended a two-day workforce summit.

The WIC will continue to lead staff development ensuring that the District's workforce system staff are the best trained. Through a certificate process, the WIC will track incremental improvements in the quality of staff resulting in improved customer performance outcomes.

3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

(A) STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

The District is designated as a single-area state. As the Chief Elected Official, Mayor Muriel Bowser acts in the role of the governor where federal guidelines require gubernatorial action. The WIC reports to the Deputy Mayor for Education. DME is also responsible for oversight of the Department of Employment Services, DC Public Schools, The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), The University of the District of Columbia (UDC), DC Public Schools (DCPS), The DC Public Charter School Board (DCPCSB), The DC Public Library (DCPL), and the Department of Parks and Recreation. Agencies within the cluster meet regularly and the Deputy Mayor for Education is positioned to identify opportunities for improved collaboration and alignment of priorities across all these organizations.

The DC WIC provides oversight of the AJC delivery system and federally supported workforce programs, while also ensuring that such programs and investments are closely aligned with Washington, DC's economic development initiatives. DOES serves as the WIOA fiscal agent and is the designated agency for WIOA Title I and III core programs, UI, TAA, RES, JVSG, SCSEP, Registered Apprenticeships, Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), and Labor Market Research and Information. OSSE, which is the designated agency for WIOA Title II, falls under the jurisdiction of the Deputy Mayor for Education, as do DCPS and UDC. OSSE's Division of Postsecondary and Career Education administers all federal (Perkins V) and local funding specifically allocated to support Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming in DC's secondary and postsecondary systems. Specifically, OSSE grants funding; establishes standards and requirements; monitors implementation and performance; collects participation and outcome data; and provides professional development and access to resources for DCPS, public charter schools, the University of the District of Columbia Community College, and the District's Department of Corrections.

The Department on Disability Services/Rehabilitation Services Administration (DDS/RSA) is the designated state agency for the WIOA Title IV VR program.

DHS is the designated agency overseeing the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP). DHS has an MOU with the DC WIC to offer the employment and training component of these programs through and are co-located in the AJCs. The Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services oversees both DDS/RSA and DHS.

(B) STATE BOARD

The Workforce Investment Council (DC WIC) serves as the District's State Workforce Development Board and, as a single-area state, carries out the functions of the Local Workforce Development Board. The DC WIC Board has a total of 34 seats, with the following representation:

1. The Mayor, or his or her designee;
2. Two (2) members of the Council of the District of Columbia ("Council") appointed by the Chairman of the Council
3. The Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, or his or her designee;
4. The Director of the Department of Employment Services, or his or her designee;
5. The Director of the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, or his or her designee;
6. The Director of Rehabilitation Services Administration, or his or her designee, or Title IV representative;
7. The Director of the Department of Human Services, or his or her designee;
8. The President of the Community College of the University of the District of Columbia, or his or her designee;

9. Two (2) representatives of District labor organizations nominated by District labor federations;
10. One (1) representative of a labor organization or training director from a joint labor management registered apprenticeship program;
11. Four (4) representatives of:
 - Community-based organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including organizations that serve veterans or that provide or support competitive, integrated employment for individuals with disabilities; or
 - Organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of eligible youth, including representatives of organizations that serve out-of-school youth; and
12. Nineteen (19) representatives of businesses in the District, who:
 - Are owners of businesses, chief executives or operating officers of businesses, or other business executives or employers with optimum policymaking or hiring authority;
 - Represent businesses (including at least one (1) representative of small business), or organizations representing businesses, that provide employment opportunities that, at a minimum, include high-quality, work related training and development in in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the District;
 - Are appointed from among individuals nominated by District business organizations and business trade associations; and
 - At least one (1) representative from the following categories/industry sectors: Hospitality; Law; Construction; Information technology; Health care; Business organization; Retail; and Small business. At least five (5) at-large representatives from either the industry sectors listed in sub-paragraph d. of this paragraph or from any other industry sector in the District.

The Executive Committee consists of the following members:

1. The DC WIC Chairperson, who shall serve as the chair of the Executive Committee;
2. Four (4) members of the DC WIC representing businesses in the District;
3. One (1) member of the DC WIC representing labor organizations; and
4. One (1) member of the DC WIC representing a youth-focused organization

i. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

First Name	Last Name	Seat Designation (specific role)	Organization
Drew	Hubbard	Workforce Investment Council (WIC) Executive Director	DC Government - Workforce Investment Council
Anita	Bond	Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia designee	DC Government - Council
Sybongile	Cook	Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) Designee	DC Government - DMPED
Maurice	Edington	University of the District of Columbia (UDC) Designee	DC Government - UDC
Darryl	Evans	Department of Disability Services	DC Government – DDS/RSA
Matt	Fruman	Council of the District of Columbia	DC Government - Council
Paul	Kihn	The Mayor, or his or her designee	DC Government - DME
Antoinette	Mitchell	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) Designee	DC Government - OSSE
Unique	Morris-Hughes	Department of Employment Services (DOES) Designee	DC Government - DOES
Glenn	Starnes	District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) Designee	DC Government – DCPS
Laura	Zeilinger	Department of Human Services (DHS) Designee	DC Government - DHS
Kunta	Bedney	Organized Labor Representative/Apprenticeship Organization Member	Eastern Atlantic State Regional Council
Steven	Boney	At-Large Representative from District Industry Sector/Executive Committee	Washington Metro. Trans. Authority
Anthony	Cancelosi	Community-Based Organization Member	Lighthouse for the Blind
Liz	DeBarros	District Labor Organization	DC Building Industry
Antwanye	Ford	Information Technology Member/Board Chair	Enlightened, Inc.
Angela	Franco	Business Organization Member	DC Chamber
Korey	Gray	Energy and Utility Sector Member	DC Water
Nicole	Hanrahan	Community Based Organization Member	Latin American Youth Center
LaTara	Harris	Information Technology Member	Prior - AT&T
Bernadette	Harvey	Construction Sector Member	Bconstrux
Solomon	Keene, Jr.	Business Organization Member	Hotel Association of Wash. DC
Thomas	Penny	Hospitality Sector Member	Donohoe Hospitality Services
Nathan	Smith	Security and Law Sector Member	Allied Universal
Darryl	Wiggins	Information Technology Sector Member	Walter Reed Infrastructure Academy

BOARD ACTIVITIES

The role of the DC WIC includes planning and implementing the District's workforce development system through committees, subcommittees, and task forces. The Board is supported by workforce professionals focused on ensuring objectives are achieved as planned.

The Executive Director convenes quarterly meetings that focus on reviewing performance benchmarks, staying informed of Federal level activities and decisions that impact the District's workforce, discusses best practices by bringing subject matter experts to increase awareness and knowledge of effective strategies for meeting the needs of business and jobseekers.

Newly appointed members to the Board receive in-depth orientation that ensures board members are prepared to contribute to the vision, goals and strategies of the District's workforce system.

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

(A) ASSESSMENT OF CORE PROGRAMS

The activities discussed below ensure adherence to federal and state regulations, provision of quality services to workforce system customers, that the District meets federal and state outcome expectations, and support continuous improvement of the workforce system. The District will use the outcomes reported for each of the federal performance measures as a means to assess the overall performance and effectiveness of the District's workforce system. Additionally, on a quarterly basis, the DC WIC will lead a review of progress towards achieving the goals and strategies of the plan. Overall, the results reported from both the federal performance measures and the quarterly updates on WIOA Unified State Plan implementation will provide the District with the detailed information required to effectively monitor workforce activities and results; promoting accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement.

In addition to the WIOA performance measures, the OSO collects, analyzes, and reviews AJC partner customer performances data at the aggregate level. The data allows the OSO to create reports that show customer traffic and service utilization, WIOA enrollments, industry-aligned enrollment and trainings, apprenticeships and other "work and learn" opportunities, and employment leading to financial self-sufficiency.

The OSO meets with AJC partner staff regularly to discuss the findings of the reports to ensure accuracy as well as identify systemic issues that can be addressed by the OSO or other key agencies that influence systemic processes or policies. This includes issues such as referral processes, data collection processes, occupational training opportunities, and staff development opportunities.

Another way the District will gauge effectiveness is through opinion surveys that both residents and employers can respond to determine areas of improvement, technical assistance or increased awareness of services. Using a survey platform, Qualtrics the WIC is able to administer regularly-scheduled surveys in order to track customer satisfaction upon participating in events or trainings. In addition, surveys are sent to training providers to gauge levels of success in customer completions, certifications, and employment. By focusing on customer experience, the system can track positive outcomes for participants and referrals to the workforce system.

The Workforce Development System Transparency Act (D.C. Law 22-95) requires the DC WIC to create an annual report of performance outcomes and spending data across all DC government agencies that administer, manage, oversee, or fund workforce development or adult education programs.

While the District has not established any additional, state-specific performance measures to date, through this annual report process, agencies are identifying program-specific measures of success that will be considered. Ultimately, the goals for the annual report are to look comprehensively at successes (and areas of challenge) across agencies; to serve as a resource for District residents to identify relevant workforce opportunities; to provide transparency about how government spends money in workforce development; and to provide data to support continuous improvement.

(B) ASSESSMENT OF ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS

See response in Section III. b. 4. A.

(C) PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

AJCs were reviewed by an independent third-party in 2021 as part of the process for AJC recertification determination. This review resulted in findings and recommendations based on onsite visits, website reviews, and document reviews. Based on the criteria outlined in the DC WIC's "Application for Certification of DC American Job Centers," each of the four AJCs met all criteria. The WIC will lead the certification process in 2024.

(D) EVALUATION

A key goal for the District's workforce system is to ensure that workforce services are evidence-based, high-quality, and flexible in meeting customers' needs. District agencies will evaluate outcomes through standardized methodologies that ensure accountability and transparency.

The District is committed to continuous improvement of the workforce system. To this end, the DC WIC will evaluate the overall effectiveness of the workforce system during Year 2 of the WIOA strategic plan implementation. The evaluation will report progress made and where the District needs to focus in the second half of the strategic plan period to make continued progress toward meeting its goals.

The DC WIC's Executive Committee is responsible for reviewing quarterly performance information and expenditures by each workforce system partner and provide recommendations and direction in areas that require improvement.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

(A) FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

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

The District is a single state-local area, and accordingly does not distribute funds to local areas. DOES serves as the District's fiscal agent and distributes funds based on relevant policies set by the DC WIC to ensure compliance with federal law and alignment with business needs.

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

The District is a single state-local area, and accordingly does not distribute funds to local areas. DOES serves as the District's fiscal agent and distributes funds based on relevant policies set by the DC WIC to ensure compliance with federal law and alignment with business needs.

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

The District is a single state-local area, and accordingly does not distribute funds to local areas. DOES serves as the District's fiscal agent and distributes funds based on relevant policies set by the DC WIC to ensure compliance with federal law and alignment with business needs.

DRAFT

(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

OSSE is the state's designated agency for adult education and literacy programs, and is responsible for administering WIOA Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds and providing program and performance oversight to grantees. OSSE uses a competitive grant process to award multi-year grants to eligible providers to develop and deliver adult education within the District. An eligible provider is an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education activities to eligible individuals and may include: a local education agency; a community-based or faith-based organization; a volunteer literacy organization; an institution of higher education; a library; a public housing authority; a nonprofit institution with the ability to provide adult education and literacy services; a public or private nonprofit organization that is not described above and has the ability to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals; any other organization or entity; a consortium or coalition of agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described above; and a partnership between an employer and an entity described above. DC WIC has supported this work by supplementing WIOA Title II AEFLA funds with local taxpayer funds; this has enabled the expansion of this program and furthered alignment between the two agencies.

Eligible providers are required to provide evidence of their ability to improve the skills of adults with low-level literacy skills, English language learners, and institutionalized individuals. Data from OSSE's management information system (LACES) and local program monitoring data may be considered as evidence as to how the organization has met the State's negotiated performance measures for students at all levels.

OSSE monitors each eligible provider's performance via monthly local program provider monitoring, check-in sessions, desk reviews, monthly and quarterly reporting, and end-of-the-year Final monitoring reviews. Based on OSSE's findings, eligible providers that meet federal, state, and local accountability and reporting requirements are invited to apply for continuation funding for the subsequent grant year.

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

OSSE AFE ensures direct and equitable access for all eligible providers to apply for AEFLA grant funds. OSSE publishes a Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) in the DC Register and the DC Office of Partnerships and Grant Services (OPGS) District Grants Clearinghouse, as well as on OSSE's website (www.osse.dc.gov), on the AFE Program website, and the OSSE School Year Grant Forecast.

All eligible applicants may submit applications, including certifications and assurances, using OSSE's web-based Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS). Other information in the application includes a description of how funds awarded under the AEFLA will be spent and a description of any cooperative agreements the eligible provider has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of adult education and family literacy activities. A panel of independent reviewers, external to OSSE, reviews and scores applications based on 13 considerations in section 231(e) of WIOA.

Upon completion of the review process, the panel makes recommendations for awards to OSSE AFE. Further, per WIOA, OSSE provides applications submitted by eligible providers in response to the RFA to the DC WIC for review prior to the selection of awardees. OSSE considers both the recommendations of the independent review panel and the DC WIC in making awards.

Eligible applicants are not required to apply for an AEFLA grant through another agency, as OSSE awards funding directly to the selected eligible providers. The application process has been designed so that it is clearly evident that the direct submission of an application to OSSE via EGMS is the only acceptable and non-negotiable method of applying for grant funds. OSSE requires all eligible providers for sections 231, 225, and 243 to use the same application process via EGMS to ensure that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria.

OSSE further ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for AEFLA grant funds via the same grant announcement and application process. During the initial period of the grant submission process, any eligible agency that contacts OSSE with an interest in participating in the competition is provided necessary information. These approaches meet the specifications of AEFLA, thus satisfying the requirement that every effort be made to ensure direct and equitable access to eligible providers.

(C) VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

This does not apply to the District as it has a combined State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency that provides services to all people with disabilities, including people who are blind or visually impaired.

6. PROGRAM DATA

(A) DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

As outlined in Section III(b)(1), the District's core partners have independent systems that supports program case management and reporting activities. To make these management information systems interoperable and enhance data sharing among management information systems of the four core programs, the District will develop a common data dictionary for workforce definitions, data locations, and methods of measurement to promote core programs' data systems interoperability in support of data exchange for assessment and evaluation. The development and use of a consistent set of data elements (common measures) and formats for documenting content and structures makes data integration possible. The DC WIC has been upgrading the My Journey DC system to align the provision of assessment, education, training and other related services by integrating data from core partner and community-based organizations to support streamline enrollment and service provision. It will also facilitate a warm hand-off and referral to other services with a built-in mechanism to track the enrollment, participation, progress, and outcomes associated with these referrals.

My Journey DC:

- 1) Facilitates the referral (electronically) of District residents to and from agencies for services;
- 2) Allows staff to schedule and register customers for assessments;
- 3) Filters programs based on customer interests, preferences and needs;
- 4) Links customers to programs and monitor their receipt of services;
- 5) Allow staff to upload, maintain and share customer eligibility documents;
- 6) Provide access to customer information and notifications to key staff;

- 7) Generate customer profiles;
- 8) Tracks customer participation, progress and outcomes;
- 9) Facilitate cross agency communication and collaboration for services for residents; and
- 10) Include a participant portal so jobseekers can access resources and services and support career coaching activities.

Data sharing will improve coordination, service delivery, customer experiences and outcomes through the alignment of processes and resources. Goal 5 of the plan further outlines the system data alignment efforts.

Employment data-sharing agreements are being formalized between core programs to ensure agencies can access employment and wage data required for WIOA performance measures. While only DOES has access to WRIS and UI data through implementation of the new federal

SWIS agreement, OSSE and DDS do have access to the national and federal wage data associated with this new initiative. Furthermore, the Mayor's FY24 budget included a \$1.2 million investment to develop an Education to Employment data system. This new effort includes a new partnership with Equifax which will hopefully capture new data, providing greater insight into the impact of K12 education, CTE, integrated education and training (IE&T) for adults, and workforce programming on employment outcomes.

The DC WIC advises the Mayor, Council, and the District government on the development, implementation, and continuous improvement of an integrated and effective workforce investment system, including the alignment of technology and data systems. Ultimately, data sharing will align resources, improve reporting processes and outcomes, and enhance the consumer's experience.

DOES (Titles I and III), OSSE (Title II) and VR (Title IV) submit reports required under section 116, performance accountability separately. Each of the District agencies responsible for administering core programs has data systems in place that are able to track outcomes related to required WIOA performance metrics and store relevant information on case management and other activities as required for monitoring. Agencies will leverage DOES's access to the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS). As mentioned, data sharing agreements will be formalized to ensure employment data is accessible to agencies administering core programs.

Additionally, each WIOA core partner requires eligible providers that receive Title I, II, III and IV to: 1) Collect, enter, maintain and update student, staff and program data in the core partner agency's management information system; 2) Conduct follow-up activities to collect and report on the core outcomes achieved by all students who exited the program during the appropriate follow-up period; 3) Update and maintain student files/records and data in the core partner agency's management information system; 4) Conduct routine student folder checks; 5) Generate diagnostic search reports and resolve errors to ensure the validity and accuracy of data in each system; 5) Submit reports to the core partner agency by the requested deadlines; and 6) Engage in monitoring and continuous improvement activities that facilitate increased performance and accountability.

(B) ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPANTS' POST-PROGRAM SUCCESS

DOES and its staff utilize DC Networks for recording case management activities as well as performance outcomes of program participants. DC Networks tracks, predicts, and reports the core indicators of performance, including job placement rates, earnings, employment retention, skills gains, and credentials earned to ensure that federal performance standards are achieved for WIOA Title I and Title III Programs.

DOES will continue to carefully monitor state performance measures under WIOA. Quarterly and regular reports are shared with AJC staff throughout the year, so areas where performance is not meeting expectations may be identified and addressed.

OSSE will continue to lead the high school equivalency completion and postsecondary enrollment data through existing partnerships with GED Testing Services, CASAS for the National External Diploma, and the National Student Clearinghouse to determine student attainment of core indicators of performance. Additionally, OSSE has a data sharing MOA with DOES and is a party to the federal SWIS agreement to share information on student attainment of the core indicators of performance under WIOA associated with employment and wages.

Performance measures for the vocational rehabilitation program changed under WIOA. DDS/RSA will use the required six (6) indicators under WIOA (listed below) to measure Post- Program success of its participants. DDS RSA will use the SWIS (State Wage Interchange System) system to measure the success of long-term employment outcomes by looking at wages and employment two (2) and four (4) quarters after successful exit of the program.

Additionally, DDS/RSA will continue to utilize the DC Data Vault to help capture Measurable Skills Gains as well as credential attainment of participants that are in postsecondary and/or vocational training programs. DDS/RSA will continue to ask WINTAC (Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center) to provide technical assistance as well as best practices exercises to help DDS/RSA meet, report, and achieve all WIOA performance indicators. Finally, DDS/RSA will continue to partner with the Workforce Investment Council and DOES on the Employer Engagement initiative to help measure DCRSA success in engaging businesses leading to more potential jobs, internships, and opportunities for clients. However, DDS/RSA will continue to utilize indicator “1.1 Annual Change in Employment Outcomes (the difference in the number of individuals exiting the VR Program who achieved an employment outcome during the current performance period as compared to the previous performance period)” at the state level while the administration develops a plan and strategy to transition the state expectations to align with the Federal WIOA standards listed below, to which grant funding and performance are based.

DDS/RSA will continue to take steps to improve performance on indicator 1.1 Annual Change in Employment Outcomes that existed prior to the passage of WIOA, which is an important method to assess DDS/RSA participant’s success.

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

The Department of Employment Services Office of Unemployment Compensation is the designated UI agency for the District and required one-stop partner. The Division currently utilizes the UI Wage Record Database to validate information collected about WIOA program participants with respect to their Employment Rate at the second quarter after exit, median earnings, and Employment Rate at the fourth quarter after exit, as required by law. In addition to using UI wage data for performance monitoring and validation, DOES utilizes this data to support program evaluations.

The use of UI data has proven to be an invaluable resource for determining how and when District residents are connecting to employment after involvement in workforce programs. Additionally, the Office of Labor Market Information (LMI) reviews UI wage records each quarter to inform their research and findings related to high-demand occupations and industries in the District. LMI uses the information learned from the research and findings to create public products such as Hot Jobs listings, Private vs. Public Sector wages, occupational profiles, and industry and occupational projections.

(D) PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

District agencies are strongly committed to maintaining the privacy of personal information and the security of their computer systems. With respect to the collection, use and disclosure of personal information, the District makes every effort to ensure compliance with applicable Federal law, including, but not limited to, the Privacy Act of 1974, the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

District leadership is aware that a key element of success to utilizing data across agencies for either improved customer service or improved measurement and tracking of outcomes is ensuring the integrity of all data and ensuring confidential data is treated as such. This is accomplished with various technical, physical, and administrative safeguards. Personnel handling these data are properly trained in all relevant regulations and the fundamentals of handling personal and confidential data. Access to data is limited to personnel who require access to carry out their daily job functions. Data are securely stored, transported, and otherwise technically and physically protected against unauthorized access. Technical safeguards such as network security, monitoring, firewalls, encryption, secure data transport mechanisms, etc. are in place to prevent unauthorized access to data.

7. PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS

In the heart of our District, a steadfast commitment to honoring and serving those who have served our country is deeply embedded. With a suite of specially tailored programs, the District is dedicated to delivering exceptional services to veterans, aligning with the guiding principles of the JVSG and WIOA as elaborated in TEGL 3-15. In accordance with the mandates of section 4215 of title 38, U.S.C., and the DC WIC policy, we uphold a "veterans-first" approach. This means that in any DOL employment and job training program we offer, veterans and their eligible spouses are the first in line, receiving priority over others. This commitment stands firm even in situations where resources are scarce, ensuring that those who served and their spouses have first access to employment, training, and placement services.

Our staff are not only well-versed in these federal requirements and local policies but are also trained to integrate these principles into their daily interactions. At our American Job Centers (AJCs), visitors are greeted with clear signage indicating our Priority of Service policy. From the moment someone steps into our centers, they are asked if they wish to claim veteran status, ensuring that this priority is not just a policy on paper but a living practice.

This commitment extends to our marketing efforts as well, with priority of service messages being an integral part of our AJC-related materials. Every veteran or eligible person who visits our AJCs receives an initial assessment to determine the most appropriate pathway for them, whether it's referral to DVOP staff for those facing significant employment barriers or to WDS staff for general service delivery. Veterans and eligible persons are not just given priority but are guaranteed full access to all programs, workshops, resources, and funding opportunities the District offers, in strict adherence to laws governing US DOL-funded programs.

To ensure our services for veterans are always up to the mark, we conduct monthly meetings involving key figures like the DVET, JVSG Program Coordinator, and the Associate Director of American Job Center, One-Stop Operations. The Office of Program and Provider Monitoring, (OPPM) carries out regular monitoring reviews to ensure program effectiveness and compliance and the Department of Labor perform internal and annual audits respectively, to ensure we are always in compliance with the Priority of Service Policy.

Furthermore, our commitment to veterans extends beyond our walls. We actively coordinate with other veteran-focused entities, including the Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs, to create a network of support and resources, ensuring that those who have bravely served our nation receive the respect, opportunities, and services they rightfully deserve.

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

All entities to which any WIOA Title I funding is extended (referred to as "recipients") must comply with the District of Columbia Nondiscrimination Plan. This includes (but is not limited to) core WIOA partners, other District government agencies receiving WIOA funding, the DC

Workforce Investment Council, the District's one-stop operator, and service providers, such as eligible training providers, placement agencies, On-the-Job-Training employers, and Job Corps contractors. The District ensures that non-discrimination and equal opportunity provisions of WIOA are incorporated into all grants, agreements or similar applications for federal financial assistance under WIOA. Agreements for the procurement of supplies or services follow the District of Columbia Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP) laws, regulations, and processes. OCP has representatives assigned to each agency, including the Department of Employment Services, which reviews all proposals and contracts. All WIOA Title I-related contracts, grants, memoranda of understanding, cooperative agreements, requests for proposals, job-training plans, and other WIOA-related arrangements must include an assurance that, "as a condition to the award of financial assistance" from the Department of Labor, the grant applicant assures that it has the ability to comply with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of applicable laws and will remain in compliance for the duration of the award of federal financial assistance.

The District has designated a State Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer that is responsible for ensuring the equal opportunity provisions of WIOA are carried out. All recipients (as defined in the above paragraph) must appoint an EO Officer to carry out EO responsibilities, including ensuring that the recipient complies with nondiscrimination requirements.

Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

All EO Officers will monitor WIOA programs and activities to ensure that qualified individuals with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate through promoting program access, physical access, and effective communication. The District performs annual monitoring through desk and on-site reviews of recipients. Monitoring includes the following activities pertaining to compliance with accessibility for individuals with disabilities:

- Management and client interviews
- Staff awareness of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity laws
- Complaint files (if appropriate)
- Participant files
- Review of physical aspects of the site, including programmatic and architectural accessibility
- Observance of reception, intake, and assessment processes, if applicable, and whether these processes are accessible by individuals with disabilities and limited English proficient individuals

Monitoring also includes an inspection of facility accessibility based on the American Disability Act (ADA) Physical Access Checklist and ADA Accessible Design Checklist, as appropriate. At the conclusion of the monitoring review process, a determination letter is issued to the recipient identifying any areas in which the recipient is or could be out of compliance and any other areas of concern. Recommendations are included for corrective actions to improve upon areas of deficiency. The State EO Officer will follow procedures to obtain prompt corrective action and may apply sanctions for noncompliance.

The District ensures that communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others to promote WIOA Title I programs and activities. The State EO Officer has published reasonable accommodations policies and procedures to promote nondiscriminatory delivery of aid, training, services, benefits, and employment for qualified individuals with disabilities.

The "Equal Opportunity is the Law" notice is provided in alternative formats (e.g., Braille, large print, Section 508-compliant electronic format, audio tape), and may be provided to visually

impaired/blind customers upon request. The notice is read and/or explained to individuals with disabilities at intake, orientation, and at other regular points of interaction on request.

The District relies, in large part, on the State Relay system to communicate with persons who are deaf, speech impaired or hard of hearing. The dial-in number throughout the District, as with most states is “711.” The number is listed on the EO notice and tagline, and other communications with the public. The District has found the State Relay system to be more user- friendly than the conventional TDD/TYY units, with no special equipment needed for either the caller or receiver, making calls to employers much simpler for job seeking customers with hearing or speech difficulties.

Staff Training and Support

The State EO Officer has a system of communication and is proactive in providing non-discrimination and equal opportunity information and training to local EO Officers. The State EO Officer holds mandatory training at least every two years, reviewing any Nondiscrimination Plan updates. This training focuses on ensuring that those staff with the critical role of ensuring nondiscrimination in the provision of services are knowledgeable and understand the requirements in the equal opportunity regulations and the District’s Nondiscrimination Plan.

In addition, each recipient is responsible for training EO Officers, contacts, and staff, at the recipient’s expense, in order to administer the recipient’s obligations under the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of Section 188 of WIOA and 29 CFR Part 38. These efforts help ensure that all local service delivery staff members, including sub- recipient staff, maintain a clear understanding of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements, thus ensuring compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

One-Stop Center Certification Accessibility Criteria

The process of one-stop certification includes an evaluation of physical and programmatic accessibility, which is based on how well the one-stop center ensures equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities to participate in or benefit from one stop center services. These evaluations include criteria assessing how the one-stop complies with the disability-related regulations implementing WIOA sec. 188, set forth at 29 CFR part 38, such as how the center:

- Provides reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities;
- Makes reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures, where necessary, to avoid discrimination against persons with disabilities;
- Administers programs in the most integrated setting appropriate;
- Communicates with persons with disabilities as effectively as with others;
- Provides appropriate auxiliary aids and services, including assistive technology devices and services, where necessary, to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, the program or activity; and
- Provides for the physical accessibility of the one-stop center to individuals with disabilities.

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

In the vibrant tapestry of the District of Columbia, the threads of diversity and inclusion are woven with great care, especially in our approach to serving those with Limited English Proficiency

(LEP). Imagine a world where language barriers are not barriers at all - that's the vision we're bringing to life in our WIOA programs and activities.

Envision a professional environment tailored to effectively accommodate Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals. Our staff members are outfitted with "I Speak" cards – a practical and efficient resource designed to swiftly identify the language preferences of our clients. These cards facilitate immediate access to comprehensive oral interpretation services via language line support. This system functions akin to an on-demand translation service, significantly enhancing communication efficiency and reducing linguistic barriers in our interactions.

The district has taken this commitment a step further, diving into the digital world. In 2019, DOES crafted a digital gateway, a user-friendly platform specifically for our Spanish-speaking residents. This isn't just any website; it's a beacon of information, guiding LEP and Non-English Proficient individuals through the maze of DOES programs, workforce training, and employment opportunities, all in the comfort of their preferred language. This initiative marked a milestone, as DOES became the first workforce agency in the nation to launch a full-service Spanish language website. This digital haven offers direct access to an array of programs and services.

DOES will continue to build on these initiatives to ensure access to such services both online and at the AJCs. The annual monitoring of recipients and corrective action procedure described Section III(b)(8) includes monitoring of compliance with nondiscrimination towards LEP persons. Onsite monitoring includes:

- Observation of reception, intake, and assessment processes, as applicable, and whether these processes are accessible by LEP individuals; and
- Confirming "Equal Opportunity is the Law" posters are displayed and in alternative formats and languages.

IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

DC WIC, DOES, DCPS, OSSE, UDC, and DCPCSB are under the oversight of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME). This organization facilitates joint planning and coordination across these agencies. Agencies under the Office of the DME meet regularly and identify opportunities for collaboration and alignment.

As outlined in the response to Section III(a)(1) above, the DC WIC brings partners and stakeholders together through committees, subcommittees, task forces, and ad hoc meetings to plan and implement the District's workforce development system. Through the Career Pathways Task Force, DC WIC has brought together government agency partners, training and service providers, businesses, and other stakeholders to plan and implement a career pathways system for the District.

The one-stop operator also promotes planning and coordination across partners. Currently, the OSO holds weekly meetings with AJC partners to identify collaborative efforts, best practices, and areas for improvement. The objective of each effort to bring partners together is to improve information sharing to benefit case management, increase engagement and services, and coordinated efforts while preventing duplication of services. The DC WIC and OSO will continue to convene workforce development, education and social service providers to discuss, evaluate and develop joint intake, assessment, referral, and service delivery processes and tools.

Coordination of partners with postsecondary education in the District occurs through standing meetings attended by executive leadership of core partners, DHS, and UDC. These meetings promote a coordinated approach between workforce development and higher education in an effort to increase the District's capacity to provide quality, job-driven education and training opportunities.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The State Plan Assurances	Included?
1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts.	Yes
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes.	Yes
3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs.	Yes
4. The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board.	Yes
5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities.	Yes
6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3).	Yes
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable.	Yes
8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program.	Yes

The State Plan Assurances	Included?
9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs.	Yes
10. The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).	Yes
11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate.	Yes
12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.	Yes

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

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

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

The District is a single workforce area and therefore does not designate regions or local workforce development areas.

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The District's policy (DC-WIGL-2018-001) for appeal by one-stop partners relating to determinations for infrastructure funding is as follows:

In the event that negotiations break down, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME) is compelled to offer assistance to the DC WIC and the Partner(s) to help them reach a WIOA MOU agreement. The dispute resolution process is designed for use by the Partner(s) when unable to successfully reach an agreement necessary to execute the WIOA MOU. The District will also use this process for any dispute that arises after execution regarding interpretation and implementation of the WIOA MOU.

In the interest of prompt resolution of the dispute, the District requires that the action at each step of this procedure be done as soon as possible, but generally not later than the prescribed time limits. The time limit may be extended at the discretion of the DMGEO, in the event of unforeseen circumstances. Final decisions reached through these processes will not be precedent-setting or binding on future conflict resolutions unless they are officially stated in this procedure.

A disagreement is considered to reach the level of dispute resolution when an issue arises out of the development and negotiation of a WIOA MOU agreement that is not easily coming to a point of resolution. It is the responsibility of the DC WIC Board Executive Director (or designee) to coordinate the WIOA MOU Dispute Resolution Process to ensure that issues are being resolved in accordance with this policy. Any party to the WIOA MOU may seek resolution under this policy.

To formally start the dispute resolution process, the petitioner, who is the party seeking resolution, must promptly complete the Dispute Resolution Form provided in Attachment B and submit it electronically to the DC WIC Board Executive Director (or designee). It is the responsibility of the petitioner to notify all Parties to the WIOA MOU of the conflict. The DC WIC Executive Director (or designee) must notify the DME of the conflict by electronically sending the completed Dispute Resolution Form.

Within fourteen (14) business days of receipt of the Dispute Resolution Form, the DME will notify the DC WIC Executive Director (or designee) of a date where the DME and DC WIC Executive Director, and appropriate staff will meet to discuss the conflict with appropriate Partners. Prior to the meeting, the DMGEO will investigate the conflict to obtain additional information or to clarify the facts presented.

After the meeting, and within seven (7) business days, the DME will determine how the dispute shall be resolved.

STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

The DC WIC is engaged in updating the District's workforce system's policy manual. The current policy manual was approved at the July 20, 2016, DC WIC Executive Committee meeting. This manual includes policies governing the statewide workforce development system and the use of state funds for workforce investment activities. DC WIC staff update the manual based on WIOA regulations and DC WIOA working group discussions as needed. It is publicly posted on the DC WIC's website at <https://dcworks.dc.gov>. Although this process is in place, DC WIC staff are undertaking an overall review and development of an update to the Policy Manual because of the pandemic and will revise and/or modify policies to ensure they address changes in economic conditions and support the needs of District residents and the business community.

The District will use its Governor's set aside funding to support DC WIC staff and operations, some DOES staff with responsibility for WIOA-related program administration, and to supplement other workforce development activities. The District will utilize Rapid Response funds and implement layoff aversion strategies as described below, including program procedures and descriptions.

Rapid Response (RR): Rapid Response is a proactive, employee-focused program designed to assist Dislocated Workers in transitioning into new employment opportunities. The goal of the RR program is two-fold: 1) provide resources to companies in both private and government sectors, and 2) respond to layoffs and closings by coordinating services and providing immediate aid to companies and their affected workers. In this regard, the program is beneficial to employees experiencing downsizing but is also geared to growing companies that need a pool of skilled workers who are readily available. Ultimately, RR services are designed to minimize the disruptions of companies and to maximize public and private resources for affected workers and communities associated with job loss.

The team responds within 48 hours of receiving notice of layoffs or closings and works quickly to coordinate services with the employer. The District follows federal guidelines under the Worker

Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act to trigger the delivery of services. Rapid Response delivers customized services on-site at or virtually for the affected company to accommodate work schedules and assists companies and affected the workers' transitions to workforce-related services.

Rapid Response services were most recently provided across employment sectors to include entertainment and hospitality, restaurant, and other private industry as invoked or requested. The RR team is an integral partner with the District's Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) and the Department of Human Resources. These partnerships allow DOES to have an early warning of possible layoffs. Before reductions in force, layoff aversion strategies include the following:

- Prior to separation notices being issued, vacant positions are identified, and employees are reassigned to the positions determined as essential to the operation of the agency
- Positions are filled with temporary employees to perform essential work
- Positions are frozen when a reduction in funds is anticipated
- A budget deficit triggers the use of furloughs to reduce budget gaps and avoid employee separation, and

- Job sharing allows two employees to perform the work of one full-time employee.

Recommended layoff aversion strategies are to be discussed during the initial meeting with the employer. Typically, the employers will consider or have considered these options when the decision to have a reduction in force was made. Lay off aversion strategies are used more often in states that have production industries. The team will then establish linkages between firms that are reducing their workforce and firms expanding their workforce.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA): Authorized by the TAA Act of 1974, TAA is a federal program providing reemployment services and benefits to workers who have lost their jobs or suffered a reduction of hours and wages because of increased imports or shifts in production outside of the United States. Workers may be eligible for training, travel allowance, subsistence allowance, job search assistance, relocation allowance, reemployment trade adjustment assistance, or trade readjustment assistance. Certified individuals may be eligible to receive one or more program benefits and services depending on what level of assistance is needed to return them to suitable, sustainable employment. Reemployment benefits include 80 percent of paid average weekly wage at the time of layoff.

For workers who experience job loss due to foreign trade or shifts in production, the Rapid Response team provides information on TAA, initiates trade petitions and informs employees of the benefits and services available if the company is certified as trade affected. A petition for TAA may also be filed by a group of three or more workers, their union, or other duly authorized representative. Although the services are available, the District rarely receives TAA requests. However, the District is poised to serve affected workers from other State Workforce Agencies and mandated to serve them per the federal mandate of benefits and services under the 2021 TAA Reversion.

The District may provide the following benefits to affected workers:

- Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) and Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) - a wage subsidy for up to two years that is available to re-employed older workers and covers a portion of the difference between a worker's new wage and his/her old wage (up to a specified maximum amount).
- Training - classroom training, on-the-job training, and customized training designed to meet the needs of a specific employer or group of employers, apprenticeship programs, and more. Training may be approved on a full-time basis and is required in order to meet TRA eligibility requirements, provided all criteria are met to receive paid training.
- Relocation Allowances - provide reimbursement for approved expenses if you are successful in obtaining employment outside your normal commuting area for you to relocate to your new area of employment.
- Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA) - income support available in the form of weekly cash payments to workers who are enrolled in a full-time training course and have exhausted their unemployment insurance.
- Job Search Allowances - may be payable to cover expenses incurred in seeking employment outside your normal commuting area. Job search allowances reimburse 90% of the costs of allowable travel and subsistence, up to a maximum of \$1,250. An application for a job search allowance must be submitted before your job search begins, and within 365 days of your layoff or certification (whichever is later), or within 182 days after the conclusion of training.

Note: The District's TAA Program operates on an ad-hoc basis and applies for reserve funding as required due to not receiving regular funding.

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

The District plans to expand investments in alternative training over the next five years, with a particular focus on on-the-job and incumbent worker training, led by TCS of DOES.

During the TCS discovery phase, an account executive is able to determine which work-based training model will yield the type of result an employer is seeking. TCS is able to recommend a strategy and direction more effectively and can offer these services early in their customized recruitment/hiring plan.

With On-the-Job (OJT) training, eligible employers have an opportunity to train, mentor, and hire candidates who are not fully proficient in a particular skillset or job function. Through the OJT model, candidates receive the hands-on training necessary to increase their skills, knowledge, and capacity to perform the designated job function.

The OJT strategy ensures unemployed jobseekers have a chance to enter/ reenter the workforce through an Earn-While-You-Learn model. This streamlined approach developed between select employers and the Department of Employment Services (DOES), allows employers to be reimbursed at an established wage rate in exchange for the training provided to participating OJT candidates.

OJTs are designed to lead to long-term employment assuming workers meet the employer's workforce skills needs and are not meant to serve as a disincentive for local employers to take on full-time, unsubsidized employees, and DOES policies and process reflect this.

The rate of reimbursement for employers participating in the OJT strategy will be based on the designated category of the selected OJT candidate. The reimbursement rates are under review and thorough business engagement will be tested and revised as needed to ensure they are adequate to incentivize employers. The current categories and reimbursement rates are listed below:

Reimbursement Guidance 1 - Employer

- Category 1 - 50% Reimbursement
 - Larger Companies (Number of Employees: 100 or more)
- Category 2 - 75% Reimbursement
 - Small to Mid-size companies (Number of Employees: 99 or less)

Note: The employer will receive the higher percentage amount from Guidance 1 and 2, even if the candidate falls into a lower percentage rate.

Reimbursement Guidance 2 - Participant

- Category 1 - 50% Reimbursement
 - Participant is job ready with significant work experience or skillsets and/or some post- secondary education.
- Category 2 - 75% Reimbursement
 - Participant is job ready with limited work experience or skillsets, possesses a high school diploma or GED.

Other qualifiers include one of the following:

- Youth ages 18 - 24
- Seniors 55 years or older
- Returning citizens
- Individuals with disabilities
- Chronically unemployed

- Homeless veterans
- Does not possess a high school diploma or GED
- Is not job ready but possesses the desire to work

OJT candidates will be assessed to determine their capacity to fulfill the requirement of the job they are interested in pursuing. The results of the assessment will be used to place the candidate within one of the identified categories. The training instruction and the length of OJT will be determined by the employer or identified industry standards for the particular job function. The agency will use a nationally recognized assessment tool such as Prove It or Career Ready 101, to gauge the candidate's level of proficiency. Utilizing these tools will aid the case manager, candidate, and employer in creating an individualized OJT plan that increases the jobseeker's proficiency level.

OJT positions must be full-time and must provide an hourly wage that meets the District of Columbia's living wage level and does not exceed the District's average wage for the participant, with evidence that the participant is on a career pathway towards a higher paying job. However, waivers are allowable for individuals with disabilities as well as older workers (55 years and older). Exceptions include a job opportunity that is appropriate to the customer's needs and skill acquisition that meets the occupational qualifications, but the starting wage does not meet the \$15.00 per hour wage. Then an OJT contract can be written for a lower hourly rate in consideration of the participant's extraordinary limitations and/or barriers.

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

The District of Columbia is currently recognized by the US Department of Labor to operate as a State Apprenticeship Agency pursuant to Title 29 CFR, part 29.13, and has been since 1946. In 1978, the District of Columbia established a local mandatory apprenticeship law (D.C. Law 2-156) that requires contractors, who are awarded contracts to perform work on District government-assisted construction projects, to register apprenticeship programs with the District of Columbia. The law was amended in 2004 to require a minimum of 35% apprenticeship hours on all government assisted projects to be performed by DC residents. Any contractor who fails to comply with the amended apprenticeship law is subject to a fine of 5% of direct and indirect labor cost of their contract amount. D.C. Official Code § 32-1431(c)(1). Since the amended law took effect in 2005, there was an immediate impact on the percentages of DC residents employed on District government assisted projects. The results of the amended apprenticeship law continue to be evidence of its effectiveness in generating apprenticeship opportunities for residents on many major city projects.

To complement its long history of apprenticeship programs in the construction industry, the District of Columbia continues to succeed in its expansion efforts to add more non-traditional sectors as apprenticeship career options. These efforts resulted in numerous non-traditional registered apprenticeship programs in the hospitality, allied health, and IT industries during FYs 2022. In FY22, OAIT registered additional healthcare apprenticeship sponsors in the occupations of medical assistant, pharmacy technician, phlebotomy technician, medical coder, and advance certified nursing assistant. OAIT and the YAAC will continue working together to connect traditional and non-traditional apprenticeship programs with participating DC Public School/DC Public Charter Schools that offer CTE and business training that will connect those students to registered apprenticeship during FY-22-23.

DOES continues to expose youth to Apprenticeship as early as middle school through the Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program and other locally funding pre-apprenticeship opportunities through Year-Round Program partnerships with DCPS and DCPCS (including but not limited to Ballou Stay SHS, IDEA PCS, Luke C. Moore SHS, and Washington Latin PCS and more). For over three years, DOES has offered 100 young people in the MBSYEP the opportunity to connect with Pre-Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPS) to gain

exposure and firsthand training opportunities that led to full-time apprenticeship placements at the end of the 6 week program.

Along with previous government programs prior to legislation, during FY 20 -Present, the District was successful in the roll out of the “Pathway to District Government Career Amendment Act of 2018”. The amendment allows partnerships between the Department of Human Resources and DC Public High Schools to promote pathways to government employment to DC high school graduates, who are DC residents with consideration priority for entry level govern jobs as apprentices. Under the Department of Human Resources registered program, DC registered three (3) new District government agencies for DC resident employees to participate in apprenticeship programs. The District agencies include (but not limited to) the Department of Human Resources (DCHR), Department Healthcare finance, Department of Employment Services and Department of Parks and Recreation. The occupation areas include, information technology, administrative assistant, human resource assistant, medical coder, etc. There are other District government agencies in which apprenticeship can be implemented. Expanding the apprenticeship system to include more programs in District government agencies will increase and retain more DC residents in its workforce and reduce the need to seek skilled workers from outside of Washington, DC when existing seasoned workers retire. DOES and the Department of Employment Services continues to expand the government apprenticeship program offerings in the future years ahead.

There are other District government agencies in which apprenticeship can be implemented. Expanding the apprenticeship system to include more programs in District government agencies will increase and retain more DC residents in its workforce and reduce the need to seek skilled workers from outside of Washington, DC when existing seasoned workers retire. Examples of other DC agencies, in which apprenticeship can be implemented in occupations certified by the Department of Labor:

- Department of Transportation - equipment operator
- DC Public Schools - teacher aide; this is an area in which a high school graduate can enter as an apprentice, while taking college courses at UDC towards eventually earning a degree in education or certification in child care. This could also assist residents participating in TANF.
- Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) in information technology
- Other apprentice-able occupations in the health-care field can be applied to Washington, DC's hospital such as, medical assistant, medical laboratory technician, medical coder, and nurse assistant.
- Apprenticeship can also be implemented for DC Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department in the area of Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). The related instruction for the occupation can be held at UDC.

The Career Pathways Task Force and other partner-led initiatives has added new agencies—Department of Parks & Recreation, Department of Healthcare Finance, Department of Human Resources and Department of Employment Services—as registered programs under DCHR's registered apprenticeship program approved in FY20. DOES has convened with education, workforce, and economic development partners such as, businesses and industry intermediaries. The partnerships and planning sessions have been purposed to better align systems and increase resident accessibility to pathways and earn-as-you-learn opportunities, including apprenticeship, in both traditional and non-tradition industry sectors.

DOES currently leverages federal, state, and private resources to develop registered apprenticeship programs, to provide general tuition assistance, and to support enrolled registered apprentices with supportive services. DOES encourages the enrollment of registered apprentices in WIOA and ensures registered apprentices consistently have the opportunity to enroll throughout their participation. Strategies to support registered apprentices through OJT

and ITAs have also been developed. Private resources have been and will continue to be used in the development of employer-based apprenticeship programs. Local grants have been utilized for pre-apprenticeship training in both construction and non-construction industries.

The DOES Office of Talent and Client Services, in conjunction with the OAIT, continues to serve as the primary connection to assist residents in entering registered apprenticeship programs and positions. To ensure the inclusion of underrepresented groups in these efforts, DOES currently has referral partnerships with DC Public and Charter Schools, the American Job Centers,

The Office of Youth Programs, Division of State Initiatives, Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that service TANF and Food Stamp Employment and Training program (FSET) participants, and various workforce programs throughout the District. To further increase inclusion, DOES has actively identified and met with agencies and organizations committed to serving women, veterans, individuals with disabilities, communities of color, and economically disadvantaged groups.

TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

The DC WIC sets policies related to eligible training providers (ETP), including the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs and the use of federal funds for training under WIOA, including through individual training accounts (ITA). They can be found at <https://dcworks.dc.gov/page/policy-and-technical-assistance>.

The District's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) policy and procedures is being updated to ensure compliance with federal regulations and to reflect efforts in recent years to strengthen the program and processes to approve and manage the ETPL. The DC WIC plans to publish this policy in the first half of the 2022 calendar year.

3. 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

Pursuant to Sec 134(c)(3)(E) of WIOA, DOES has developed a policy and procedures to ensure priority of Adult and Dislocated Worker training and employment services for those job seekers that are veterans, receiving public assistance, low-income, or are determined to be basic skills deficient.

As outlined in TEGL 3-15, the priority of service for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers in the District is as follows:

1st Priority - Covered persons (veterans and eligible spouses) who are:

- Low income [as defined by WIOA Sec. 3(36)], or
- Recipients of public assistance, or Who are basic skills deficient.

2nd Priority - Individuals (non-covered persons) who are:

- Low income [as defined by WIOA Sec. 3(36)], or
- Recipients of public assistance, or
- Who are basic skills deficient.

3rd Priority - Veterans and eligible spouses who are:

- Not low income, and
- Not recipients of public assistance, and
- Not basic skills deficient.

4th Priority - Individuals (non-covered persons) who do not meet the above priorities may be enrolled. These individuals are:

- Not veterans or eligible spouses, and
- Not low income, and
- Not recipients of public assistance, and
- Not basic skills deficient.

During enrollment into WIOA, Workforce Development Specialists (WDSs) are required to determine each customer's Priority of Service level and mark the priority level on the Priority of Service Determination form that must be signed by the WDS. During virtual or remote appointments customers are still identified according to priority of service and veterans status is checked. Additionally, during the AJC virtual orientation customers are asked about whether they are veterans or not. Those identified as Veterans are referred to services first.

The backside of this determination form also provides details on how low-income status should be determined under WIOA. This low-income definition includes: the various forms of public assistance receipt; the current Federal Poverty Line (based on guidelines released by the Department of Health and Human Services) and 70% of Lower Living Standard Income Levels (LLSIL, released by DOLETA) based on different family/household sizes; homeless individuals; foster children; and all low-income individuals with disabilities regardless of their family/household income.

In the District, basic skills deficiency is determined by using the eCASAS test and defined as having reading and/or math scores at or below the 8th-grade level. Customers receiving public assistance are asked to provide documentation, which is included in the customer's folder.

The Priority of Service Determination form is stored in the customer's file, and if applying to enroll in training services, the customer's training folder as well. Workforce Development Specialists are required to identify the participant's Priority of Service level on the customer folder tab—as P1, P2, P3, or P4—along with last name, first name, and last four of their SSN. This labeling process is to ensure that when customer files are in the process of review and approval for services (such as training), the Priority of Service is always followed.

A priority of Service is covered in the training for new Workforce Development Specialists and other AJC staff and will continue to be emphasized and communicated in upcoming and ongoing professional development and WIOA training sessions at all AJCs.

5. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S CRITERIA REGARDING LOCAL AREA TRANSFER OF FUNDS BETWEEN THE ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

Per Mayors Order 2018-076, the Mayor of the District of Columbia has designated DOES as the WIA administrator and delegates all decision-making authority to the Agency Director. Based on this law the Director of DOES has the authority to transfer said funds.

C. WITH RESPECT TO YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED IN SECTION 129 OF WIOA—

1. IDENTIFY THE STATE-DEVELOPED CRITERIA TO BE USED BY LOCAL BOARDS IN AWARDING GRANTS OR CONTRACTS FOR YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AND DESCRIBE HOW THE LOCAL BOARDS WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ABILITY OF THE PROVIDERS TO MEET PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES BASED ON PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR THE YOUTH PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 116(B)(2)(A)(II) OF WIOA IN AWARDING SUCH GRANTS OR CONTRACTS.[11]

The District's Department of Employment Services, Office of Youth Programs sets policies related to the awarding of grants and contracts for youth workforce activities and methods to take into consideration the ability of the providers to meet performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in awarding funds. DOES selects providers of youth services via a competitive solicitation process to determine a vendor that can administer the WIOA Youth program through federal and local policies and additional DC WIC oversight.

DOES's Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Youth providers is reviewed and modified as necessary every program year to reflect the new performance accountability measures and eligibility requirements for ISY and OSY under WIOA. Service providers are required to demonstrate their service strategy through their proposals that identify a clear path for every participant to attain WIOA performance accountability measures.

The plan must identify innovative career pathways that include education and employment goals with appropriate services to meet those goals. The service strategy should include an initial objective assessment that highlights the youth's basic skills, occupational skills, work experience, interests, academic levels, skill levels, case management needs and other details that will pinpoint the youths plan for completing the programs. Youth providers will also develop a follow up plan to continually engage youth to ensure that they maintain outcomes from the programs such as unsubsidized employment or post-secondary education. All services provided to the youth must be documented via case notes through VOS to demonstrate engagement and progress leading towards the WIOA performance accountability measures and weekly timesheets that verify participation and provide specifics of the activity.

Upon contract award, all youth will be trained on Personal Identifiable Information, Federal Tax Information and the DC Networks Virtual One Stop (VOS) system. VOS is the system of record to accurately account for enrollments, updates to service strategies, assessments, literacy and numeracy gains, participant activities, status changes, and outcomes. Maintaining case notes of participant contact, interactions, and activities of the participant, progress, and methods to resolve barriers, is important documentation that provides a record of services. Accurate and timely data entry in VOS is required to ensure mandated accountability for performance indicators on both a federal, state and local level, in addition to individual providers.

All WIOA Title I Youth activities for ISY and OSY will be delivered by contracted vendors via Human Care Agreements (HCA) after responding to a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) outlining the details of their program and service strategy. In addition to requirements regarding performance accountability detailed above, service providers must also describe how the fourteen program elements are included in their service strategy, their methodology for providing those program elements. Contractors will demonstrate the ability to enhance design, coordinate and deliver year-round activities and services for WIOA eligible youth that promote:

- Earning a high school diploma or GED
- Preparation for postsecondary education and training Career preparation
- Work-based learning
- Employment in demand driven occupations
- Earning postsecondary credentials
- Basic Skills Proficiency
- Occupational skills training that leads to credential attainment

2. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH AS DESCRIBED IN 129(A)(1)(B), INCLUDING HOW IT WILL LEVERAGE AND ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE.

As noted in Section II(c) - State Strategy, Washington, DC's strategies for supporting youth are focused on ensuring that the District's full range of programs are coordinated with WIOA Youth activities. Over the last 40 years, the Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program (MBSYEP) has served as the District's local youth workforce development program. The MBSYEP is a program for youth ages 14-24 to gain workforce development skills and exposure that leads to steps toward the working middle class. To help drive higher enrollment in the year-round WIOA Youth program - a key challenge the District is working to address - DOES's Office of Youth Programs (OYP) will use the applicant pool from MBSYEP to recruit youth for the WIOA programs. In addition to the MBSYEP, the District's Middle School Exploration program serves youth 11-14, offering resume building, emerging career fields, and continuing opportunities within the Office of Youth Programs. The Office of Youth Programs stays connected with these youths so they can successfully transition to MBSYEP and other federal and local youth programs.

OYP uses innovative strategies to keep youth engaged and connected, including social media, e-mail blasts, text messaging, Workforce on Wheels, and community events will be used to capture youth who will most benefit from the programs. Referrals from the Youth Earn and Learn Program, and the Pathways for Young Adults Programs, and the DC High School Internship program also help to drive enrollment gains and identify youth who can best benefit from WIOA Youth services. OYP conducts outreach events and visits all high schools in the District on a regular basis, in order to ensure these essential partners have a basic understanding of the services and program offerings that are available to all graduates who do not have postsecondary engagement plans or unsubsidized employment.

Additionally, programs such as the Youth Innovation Grants are designed for specific demographics including youth who are interested in alternative career pathways other than GED obtainment or credential attainment. The Youth Innovation Grants Program focuses on entry into a post-secondary institution and/or entrepreneurship leading to attainment of a DC business license. Based on funding availability this program will be coupled with WIOA programs that will provide necessary support including barrier removal techniques and innovative strategies to keep youth engaged. OYP also has strong partnerships with many educational institutions throughout the District including the District of Columbia Public Schools, the Public Charter School Board, the OSSE Re-Engagement Center, and the University of the District of Columbia-Community College. Other inter-district agencies such as Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) Youth Services Center, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), DC Housing Authority (DCHA), and Department of Disability Services (DDS) provide support to the office for case management and job coaching.

The OYP offers multiple intake sessions each week to allow youth to hear about workforce and educational services and connect them to workforce partners. OYP works closely with AJC staff to ensure that youth in partner programs such as Job Corps, DC Career Connections, and apprenticeships have access to WIOA services. Intake sessions have a hybrid approach.

Individuals are able to be seen remotely and in-person. Sessions are scheduled utilizing the DOES Scheduling Tool and available to the public via DOES.DC.GOV. Vendors have adapted and are required to follow the District's policies and protocols during a Health Emergency/Pandemic.

Closeout meetings and focus groups with youth and service providers are conducted to request feedback on the DOES OYP experience, services offered and ways to increase effectiveness.

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]

All WIOA Title I Youth activities for ISY and OSY are delivered by contracted service providers. Each contract describes how the fourteen youth program elements are available to every youth registrant. The District is meeting with key labor organizations including the Building Trades Council, Unite Here! (the hospitality and culinary industry), Local 1191 (health care jobs) and the Communication Workers to expand existing partnerships and to create new partnerships that lead to youth entering pre-apprenticeships programs. Participants are then able to transition to Apprenticeship Programs that will lead to credential attainment and/or unsubsidized employment. The Office of Youth Programs will continue to use a competitive procurement process to identify service providers that tie to and partner with pre- apprenticeship programs.

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.

According to the Unified State Plan, the policy “requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program, or to secure and maintain employment” criterion specified in WIOA sections 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VIII) and 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII) and for “requiring additional assistance to complete an education program, or to secure and hold employment” criterion for in-school youth specified in WIOA section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII).

The DC WIC in WIGL-2017-002 established guidance for identifying out-of-school youth “requiring additional assistance.” The policy focuses on youth who have one or more of the following serious barriers to employment:

- Incarcerated parent,
- Victim of violence,
- Behavior problems at school,
- Family literacy problems,
- Domestic violence,
- Substance abuse,
- Chronic health conditions,
- One or more grade levels below appropriate for the age of the student,
- Attending a school that is currently “failing” as identified by the federal or District school accountability system, or
- Lives in, or attends school in, an identified high-crime area.

5. INCLUDE THE STATE DEFINITION, AS DEFINED IN LAW, FOR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL AND ATTENDING SCHOOL AS SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(I) AND SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(I). IF STATE LAW DOES NOT DEFINE “NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL” OR “ATTENDING SCHOOL,” INDICATE THAT IS THE CASE AND PROVIDE THE STATE POLICY FOR DETERMINING WHETHER A YOUTH IS ATTENDING OR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL.

There are currently no laws in the DC Code that define “not attending school” or “attending school.”

The DC WIC adopted WIGL-2017-002 on January 24, 2017, which covers Youth Program

Eligibility and which references the District's statutory definition of attending and not attending school. The WIGL contains the following language:

"District law defines a school in the District of Columbia Public Schools system as a public charter school, an independent school, a private school, a parochial school, or a private instructor. For purposes of WIOA, DOL does not consider providers of Adult Education under Title II of WIOA, Youthbuild programs, and Job Corps programs to be schools. Therefore, WIOA youth programs may consider a youth to be out-of-school for purposes of WIOA youth program eligibility if he/she is attending Adult Education provided under Title II of WIOA, Youthbuild, or Job Corps."

The WIGL also states that if a given youth is enrolled in school "but did not attend the last school year calendar quarter" the youth is considered to be out-of-school. The District's compulsory education laws require children between the ages of 5 and 18 to attend school. "School year" means the period from the opening of regular school programs, typically in September, until the closing of regular school programs, typically in June.

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.

The District does not intend to use the basic skills deficient definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B) for its WIOA youth program. The District will use WIOA Section 3(5)(A), which states as follows:

"Basic skills deficient": The term "basic skills deficient" means, with respect to an individual- (A) who is a youth, that the individual has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test."

The District intends to use the CASAS exam as its standardized test of record. The agencies that comprise this unified plan are working toward completing a comprehensive MOU, and this comprehensive MOU will include uniform CASAS standards and procedures across all WIOA-funded programs, including a definition of Basic Skills Deficient. However, the DC WIC will evaluate this policy to ensure that the use of the CASAS exam does not pose a barrier for participants who can otherwise demonstrate basic skills proficiency by other means.

D. SINGLE-AREA STATE REQUIREMENTS

1. ANY COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD THAT REPRESENT DISAGREEMENT WITH THE PLAN. (WIOA SECTION 108(D)(3).)
2. THE ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISBURSAL OF GRANT FUNDS, AS DETERMINED BY THE GOVERNOR, IF DIFFERENT FROM THAT FOR THE STATE. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(15).)
3. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND AVAILABILITY OF WIOA TITLE I YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND SUCCESSFUL MODELS, INCLUDING FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(9).)

Public comments that were received during the public comment period are shown in the Appendix. DOES serves as the District's fiscal agent and disburses grant funds in conjunction with the Office of the Chief Financial Officer. The DC WIC sets policies related to WIOA funds and provides oversight.

Because the District has only one local workforce investment area, the following local plan information is required to be included in the WIOA Plan. DOES's Office of Youth Programs (OYP) provides an array of programs and services designed to target and engage youth from ages 14-24. The services offered by both DOES OYP and its providers are described in Table 25.

Table 25: Services Offered by both DOES OYP and its Providers

Service	Description
Outreach/ Recruitment/ Eligibility	DOES conducts outreach and recruitment and verifying participant eligibility. DOES makes program referrals of eligible youth via in-person community events, virtual meetings via the web-based scheduling tool located on the DOES websites, working closely with our vendors who conduct community outreach for their respective programs and continued connections with partner agencies such as OSSE, DHS, and CFSA. Providers are contracted to perform outreach and recruitment activities. Providers may support youth with the collection of eligibility documents and for their timely submission to DOES. DOES will be responsible for determining and documenting participant eligibility prior to WIOA program enrollment. Providers are required to maintain all program documentation and ensure that DOES receives all required program updates through the regular entry of data in the system.
Intake/Assessment	DOES will conduct the initial intake process to include conducting intake interviews and the initial objective assessment. DOES will coordinate with partner agencies to collect pre-existing assessment data. Providers will be offered training and technical assistance to conduct the initial objective assessment as appropriate. Providers will be responsible for conducting assessments to measure progress throughout the duration of the program.
Referrals	DOES will be responsible for making the official referral to an eligible service provider. This does not prevent providers from conducting outreach and recruitment of participants, however, the provider may not enroll a participant until DOES has deemed that participant is eligible and made the appropriate referral.
Case Management/ISS Development	Case Management is the foundation of the service delivery in the workforce system and is effectively managed by the provider Case Manager and DOES. Comprehensive case management includes the development of Individual Service Strategies (ISS), follow-up services, case note updates, and on-going file maintenance. DOES will be responsible for ensuring that the provider maintains a comprehensive case file per youth. The Individual Service Strategy (ISS) is developed in conjunction with the youth participant, Case Manager, and educational counselor to establish a concise path towards meeting educational/occupational goals.
Program Services	The provider is responsible for ensuring program services are effectively developed, delivered, and made readily accessible to all referred youth participants. Providers will be required to demonstrate how their program meets the fourteen (14) required program elements under WIOA. However, providers will not necessarily be responsible for delivering all 14.

Placement of Jobs or Continuing Education	The provider is responsible for establishing internship opportunities for work based learning experience and/or facilitating the development of professional development skills for each participant.
Follow-Up/Exit	Youth service providers are responsible for maintaining twelve (12) months of follow-up services for the youth participants. DOES and the provider work collaboratively to ensure a successful exit is completed and captured in the Virtual One-Stop System. DOES will work to ensure that all program participants have access to the array of services and programs that are part of its youth and adult workforce systems and of the District's larger workforce development system.

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4. A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ONE-STOP PARTNERS

Cost Allocation Methodology and Steps to Reach Consensus:

The DC WIC contracted with a subject matter expert in infrastructure and cost sharing development for workforce areas in Washington and Oregon. The goal was to make recommendations on making the process of establishing the IFA more transparent for agency partners. In the process, DC WIC identified and described several potential bases for cost allocation, and ultimately recommended the basis chosen by the partners because it seemed to most appropriately allocate costs across the partners.

The methodology for equitable distribution of costs associated with the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) will be the proportion of partners' staff FTEs among all staff at the AJC based on actual number of hours worked. The existing FTE basis for allocation skews the distribution of costs, depending on how the IFA partners source their personnel. The DOES/Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) will allocate costs based on each IFA partner's proportional share of total monthly hours worked, which aligns with all other cost allocation bases utilized for American Job Center operations. The DC WIC has published a policy on its website which details the cost allocation methodology and the guidance used in finalizing this agreement. (DC WIGL- 2018-001)

The DC WIC contracted with a firm in 2021 to assist with developing a new IFA methodology and negotiate a new MOU. In the short-term, partners are using the current IFA with a new methodology to be implemented in 2022.

One-Stop System Services:

WIOA establishes two levels of employment and training services for adults and dislocated workers: career services and training services.

Career Services: Career services for adults and dislocated workers are available at all DCAJCs. USDOL has identified three types of career services:

- Basic career services;
- Individualized career services; and
- Follow-up services

Basic Career Services: Basic career services must be made available and, at a minimum, must include the following:

- Determinations of whether the individual is eligible to receive assistance from the adult, dislocated worker, or youth programs;
- Outreach, intake (including worker profiling), and orientation to information and other services available through the local workforce system;
- Initial assessment of skills levels, including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and support 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 nontraditional employment and in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and

- appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including information and referrals to specialized business services not traditionally offered through the local workforce system;
- Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the local workforce system and, when appropriate, other workforce development programs;
- Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas;
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and provider type;
- Provision of information, in usable and understandable formats and languages, about how the Board¹ is performing on local performance accountability measures, as well as any additional performance information relating to the local workforce system;
- Provision of information, in usable and understandable formats and languages, relating to the availability of support services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance;
- Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation, by which the Board must provide assistance to individuals seeking such assistance.
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA.

Individualized Career Services: Individualized career services must be made available if determined to be appropriate in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment. These include the following services:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skills levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers; Section 134(c)(2) and (c)(3) list the required local employment and training activities. To satisfy some of these requirements, the use of assessments is necessary. To avoid duplication of services, WIOA allows the use of previous assessments from another education or training program. The previous assessments must be determined to be appropriate by AJCC representatives and must have been completed within the previous six months
- 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 information regarding eligible training providers;
- Group counseling;
- Individual counseling;
- Career planning;
- Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training;
- Internships and work experience that are linked to careers;
- Workforce preparation activities;
- Financial literacy services as described in WIOA §129(b)(2)(D);
- Out-of-area job search and relocation assistance; and

- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

Follow-up Services: These services must be made available, as appropriate (including counseling regarding the workplace) for participants in adult or dislocated worker activities that are placed in unsubsidized employment for a minimum of 12 months after the first day of employment.

Training Services: WIOA is designed to increase participant access to training services. Training services are provided to equip individuals to enter the workforce and retain employment.

Examples of training services include:

- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment;
- On-the-job training (OJT), including registered apprenticeship;
- Incumbent worker training in accordance with WIOA §134(d)(4);
- Workplace training and cooperative education programs;
- Private sector training programs;
- Skills upgrading and retraining;
- Entrepreneurial training;
- Transitional jobs in accordance with WIOA §134(d)(5);
- Job readiness training provided in combination with other training described above;
- Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, in combination with training; and
- Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training.

WIOA clarifies that there is no sequence of service requirement in order to receive training. However, DOL has indicated that, at minimum, to be eligible for training, an individual must receive an interview, evaluation, or assessment and career planning or any other method through which the one-stop operator/partner can obtain enough information to make an eligibility determination for training services. Where appropriate, a recent interview, evaluation, or assessment may be used for the assessment purpose.

Business Services: The District's AJCs are part of a business-focused system. Examples of system services to serve business customers include:

- Customized screening and referral of qualified participants in training services to employers
- Customized employment-related services to employers, employer associations, or similar organizations on a fee-for-service basis that are in addition to labor exchange services available to employers under the Wagner-Peyser Act
- Work-based learning activities, including incumbent worker training, Registered Apprenticeship, transitional jobs, on-the-job training, and customized training.
- Activities to provide business services and strategies that meet the workforce investment needs of employers, as determined by the Board and consistent with the local plan.

Required American Job Center Partner Activities and Integration:

One-Stop/AJC Partner Program	District Agency/Local Provider
U.S. Department of Labor Program	
Adult (WIOA title I formula)	Department of Employment Services
Dislocated Worker (WIOA title I formula)	Department of Employment Services
Youth (WIOA title I formula)	Department of Employment Services
Job Corps	Potomac Job Corps
Senior Community Service Employment Program (title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965)	Department of Employment Services
Trade Adjustment Assistance activities (Trade Act of 1974, as amended)	Department of Employment Services
Jobs for Veterans State Grants (Chapter 41 of title 38)	Department of Employment Services
Unemployment Compensation programs	Department of Employment Services
Wagner-Peyser Act ES, as authorized under the Wagner- Peyser Act, as amended by WIOA title III	Department of Employment Services
U.S. Department of Education Programs	
Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program (WIOA title II)	Office of the State Superintendent of Education
State VR program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA title IV	Department of Disability Services
Career technical education programs at the postsecondary level, authorized under Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006	Office of the State Superintendent of Education
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Programs	
Programs authorized under the Social Security Act title IV, part A (TANF)	Department of Human Services
Community Services Block Grant Employment and Training activities (Community Services Block Grant Act)	Department of Human Services
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Programs	
Employment and training programs	District of Columbia Housing Authority EnVision Center

AJC Partner Agency Activities:

DOES

The following information summarizes DOES's role within the District's one-stop/AJC system:

Shared System Design and Access

With regard to system design and access, the system partners and DC WIC agree to use of the following terms to characterize the participation of DOES within the local AJC system:

- **Co-Location:** A full- or part-time physical presence by one or more partner representatives at one or more of the District's AJCs.
- **Electronic Connection:** Providing AJC customers direct linkages to partner services to through use of various web-based technology applications, along with using web connections to provide partners' customers with access to the AJCs and system partner information and services.

Due to its role in the operation of the AJCs, DOES has the most significant presence, among the partners, of staff at the AJCs. This includes those funded through WIOA, Wagner Peyser, UI and other fund sources. The table that follows indicates the number of full-time equivalent staff that DOES has co-located at each AJC on a weekly basis.

DOES also actively participates in the system through electronic connection, including using hyperlinks on its own website to link, which hosts information on AJC services to partners' websites. In addition, DOES customers use DCNetworks.org to access system information and services.

Shared System Knowledge

DOES agrees to participate in cross training partner program staff to increase system capacity. This will include:

- Providing content to be used in training of partner managers and staff about the programs and services offered by DOES. Such content will, at a minimum, include information about types of services offered; program and service eligibility requirements; application processes; and information on outcomes.
- Assisting with the delivery of training, which may include providing content suitable for electronic media format (e.g. PowerPoint, on-line video) or in-person or webcast presentations to partner representatives.
- Participating in training developed and/or provided by all District one-stop system partner agencies listed in Section 5 of the MOU. Such participation may occur through attendance at in-person sessions or by viewing web-based content.

Shared Systems and Customers

As a partner in the District's workforce development delivery system and in its role as principal service provider at the AJCs, DOES is committed to working with the DC WIC and the full range of system partners to devise, implement and continuously improve workforce strategies benefitting residents and businesses in Washington, DC. As an extension of this commitment, DOES agrees to participate in meetings and activities organized by the One-Stop Operator, which is contracted by the WIC to manage partner activities within the centers and across the local workforce system.

DOES's role in the coordinated delivery of AJC services will include the following services, participation and collaboration.

1. Outreach and Recruitment

DOES serves eligible individuals under many programs and its messages reach a broad cross section of District residents. Therefore, the agency can provide candidates (no matter which DOES services they are applying for) with information on the services of the AJCs and the system's partner programs. Information will be provided via web-based media, print materials and verbal communications.

2. Intake

As DOES representatives conduct intake for the agency's programs, it agrees to identify individuals that may be eligible for and/or interested in AJC services or those of the system partners. Such individuals will be referred in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

3. Orientation

Similar to candidate information derived from outreach and intake processes, orientation and information sessions led by DOES provide a venue and/or opportunity to share with District residents information about other programs and services for which they may be qualified. For those who may benefit partner programs, DOES will make appropriate referrals in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

4. Initial Assessment

To the extent permitted by rules governing the funding under which it operates, DOES may provide other partners with results of assessments in which customers participate. In cases where customers apply for services from another system partner, this process may help to avoid duplication of effort. Sharing of assessment results will require a release signed by the affected individuals.

5. Cross Referrals

As indicated in Section 11 of the MOU, cross referrals among the District's workforce system partners are critical to the goals of collaboration and alignment of programs and to ensuring that services are customer-focused. While the partners will work with the One-Stop Operator to develop specific details for managing and tracking referrals; DOES and the other system partners agree to the following:

- Referrals will be made when services of a partner program can fulfill an unmet need of an applicant/participant.
- Referrals will be made via a "hard hand-off," under which DOES will refer individuals to a specific contact person at a partner agency and will provide assistance in scheduling an appointment, if possible.
- Referrals made will be recorded and shared with the One-Stop Operator.
- Referrals will be made through My Journey DC as the official referral platform

6. Sharing of Local Market Intelligence

In support of its various employment programs and activities, DOES receive substantial and regular input from businesses that informs its efforts to prepare individuals for work and place customers in employment. Similarly, DC WIC and partner programs conduct business outreach and engage in gathering local labor market information and industry "intelligence." To the extent practicable, DOES agrees to share such information and intelligence with all system partners so that entire system is well prepared to meet business and industry needs.

7. Co-Enrollment/Co-Case Management

When DOES and one or more other partners serve the same customer (via the participant's co-enrollment), the partners agree to identify opportunities to co-case manage activities to streamline processes and avoid duplication of effort and resources.

8. Support Services

DOES directly provides or otherwise connects its customers to a wide range of support services to address their specific barriers and needs. Participants may be referred to other system partners for other services to address their unique circumstances.

9. Placement Services

To increase the range of employment opportunities for customers, DOES agrees to provide AJCs placement services to all system customers that are determined as needing these services.

DHS

The following information summarizes DHS's role within the District's one-stop/AJC system.

Shared System Design and Access

With regard to system design and access, the system partners and DC WIC agree to use of the following terms to characterize the participation of the DHS and other partners within the local AJC system:

- **Co-Location:** A full- or part-time physical presence by one or more partner representatives at one or more of the District's AJCs.
- **Electronic Connection:** Providing AJC customers direct linkages to partner services to through use of various web-based technology applications, along with using web connections to provide partners' customers access to the AJCs and system partner information and services.

DHS shall participate in the system through both co-location and electronic connection, including using hyperlinks on its own website to link participants to the AJCs and to system partners' websites. In addition, DHS customers may use DCNetworks.org to access system information and services. DHS advises all TEP contractors and SNAP E&T grantees to ensure that participants are registered in and may use DCNetworks.org.

DHS representatives routinely have staff on site at the AJCs to determine eligibility for public benefits and to provide access to workforce and support services provided through the TEP, SNAP E&T, and CSBG programs. DHS representatives regularly refer clients and other customers to the AJCs for services.

Shared System Knowledge

DHS agrees to participate in cross training partner program staff to increase system capacity. This shall include:

- Providing content to be used in training of partner managers and staff about the programs and services offered by DHS. Such content will, at a minimum, include information about types of services offered; program and service eligibility requirements; application processes; and information on outcomes.
- Assisting with the delivery of training, which may include providing content suitable for electronic media format (e.g., PowerPoint, on-line video) or in-person or webcast presentations to partner representatives.
- Participating in training developed and/or provided by all District one-stop system partner agencies listed in Section 5 of the MOU. Such participation may occur through attendance at in-person sessions or by viewing web-based content.

Shared Systems and Customers

As a partner in the District's workforce development delivery system and with its network of AJCs, DHS is committed to working with the DC WIC, DOES (which operates the AJCs), and the full range of system partners to devise, implement and continuously improve workforce strategies benefitting residents and businesses in Washington, DC. As an extension of this commitment, DHS agrees to participate in meetings and activities organized by the One-Stop Operator, which is contracted by the WIC to manage partner activities within the centers and across the local workforce system.

DHS's role in the coordinated delivery of AJC services shall include the following services, participation and collaboration. While the descriptions below contemplate services for customers services by the TANF, SNAP E&T, and CSBG programs, coordination with the AJCs and partners in the local workforce system may benefit customers served under the myriad other programs administered and operated by DHS.

1. Outreach and Recruitment

While DHS serves eligible individuals under its programs, its messages reach a broad cross section of District residents. Therefore, the agency can provide candidates (including those not using its services) with information on the services of the AJCs and the system's partner programs. Information will be provided via web-based media, print materials and verbal communications.

2. Intake

As DHS representatives conduct intake for its programs, it agrees to identify individuals that may be eligible for and/or interested in AJC services or those of the system partners. Such individuals will be referred in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

3. Orientation

Similar to candidate information derived from outreach and intake processes, orientation and information sessions led by DHS provide a venue and/or opportunity to share with District residents information about other programs and services for which they may be qualified. For those who may benefit from AJC or partner programs, DHS shall make appropriate referrals in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

4. Initial Assessment

To the extent permitted by rules governing the funding under which it operates, DHS may provide the AJCs and other partners with some of the results of assessments in which customers participate. Because TEP and SNAP E&T conduct a comprehensive assessment in order to identify customers' full range of barriers to employment, some of the results of these assessments may be useful to service planning in other workforce development programs. In cases where customers apply for services from another system partner, this process may help to avoid duplication of effort. Sharing of assessment results will require a release signed by the affected individuals.

5. Cross Referrals

As indicated in Section 11 of the MOU, cross referrals among the District's workforce system partners are critical to the goals of collaboration and alignment of programs and to ensuring that services are customer-focused. While the partners will work with the One-Stop Operator to develop specific details for managing and tracking referrals; DHS and the other system partners agree to the following:

- Referrals shall be made when services of a partner program can fulfill an unmet need of an applicant/participant through My Journey DC as the official referral platform.

- Referrals shall be made via a “hard hand-off,” under which DHS will refer individuals to a specific contact person at a partner agency and will provide assistance in scheduling an appointment, if possible.
- Referrals made shall be recorded and shared with the One-Stop Operator.
- Referrals will be made through My Journey DC as the official referral platform

6. Sharing of Local Market Intelligence

In support of its various employment programs and activities, DHS may receive input from businesses that informs its efforts to train and place customers in employment. Similarly, DC WIC, the AJCs and all partner programs conduct business outreach and engage in gathering local labor market information and industry “intelligence.” To the extent practicable, DHS agrees to share such information and intelligence with the AJC/one-stop partners so that entire system is well prepared to meet business and industry needs.

7. Co-Enrollment/Co-Case Management

When DHS and one or more other partners serve the same customer (via the participant’s co-enrollment), the partners agree to identify opportunities to co-case manage activities to streamline processes and avoid duplication of effort and resources.

8. Support Services

DHS directly provides or otherwise connects its customers to a wide range of support services to address their specific barriers and needs. Participants may be referred to the AJCs or other system partners for other services to address their unique circumstances.

9. Placement Services

To increase the range of employment opportunities for customers, DHS agrees to refer those seeking employment to the AJCs for placement services and support, when such services are determined as benefitting an individual.

DDS

The following information summarizes DDS’s role within the District’s one-stop/AJC system:
Shared System Design and Access

With regard to system design and access, the system partners and DC WIC agree to use of the following terms to characterize the participation of DDS and other system partners within the local AJC system:

- **Co-Location:** DDS has allocated sufficient staff to ensure a full-time physical presence at each of the four AJCs, as space and resources permit. Currently, the agency has a full-time presence at two AJCs and part-time presence at the other two.
- **Electronic Connection:** Providing AJC customers direct linkages to partner services to through use of various web-based technology applications, along with using web connections to provide partners’ customers access to the AJCs and system partner information and services.

DDS representatives are co-located at the four AJCs located within the District. Currently, DDS’s presence at each site is 1 full-time equivalent position, which is filled by various DDS counselors and staff.

DDS will, principally, participate in the system through electronic connection, including using hyperlinks on its own website to link participants to the AJCs and to system partners’ websites,

including to the DOES Virtual One Stop (VOS) system and the DC Data Vault. In addition, DDS customers may use DCNetworks.org to access system information and services.

Shared System Knowledge

DDS agrees to participate in cross training partner program staff to increase system capacity. This will include:

- Providing content to be used in training of partner managers and staff about the programs and services offered by DDS. Such content will, at a minimum, include information about types of services offered; program and service eligibility requirements; application processes; and information on outcomes.
- Assisting with the delivery of training, which may include providing content suitable for electronic media format (e.g. PowerPoint, on-line video) or in-person or webcast presentations to partner representatives.
- Participating in training developed and/or provided by all District one-stop system partner agencies listed in Section 5 of the MOU. Such participation may occur through attendance at in-person sessions or by viewing web-based content.

Shared Systems and Customers

As a partner in the District's workforce development delivery system and with its network of AJCs, DDS is committed to working with the DC WIC, DOES (which manages the AJCs), and the full range of system partners to devise, implement and continuously improve workforce strategies benefitting residents and businesses in Washington, DC. As an extension of this commitment, DDS agrees to participate in meetings and activities organized by the One-Stop Operator, which is contracted by the WIC to manage partner activities within the centers and across the local workforce system.

DDS's role in the coordinated delivery of AJC services will include the following services, participation and collaboration.

1. Outreach and Recruitment

While DDS targets specific individuals (such as those with a physical or mental disability that poses a substantial barrier to employment), its messages reach a broad cross section of District residents. Therefore, the agency can provide candidates (including those not using its services) with information on the services of the AJCs and the system's partner programs. Information will be provided via web-based media, print materials and verbal communications.

2. Intake

As DDS representatives conduct intake for its programs, it agrees to identify individuals that may be eligible for and/or interested in AJC services or those of the system partners. Such individuals will be referred in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

3. Orientation

Similar to candidate information derived from outreach and intake processes, orientation and information sessions led by DDS provide a venue and/or opportunity to share with District residents information about other programs and services for which they may be qualified. For those who may benefit from AJC or partner programs, DDS will make appropriate referrals in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

4. Initial Assessment

To the extent permitted by rules governing the funding under which it operates, DDS may provide the AJCs and other partners with results of assessments in which residents participate.

In cases where residents apply for services from another system partner, this process may help to avoid duplication of effort. Sharing of assessment results will require a release signed by the affected individuals.

5. Cross Referrals

As indicated in Section 11 of the MOU, cross referrals among the District's workforce system partners are critical to the goals of collaboration and alignment of programs and to ensuring that services are customer-focused. While the partners will work with the One-Stop Operator to develop specific details for managing and tracking referrals; DDS and the other system partners agree to the following:

- Referrals will be made when services of a partner program can fulfill an unmet need of an applicant/participant.
- Referrals will be made via a "hard hand-off," under which DDS will refer individuals to a specific contact person at a partner agency and will provide assistance in scheduling an appointment, if possible.
- Referrals made will be recorded and shared with the One-Stop Operator.
- Referrals will be made through My Journey DC as the official referral platform

DDS has a number of active referral relationships with District agencies that are partners in the local workforce development system (e.g. DOES, OSSE, Department of Human Services). DDS process may provide a model for partners in making referrals across the system.

6. Sharing of Local Market Intelligence

In support of its various employment programs and activities, DDS regularly communicates with businesses to help inform its efforts to train and place residents in employment. Similarly, DC WIC, the AJCs and all partner programs conduct business outreach and engage in gathering local labor market information and industry "intelligence." To the extent practicable, the DDS agrees to share such information and intelligence with the AJC/one-stop partners so that entire system is well prepared to meet business and industry needs.

7. Co-Enrollment/Co-Case Management

When DDS and one or more other partners serve the same customer (via the participant's co-enrollment), the partners agree to identify opportunities to co-case manage activities to streamline processes and avoid duplication of effort and resources.

8. Support Services

DDS directly provides or otherwise connects its customers to a wide range of support services, including transportation and assistance technology and other forms of training and workplace aids, among others. Participants may be referred to the AJCs or other system partners for other services to address their unique needs.

9. Placement Services

To increase the range of employment opportunities for customers, DDS agrees to refer those seeking employment to the AJCs for placement services and support, when such services are determined as benefiting an individual.

OSSE

The following information summarizes OSSE's role within the District's one-stop/AJC system:

Shared System Design and Access

With regard to system design and access, OSSE agrees to use of the following terms to characterize its participation in the local one-stop/AJC system:

- **Electronic Connection:** Direct linkages to OSSE and other partner agencies' programs and services through the use of web-based technology applications, including Microsoft Bookings and the My Journey DC.

OSSE agrees to also participate in the local AJC/workforce system through electronic connection, including using hyperlinks on its website to link participants to the AJCs and to system partners' websites and use of the DC Data Vault. In addition, OSSE students may use DCNetworks.org to access system information and services.

Shared System Knowledge

OSSE agrees to participate in cross training partner program staff to increase system capacity. This will include:

- Providing content to be used in training of partner managers and staff about the programs, services, and resources offered by OSSE. Such content will, at a minimum, include information about types of services offered; program and service eligibility requirements; application processes; information on outcomes; and information on resources such as the My Journey DC system, eCASAS assessments, and the Career Coach DC website.
- Assisting with the delivery of training, which may include providing content suitable for electronic media format (e.g. PowerPoint, on-line video) or in-person or webcast presentations to partner representatives.
- Participating in training developed and/or provided by all District one-stop system partner agencies listed in Section 5 of the MOU. Such participation may occur through attendance at in-person sessions or by viewing web-based content.

Shared Systems and Customers

As a partner in the District's workforce development delivery system and with its network of AJCs, OSSE is committed to working with the DC WIC, DOES (which operates the AJCs), and the full range of system partners to devise, implement and continuously improve workforce strategies benefitting residents and businesses in Washington, DC. As an extension of this commitment, OSSE agrees to participate in meetings and activities organized by the One-Stop Operator, which is contracted by the WIC to manage partner activities within the centers and across the local workforce system.

OSSE's role in the coordinated delivery of AJC services will include the following services, participation and collaboration. While the descriptions below contemplate services for students enrolled under AEFLA and Perkins V funding, coordination with the AJCs and partners in the local workforce system may benefit many other students served by OSSE's myriad programs.

1. Outreach and Recruitment

While OSSE may serve targeted populations under various programs, its messages reach a broad cross section of District residents. Therefore, the agency can provide candidates (including those not using its services) with information on the services of the AJCs and the system's partner programs. Information will be provided via web-based media, print materials and verbal communications.

2. Intake

As OSSE representatives conduct intake for its programs, it agrees to identify individuals that may be eligible for and/or interested in AJC services or those of the system partners. Such individuals will be referred in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

3. Orientation

Similar to candidate information derived from outreach and intake processes, orientation and information sessions led by OSSE provide a venue and/or opportunity to share with District residents information about other programs and services for which they may be qualified. For those who may benefit from AJC or partner programs, OSSE will make appropriate referrals in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

4. Initial Assessment

To the extent permitted by rules governing the funding under which it operates, OSSE may provide the AJCs and other partners with results of assessments in which customers participate via My Journey DC or TOPSpro Enterprise, the companion information management system for CASAS eTests. In cases where customers apply for services from another system partner, this process will help to avoid duplication of effort. Sharing of assessment results will require a release signed by the affected individuals in the DC Data Vault or TOPSpro Enterprise.

5. Cross Referrals

As indicated in Section 11 of the MOU, cross referrals among the District's workforce system partners are critical to the goals of collaboration and alignment of programs and to ensuring that services are customer-focused. While the partners will work with the One-Stop Operator to develop specific details for managing and tracking referrals; OSSE agrees to the following:

- Refer District residents to partner agencies via My Journey DC to fulfill an unmet need of a participant.
- Referrals will be made and tracked via My Journey DC.

6. Sharing of Local Market Intelligence

In support of its various training programs, OSSE regularly receives input from businesses that informs its efforts to train and place students in employment. Similarly, DC WIC, the AJCs and all partner programs conduct business outreach and engage in gathering local labor market information and industry "intelligence." To the extent practicable, OSSE agrees to share such information and intelligence with the AJC/one-stop partners so that entire system is well prepared to meet business and industry needs.

7. Co-Enrollment/Co-Case Management

When an OSSE provider and one or more partners serve the same customer (via the participant's co-enrollment), OSSE will work with its providers and its partners to identify opportunities to monitor customer performance, progress and outcomes, using My Journey DC and co-case manage activities for the customer to streamline processes and avoid duplication of effort and resources.

8. Support Services

OSSE will work with its providers to connect District residents to a wide range of supportive services to address their specific barriers and needs. Participants may be referred to the AJCs or other system partners, via My Journey DC, for supportive and other related services to address their unique circumstances.

9. Placement Services

To increase the range of employment opportunities for customers, OSSE agrees to work with its providers to refer District residents seeking training and/or employment to the AJCs for placement and other related services, when such services are determined as benefitting an individual.

DCHA

The following information summarizes DCHA's role within the District's one-stop/AJC system:

Shared System Design and Access

With regard to system design and access, the system partners and DC WIC agree to use of the following terms to characterize the participation of the DCHA and other partners within the local AJC system:

- **Co-Location:** A full- or part-time physical presence by one or more partner representatives at one or more of the District's AJCs.
- **Electronic Connection:** Providing AJC customers direct linkages to partner services to through use of various web-based technology applications, along with using web connections to provide partners' customers access to the AJCs and system partner information and services.

DCHA will, principally, participate in the system through electronic connection, including using hyperlinks on its own website to link participants to the AJCs and to system partners' websites. In addition, DCHA customers may use DCNetworks.org to access system information and services.

DCHA representatives may also, periodically, participate in activities occurring at the AJCs, such as recruitment and hiring events.

Shared System Knowledge

DCHA agrees to participate in cross training partner program staff to increase system capacity. This will include:

- Providing content to be used in training of partner managers and staff about the programs and services offered by DCHA. Such content will, at a minimum, include information about types of services offered; program and service eligibility requirements; application processes; and information on outcomes.
- Assisting with the delivery of training, which may include providing content suitable for electronic media format (e.g., PowerPoint, on-line video) or in-person or webcast presentations to partner representatives.
- Participating in training developed and/or provided by all District one-stop system partner agencies listed in Section 5 of the MOU. Such participation may occur through attendance at in- person sessions or by viewing web-based content.

Shared Systems and Customers

As a partner in the District's workforce development delivery system and with its network of AJCs, DCHA is committed to working with the DC WIC, DOES (which operates the AJCs), and the full range of system partners to devise, implement and continuously improve workforce strategies benefitting residents and businesses in Washington, DC. As an extension of this commitment, DCHA agrees to participate in meetings and activities organized by the One-Stop Operator, which is contracted by the WIC to manage partner activities within the centers and across the local workforce system.

DCHA's role in the coordinated delivery of AJC services will include the following services, participation and collaboration.

1. Outreach and Recruitment

While DCHA targets specific groups (generally, public housing residents and Housing Choice Voucher Program participants), its messages reach a broad cross section of District residents. Therefore, the agency can provide candidates (including those not using its services) with information on the services of the AJCs and the system's partner programs. Information will be provided via web-based media, print materials and verbal communications.

2. Intake

As DCHA representatives conduct intake for its programs, it agrees to identify individuals that may be eligible for and/or interested in AJC services or those of the system partners. Such individuals will be referred in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

3. Orientation

Similar to candidate information derived from outreach and intake processes, orientation and information sessions led by DCHA provide a venue and/or opportunity to share with District residents information about other programs and services for which they may be qualified. For those who may benefit from AJC or partner programs, DCHA will make appropriate referrals in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

4. Initial Assessment

To the extent permitted by rules governing the funding under which it operates, DCHA may provide the AJCs and other partners with results of assessments (such as CASAS, Northstar and career assessments) in which residents participate. In cases where residents apply for services from another system partner, this process may help to avoid duplication of effort. Sharing of assessment results will require a release signed by the affected individuals.

5. Cross Referrals

As indicated in Section 11 of the MOU, cross referrals among the District's workforce system partners are critical to the goals of collaboration and alignment of programs and to ensuring that services are customer-focused. While the partners will work with the One-Stop Operator to develop specific details for managing and tracking referrals; DCHA and the other system partners agree to the following:

- Referrals will be made when services of a partner program can fulfill an unmet need of an applicant/participant.
- Referrals will be made via a "hard hand-off," under which DCHA will refer individuals to a specific contact person at a partner agency and will provide assistance in scheduling an appointment, if possible.
- Referrals made will be recorded and shared with the One-Stop Operator.
- Referrals are made through My Journey DC as the official referral platform.

6. Sharing of Local Market Intelligence

Through its Workforce Development Initiative, DCHA regularly communicates with businesses to help inform its efforts to train and place residents in employment. Similarly, DC WIC, the AJCs and all partner programs conduct business outreach and engage in gathering local labor market information and industry "intelligence." To the extent practicable, the DCHA agrees to share such information and intelligence with the AJC/one-stop partners so that entire system is well prepared to meet business and industry needs.

7. Co-Enrollment/Co-Case Management

When DCHA and one or more other partners serve the same customer (via the participant's co-enrollment), the partners agree to identify opportunities to co-case manage activities to streamline processes and avoid duplication of effort and resources.

8. Support Services

DCHA directly provides or otherwise connects its students to a wide range of support services. Participants may be referred to the AJCs or other system partners for other services to address their unique needs.

9. Placement Services

To increase the range of employment opportunities for graduates of its programs, DCHA agrees to refer those seeking employment to the AJCs for placement services and support, when such services are determined as benefitting an individual.

NCBA

The following information summarizes NCBA's role within the District's one-stop/AJC system:

Shared System Design and Access

With regard to system design and access, the system partners and DC WIC agree to use of the following terms to characterize the participation of NCBA within the local AJC system:

- **Co-Location:** A full- or part-time physical presence by one or more partner representatives at one or more of the District's AJCs.
- **Electronic Connection:** Providing AJC customers direct linkages to partner services to through use of various web-based technology applications, along with using web connections to provide partners' customers access to the AJCs and system partner information and services.

NCBA will participate, principally, in the system through electronic connection, including using hyperlinks on its own website to link participants to the AJCs and to system partners' websites. In addition, NCBA customers may use DCNetworks.org to access system information and services.

NCBA representatives may also, periodically, participate in activities occurring at the AJCs, such as recruitment and hiring events.

Shared System Knowledge

NCBA agrees to participate in cross training partner program staff to increase system capacity. This will include:

- Providing content to be used in training of partner managers and staff about the programs and services offered by NCBA. Such content will, at a minimum, include information about types of services offered; program and service eligibility requirements; application processes; and information on outcomes.
- Assisting with the delivery of training, which may include providing content suitable for electronic media format (e.g. PowerPoint, on-line video) or in-person or webcast presentations to partner representatives.
- Participating in training developed and/or provided by all District one-stop system partner agencies listed in Section 5 of the MOU. Such participation may occur through attendance at in-person sessions or by viewing web-based content.

Shared Systems and Customers

As a partner in the District's workforce development delivery system and with its network of AJCs, NCBA is committed to working with the DC WIC, DOES, (which operates the AJCs) and the full range of system partners to devise, implement and continuously improve workforce strategies benefitting residents and businesses in Washington, DC. As an extension of this commitment, NCBA agrees to participate in meetings and activities organized by the One-Stop Operator, which is contracted by the WIC to manage partner activities within the centers and across the local workforce system.

NCBA's role in the coordinated delivery of AJC services will include the following services, participation and collaboration.

1. Outreach and Recruitment

While NCBA targets specific groups (e.g. unemployed seniors age 55 and over) and operates programs under which specific eligibility criteria must be met, it performs broad outreach to communicate its programs and opportunities to District residents. In doing so, the organization will provide candidates (including those not eligible for its services) with information on the services of the AJCs and the system's partner programs. Information will be provided via web- based media, print materials and verbal communications.

2. Intake

As NCBA representatives conduct intake for its programs, it agrees to identify individuals that may be eligible for and/or interested in AJC services or those of the system partners. Such individuals will be referred in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

3. Orientation

Similar to candidate information derived from outreach and intake processes, orientation and information sessions led by NCBA provide a venue and/or opportunity to share with applicants information about other programs and services for which they may be qualified. For those who may benefit from AJC or partner programs, NCBA will make appropriate referrals in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

4. Initial Assessment

To the extent permitted by rules governing the funding under which it operates, NCBA may provide the AJCs and other partners with results of assessments in which candidates/students participate. In cases where candidates or students apply for services from another system partner, this process may help to avoid duplication of effort. Sharing of assessment results will require a release signed by the affected individuals.

5. Cross Referrals

As indicated in Section 11 of the MOU, cross referrals among the District workforce system partners are critical to the goals of collaboration and alignment of programs and to ensuring that services are customer-focused. While the partner will work with the One-Stop Operator to develop specific details for managing and tracking referrals; NCBA and the other system partners agree to the following:

- Referrals will be made when services of a partner program and services can fulfill an unmet need of an applicant/participant.
- Referrals will be made via a "hard hand-off," under which NCBA will refer individuals to a specific contact person at a partner agency and will provide assistance in scheduling an appointment, if possible.

- Referrals made will be recorded and shared with the One-Stop Operator.
- Referrals will be made through My Journey DC as the official referral platform

6. Sharing of Local Market Intelligence

NCBA uses the Labor Market Information (LMI) in its efforts to train and place the participants into unsubsidized employment. Similarly, DC WIC, the AJC and all partner programs conduct business outreach and engage in gathering local labor market information and industry “intelligence.” To the extent practicable, NCBA agrees to share such information and intelligence with the AJC/one-stop partners so that entire system is well prepared to meet business and industry need.

7. Co-Enrollment/Co-Case Management

When NCBA and one or more other partners serve the same customer (via the participant’s co- enrollment), the partners agree to identify opportunities to co-case manage activities to streamline processes and avoid duplication of effort and resources.

8. Support Services

NCBA directly provides or otherwise connects its students support services including, substance abuse counseling, individual/group counseling and assistance with obtaining housing, daycare, and medical insurance. Participants may be referred to the AJCs or other system partners for other services to address their unique needs.

9. Placement Services

To increase the range of employment opportunities for graduates of its programs, NCBA agrees to refer those seeking employment to the AJCs for placement services and support, when such services are determined as benefitting an individual.

UDCC

The following information summarizes the University’s role within the District’s one-stop/AJC system:

Shared System Design and Access

With regard to system design and access, the system partners and DC WIC agree to use of the following terms to characterize the participation of the University within the local AJC system:

- **Co-Location:** A full- or part-time physical presence by one or more partner representatives at one or more of the District’s AJCs.
- **Electronic Connection:** Providing AJC customers direct linkages to partner services through use of various web-based technology applications, along with using web connections to provide partner’s customers access to the AJCs and system partner information and services.

The District’s AJC Affiliate site at 5171 South Dakota Ave., NE is co-located on the Bertie Backus

Campus of the University of the District of Columbia. The proximity of education, career training

and college-administered workforce development services to the AJC provides the opportunity for one-stop customers to easily access information about training and education programs provided by the University.

The University also participates in the local AJC/workforce system through electronic connection, including using hyperlinks on its own website to link participants to the AJCs and to system partners' websites. In addition, the University students may use DCNetworks.org to access system information and services.

Shared System Knowledge

The University agrees to participate in cross training with partner program staff to increase system capacity. This will include:

- Providing content to be used in training of partner managers and staff about the programs and services offered by the University. Such content will, at a minimum, include information about types of services offered; program and service eligibility requirements; application processes; and information on outcomes.
- Assisting with the delivery of training, which may include providing content suitable for electronic media format (e.g. PowerPoint, on-line video) or in-person or webcast presentations to partner representatives.
- Participating in training developed and/or provided by all District one-stop system partner agencies listed in Section 5 of the MOU. Such participation may occur through attendance at in-person sessions or by viewing web-based content.

Shared Systems and Customers

As a partner in the District's workforce development delivery system and with its network of AJCs, the University is committed to working with the DC WIC, DOES (which operates the AJCs), and the full range of system partners to devise, implement and continuously improve workforce strategies benefitting residents and businesses in Washington, DC. As an extension of this commitment, the University agrees to participate in meetings and activities organized by the One-Stop Operator, which is contracted by the WIC to manage partner activities within the centers and across the local workforce system.

The University's role in the coordinated delivery of AJC services will include the following services, participation and collaboration. While the descriptions below contemplate services for students enrolled under TAACCCT and Carl D. Perkins funding, coordination with the AJCs and partners in the local workforce system may benefit many other students served by the University's myriad programs.

1. Outreach and Recruitment

The University's messages reach a broad cross section of District residents. Therefore, the University can provide candidates (including those not using its services) with information on the services of the AJCs and the system's partner programs. Information will be provided via web-based media, print materials and verbal communications.

2. Intake

As the University representatives conduct intake and admissions for its programs, the institution agrees to identify individuals that may be eligible for and/or interested in AJC services or those of the system partners. Such individuals will be referred in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

3. Orientation

Similar to candidate information derived from outreach and intake processes, orientation and information sessions led by the University provide a venue and/or opportunity to share with District resident's information about other programs and services for which they may be

qualified. For those who may benefit from AJC or partner programs, the University will make appropriate referrals in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

4. Initial Assessment

To the extent permitted by rules governing the funding under which it operates, the University may provide the AJCs and other partners with results of assessments in which applicants and students participate. In cases where students apply for services from another system partner, this process may help to avoid duplication of effort. Sharing of assessment results will require a release signed by the affected individuals.

5. Cross Referrals

As indicated in Section 11 of the MOU, cross referrals among the District's workforce system partners are critical to the goals of collaboration and alignment of programs and to ensuring that services are customer-focused. While the partners will work with the One-Stop Operator to develop specific details for managing and tracking referrals; the University and the other system partners agree to the following:

- Referrals will be made when services of a partner program can fulfill an unmet need of an applicant/participant.
- Referrals will be made via a "hard hand-off," under which the University will refer individuals to a specific contact person at a partner agency and will provide assistance in scheduling an appointment, if possible.
- Referrals made will be recorded and shared with the One-Stop Operator.
- Referrals will be made through My Journey DC as the official referral platform

6. Sharing of Local Market Intelligence

In support of its various training programs, the University and WDLL regularly receive input from businesses that informs its efforts to train and place students in employment. Similarly, DC WIC, the AJCs and all partner programs conduct business outreach and engage in gathering local labor market information and industry "intelligence." To the extent practicable, and in compliance with applicable law and any third party confidentiality obligations, the University agrees to share such information and intelligence with the AJC/one-stop partners so that entire system is well prepared to meet business and industry needs.

7. Co-Enrollment/Co-Case Management

When the University and one or more other partners serve the same customer (via the student's co-enrollment), the partners agree to identify opportunities to co-case manage activities to streamline processes and avoid duplication of effort and resources.

8. Support Services

The University may directly provide or otherwise connect its students to a wide range of support services to address their specific barriers and needs. Participants may be referred to the AJCs or other system partners for other services to address their unique circumstances.

9. Placement Services

To increase the range of employment opportunities for customers, the University agrees to refer those seeking employment to the AJCs for placement services and support, when such services are determined as benefitting an individual.

Potomac Job Corps

The following information summarizes Potomac Job Corps Center's role within the District's onestop/AJC system:

Shared System Design and Access

With regard to system design and access, the system partners and DC WIC agree to use of the following terms to characterize the participation of the Potomac Job Corps Center within the local AJC system:

- **Co-Location:** A full- or part-time physical presence by one or more partner representatives at one or more of the District's AJCs.
- **Electronic Connection:** Providing AJC customers direct linkages to partner services to through use of various web-based technology applications, along with using web connections to provide partners' customers access to the AJCs and system partner information and services.

Potomac Job Corps Center will participate in the system through electronic connection, including using hyperlinks on its own website to link participants to the AJCs and to system partners' websites. In addition, Potomac Job Corps Center customers may use DCNetworks.org to access system information and services.

In addition, Potomac Job Corps Center conducts outreach and admissions activities at the AJCs. Shared System Knowledge

Potomac Job Corps Center agrees to participate in cross training partner program staff to increase system capacity. This will include:

- Providing content to be used in training of partner managers and staff about the programs and services offered by Potomac Job Corps Center. Such content will, at a minimum, include information about types of services offered; program and service eligibility requirements; application processes; and information on outcomes.
- Assisting with the delivery of training, which may include providing content suitable for electronic media format (e.g. PowerPoint, on-line video) or in-person or webcast presentations to partner representatives.
- Participating in training developed and/or provided by all District one-stop system partner agencies listed in Section 5 of the MOU. Such participation may occur through attendance at in-person sessions or by viewing web-based content.

Shared Systems and Customers

As a partner in the District's workforce development delivery system and with its network of AJCs, Potomac Job Corps Center is committed to working with the DC WIC, DOES (which operates the AJCs), and the full range of system partners to devise, implement and continuously improve workforce strategies benefitting residents and businesses in Washington, DC. As an extension of this commitment, Potomac Job Corps Center agrees to participate in meetings and activities organized by the One-Stop Operator, which is contracted by the WIC to manage partner activities within the centers and across the local workforce system.

Potomac Job Corps Center's role in the coordinated delivery of AJC services will include the following services, participation and collaboration.

1. Outreach and Recruitment

While Potomac Job Corps Center targets specific groups (e.g. eligible youth and young adults, ages 16 through 24) and operates programs under which specific eligibility criteria must be

met, it performs broad outreach to communicate its programs and opportunities to District residents. In doing so, the organization will provide candidates (including those not eligible for or not interested in its services) with information on the services of the AJCs and the system's partner programs. Information will be provided via web-based media, print materials and verbal communications.

2. Intake

As Potomac Job Corps Center representatives conduct intake for its programs, it agrees to identify individuals that may be eligible for and/or interested in AJC services or those of the system partners. Such individuals will be referred in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

3. Orientation

Similar to candidate information derived from outreach and intake processes, orientation and information sessions led by Potomac Job Corps Center provide a venue and/or opportunity to share with applicants information about other programs and services for which they may be qualified. For those who may benefit from AJC or partner programs, Potomac Job Corps Center will make appropriate referrals in accordance with the process summarized under item 5, below.

4. Initial Assessment

To the extent permitted by rules governing the funding under which it operates, Potomac Job Corps Center may provide the AJCs and other partners with results of assessments in which candidates/students participate. In cases where candidates or students apply for services from another system partner, this process may help to avoid duplication of effort. Sharing of assessment results will require a release signed by the affected individuals.

5. Cross Referrals

As indicated in Section 11 of the MOU, cross referrals among the District's workforce system partners are critical to the goals of collaboration and alignment of programs and to ensuring that services are customer-focused. While the partners will work with the One-Stop Operator to develop specific details for managing and tracking referrals; Potomac Job Corps Center and the other system partners agree to the following:

- Referrals will be made when services of a partner program and services can fulfill an unmet need of an applicant/participant.
- Referrals will be made via a "hard hand-off," under which Potomac Job Corps Center will refer individuals to a specific contact person at a partner agency and will provide assistance in scheduling an appointment, if possible.
- Referrals made will be recorded and shared with the One-Stop Operator.
- Referrals will be made through My Journey DC as the official referral platform

6. Sharing of Local Market Intelligence

Potomac Job Corps Center regularly communicates with employers and has business advisory meetings to help inform its efforts to train and place youth and young adults participating in its education and training programs. Similarly, DC WIC, the AJCs and all partner programs conduct business outreach and engage in gathering local labor market information and industry "intelligence." To the extent practicable, the Potomac Job Corps Center agrees to share such information and intelligence with the AJC/one-stop partners so that entire system is well prepared to meet business and industry needs.

7. Co-Enrollment/Co-Case Management

When Potomac Job Corps Center and one or more other partners serve the same customer (via the participant's co-enrollment), the partners agree to identify opportunities to co-case manage activities to streamline processes and avoid duplication of effort and resources.

8. Support Services

Potomac Job Corps Center directly provides or otherwise connects its students to a wide range of support services. Participants may be referred to the AJCs or other system partners for other services to address their unique needs.

9. Placement Services

To increase the range of employment opportunities for graduates of its programs, Potomac Job Corps Center agrees to refer those seeking employment to the AJCs for placement services and support, when such services are determined as benefitting an individual.

5. THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS USED TO AWARD THE SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR TITLE I ACTIVITIES.

The Department of Employment Services uses Human Care Agreements to provide services. Human Care Services are "education or special education, health, human or social services, to be provided directly to individuals who are disabled, disadvantaged, displaced, elderly, indigent, mentally ill, physically ill, unemployed or minors in the custody of the District of Columbia." 27 DCMR § 1999.1. A Human Care Agreement (HCA) is a written agreement for the procurement of education, special education, health, human, or social services to be provided directly to the individuals who have disabilities or are disadvantaged, displaced, elderly, indigent, mentally ill, physically ill, unemployed, or minors in the custody of the District of Columbia (DC). Procurement Practices Reform Act of 2010 (PPRA), Section 104(37) (2001 Ed.); D.C. Code § 2-351.04(37). According to chapter 1905 of the Title 27 of the DCMR, if an agency intends to provide contracting services through an HCA the contracting officer shall give public notice of a request for qualifications. Compliance with chapters 1905-1908 constitutes a competitive procedure for HCA services.

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. Department of Employment Services manages four AJCs throughout the District and mandates that the centers be certified as either a comprehensive center or an affiliate center in accordance with the DC WIC Policy No. 2013.003. A comprehensive AJC, as well as affiliates sites, must provide career, employment, and training services specified in Section 134 of the WIOA and provide job seeker and employer access to AJC partner services listed in Section 121(b).

Each AJC in the District is equipped to provide District residents with a range of DOES programs; in addition, a comprehensive center provides customers with access to all the AJC partner programs through on-site services or direct linkages. The roles of the co-located one-stop partners are clearly defined in existing MOAs and MOUs between DOES, OSSE, and DDS/RSA. Resource contributions of the one-stop partners have been addressed through the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA).

Through the District's AJCs, customers receive direct access to DOES staff and partners in support of their job search efforts. Services delivered through the AJCs are completely based on customer choice, allowing each customer to determine which services they would like to pursue. AJC staff is provided with tools and resources to make recommendations and work with customers to determine their individual plans based on an initial assessment. All customers are provided with assistance in the completion of their DC Networks registration, job search assistance, job readiness workshops, and labor market information. Those who are assessed as needing more intensive services, and meet eligibility requirements for WIOA, are enrolled and matched with a Workforce Development Specialist.

WIOA's provision for career services provides comprehensive assessments, development of individual employment plans, group/individual guidance and counseling, career planning, prevocational services, and a variety of specialized services and workshops tailored to the customers' needs. Customers are provided with an Individual Employment Plan that identifies the customer's goals, appropriate educational and employment objectives, and the most effective methods for securing employment. Customers focus on securing employment, obtaining training that will lead to employment, or both, depending on their needs. They will work with their assigned Workforce Development Specialists to explore career/training options and related needs, attend career development workshops, enroll in an educational component, address any barriers to employment, and identify and resolve any deficiencies. Additionally, Workforce Development Specialists make referrals to one-stop partners based on each individual's needs. The specialists coordinate with partner service providers on customers' Individual Employment Plans and ensure the service strategies in place are coordinated and comprehensive.

Occupational Skills Training is also available to employed and unemployed adults and dislocated workers who have met the eligibility requirements, need training services, and have the skills and qualifications to successfully complete the selected training program. The selected training programs are directly linked to the demand occupations in either the local area in which they reside or in areas where they are willing to commute for employment. Occupational Skills Training programs that are funded through individual training accounts (ITAs) must be accessible through the AJC. Other training services may include:

- On-the-Job training;
- Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which can include cooperative education programs and registered apprenticeship programs;
- Skills upgrading and retraining;
- Job readiness training (this should not be mistaken as short-term prevocational training, which is a career service, this training service is occupation-specific);
- Adult education and literacy activities when provided in combination with any of the previously listed training services;
- Customized training; and,
- Registered Apprenticeship.

Supportive services, allowed under WIOA 134 (d)(2), are provided to eligible adults and dislocated workers when they are determined necessary for the customer to participate in employment and training activities. Supportive services must be based on an objective assessment described and justified in the participant's Individual Employment Plan and documented in case notes. They are provided only when the customer is unable to obtain such services through other programs. The DC WIC will work with the AJC and agency partners to ensure that supportive services are coordinated through the District's AJC Memorandum of Agreement.

Supportive services are extremely important to residents to remove barriers to their success and enable successful completion of training and other activities authorized under WIOA Title I. These services include:

- Transportation assistance
- Childcare assistance
- Training and work-related clothing, including uniforms and tools
- Housing assistance
- Employment-related medical testing and background checks

In addition, WIOA participants enrolled in a training program may also be eligible to receive needs-related payments to improve their chances of successfully completing the training. Participants receiving needs-related payments must be enrolled in a WIOA-funded training program, unemployed, and not qualified (or no longer qualified) to receive Unemployment Compensation. The District is considering including legal aid supportive services that may be necessary to secure employment; a consideration recommended in WIOA's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM). Those would include criminal record expungement, resolving credit and debt issues, and support in reinstating or receiving their driver's license.

RSA plays an integral role in the delivery of services to individuals in the AJCs. Services provided by RSA staff to eligible individuals with disabilities include: conducting comprehensive and specialized assessments; creating Individualized Plans for Employment (IPE), providing counseling and guidance, career planning including career exploration, training or postsecondary education, job search and placement assistance, and supported employment services and referrals to other agencies as appropriate. Additionally, RSA provides technical assistance to the one-stop system on assistive technology and accessibility of each of the AJCs.

The roles of each one-stop partner is defined in their AJC Memoranda of Agreement and Understanding.

7. HOW THE STATE BOARD, IN FULFILLING LOCAL BOARD FUNCTIONS, WILL COORDINATE TITLE I ACTIVITIES WITH THOSE ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE II. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL CARRY OUT THE REVIEW OF LOCAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED UNDER TITLE II CONSISTENT WITH WIOA SECS. 107(D)(11)(A) AND (B)(I) AND WIOA SEC. 232.

The following are examples of how the DC WIC coordinates title I activities with the activities under title II:

- OSSE AFE and the DC WIC partnered to blend funding to support AFE's grant awards for the provision of Integrated Education and Training (IE&T) from 2018-2024.
- AFE's grants focus on the provision of IE&T, which is a model that inherently coordinates industry-specific training (Title I activities) with adult education (Title II activities) concurrently and contextually for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. Furthermore, the IE&T program offerings align with the DC WIC approved list of high demand industries.
- The DC WIC Career Pathway funding supports work-based learning, employer partnerships and other key elements necessary for implementation of IE&T program models.

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.

Memoranda of Agreement and Understanding, including one-stop partner MOUs, have been provided to DOL.

The District agencies responsible for carrying out core programs—the Department of Employment Services (DOES), the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), and the Department of Disability Services-Rehabilitation Services Administration (DDS/RSA)—are committed to working together, integrating services, and aligning programs to form a cohesive workforce development system, as outlined in the state goals and strategies. The above-mentioned activities for each of the core programs will be aligned to the District’s strategy to meet the diverse needs of District residents as follows:

Facilitating a Streamlined and Effective Workforce System

AJC partner MOUs describe the workforce development system vision and goals, as well as how each program ensures residents have full access to AJC services. The DC WIC, through the One-Stop Operator, monitors the activities outlined in the AJC Partner MOUs to ensure compliance and continuous improvement. Through AJC Partner Agency meetings and targeted strategy meetings, the One-Stop Operator can understand challenges and issues across the agencies or specific to an agency and provide solutions and best practices. Quarterly meetings provide partner agencies with an opportunity to discuss and strategize ways to align workforce goals and services and blend, braid or leverage human, material and/or fiscal resources to reduce service duplication and enhance service efficacy.

Continuous Learning for Workforce System Staff

The DC WIC is leading the effort to align staff development for the entire workforce system. In June 2023, the WIC hosted the first annual DC Workforce Summit, bringing together over 150 workforce system staff to increase their awareness and skills for serving the District’s jobseekers and businesses. The WIC is developing staff development curriculum that leads to an annual certificate of completion, ensuring that we elevate the knowledge and skills of our workforce staff, so they are prepared to meet the needs of a more modern jobseeker. The curriculum will include diverse aspects of the workforce system (case management, data analysis, policy, business development), ensures that staff have the knowledge and tools to provide quality services. A better understanding of the workforce system leads to an alignment of services through common intake, assessment, referral, and service delivery processes and tools. In addition, the WIC will deliver quarterly training and workshops that provide real time and up to date processes in support service delivery methods.

Data Alignment

The District will develop a common data dictionary and align methods of measuring success which will make individual agency management information systems interoperable. Greater alignment of WIOA core partner activities, including the development of tools, resources and/or processes for shared intake, assessment, program referral, service provision and case management. Tracking and reporting such data would add to an increasing co-enrollments more efficient expenditures of program funding. The DC WIC and the One Stop Operator will work with the core partners to strategize ways to increase co-enrollment opportunities for District residents and provide training and/or guidance to the core partners on how to make these options available to workforce system customers.

Career Pathways

The partners will continue to develop a business-driven, jobseeker-centered career pathways system, including: articulating and connecting the full range of K-12, adult education, post-secondary, and other education and training, with seamless transitions between “levels” and no

“dead ends”; providing integrated supports like education and career coaching and advising and wrap-around services like childcare and transportation assistance, especially at education and career transition points; promoting continuous, life-long learning and professional development opportunities that meet people where they are; and operationalizing residents’ access to and progress along identified career pathways.

Agreement on Resource Sharing

The Consolidated System Budget for Applicable Career Services represents services authorized to be provide under each partner’s program and are paid by each individual program. The District of Columbia cost sharing agreement has been developed via consensus with the required partners in this workforce development area. All of the applicable partners have indicated their approval by executing an MOU with the DC WIC. The cost sharing agreement consists of:

- Non-personnel infrastructure costs necessary for the general operation of the One- Stop Centers, including but not limited to:
- Applicable facility costs (such as rent)
- Costs of utilities and maintenance
- Equipment (including assessment-related and assistive technology for individuals with disabilities); and
- Technology to facilitate access to the One-Stop Centers, including technology used for the center’s planning and outreach activities
- Additional costs:
- Applicable Career Services to include the costs of the provision of Career Services in Section 134(c)(2), as authorized by and applicable to each partner’s program. For the purpose of this cost sharing agreement, applicable career services were defined to mean the partner’s costs for the delivery of applicable career services.
- The other system costs may include any other shared services that are authorized for and commonly provided through the AJC partner programs to any individual, such as initial intake, assessment of needs, appraisal of basic skills, identification of appropriate services to meet such needs, referrals to other One-Stop partners, and business services.

The cost sharing agreement was developed for the entire American Job Center of the District of Columbia System.

Each partner recognizes that infrastructure costs are applicable to all required partners, whether they are physically located in the American Job Center or not. Each partner’s contributions to both infrastructure and additional costs, however, may vary, as these contributions are based on the proportionate use and relative benefit received, consistent with the partner programs’ authorizing laws and regulations and the Uniform Guidance.

The WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, Wagner-Peyser, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Unemployment Insurance Compensation (UI), Carl D. Perkins, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program, Vocational Rehabilitation, TANF, and Job Corp are physically co-located in the District of Columbia American Job Centers.

The Senior Community Service Employment Program run by National Caucus on Black Aging (NCBA) and the employment and training programs run by DC Housing Authority (DCHA) do not have Partner Program Staff FTEs in AJC; their services are accessible via AJC front desk staff and other cross-trained partner staff at the AJC who can assist in making referrals.

F. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

No waiver requests are included.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient;	Yes
2. The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;	Yes
3. The State established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;	Yes
4. The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);	Yes
5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership;	Yes
6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions;	Yes
7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7);	Yes
8. The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan;	Yes
9. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I;	Yes
10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report; and	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
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Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	67%		68%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	71%		71%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$6,500		\$6,700	
Credential Attainment Rate	60%		60%	
Measurable Skill Gains	36%		40%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers				

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	74%		75%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	71%		71%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$8,200		\$8,200	
Credential Attainment Rate	60%		60%	
Measurable Skill Gains	57%		58%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers				

DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

**PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR WAGNER-PEYSER PROGRAM
(EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)**

A. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL STAFF THE PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES UNDER THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT, SUCH AS THROUGH STATE EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO STATE MERIT STAFF EMPLOYEES, STAFF OF A SUBRECIPIENT, OR SOME COMBINATION THEREOF

State employees currently deliver the Districts' Wagner-Peyser services at the American Job Centers (AJCs). The AJCs run resource rooms where jobseekers have access to computers, faxes, and printers. The Wagner-Peyser staff support job seekers register in DCNetworks, which includes uploading the jobseeker's resume and entering basic information on the jobseeker's career goals and interests. Once registered in DCNetworks, the Wagner-Peyser staff assists jobseekers in navigating the system to access the state job bank, labor market information, and a wide array of career tools and resources. Additionally, the DOES Office of Talent and Client Services assists employers in registering in the labor exchange to promote their job opportunities. The labor exchange platform allows the DOES Office of Talent and Client Services (T&C) team to facilitate the match between job seekers and employers. Job Seekers are informed of potential job matches they may be interested in pursuing.

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	60%		61%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	58%		58%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$3,400		\$3,600	
Credential Attainment Rate	53%		54%	
Measurable Skill Gains	22%		25%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers				

Wagner-Peyser staff also assist Unemployment Insurance claimants (UICs) at the AJCs who may need support in registering in DCNetworks. Additionally, Staff help UICs learn how to complete their work search logs, which is a requirement of the State's unemployment compensation system.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF TO ENSURE STAFF IS ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

The District will continue its strategic efforts and investments in professional development for AJC staff. These efforts include training AJC staff in the latest evidence-based best practices in the field of Workforce Development. The District focuses its training efforts on making sure AJC

staff are proficient in the industry-recognized core workforce development competencies such as customer service methodology, helping skills, employability skills, assessments, training clients and peers, labor market information and resources, career development principles and models, business and economic development intelligence, collaboration and problem-solving, diversity in workforce development, etc. Over the past two years, DOES has connected the AJC staff with the industry-recognized Workforce and Career Development Certification Training (WCDC), which is a 12-week long course that covers fundamental workforce development competencies and skills required for the effective delivery of high-quality career development services.

DOES' Office of Training and Professional Development offers training opportunities to AJCs staff, including frontline staff and managers. These trainings range from customer service, communicating effectively, effective writing, developing high-performing teams to management skills for AJC Center Managers.

The DC WIC coordinates a summer training series every summer for workforce system staff. This training includes WIOA Performance, Customer Service, Resume Review, Career Coaching, Vicarious Trauma, etc.

Additionally, WIOA Partners will leverage resources to provide training opportunities to the AJC staff and partners' staff to cross-train agency staff and ensure staff from all agencies are equipped to connect AJC customers with the most appropriate resources in the most effective way.

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

Ongoing training is provided to Workforce partners on how to identify UI eligibility issues and refer issues to UI staff for adjudication. This quarterly training focuses on the importance of identifying and reporting eligibility issues, how to identify eligibility issues and how to report eligibility issues. This training has been expanded within the past year to include Customer Navigation Center (CNC) staff members who answer all phone calls received by the agency pertaining to UI and reemployment services. Additionally, a comprehensive referral process was implemented in 2016 to ensure that all UI eligibility issues identified by Workforce staff members are forwarded to UI staff for adjudication. As a result of this referral process, more UI eligibility issues are identified and adjudicated by UI claims examiners.

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

Staff training and development will help to improve the one-stop experience for UI claimants. Additionally, there are multiple resources to assist an individual needing assistance or information in filing an unemployment compensation claim at a one-stop center. Workforce and unemployment insurance have been collaborating for the last few years to provide meaningful assistance to claimants filing for unemployment through the AJC. The two divisions have been actively working to sync systems so that information regarding claimants can be shared in "real-time". This assistance will allow unemployment insurance to connect and verify a claimant's activity with the virtual one-stop system and case notes regarding job search.

C. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UI CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

UI claimants receive reemployment assistance through the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program. The primary goals of the RESEA program are to ensure an individual receiving UI benefits continues to meet the eligibility requirements and to connect claimants to reemployment services that support the claimant's return to work at the earliest possible time. During a customer RESEA session, they receive an orientation of the center services, UI disqualifications, resume review, work search review, Labor Market Information (LMI) review and one on one job counseling. Claimants are randomly selected to attend RESEA sessions based on specific criteria which includes education level, employment history, local labor market information and economic trends.

In addition to the RESEA program, DOES uses a referral process for UI claimants who are identified as needing reemployment services. If a UI staff member identifies a reemployment barrier during a UI eligibility investigation in an AJC, they will refer the claimant to a Workforce point of contact to provide Wagner Peyser services addressing that barrier.

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:

Wagner-Peyser funds, including items/services paid for by Wagner-Peyser funds, may also be utilized to support UI claimants. Each AJC in the District has a resource room that contains computers, Internet access, telephones, printers, fax machines, unemployment staff and information and a variety of job search and career exploration aides including the labor exchange. The unemployment insurance claimant may access these via self-services or individualized career services. These services are available to all job seekers in the AJC, with a designated self-help area with light touch services available when needed by the claimant. The Districts AJC has unemployment insurance staff housed in each center. Staff coordinates all claimants that they assist in speaking with an AJC workforce staff person for job search assistance. Currently under development are IT system changes that will allow both workforce and unemployment systems to request UI and Workforce services in "real-time", upon application. This development will allow for pop up messages for all claimants as they file each week, also reminders about how many more weeks they are allowed to receive benefits and also workforce activities scheduled for that week. DOES OIT is working to develop this program and will allow both sides to share information. In addition, DOES is exploring the full replacement of the UI and workforce systems to enable better system integration.

Currently, all claimants are registered in the reemployment services system when they file their initial UI claim. Claimants are then required to create a profile that includes career type, desired positions and educational history. Once their profile is completed, claimants have access to job search tools, job announcements, job recruitments and other employment related resources 24-hours a day. The information stored in the claimant's workforce profile can also be viewed and searched by employers who are seeking suitable candidates for available positions.

Washington, DC administers the Work Test to claimants during required RESEA sessions. In 2016, the District began selecting claimants for RESEA earlier in the claim filing process.

Claimants are now randomly selected to attend RESEA after only two weeks of UI certification, opposed to the previous parameter of eight weeks. By providing an earlier point of entry, the District is able to deliver expedited reemployment services to UI beneficiaries and ensure that claimants receive the full range of available services as quickly as possible in an effort to reduce their duration of unemployment. This expedited process has also resulted in earlier detection of potential UI eligibility issues for referral to UI adjudication.

Wagner-Peyser services are aligned with Adult and Dislocated Worker services in Washington, DC. AJC staff members refer job seekers to training, support services and a more intensive level of service that Wagner-Peyser dollars do not fund. Workforce staff routinely refer job seekers to training for high-demand occupations. If Workforce Development Specialists are unable to serve jobseekers after their initial visit and assessment, and the job seeker is interested in continued service, Specialists will ask that job seekers make an appointment to return and to bring the necessary documentation to assess eligibility and become enrolled in WIOA. This will provide employers with the talent they need and job seekers with the jobs they desire.

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.

Washington, DC has no persons identified as Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) seeking services under WIOA and no agricultural sector economic activity related to MSFWs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service shows no data on farms for the District of Columbia in its most recent 2017 data.[1] As such, District has determined that there is no need for MSFW-specific services and outreach, and there are no plans to identify grantees to deliver services listed in WIOA Section 167, National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP). [1]<https://data.ers.usda.gov/reports.aspx?StateFIPS=11&StateName=District%20of%20Columbia&ID=17854>

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

See response in Section e.1. above.

3. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS MEANS SUMMARIZING MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKER (MSFW) CHARACTERISTICS (INCLUDING IF THEY ARE PREDOMINANTLY FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES, WHAT LANGUAGE(S) THEY SPEAK, THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MSFWs IN THE STATE DURING PEAK SEASON AND DURING LOW SEASON, AND WHETHER THEY TEND TO BE MIGRANT, SEASONAL, OR YEAR-ROUND FARMWORKERS). THIS INFORMATION MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DATA SUPPLIED BY WIOA SECTION 167 NATIONAL FARMWORKER JOBS PROGRAM (NFJP) GRANTEES, OTHER MSFW ORGANIZATIONS, EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, AND STATE AND/OR FEDERAL AGENCY DATA SOURCES SUCH AS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL) EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION

See response in Section e.1. above.

4. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

With no MSFW needs identified in the District, there are no plans to conduct specific outreach for MSFWs.

With no MSFW needs identified in the District, there are no plans to conduct specific outreach for MSFWs.

With no MSFW needs identified in the District, the District does not staff outreach workers for the MSFW population.

With no MSFW needs identified in the District, the District does not staff outreach workers for the MSFW population.

With no MSFW needs identified in the District, the District does not staff outreach workers for the MSFW population.

With no MSFW needs identified in the District, the District does not have outreach efforts to MSFW groups. While Washington, DC does not have an NFJP grantee, coordination is planned with neighboring NFJP grantees in Virginia and Maryland in order to educate AJC staff on available services for MSFWs from fellow practitioners in the region.

5. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

Upon entering the AJC-HQ, all customers are greeted by DOES' QMatic Ticketing System, a kiosk that guides visitors to their designated representative or training class. MSFW customers who self-identify will be directed to a Workforce Development Specialist (WDS), who will begin an assessment to determine the customers' needs and immediate, next steps. For individuals who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) or Non-English Proficient (NEP), the Language Access System will provide linguistically relevant access to DOES programs and services. American Job Center (AJC) staff, who've received Language Access training, Language Access Line interpretation services, "I Speak" cards, Language Access posters, and the DOES' website are among the various tools used to assist LEP and NEP customers. The DOES website is offered in both English and Spanish, DOES Español. If MSFW customers do not possess work visas or social security numbers, they are limited to basic services as they cannot enroll in WIOA or local training programming. Therefore, the WDS will refer the customer to an appropriate partner organization for further assistance, such as the Mayor's Office on Asian & Pacific Islander Affairs, the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs, and the Mayor's Office on African Affairs. Given there are no identified agricultural employers in the District at this time, WDS will connect MSFW seeking agricultural opportunities in neighboring jurisdictions, such National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees in Maryland and Virginia.

Although there are no MSFWs' needs to be identified in the District, DOES will develop a complaint process, which will identify a complaint specialist who receives complaints in person, written, email, or telephone. All complaints will be accepted, reviewed, assigned to the appropriate parties, investigated, and resolved within a specific timeframe from when the receipt of the filed complaint. In addition to examining the complaints, documenting all correspondence, conversations, and activities, the complaint specialist must log all complaints into a complaint system log for record retention and follow-up. Once the MSFW complaint process is approved, AJC staff will receive training on the new procedure. DOES will display the complaint system poster at all AJC locations, post the process to the DOES website, and create a one-page handout for AJC staff to distribute to MSFW customers at the AJCs'.

Although there are no agricultural employers identified as being established in the District, DOES will market an Agricultural Recruitment System to agricultural employers once finalized. Currently, an Urban Agriculture program is being established through the leadership of the Department of Energy and Environment and DOES support those efforts where applicable. Once

the program is finalized and approved, DOES will train AJC staff on the new program, post the program to the DOES website, and create a one-page handout for AJC staff to distribute to MSFW customers at the AJCs’.

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS A. COLLABORATION

While the District has not historically seen MSFWs visit the AJC system, DOES will ensure that AJC managers and staff are aware of the services available in neighboring states Virginia and

Maryland—both of which contract with Telamon Corporation as their WIOA 167 National Farm Workers Job Program grantee. As the first stage of collaboration, DOES will issue periodic directives and a fact-sheet to AJC staff informing them of the MD and VA locations that MSFWs can receive specialized services.

According to the Maryland WIOA State Plan, just 3% of outreach activities take place in the counties closest to the District of Columbia. For MSFWs interested in Eastern Shore, Maryland, they will be referred to the Salisbury American Job Center, where the MD NFJP grantee is colocated.

According to the Virginia WIOA State Plan, Winchester is the closest region to the District of Columbia with agricultural services staff, with one full-time Farm Placement Specialist based out of the local Winchester, VA office at 100 Premier Place. The nearest Telamon site offering NFJP services is located in Montross, Virginia, roughly seventy-five miles from Washington, DC. MSFWs interested in receiving services and/or relocating to Virginia for work will be referred to these sites.

Additionally, DOES will reach out to representatives at the Virginia Workforce Connection (VAWC) and Maryland Jobs Now (MJN) to request agricultural services staff and/or Telamon representatives to host an event or webinar, so that DOES AJC system staff can learn more about NFJP and other available services for MSFWs from fellow practitioners in the region. The timeframe for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements is Q4 of 2021.

B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Although there are no MSFW needs to be identified and no agricultural employers established in Washington, DC, the District will begin to solicit information and suggestions regarding MSFW-specific services and outreach from neighboring NFJP grantees in VA and MD, the Association of Farmworker Opportunities Programs, the Department of Energy and Environment, and other MSFW-related groups, providing them the opportunity to comment. Once the feedback is obtained, the District will report the organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

C. DATA ASSESSMENT

The data provided in Section e.1 shows the District has no identified MSFW needs and consequently did not make goals to serve this population.

D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

With no MSFW needs identified, the District has not conducted outreach to MSFWs or agricultural employers in the past and, consequently, did not meet goals addressing these efforts.

Moving forward, the District plans to work with MSFWs organizations and neighboring NFJP grantees in VA and MD to build staff awareness and collaboration. The timeframe for establishing goals is Q4 of 2021.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The District does not have a State Monitor Advocate.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include:	Include
1. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time (sec 121(e)(3));	Yes
2. If the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111, State Workforce Agency staffing requirements;	Yes
3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser Act services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and	Yes
4. SWA officials: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services; 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued; 3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued; 4) Approve corrective action plans; 5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days; 6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and 7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing. 	Yes

WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	57%		57%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	60%		60%	

Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5,500		\$5,500	
Credential Attainment Rate	N/A		N/A	
Measurable Skill Gains	N/A		N/A	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers				

DRAFT

**PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY
LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS
A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS**

Aligning adult education content standards is an integral part of WIOA, Title II, planning and implementation. To ensure alignment with state-adopted academic content standards, OSSE AFE has adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) as the adult education content standards for the District of Columbia. In addition to CCSS and CCRS, adult educators in OSSE funded Integrated Education Training (IE&T) programs are required to integrate the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) competencies and content standards, ONET competencies, digital literacy standards for essential computer skills, and applicable industry standards in their IE&T instructional programs and lesson plans.

OSSE AFE monitors sub-grantees for compliance with these requirements via monthly local program monitoring, monthly/quarterly reporting, check-in sessions, desk reviews and an end-of-the year final monitoring review. OSSE AFE staff, in collaboration with program managers, also conduct classroom observations for a representative sample of teachers in the program, and review lesson plans, student surveys and student performance, progress and outcome reports to determine compliance with this requirement.

The CCSS and CCRS are embedded in the CASAS Reading and Math Greater Opportunities for Adult Learning Success (GOALS) Reading and Math assessment series for Adult Basic Education (ABE) students. The CASAS Reading and Listening Student Test of English Progress and Success (STEPS) assessment series for English Language Learners are aligned with the English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards for Adult Education. Both the CASAS GOALS series and the CASAS STEPS series are assessments series approved assessments by the U.S. Department of Education. The 2014 GED and NEDP, which are the two alternative pathways to a secondary credential for adults in the District of Columbia, are also aligned with the CCSS and CCRS.

In collaboration with the University of the District of Columbia (UDC), CASAS National Office, Mustard Seed, World Education IDEAL Consortium and other professional development partners, OSSE AFE will continue to offer professional development and technical assistance to sub-grantees focused on standards integration and implementation in IE&T programs.

In September 2023, OSSE AFE launched its Action Research Distance Learning (ARDL) Project II which will be implemented through FY 2025 and beyond. The purpose of the project is to:

- 1) support AFE sub-grantees in expanding their capacity to offer Integrated Education and Training (IE&T) to adult learners through distance education, blended learning, hybrid learning and the HyFlex learning model;
- 2) Provide teachers with an opportunity to a) plan and pilot a HyFlex class, reflect on their class experiences, identify problems issues, and develop strategies to address them; b) develop industry-specific, contextualized lesson plans that include the O*NET competencies, industry standards, digital literacy standards and College and Career Readiness Standards for inclusion in OSSE AFE's new repository of IE&T lesson plans; c) use tools and techniques to boost student learning, persistence, and outcomes on National Reporting System (NRS) Tables 4, 4C, 5, and 5A with an emphasis on student attainment of entry-level and industry-recognized credentials; and

3) Build a repertoire of research-based promising practices on the integration of distance education, blended learning, hybrid learning, and HyFlex learning into IE&T programs models in the District of Columbia.

The ARDL Project II will encompass the four key areas of Action Research/Distance Learning

- AFE Integrated Education & Training (IE&T) provider and teacher reflection on program/class experiences Identification of problems or issues
- Development of strategies or an action plan to address them
- Sharing of promising practices
- Standards Integration (Standards-in-Action)

O*NET Standards

O*NET Content Model

International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Digital Literacy Standards

Seattle Digital Equity Framework

Industry-Focused Standards & Communities of Practice

Contextualizing lesson plans using O*NET, industry and digital literacy standards, College and Career Readiness Standards

Using assessment and instructional resources - Career Coach DC, Essential Education, IXL Learning, Northstar Digital Literacy

Digital Equity and Resilience

Broadband Equity Access Deployment (BEAD)

Digital Equity Act

HyFlex Planning and Piloting course

Through their participation in the ARDL Project II, OSSE AFE local providers will have an opportunity to 1) collect, staff participated in the Standards-in-Action (SIA) 2.0 State-Based Curriculum Review Pilot Project sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, to increase staff's knowledge, skills, and ability to provide technical assistance to local program providers on how to align curricula and state and industry standards. OSSE AFE staff developed a SIA Plan for implementation in 2021-25, which includes the provision of professional development, technical assistance, resources, and guidance to providers; and expanding upon its monitoring activities to include a more in-depth assessment of local program alignment of curricula and state and industry standards. OSSE AFE is developing a crosswalk of 1) the IE&T programs being offered by each provider by industry, 2) the IE&T (adult education, workforce preparation and workforce training) curricula and instructional materials being used by each provider per industry, 3) the occupations for which District residents are being prepared, and 4) the ONET standards/competencies that students are expected to possess and/or demonstrate as a result of their participation in an IE&T program, engagement in work-based learning and/or completion of an IE&T program.

The AFE team and its professional development and technical assistance partners will:

Review, analyze and compare provider crosswalk data with local program performance and student outcome data by provider(s) and industry to gain additional insight into the relative effectiveness of the IE&T program models and to identify strategies that may merit further exploration or research.

Select, review and analyze industry specific curricula from the provider crosswalk data, state-supported curricula (Essential Education and NorthStar) and other online resources (Career Coach and Virtual Job Shadow) to evaluate their alignment to English Language Arts, Mathematics and other supports appropriate for adult learners in IE&T settings as well as the CCRS, CASAS Content Standards, ONET Competencies, and the Employability Skills Framework, as applicable.

Engage providers in industry specific communities of practice to:

- Review, analyze and compare provider crosswalk data and aggregate local program performance and student outcome data,
- Identify gaps (e.g., program model, curricula, instruction, instructors' expertise and experience, etc.), and
- Develop strategies to fill/address the gaps to improve local program performance and student outcomes.

Engage providers in action research to:

- Pilot implementation of one or more programmatic and/or instructional enhancement strategies,
- Review and analyze data to determine the impact of their strategy/strategies on local program performance and student outcomes,
 - 2) Identify lessons learned, and
 - 3) Share promising practices for future replication and/or adaptation by other IE&T providers and/or partners serving youth and adults.

Additionally, as stated earlier in this plan, OSSE AFE will work closely with OSSE CTE, the WIC, other workforce development partners, and industry representatives to identify high-leverage credentials and skillsets (including both technical skills and general employability skills) that align with the in-demand careers in the District. OSSE AFE will work with its subgrantees to incorporate the alignment of these credentials and skills into their standards and curriculum. Alignment of industry recognized credentials will support the Perkins performance indicator for recognized postsecondary industry credential and WIOA Title I and II Credential Attainment metrics, thus allowing DC to collect and report credential attainment rates that are more aligned and comparable. This effort will also include identifying or developing an agreed upon rubric and/or assessment to measure the employability skills identified by DC's employers and that the CTE, adult education, and workforce development systems can incorporate into their programming. Once implemented, tracking performance on this metric will help inform how these skills are taught and will allow the District to set specific performance targets regarding DC resident's mastery of key employability skills.

B. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is the state agency in the District of Columbia responsible for administering the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), a federal initiative authorized by Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

of 2014 (Pub. Law 113-128), codified at 29 U.S.C. § 3271 et seq. and its implementing regulations at 34 CFR Part 463. The AEFLA Grant program is supported with a match of local funds, as required by Title II, section 222(b) of WIOA codified at 29 U.S.C. § 3302(b). As such, the AEFLA Grant program is supported by a combination of federal and local funding.

OSSE, in collaboration with the District's Workforce Investment Council (DC WIC), administers the DC WIC Career Pathways Grant which is authorized by the Mayor's Order 2016-086 and the Workforce Investment Implementation Act of 2000 (D.C. Code 32-1601 et seq.). OSSE also administers the Gateway to Careers Grant, which is authorized by the State Education Office Establishment Act of 2000, effective October 21, 2000 (D.C. Law 13-176; D.C. Official Code § 38-2602(b)) and Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Support Act of 2017, sec. 4052.

Through its Adult and Family Education unit, OSSE:

Awards AEFLA, DC WIC Career Pathways, and Gateway to Careers Grant funds, through a competitive grant process, to eligible providers to offer Integrated Education and Training Programs (adult education and literacy, workforce preparation and workforce training services) as well as supportive and transition services to District residents;

Facilitates state leadership activities including professional development, technical assistance and monitoring;

Provides resources (software, instructional materials, equipment, and assistive technology) to adult education providers and partners in Washington, DC; and

Maintains and reports state and local program performance, progress and outcome data to the U.S. Department of Education, city officials and other stakeholders in an attempt to facilitate continuous improvement at the state and local program levels.

OSSE, in partnership with the DC WIC, conducted a grant competition in FY 2020 and awarded AEFLA Section 231, 225 and 243 funding, DC WIC Career Pathways funding and Gateways to Careers funding to twelve eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness, to offer high quality integrated education and training programs to District residents from FYs 2021-25 with an emphasis on preparing youth and adults for a career path in one or more of the DC WIC's high demand industries. These industries include: 1) Business and Office Administration, 2) Construction, 3) Education, 4) Healthcare, 5) Hospitality, Retail, Tourism and Entertainment, 5) Information Technology, 6) Security and Law Enforcement, 7) Transportation, Infrastructure and Utilities. Additionally, programming may be offered in alignment with other in-demand industries in the Washington metropolitan area. The next grant competition will be held in FY 2025 for AEFLA funding for FYs 2026-31.

Integrated education and training program models include the provision of 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. These and other related services (e.g., supportive and transition services) are offered to District residents for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Adult learners will have an opportunity to attain measurable skills gains, earn a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, attain one or more entry level and/or industry-recognized certifications, transition to postsecondary education, engage in work-based learning and/or be placed in unsubsidized employment in a high- or in-demand industry and occupation that pays a family sustaining wage and/or that leads to economic self-sufficiency. To achieve these goals, eligible providers partner with educational providers, workforce training providers,

employers, postsecondary institutions, and other entities to meet the diverse needs of youth and adults and support them in the pursuit of their desired career path.

In the last quarter of FY23, OSSE AFE, in collaboration with the WIC, provided WIC Career Pathways funding to OSSE AFE IE&T providers to pilot the Career Up DC Project. Through this project, students close to receiving their secondary, entry-level and/or industry recognized credential or nearing completion of an OSSE AFE IE&T program are afforded an opportunity to earn a stipend (minimum wage) or incentive during their participation in a work-based learning activity (e.g., internship, externship, practicum, apprenticeship, etc.). OSSE AFE will continue the implementation of Career Up DC, based on the availability of funding, to provide youth and adults in OSSE AFE IE&T programs with an opportunity to enhance their skillsets through their participation in work-based learning activities designed to increase the talent pool for businesses and lead directly to employment opportunities.

In FY 2024 and beyond, OSSE plans to play a key role in ensuring that youth and adults in AEFLA programs have equitable access to affordable, high-speed and reliable internet, and are empowered with the devices, technological support, and the digital literacy skills needed to effectively use it. OSSE AFE IE&T providers connected students to the Internet for All Program to acquire subsidized residential broadband internet services from Comcast through its Internet Essential Program (\$9.99 per month) or RCN/Astound Internet First Program (\$9.95 per month). Providers also assisted eligible students in obtaining the Emergency Broadband Benefit, if applicable. The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) replaced the Emergency Broadband Benefit program effective December 31, 2021. ACP is a benefit program that helps ensure that households can afford the broadband they need for work, school, healthcare and more. The benefit provides a discount of up to \$30 per month toward internet service for eligible households. Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if they contribute more than \$10 and less than \$50 toward the purchase price. ACP is limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household.

Additionally, OSSE is:

Partnering with OCTO's Broadband and Digital Equity Team, the WIC and other stakeholders relative to the development and implementation of the District's BEAD State Plan and Digital Equity State Plan;

Preparing AFE IE&T providers to compete independently for either (1) the District's Digital Equity Act funds or (2) the Department of Commerce (DoC), National Telecommunications and Information Agency's (NTIA) Digital Equity Act funds in FY 2024 or FY 2025, as applicable; and

Strategizing and planning to compete for either (1) the District's Digital Equity Act funds or (2) the DoC NTIA's Digital Equity Act funds in 2024, if/as applicable. If selected as a grantee, OSSE AFE will award the grant funds to OSSE AFE IE&T providers to bridge the digital skills divide, promote digital inclusion and advance digital equity for students in IE&T programs and their families.

Eligible providers are funded based on the 13 AEFLA funding considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, as well as other criteria or state-imposed requirements specified by OSSE AFE and DC WIC in the Request for Application.

Eligible individuals include District residents who (a) have attained 18 years of age; (b) are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; and (c) who are basic skills deficient; do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent of education;

or are English Language learners. OSSE AFE is committed to ensuring equitable access to AEFLA and other related programs and services for youth and adults that comprise the District's most vulnerable residents. This includes the following target and/or covered populations specified in the District's Unified WIOA State Plan, District's Broadband, Equity and Access State Plan and the District's Digital Equity State Plan, who face significant barriers to education, employment and economic success.

- Youth (18 to 24 years of age);
- Youth in Foster Care;
- Long-term unemployed residents and displaced homemakers;
- Low income individuals, including TANF and SNAP Participants;
- Individuals with disabilities, including persons with learning disabilities;
- Older individuals (55+);
- Returning citizens and incarcerated individuals in a prison, jail, reformatory, work farm, detention center, or halfway house, community-based rehabilitation center, or other similar institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders;
- Individuals who are English language learners and persons with language barriers;
- People experiencing or with recent histories of homelessness;
- Individuals who have low levels of literacy;
- Racial and ethnic minorities; and
- Veterans.

Eligible providers include organizations that have demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy, and may include: (a) a local educational agency; (b) a community-based organization or faith-based organization; (c) a volunteer literacy organization; (d) an institution of higher education; (e) a public or private non-profit agency; (f) a library; (g) a public housing authority; (h) a nonprofit institution that is not described in any of subparagraphs (a) through (g) and has the ability to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals; (i) a consortium or coalition of agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described in any of the subparagraphs (a) through (h); and (j) a partnership between an employer and an entity described in any of the subparagraphs (a) through (i).

Funds awarded by OSSE AFE under Sec. 231 of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) shall not be used to support or provide programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not individuals described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of Section 203 (1), inclusive of individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in a secondary school under State law except that funds will be made available to support family literacy programs, services and activities. Eligible providers shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this subtitle prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities other than adult education activities (Sec. 231 (d)).

OSSE AFE provides oversight of the grants administration process using the EGMS (Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS) for the submission, review and approval of applications for funding, processing of cost reimbursements for payment tied to District Integrated Financial System (DIFS)SOAR and for programmatic and fiscal monitoring of its sub-grantee. OSSE AFE uses the Literacy Adult and Community Education System (LACES) for programmatic monitoring of its subgrantees and reporting of local program provider and student performance, progress and outcome data to the U.S. Department of Education, city council, WIC, and other key stakeholders.

Additionally, OSSE AFE continues to partner with the University of the District of Columbia and other partners to offer professional development, technical assistance, consultation and

evaluation services to adult educators and the leadership/support teams of local program providers. These services are aimed at both professionalizing the field of adult education and increasing providers capacity to plan for and embrace impending changes to adult education and workforce development as a result of the WIOA, District of Columbia state initiatives such as Mayor Muriel Bowser's Come Back Plan and/or other related legislation, including the Infrastructure and Job Investment Act of 2021 (Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill).

Please also see the following sections: Aligning of Content Standards, Correctional Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program, State Leadership and Assessing Quality.

OSSE AFE ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for AEFLA Section 231 funding. OSSE AFE uses the same Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) and Request for Application (RFA) to apprise eligible providers about the AEFLA 231, 225 and 243 grant opportunities. The grant competition is facilitated through OSSE's Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS). Eligible providers follow the same process to create and apply for AEFLA grant funds in EGMS. This ensures that all applications can be screened by OSSE AFE staff for evidence of demonstrated effectiveness and forwarded to the grant readers for review using the same rubric and scoring criteria. Once funding determinations are made, eligible providers receive a notification via EGMS of the status of their application. If the eligible provider's application has been accepted, the eligible provider will also be able to generate a Grant Award Notification via EGMS. See Section III.b.5.B.1 above for a description of how AEFLA grants, including funding associated with Section 231, 225, and 243 will be competed and awarded. Section III.b.5.B.1 also outlines how the State will comply with the requirements of Subpart C (competition, direct and equitable access, same grant process, and use of the 13 AEFLA funding considerations).

OSSE AFE will not spend more than 82.5 percent of the state AEFLA grant for Section 231- Adult Education and Literacy.

C. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

OSSE AFE provides funding to eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness to offer Integrated Education and Training (adult education and literacy, workforce preparation, workforce training and other related services) aligned to the DC WIC's high demand industries, to individuals in correctional institution or other facility for institutionalized individuals in accordance with Section 225 of WIOA. A correctional institution is defined as any of the following: 1) Prison, 2) Jail, 3) Reformatory, 4) Work farm, 5) Detention Center, or 6) Halfway house, community-based rehabilitation center, or other similar institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders. These industries include: 1) Business and Office Administration, 2) Construction, 3) Education, 4) Healthcare, 5) Hospitality, Retail, Tourism and Entertainment, 5) Information Technology, 6) Security and Law Enforcement, 7) Transportation, Infrastructure and Utilities.

OSSE requires eligible providers to use Section 225 grants for the cost of educational programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions and other institutionalized individuals, including academic programs for: 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.

Eligible providers may also use Section 225 funding to support educational programs for students' transition to re-entry initiatives and other post-release services with the goal of reducing recidivism. Such use of funds may include educational counseling or case work to support incarcerated individuals' transition to re-entry and other post-release services.

Examples include assisting incarcerated individuals to develop plans for post-release education program participation, assisting students in identifying and applying for participation in post-release programs, and performing direct outreach to community-based program providers on behalf of re-entering students. Eligible providers will not be able to use Section 225 funds for costs for participation in post-release programs or services. OSSE AFE ensures that service provision is prioritized and directed to individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. OSSE AFE encourages collaboration with other adult education providers, training providers, employers, and postsecondary education institutions to help facilitate students' successful transition and reintegration into the community after release.

OSSE AFE ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for AEFLA Section 225 funding. OSSE AFE uses the same Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) and Request for Application (RFA) to apprise eligible providers about the AEFLA 225, 243 and 231 grant opportunities. The grant competition is facilitated through OSSE's Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS). Eligible providers follow the same process to create and apply for AEFLA grant funds in EGMS. This ensures that all applications can be screened by OSSE AFE staff for evidence of demonstrated effectiveness and forwarded to the grant readers for review using the same rubric and scoring criteria. Once funding determinations are made, eligible providers receive a notification via EGMS of the status of their application. If the eligible provider's application has been accepted, the eligible provider will also be able to generate a Grant Award Notification via EGMS. See above for a description of how AEFLA grants, including funding associated with Section 225, 243, and 231 will be competed and awarded.

Section III.b.5.B.1 also outlines how the State will comply with the requirements of Subpart C (competition, direct and equitable access, same grant process, and use of the 13 AEFLA funding considerations).

OSSE AFE will not spend more than 20 percent of the 82.5 percent of the state AEFLA grant for Section 225 – Corrections Education and Education of Other Institutionalized Individuals activities.

D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

OSSE AFE provides funding to eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness to offer Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) and Training to District residents in accordance with Section 243 of WIOA. Section 243 funding may be used to serve English Language Learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries. English Language Learners have an opportunity to participate in Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs that help them to gain competency in English and acquire the skills needed to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship as members of their communities, while also engaging in integrated education and training activities aligned to their desired career path.

Eligible providers receiving funds through the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program are required to provide services that 1) Include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic

participation; 2) Prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency; and 3) Integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

Eligible providers that receive funds through the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program may use funds for integrated English literacy and civics education in combination with integrated education and training activities by: 1) Co-enrolling participants in integrated education and training that is provided within the local or regional workforce development area from sources other than Section 243 of the Act; or 2) Using funds provided under Section 243 of the Act to support integrated education and training activities.

OSSE AFE ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for AEFLA Section 243 funding. OSSE AFE uses the same Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) and Request for Application (RFA) to apprise eligible providers about the AEFLA 243, 225 and 231 grant opportunities. The grant competition is facilitated through OSSE's Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS). Eligible providers follow the same process to create and apply for AEFLA grant funds in EGMS. This ensures that all applications can be screened by OSSE AFE staff for evidence of demonstrated effectiveness and forwarded to the grant readers for review using the same rubric and scoring criteria. Once funding determinations are made, eligible providers receive a notification via EGMS of the status of their application. If the eligible provider's application has been accepted, the eligible provider will also be able to generate a Grant Award Notification via EGMS.

See Section III.b.5.B.1 above for a description of how AEFLA grants, including funding associated with Section 243, 225, and 231 will be competed and awarded. Section III.b.5.B.1 also outlines how the State will comply with the requirements of Subpart C (competition, direct and equitable access, same grant process, and use of the 13 AEFLA funding considerations).

OSSE AFE expends the subset of funding specified in its award letter from the U.S. Department of Education for Section 243 – Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education and Training activities, in addition to local funding and WIC Career Pathways. IELCE and training program offerings will be aligned to the DC WIC's Workforce Council's High Demand Industries. These include: 1) Business Administration and Office Administration, 2) Information Technology, Construction, 3) Education, 4) Healthcare, 5) Hospitality, Retail, Tourism and Entertainment, 5) Information Technology Infrastructure (Energy and Utilities, Energy Efficient Technology, and Transportation and Logistics), 6) Security and Law Enforcement, 7) Transportation, Infrastructure and Utilities and Security. Additionally, programming may be offered in alignment with other in-demand industries in the Washington metropolitan area.

Through their engagement in IELCE and training programs, District residents have an opportunity to receive adult education and literacy instruction, concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training, where applicable, for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. These and other related services (e.g., supportive and transition) are offered to District residents for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Adult learners will have an opportunity to attain measurable skills gains, earn a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, attain one or more entry level and/or industry-recognized certifications, transition to postsecondary education, engage in work-based learning and/or be placed in unsubsidized employment in a high- or in-demand industry and occupation that pays a family sustaining wage and/or that leads to economic self-sufficiency.

To achieve these goals, eligible providers partner with educational providers, workforce training providers, employers, postsecondary institutions, and other entities to meet the diverse needs of English Language Learners and support them in the pursuit of their desired career path.

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

To meet the requirements of Section 223(a)(1)(A), (B), (C) and (D) of WIOA, OSSE AFE uses federal and local state leadership funds to enhance the quality of programming in the District's adult education and workforce development system. Not more than 12.5% of the federal grant funds made available will be used to carry out the state leadership activities under Section 223.

Activities to be supported with state leadership funds include the following:

OSSE will continue to work collaboratively with key stakeholders to align adult education and literacy activities with the WIOA core programs as specified in the District's Unified State Plan under section 102. Priority emphasis has been placed on the development of career pathways that provide access to integrated education and training services, that lead to postsecondary education and/or high-wage and high-demand employment for District residents in adult education and literacy activities. This initiative is being led by the DC WIC in collaboration with the WIOA core partners and other key stakeholders. State leadership funds are used to build the capacity of WIOA core program providers to better assess and address the needs of District residents. Efforts include cross-training staff on a shared process for student client orientation, intake, assessment, learning needs screening, career mapping, and referral and receipt of services.

To meet future teacher qualification requirements, OSSE has and will continue to partner with the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) to offer a Graduate Certificate Program in Adult Education (24 credit hours) and, Master of Arts in Adult Education (36 credit hours), and one-credit professional development modules, workshops and seminars for adult educators using state leadership funds. OSSE has and will also continue to work in collaboration with UDC and other PD partners to provide high quality professional development (PD) programs to adult educators to improve programming and instruction to adult learners. OSSE AFE, in collaboration with the UDC Adult Education Program, UDC's Office of Continuing Education, and Ed2Go offers additional professional development opportunities to practitioners in the District of Columbia. This includes Professional Development Scholarships to meet the specific fundamental and career training needs of adult educators, vocational instructors, program administrators, and support staff from OSSE AFE subgrantees and other adult education and/or workforce training programs in the District so that these individuals can enhance their knowledge and skills, and better assist District residents in the pursuit of their desired career paths.

State leadership funds will continue to be used to work in collaboration with national, state and/or local trainers/subject matter experts from various organizations (e.g., Genius, World Education, IDEAL Consortium, the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) National Office, , LINCS, Mustard Seed, Minnesota Literacy Council, Essential Education, etc.) to provide high quality professional development to program administrators, teachers and staff at all levels. Topics will include but are not limited to: Action Research, Using Assessment to Design Instruction, Curricula Review and Standards Integration, Differentiated Instruction, Contextualized Instruction, Digital Literacy Implementation, technology integration, blended learning/distance education, HyFlex learning and other related topics.

OSSE will continue to engage in evaluation activities to assess the effectiveness of the PD provided and employ continuous improvement strategies to improve state, local program and student performance and outcomes.

OSSE will continue to support the provision of technical assistance (TA) to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation and workforce training to enhance local program effectiveness. TA is offered to increase the ability of providers to meet established performance standards, and to fulfill obligations associated with being a WIOA and one-stop delivery system partner. Eligible providers receive one-to-one and/or small group technical assistance. OSSE AFE PD partners also provide TA to eligible providers on a variety of topics. OSSE uses State leadership funds to support 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, blended learning/distance education, and staff training. OSSE AFE providers will also be required to participate in events and activities sponsored by the DC WIC, One Stop Operator, WIOA core partner agencies and/or other key stakeholders.

OSSE has and will continue to promote technology integration in providers and partner agencies to improve instruction, services, and system efficiencies. OSSE makes web-based assessments, curriculum and instructional resources (eCASAS, TOPSpro Enterprise, GED Academy, CASAS Academy, Work Essentials, Computer Essentials, Money Essentials, Career Coach DC, Virtual Job Shadow, IXL Learning and NorthStar Digital Literacy,) available for use by providers and partners. State leadership funds also support the DC Data Vault, a web-based transactional data system designed to help facilitate shared intake, assessment, program referral, and tracking services for WIOA core programs and partners.

OSSE will continue to conduct monitoring activities that evaluate the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation and workforce training. OSSE monitors local program performance on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis and works with eligible providers to improve local program performance and student outcomes. Local program check-in sessions, desk reviews, programmatic and fiscal reporting, classroom observations, folder samples, and end-of-the year monitoring reviews are employed to assess average attendance hours, measurable skills gains, credential attainment, students' transition to secondary education, postsecondary education, training, advanced training and/or employment and other student performance, progress and outcomes. These methods allow OSSE monitors and eligible providers to review the operational aspects of the program including the draw down and expenditure of grant funds, staff completion of required professional development, and local program adherence to accountability and reporting requirements. Based on the evaluation findings, OSSE, in collaboration with its PD/TA providers, offers professional development, technical assistance, and resources to adult education administrators, teachers and staff at all levels to ensure continuous improvement at the local program level.

OSSE will continue to prioritize the facilitation of partnerships between adult education providers, training providers, local postsecondary institutions, industry associations and employers in an effort to create pathways and bridge programs from adult education to higher education and/or employment in high-wage and high-demand industries for adult learners in the District of Columbia.

OSSE will collaborate, where possible with the DC WIC, One Stop Operator, WIOA Core Programs, partners, providers, and other stakeholders to avoid duplication of efforts in order to maximize the impact of the activities described above.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE See response in Section e.1.

F. ASSESSING QUALITY

OSSE works in collaboration with its PD/TA providers to assess the quality of local program providers of adult education and literacy services and take actions to improve such quality through its robust monitoring system. The OSSE AFE monitoring system measures local program performance in four key areas: 1) Student performance, progress, and involvement, 2) Instructional Models and Methods, 3) Program Management and Leadership, 4) Data Collection and/ Reporting. In addition to requiring programmatic and fiscal reporting, OSSE AFE will monitor and evaluate providers remotely via local program monitoring, check-in sessions, desks reviews, quarterly reporting and end-of- the-year monitoring reviews.

Eligible providers will be required to:

- Enter local program, student, and staff data in LACES (The Literacy Adult and Community Education System (LACES), OSSE AFE's management information systems;

- Conduct student outcome follow-up activities and report data in LACES;

- Generate monthly Diagnostic Search Reports in LACES and address data discrepancies to ensure the validity and accuracy of data;

- Submit programmatic and/or fiscal data when requested by the monitor and the required evidence (e.g., Student Roster, Student Diagnostic Reports, Student Performance Report(s), Student Outcome Report(s), cost reimbursement supporting documentation, agency audit, certification of single audit, etc.);

- Participate in Local Program Monitoring activities, check-in sessions, follow-up Desk reviews, and follow-up TA Sessions;

- Participate in Classroom Observations and provide feedback to instructors;

- Participate in an end-of-the-year final monitoring review; and

- Develop and implement a Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP), as determined by the state.

Continue to improve in the performance area(s) for which the provider did not achieve the targeted outcome(s) or receive the maximum points available for the metrics on the final monitoring tool.

OSSE will monitor local program providers remotely throughout the program year to:

- Evaluate the local program's progress to-date toward contracted enrollment, goals and outcomes;

Determine if the local program will be able to achieve the contracted enrollment, goals and outcomes by program year-end;

Ensure that the local program has qualified staff, procedures, and systems in place to achieve contracted enrollment, goals and outcomes;

Ensure that the local program is following OSSE's Assessment Policy, Data Collection and Reporting Policy, Internal Control Policy, and other policies and procedures;

Ensure that local program providers are entering data in LACES and able to produce and report accurate and reliable information;

Assess the funded program's instructional quality of OSSE AFE IE&T programs;

Compare local the program providers' grant expenditures to-date with the approved budget;

Review and approve local program cost reimbursement requests and maintain a budget tracker for each local program provider;

Identify program strengths and areas needing improvement;

Identify and address local program technical assistance, professional development and resource needs; and

Facilitate continuous improvement at the local program levels.

Furthermore, as stated earlier in this plan, to support the recent focus on work-based learning, OSSE AFE will work to adopt and adapt the shared work-based learning toolkit that was jointly developed by OSSE, the WIC, City Works DC, and other workforce development partners. This toolkit will help government agencies and workforce partners throughout the education to employment continuum think about work-based learning the same way. This will include incorporating monitoring and evaluation of these opportunities based on an adapted version of the shared rubric that was created by the cross-sector group.

State leaderships funds will be used to support the state's management information system - LACES (Literacy Adult and Community Education System). LACES will be used by the state to evaluate state and local program performance.

OSSE AFE staff monitor local programs on their compliance to the DC Data Collection and Reporting Policy to ensure that local programs meet the National Reporting System (NRS) requirements for follow-up of core and secondary outcome measures. Local programs will use a combination of direct program reporting and survey to collect follow-up data from students who exited the program so that the data is reflected on NRS Table 5.

OSSE AFE included a requirement in its Fiscal Year 2020 grant application that eligible providers describe how their IE&T programs are of sufficient intensity and quality and based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains. To evaluate this measure, AFE conducted an analysis of local program performance and student outcome data annually for FY 21 and FY 20. Each year In FY 21, a significant number and percentage of students in AFE IE&T programs make a measurable skill gain and attained an entry-level and/or industry-recognized credentials.

In an effort to Tell the District's Story: Using Data Outcomes to Measure Success, OSSE As stated above, AFE is developing a crosswalk of 1) the IE&T programs being offered by each provider by industry, 2) the IE&T (adult education, workforce preparation and workforce training) curricula and instructional materials being used by each provider per industry, 3) the occupations for which District residents are being prepared, and 4) the ONET standards/competencies that students are expected to possess and/or demonstrate as a result of their participation in an IE&T program, engagement in work-based learning and/or completion of an IE&T program and other key elements of each IE&T program's design. AFE will continue to review, analyze, and compare the provider crosswalk data with local program performance and student outcome data by provider(s) and industry to gain additional insight into their relative effectiveness and to identify strategies that may merit further exploration and research. Information and insights gained from these evaluations, in addition to program monitoring data, will be used to inform state planning and the allocation of resources, professional development and technical assistance to local program providers.

Professional Development Quality Assessment

The OSSE AFE bases professional development and technical assistance activities on the results of the prior year monitoring data so that the state can address the metrics categories for in which sub- grantees had earned the lowest number of points. On an annual basis, OSSE AFE directs its PD efforts toward promoting teacher effectiveness and improving student outcomes.

OSSE AFE continues to identify and implement strategies modified its classroom observation tool to that reinforce the state's expectation that 1) teachers align assessment, curriculum and instruction to address and accommodate different student learning needs; 2) teachers embed the Common Core State Standards, College and Career Readiness Standards, CASAS Competencies and Content Standards, ONET Competencies, digital literacy standards and applicable industry standards into their IE&T instructional programs and lesson plans; and 3) students achieve their desired outcomes as evidenced on NRS Tables 4 and 5.

Adult educators have been participating in professional development activities remotely including: The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) Implementation Training; Literacy Adult and Community Education System (LACES) Training; the National External Diploma Program (NEDP) Training, OSSE AFE and UDC Mini-PD Institutes and workshops offered by the DC WIC and One Stop Operator for WIOA providers and partners and workshops on other related topics. Adult educators also have participated in workshops remotely on contextualized instruction, models of integrating education and training, and integrating technology into their programs, with an emphasis on the use of state sponsored educational software products, mentioned above, to meet the needs of students via classroom instruction, blended learning and/or distance education.

OSSE AFE will assess the quality of its remote professional development programs via training participant surveys and after all workshops, webinars, presentations and PD institutes. Participant feedback which will be used to inform future PD offerings and the continued use of specific PD training providers; to modify the format of future workshops; and/or to determine if there is a need for technical assistance and/or additional resources for the training participants to successfully operationalize their lessons learned.

OSSE AFE, in collaboration with its PD providers, will also conduct a PD survey at specific intervals to determine adult educators' PD needs, preferred delivery formats (face-to-face, webinars, hybrid), and preferred schedule (days, evenings, weekends) for offerings. The PD survey will also be used to assess local program staff's satisfaction with the training they have

received throughout the program year and provide participants with an opportunity to share examples of how they applied the lessons learned during training in their programs, classrooms and everyday practices. The PD survey will also provide local program staff with an opportunity to identify resources and supports they may need to be more effective in their roles in adult education and family literacy programs.

OSSE AFE monitors providers remotely via check-in sessions, webinars, and desk reviews to assess the quality and application of PD. Monitors review local program providers' lesson plans, student and class profiles, PowerPoint presentations, and handouts. Monitors also participate in classroom observations remotely and review data collected and reported through the OSSE AFE end-of-the year Final Monitoring Review and student surveys, as applicable.

Furthermore, OSSE AFE will review local program and student data in LACES, the state's management information system, to evaluate the impact of professional development on local program performance and student progress and outcomes.

One example of OSSE AFE's evaluation of the implementation of PD, is as follows: Since CASAS is the approved assessment for the District of Columbia, local program staff are required to participate in CASAS PD training and implement either the paper-based or the CASAS eTest web-based assessment system. OSSE AFE monitors generate assessment reports in LACES to determine if local programs are administering tests appropriately and generating Diagnostic Search Reports to identify and address discrepancies in the data. OSSE AFE monitors review local program data to determine whether that the staff are adhering to OSSE AFE's Assessment Policy, including ensuring that enrolled students who have a minimum of 50 (maximum of 70 to 100 instructional hours have validly matched CASAS pre-tests and post-tests in reading and math or other ESL instructional areas (writing, speaking, listening comprehension). They determine whether enrolled students who are post-tested are making educational gains as evidenced by the percentage of enrolled students who complete an educational functioning level.

Furthermore, local program staff are required to complete and/or generate CASAS student profiles by competency and class profiles by competency and to work with students to establish goals. They are also required to develop lesson plans that incorporate student learning needs as specified on CASAS student and class profiles by competency, class profiles by competency, and student goals as well as expected to use appropriate curricula, multiple delivery methods and approaches to meet the diverse learning needs of students. Program managers are required to conduct classroom observations to assess the quality of the instruction being provided by teachers and the level of student satisfaction with the instructional services they are receiving. OSSE AFE monitors review the lesson plans, conduct classroom observations remotely and review student surveys, where applicable, to determine if teachers are employing the instructional strategies, utilizing instructional resources, and improving their practices based on the training that they have received.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include:	Include
1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;	Yes

2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;	Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;	Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;	Yes
5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;	Yes
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;	Yes
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and	Yes
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program.	Yes

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include:	Include
1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding the supplement-not-supplant requirement);	Yes
2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;	Yes
3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not "eligible individuals" within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA;	Yes
4. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.	Yes
5. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).	Yes

AUTHORIZING OR CERTIFYING REPRESENTATIVE

<u>APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>Enter information in this column</u>
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Applicant's Organization	DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	Enter information in this column
First Name	Michelle
Last Name	Johnson
Title	State Director, Adult and Family Education
Email	jmichelle.johnson@dc.gov

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

OSSE AFE ensures direct and equitable access for all eligible providers to apply for AEFLA grant funds in the District of Columbia. OSSE will publish a Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) on the DC Office of Partnerships and Grant Services (OPGS) website and in the OPGS electronic bulletin "The Funding Alert." The NOFA will also be published on OSSE's website at www.osse.dc.gov.

OSSE will then publish the multi-year (minimum five-years) AEFLA Request for Applications (RFA). A notice about the release of the RFA will be published on the DC OPGS website and in the Funding Alert. The RFA will also be published on OSSE's website at www.osse.dc.gov.

All eligible applicants will submit applications using OSSE's web-based Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS), including certifications and assurances. Other information in the application will include a description of how funds awarded under the AEFLA will be spent and a description of any cooperative agreements the eligible provider has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of adult education and family literacy activities. A panel of independent reviewers, external to OSSE, will review and score the applications based on the 13 considerations in section 231(e) of WIOA.

Eligible applicants will not be required to apply for an AEFLA grant through another agency as OSSE will award the funding directly to the selected eligible providers. The application process has been designed so that it is clearly evident that the direct submission of an application to OSSE via EGMS is the only acceptable and non-negotiable method of applying for grant funds.

OSSE will require all eligible providers for sections 231, 225, and 243 to use the same application process via EGMS to ensure that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. OSSE further ensures that all eligible providers will have direct and equitable access to apply for AEFLA grant funds via the same grant announcement and

application process. During the initial period of the grant submission process, any eligible agency that contacts OSSE with an interest in participating in the competition will be provided the information needed. OSSE believes that these approaches meet the requirements specified in AEFLA and satisfy the requirement that every effort be made to ensure direct and equitable access to eligible providers.

To ensure fair and equitable access, the OSSE state agency for Adult and Family Education adheres to policies and procedures set forth by the District of Columbia Office of Contracting and Procurement and Office of Partnerships and Grants Services as well as policies, procedures, and guidance from the OSSE Office of Grants Management and Compliance, Office of the General Council, Office of the Chief Financial Officer and Office of the Chief Information Officer.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	19.0%	19.0%	21.0%	21.0%	17%	17%	18%	18.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	23.0%	23.0%	25.0%	25.0%	15%	15%	16%	16%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$6,900	\$6,900	\$7,000	\$7,000
Credential Attainment Rate	46.0%	46.0%	48.0%	48.0%	46.0%	46.0%	47.0%	47.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	45.0%	47.0%	46.0%	47.0%	50.0%	52.0%	52.0%	53.0%

- Employment (Second Quarter After Exit) and Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit): Per its PY 2022 negotiated target (17%) and actual performance (37.2%) and its PY 2023 negotiated target (18%), OSSE is proposing the following targets for PY 2024 (27%), PY 2025 (28%), PY 2026 (29%) and PY 2027 (30%) for this indicator.
- Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit): Per its PY 2022 negotiated target (15%) and actual performance (35.97%), and its PY 2023 negotiated target (16%), OSSE is proposing the following targets for PY 2024 (25%), PY 2025 (26%), PY 2026 (27%) and PY 2027 (28%) for this indicator.
- Median Earning (Second Quarter After Exit): Per its PY 2022 negotiated target (\$6,900) and actual performance (\$8,580), and its PY 2023 negotiated target (\$7,000), OSSE is proposing the following targets for PY 2024 (\$7,500), PY 2025 (\$7,600), PY 2026 (\$7,700) and PY 2027 (\$7,800) for this indicator.
- Credential Attainment Rate: Per its PY 2022 negotiated target (46%) and actual performance (29.24%), and its PY 2023 negotiated target (47%), OSSE is proposing the following targets for PY 2024 (25%), PY 2025 (26%), PY 2026 (27%) and PY 2027 (28%) for this indicator. In FY 2023, OSSE engaged in the refinement of its list of entry-level and industry-recognized credentials. The impact of these efforts resulted in a lower credential attainment rate for PY 2022 and will have a more significant impact on PY 2023's data as well based on the increased rigor associated with the credentials that we are now reporting on and for which will have high value from the industry perspective. OSSE is proposing two targets for PY 2022 and PY 2023 for these two indicators for consideration by USDE.
- Of the two proposed targets, OSSE would prefer to establish a target of 17% for PY 2022 and 18% for PY 2023 for Employment (Second Quarter After Exit) based on PY 2020 (21.57%) and PY 2021 (15.12%) actual performance data. Additionally, OSSE would prefer to establish a target of 15% for PY 2022 and 16% for PY 2023 for Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit) based on PY 2020 (19.63%) and PY 2021 (12.01%) actual performance data.

- If the target for each employment indicator must be established at the same or a higher level than the prior PYs, OSSE, to meet this criteria, is proposing an optional target of 22% for PY 2022 and 23% for PY 2023 for Employment (Second Quarter After Exit) and 26% for PY 2022 and 27% in PY 2023 for Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit).
- Median Earning (Second Quarter After Exit): OSSE is proposing a target of \$6,900 for PY 2022 and \$7,000 for PY 2023 for Median Earning (Second Quarter After Exit) based on PY 2020 (\$6,409.00) and PY 2021 (\$6,890.00) actual performance data.
- Credential Attainment Rate: OSSE is proposing a target of 46% for PY 2022 and 47% for PY 2023 for Credential Attainment Rate is based on PY 2020 (54.16%) and PY 2021 (44.87%) actual performance data.

DRAFT

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL)

A. INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

1. INPUT PROVIDED BY THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, INCLUDING INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPORT, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS PART OF THE COUNCIL'S FUNCTIONS;

The following report was provided by the Chair of the State Rehabilitation Council:

Mission, Purpose, and Function

Mission: The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was created in response to federal law and Mayoral Order 93-149, to empower and respect people with disabilities in the District of Columbia; and maximize their employment outcome, self-determination, economic self-sufficiency, independence, inclusion, and integration into society based on the informed choices of people with disabilities in the District of Columbia.

Purpose: The purpose of the SRC is to act in an advisory capacity to the Administrator of DCRSA on the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to people with disabilities in the District of Columbia.

Functions: The function of the SRC includes the following:

- Review, analyze, and advise the agency regarding eligibility for services; extent, scope, and effectiveness of services provided; and functions performed by District of Columbia agencies that affect or that potentially affect the ability of individuals with disabilities achieving rehabilitation goals and objectives.
- Advise the Administrator of RSA, and assist in the preparation of applications, the State Plan, the Strategic Plan and amendments to the plans, reports, needs assessment and evaluations required.
- Conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness, and consumer satisfaction with (a) functions performed by the District of Columbia agencies and other public and private entities responsible for performing functions for individuals with disabilities; and (b) vocational rehabilitation services.
- Prepare and submit an annual report to the Mayor of the District of Columbia and the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration, and the United States Department of Education, on the status of vocational rehabilitation programs operated within the District of Columbia.
- Coordinate with other councils within the District of Columbia.
- Advise the Administrator of DCRSA and provide for coordination and the establishment of working relationships between DCRSA, the Statewide Independent Living Council, and Centers for Independent within the District of Columbia.
- Perform such other functions, consistent with the purpose of the Council as deemed appropriate.
- Prepare a Resource Plan, in conjunction with the Administrator of DCRSA, for the provision of resources, including staff and other personnel as may be necessary to carry out the functions of the Council.

Federal law specifies community representation in the composition of the State Rehabilitation Council.

Key Performance Indicators

RSA has several key performance indicators reviewed and assessed throughout the fiscal year. The table below reflects the format used in previous years' reports and gives information on the key performance indicators and their progress made within the previous fiscal year. For FY23 the performance goal was 675 successful placements and while the goal was not met, DCRSA was able to successfully place 605 people in employment. This was a 90% successful employment placement rate.

DCRSA has several key performance indicators reviewed and assessed throughout the fiscal year. The table below reflects the format used in previous years' reports and gives information on the key performance indicators and their progress made within the previous fiscal year.

Key Performance Indicator	FY 2020 Target	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Target	FY 2021 Actual	FY2022 Target	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Target	FY 2023 Actual
Number of people placed by RSA that remained employed for 90 calendar days or more	675	522 FY20 Achieved 77%	675	609 FY21 Achieved 90%	675	650 FY22 Achieved 96%	675	605 FY23 Achieved 90%
Percent of people with a plan developed within 90 calendar days of eligibility	90%	97% Met; Achieved	90%	98% Met; Achieved	90%	96% Met; Achieved	90%	97% Met; Achieved
Percent of people for whom eligibility is determined within 60 calendar	90%	94% Met; Achieved	90%	98% Met; Achieved	90%	97% Met; Achieved	90%	97% Met; Achieved
Average entry level wages for people whose cases are closed successfully	\$15.00	\$17.63 Met; Achieved	\$15.00	\$17.33 Met; Achieved	\$16.50	\$17.68 Met; Achieved	\$16.50	\$19.24 Met; Achieved

Major Accomplishments of DCRSA

DCRSA continues to provide employment-preparation, attainment, advancement, and job sustainability for DC residents whose impairments served as an impediment or barrier to employment. DCRSA worked to engage the community in new ways this past fiscal year. Below

are key areas of interest DCRSA accomplished in order to continue strengthening service delivery to the residents of the District:

DCRSA outreach and engagement efforts intentionally target people identified as underserved or unserved according to the 2023 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and ensure accessibility of services. DCRSA presently has fourteen (14) bilingual staff, including six (6) Spanish speakers which is consistent with 34 CFR 361.18. This effort broadens the District's Latinx community's access to DCRSA Services, career exploration and employment supports. DCRSA has participated in over one hundred and thirty (130) community-based events, with a majority targeting the identified underserved and unserved communities. The agency has worked to improve outreach efforts, such as sponsoring educational, informational, cultural events, and strengthening relationships with community organizations. Efforts are focused on working and engaging with community organizations that the Latinx Community trusts. More collaboration and communication occur during monthly or quarterly meetings, collaborative presentations, or other activities. Over the last five years, DCRSA collaborated with other partner agencies and hosted the annual Latinx Conference for people with disabilities and their families. The Spanish language only conference was designed to provide Spanish-speaking people with disabilities and their family members with access to information, support, and resources in their native language. The conference also assisted District agencies in understanding the needs and experiences of the Latinx community with disabilities. At each year's conference, there is a dedicated listening session to provide an opportunity to hear from people who share their experiences and recommendations on what they would like to see from the District government. Based on the feedback from the community, DCRSA has hired additional Spanish-speaking staff, sponsored the Spanish-speaking Direct Service Professionals, and revised policies to enhance language access and cultural competence.

DCRSA has maintained and enhanced the effectiveness of outreach efforts through ongoing evaluation and utilization of outreach sites to ensure that DCRSA staff are placed in communities where the need for VR services is most critical. DCRSA has an outreach committee that meets monthly and has established annual outreach goals.

DCRSA worked with the American Job Centers (AJCs) to ensure VR Specialists are on-site, at all three (3) locations. The facility located in Southeast Washington, serving Wards 7 and 8, continued its concentrated effort to support the population in these wards. DCRSA has assigned Employment Coordinators at the AJC sites.

DCRSA worked to increase the number of people who completed training programs that prepare them for jobs in high demand fields, increasing the number of employment placements in these fields. DCRSA currently works with 11 training providers in high growth industries to include: Hospitality and Tourism, Healthcare, Information Technology (IT), Security, Construction and Building Trades, Transportation and Infrastructure and Retail and Customer. To assist with the number of people who complete training programs in high demand fields, the operations team informs DCRSA Programs of vendors offering vocational training in DC Workforce Investment Council (DC WIC) high-demand sectors. DCRSA currently has seventeen (17) vocational training providers offering vocational training in DC WIC high-demand sectors during Program Year 2022 including: AALB Medical Interpreter Training (1), Archangel Training Academy (1), Career Technical Institute (CTI) (1), CDL Training Center for NOVA (5), Destined for Greatness/Amala Lives Institute (2), Exceptional Minds (1), Hands On Dental Assistant Training (1), Healthwrite Training Academy (1), National Association of Blind Merchants (1), Paralegal Institute of Washington (1), and Time for Change (2). Of the seventeen (17) District residents who were placed in vocational training in PY22, twelve (12) completed training, three (3) did not complete training, and (2) were still attending training as of 6-30-23.

Five (5) District residents who completed training secured employment in the DC Workforce Investment Council (DC WIC) high-demand industries after completing training with the following vendors: Archangel Training Academy (1), CDL Training Center for NOVA (3), Time for Change (1).

DCRSA has executed agreements with additional training providers and coordinated with the DCWIC, OSSE and DOES to ensure that VR persons who are served are able to access training programs provided through other workforce agencies. DCRSA continues to collaborate with the WIC to plan the allocations and program cost of the one stop centers. DCRSA continues to meet monthly with the one stop operator who coordinates the one-stop centers to ensure compliance.

DCRSA has executed an MOU with the WIC during FY23 and has submitted to the DC WIC the following information for each month from the FY23: number and percent of referrals successfully enrolled, number and percent of enrollees who completed the agency program, number and percent of enrollees who obtain employment, number and percent of enrollees who maintain employment for at least three months. As DCRSA cannot utilize the DC Data Vault for referrals, an alternative referral process has been implemented. While a majority of staff are trained on the DC Data Vault, DCRSA's referral and eligibility process does not lend itself to a seamless transition of effective engagement with the Data Vault without altering the Administration's nature of business. The alternative referral process, "Partner Referral Process", encompasses the below process describing how customer referrals are made electronically.

Partner Referral Process:

Once a referral is placed, the Intake and Outreach Unit will schedule an intake appointment with a VR Specialist. Every person who is scheduled for an intake will be asked to identify their preferred mode of communication and any accommodation required for the intake appointment. The person will be provided with an Intake Appointment Notification Letter containing the time, date, and location of the intake interview and information about the information and documentation that will be requested. This letter can either be sent via email, or printed and mailed, or handed to the person at the time of scheduling. The person will be provided with an appointment reminder, using the person's preferred mode of communication, 24-48 hours prior to the scheduled appointment. On the day of the appointment, the VR Specialist will call the applicant to initiate the intake appointment.

DCRSA continues to collaborate with DCPS through its joint MOU. An MOU was developed for FY23 that provides staffing support to the schools for the coordination and delivery of Pre-Employment Transition Services (pre-ETS). For FY23, DCRSA funded four (4) staff at DCPS to provide programming to reach all DCPS students who qualify for pre-ETS. DCRSA coordinates pre-employment transition services with DCPCS and a local Non-Profit organization, DC Special Education Cooperative (CoOp), to provide similar staff support to eligible students or potentially eligible students in the DC Public Charter Schools (DCPCS). DCRSA has maintained a partnership with DCPS and the DC Special Education Cooperative (CoOp) that has led to an increase in counseling on post-secondary education and training as well as paid work-based learning experiences for students with disabilities in the District. DCRSA will maintain collaboration with both organizations to provide pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially for services.

In Fall 2023, the DC Special Education Cooperative hosted 351 students across DC, who attended the DC3C Next Steps Career Exploration Conference to learn about educational pathways available for future jobs. Next Steps is a program that is ideal for students who are exploring possible career and education opportunities after high school.

DCRSA collaborated with the DC Special Education Cooperative Program (CoOp) to host the Summer Explore program from June to August 2023. During the program, 17 selected students participated in paid or volunteer work opportunities. Students with disabilities, who are also members of historically marginalized groups, participated in a work-based learning program that integrated independent living and employment readiness. Participants learned about independent living skills such as living alone, financial literacy, transportation, shopping, and cooking. Students had the opportunity to investigate injustices in the community via an intersectional lens of race, disability, and prejudice. Additionally, students were able to work as social media interns.

In May 2023, SchoolTalk, along with DCRSA, hosted the Voices of Change Conference. SchoolTalk provided transition and employment-related sessions directly to students, which were tailored to fit individual schools' schedules and the individual's needs. This year, 130 students from ten (10) schools across the district attended the Voices of Change Conference and, twelve (12) youth received work-based learning experiences,

DCRSA held its 2023 National Disability Awareness Month Employer Recognition Program where DCRSA recognized business partners who have provided opportunities for high school youth to gain work experience: National Postal Museum, Spirit Club, Martha's Table, City Blossoms and Sheppard Elementary.

In FY23, DCRSA hosted its 3rd and 4th cohorts of the Aspiring Professional's Internship Program—a program designed to provide opportunities for District of Columbia Government Agencies to host DC Residents in a professional setting, geared to help job seekers become more competitive while providing a sense of focus and independence in the visualization of their career interests.

SRC and RSA Partnership, Goals and Outcomes FY 2022 and 2023

The SRC participated in several activities with DCRSA this year. The following is a summary of the activities completed this year between the two entities:

- Reviewed and updated existing bylaws
- Completed outreach for increasing membership and backfilling chairperson vacancy
- Discussed and provided feedback on WIOA state goals
- Engaged partners in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) data collection process

In FY23, the SRC reviewed its bylaws that govern the committee's work and recommendation it makes to DCRSA. DCRSA provided program updates to the SRC at its quarterly meetings in FY23.

Summary of FY22 and FY23 Accomplishments

Goal 1: Increase the number of DC residents with disabilities who achieve quality employment outcomes in competitive integrated settings.

For FY23, DCRSA successfully placed 605 individuals in competitive integrated employment. DCRSA continued to work virtually with a number of training providers in high growth industries to include Hospitality and Tourism, Healthcare, Information Technology (IT), Security, Construction and Building Trades, Transportation and Infrastructure, Retail and Customer Service. DCRSA focused on employer outreach facilitated by its Business Relations

Specialist and four (4) additional Employment Specialists who developed relationships with businesses throughout the Washington DC Metropolitan Area to ensure collaboration with businesses that utilize high demand occupations as part of their business model. This approach continued to increase education and awareness of the need for placement in the identified high demand occupancy areas. Additionally, training and support to employers was provided to foster job development and placement incentives in these occupancy areas.

For FY22, DCRSA successfully closed 650 cases, meeting approximately 96% of the overall goal. DCRSA worked with the American Job Centers (AJCs) to ensure VR Specialists were on-site five (5) days a week, at all four (4) locations, to deliver supports and services to clients. When DCRSA moved to the virtual platform due to COVID -19, VR Specialists continued to work virtually with DOES and Employment coordinators to provide job readiness and job seeking opportunities for our consumers. DCRSA engaged employers in all DC wards to ensure consumers no matter their geographic location in the city had access to available job opportunities.

Employment Outcome Descriptions for High-Demand Occupations	FY21	FY22	FY23
People served by RSA and achieved successful outcomes	609	650	605
Percentage of placements in high demand occupations /Number Served	87%/527	84%/540	85%/514
Construction/Infrastructure/Number Served	3% /21	3%/18	2%/13
Healthcare / Number Served	6%/34	5%/30	3%/19
Hospitality/Culinary / Number Served	34%/205	37%/241	38%/230
Business/IT /Number Served	20%/124	22%/146	23%/137
Security/Law Enforcement / Number Served	3%/17	5%/32	6%/34
Transportation / Number Served	5%/29	5%/30	4%/22
Customer Service/Retail / Number Served	16%/97	7%/43	9%/59

Based on this table, DCRSA specifically showed growth in Customer Service/Retail (37%). While other sectors reflected changes in the following areas: Construction/Infrastructure (-28%), Business/IT (-6%), and Healthcare (-11%). DCRSA continues to collaborate with external partners and leverage the DC Infrastructure Academy and the Department of Employment Services (DOES) to increase these job placements and opportunities in these high-demand fields in FY23.

Goal 2: Improve DCRSA service delivery through more efficient operations and a more effective, skilled workforce.

During FY 23, DCRSA provided opportunities virtually for professional development and training for new and existing staff. DCRSA updated its policies to align with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) requirements. DCRSA successfully completed its portion of the Unified State Plan for FY 24' thru FY28. In FY23, DCRSA initiated its triennial Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CSNA) for the District of Columbia. DCRSA staff were offered and participated in virtual and in-person Person-Centered Thinking (PCT) training.

DCRSA staff offered opportunities for intakes to be completed at any of the existing AJC locations to be more accessible to clients within the community. Individuals interested in services were directed to the local AJCs if an alternative intake location is requested. When the AJCs reopened, DCRSA staff were available to persons who walked into any AJC location at any time and requested to meet with an RSA representative, five days per week. The Intake Standard Operating Procedure has been updated to include a statement where individuals can choose their preferred location.

DCRSA, along with its partners, hosted the 5th annual Latinx Conference for people with disabilities and their families. The conference was held in September 2023, and 150 individuals representing individuals with disabilities, family members, and agency/organization staff attended. The Spanish-language-only conference was designed to provide Spanish-speaking people with disabilities and their family members with access to information, support, and resources in their native language. The conference was held at Columbia Heights Educational Campus at no cost to attendees and the theme was Promoting Health & Well-Being: Know Your Rights! During the conference, attendees participated in sessions on Mental Health Supports, Future Planning, and Healthy Relationships. Participants heard from various government and community-based organizations discussing supports and services in the District. Attendees also heard from people with disabilities on the importance of self-advocacy. At the end of the conference, a resource fair was held. DCRSA has 14 bilingual staff members to further serve district clients.

DCRSA, with the support of a training provider, modified the Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) curriculum with an emphasis on customized employment to present a hybrid (online and in-person) course. This course provides guidance and coaching on customized employment for individuals with disabilities, in which trainees participated in a variety of field assignments related to the individual's employment goal. DDS successfully enrolled a total of 43 participants for FY23 cohort 3 and 4, who participated in the course. All field assignments, including a specific employment placement, were completed by participants. DCRSA is looking to launch its cohort 5 and 6 in the upcoming fiscal year.

DDS-RSA hosted its annual Provider and Resource Fair. The Provider and Resource Fair offered District residents with disabilities and their family's opportunities to engage with organizations that provide a variety of supports. Participants met with DDS Providers, DC government agencies, and other community-based agencies providing supports and services to DC Residents with disabilities. During the event, participants attended sessions in the following areas:

- Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Services for DC residents with sensory needs and independent living services
- Future planning
- Assistive Technology
- Benefits Counseling
- Transition Services

Approximately 550 individuals attended the in-person event held at the Washington Convention Center. Eighty-five (85) service providers and community partners participated, delivered an overview of their services, and shared essential resources with attendees.

In FY23, there were a total of 5,694 people who received vocational rehabilitation services within the District of Columbia. Of the individuals served, there were 605 successful closures that lead to competitive integrated employment. In accordance with the Fair Shot Minimum Wage Amendment of 2016, the minimum wage and living wage in the District of Columbia increased to \$17.00 on July 1, 2023. This wage increase impacted the employment placements after July 1st. For FY23, 282 people earned more than \$17.00 an hour.

DCRSA staff case reviews continued to be completed monthly. In FY23, 97% of cases were determined eligible within 60 days and 97% of individualized plans for employment (IPEs) were developed within 90 days, surpassing the compliance requirement of 90%. DCRSA baseline

measures were established through the completion and submission of the 911 federal report. DCRSA implemented methodology to capture and report out on quarterly wages after exit and measurable skills gained. 20% was the negotiated target measurable skills gained level approved by the Department of Education. In FY22, 97% of cases were determined eligible within 60 days and 98% of individualized plans for employment (IPes) were developed within 90 days, surpassing the compliance requirement of 90%. DCRSA collaborated with the Vocational Rehabilitation for Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management to specifically identify ways to improve on reporting its WIOA key performance indicators moving forward which will include continued training to DCRSA staff, Measurable Skills Gains (MSG), Wages at 2nd and 4th quarters after exit, employer engagement, Credential Attainment, and average hourly wages.

In FY23, DCRSA developed SOPs and internal documents and trained staff to understand and comply with the revised policies and procedures. DCRSA's internal policy committee meet on a bi-weekly basis to review and update policies and practices so that they are consistent with federal and District regulations. These policies and procedures reflect and incorporate national best practices and are developed with input from the SRC and the community. Some examples of updated policies and procedures include the MSG Policy, Language Access Policy, and Prior Approval Standard Operating Procedure. Additionally, a policy has been published on Internal Controls to ensure compliance with federal requirements and accounting of the use of federal funds. In FY23, DCRSA drafted policies including some of the following examples: Rate Setting Methodology Policy, Intake Policy, Postsecondary Education and Training Policy. Lastly, DCRSA has initiated its stakeholder input process for revisions and updates for the following: Case Transfer Policy and Procedure, Customized Employment Policy and Procedure, and Quality Review and Supervisory Case Review.

DCRSA has engaged with stakeholders in sponsoring the annual Voices of Change event for youth, the DSP academies for youth and adults, the Latin X conference, the NDEAM event, just to highlight a few of the major events.

FY22 General Programming Updates

Latino Conference on Disabilities FY 22

The Department on Disability Services (DDS), the Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC), and the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs (MOLA), in collaboration with other partner agencies, hosted the fourth annual Latinx Conference for people with disabilities and their families. The conference was held on September 21, 2022 and was attended by 85 individuals representing individuals with disabilities, family members, and agency/organization staff. The Spanish-language-only conference was designed to provide Spanish-speaking people with disabilities and their family members with access to information, support, and resources in their native language. The conference was held at Martin Luther King Memorial Library at no cost to attendees. The theme of the conference was Employment for All. During the conference, attendees heard from various governmental and community-based organizations discussing employment supports and services in the District. Attendees also heard from people with disabilities about the importance of employment and some of their success stories. At the end of the conference, attendees participated in a resource fair.

Participant Number: 85

ACRE

The District of Columbia's Department on Disability Services (DDS) and the Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) presented a hybrid online and in person course. DCRSA collaborated with one of its training providers to develop an ACRE training curriculum that was tailored specifically to the DC landscape. DDS successfully enrolled (18) participants

from the provider community and DDS internal staff, who actively engaged in the course. During FY22, the program launched its second ACRE Training during the Summer of 2022. Trainers from cohort two will be able to extend and share their knowledge of customized employment to the new upcoming cohort. In FY23, DDS is looking to continue to collaborate with certified ACRE trainers to expand skillsets in the world of customized employment. Training cohort three will commence in November and end in March of 2023.

Participant Number: 18

Provider and Resource Fair FY22

In FY22, The District of Columbia's Department on Disability Services (DDS), hosted its annual Provider and Resource Fair. The goal of the event was to increase awareness of RSA's services and supports. The fair provided an opportunity for existing DDS' clients to engage, and exercise informed choice when selecting employment service providers. Approximately 220 individuals attended the in-person event, held at the Department on Disability Services. There was a total of eighteen (18) services providers who participated and delivered an overview of the services offered. Additionally, DDS facilitated a wellness demonstration that shared best practices and brought awareness to the importance of self-care as it relates to employment. DDS also highlighted the functions of employment coordinators and provided information about benefit counseling. As a result of the positive response, DDS is looking forward to expanding this event to continue to engage different community partnerships across the district.

Participant Number: 220

Goal 3: Expand and improve the quality of transition services through improved coordination with the state education agency and all local education agencies and implementation of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to secondary students with disabilities.

DCRSA expanded and improved the quality of its Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS). Based on the data available to DCRSA during FY23, from a list compiled by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), approximately 4,314 students were potentially eligible for Pre-ETS. For FY23, there were 3,429 students who were eligible or potentially eligible for Pre-ETS. These students have either already been determined eligible for VR services by the State VR Agency or are potentially eligible for services based on their status of having an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), a 504 plan, or identified as having a disability while being a student in the secondary educational environment between the ages of 14-22.

Pre-ETS Data

During fiscal year 2023, The DC Department on Disability Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration (DDS/RSA) provided Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for 3,429 students. Of the 4,314 eligible or potentially eligible students, 79% (3,429) were high school students ranging from the age of 14-22. The number of students who received services from District of Columbia Public Schools was 1,713. The number of students who received Pre-ETS from the Public Charter Schools was 545. Providers and VR Specialists delivered Pre-ETS to 1,171 students who were eligible or potentially eligible.

The data for Pre-ETS shows that DCRSA provided paid work-based learning experiences for students with disabilities throughout the District. Based on national research, students are more likely to successfully transition to postsecondary employment if they have at least one paid work experience before they graduate from high school. DCRSA worked closely with local education

agencies (LEAs) to provide paid work-based learning experiences (internships and/or job sampling experiences) for students with disabilities.

DCRSA has met this performance measure by providing 367 paid work-based learning experiences for district youth in FY23. The work-based learning experiences were provided by external partner providers, The Special Education Cooperative, and DC Public Schools. Each opportunity that was offered was a competitive, integrated work-based learning opportunity. The Special Education Cooperative provided work-based learning experiences (WBLEs) for 87 youth, DCPS provided 170 WBLEs, and Project Search provided 10 WBLEs. Internally, the VR Specialists referred 102 individuals to providers to participate in work-based learning experiences.

FY23 Transition Programming Updates

RCM-Guided Group Discovery:

During FY23, students from the River Terrace Education Campus participated in the Guided Group Discovery Program (GGD). Students created an individual blueprint to guide them as they navigate through their journey of securing employment.

Participant Number: (29) youth

RCM-Travel Training:

RCM of Washington created a travel training program that was piloted to students at the River Terrace Education Campus. The administration recognized the importance of providing travel training to youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities who would benefit from learning how to travel independently by bus and train. The program included one week of in-person class time during which facilitators covered the following topics: an overview of the metro system, safety, travel hurdles, solo travel, and a review session. Two additional sessions were set aside for facilitators and students to practice traveling the bus and train together. RCM facilitators traveled to River Terrace to train 15 students. The goal of travel training was to teach individuals with

disabilities how to travel independently and confidently using public transportation.

Participant Number: (15) youth

DC Public Schools: General Explorations Internship Program:

During FY23 DCPS provided work readiness training program focusing on career readiness skills and career exploration hosted by workforce development coordinators.

Participant Number: 90

DC Public Schools Competitive Employment Opportunities Mentoring Program:

During FY 23 DCPS provided a workplace readiness training program focusing on self-advocacy instruction and peer mentoring. Students continued the internship during MBSYEP Program.

Participant Number: 30

ProjectSEARCH Program:

Adult students ages 18-22 during FY23 participated in a transition-to-work program focusing on skills training, career exploration, and individualized job development. This program leads to supported employment.

Participant Number: 10

Workforce Development Center at River Terrace Education Campus:

In FY23 DCPS provided a transition school-to work program focusing on career exploration and training in employability and independent-living skills through classroom instruction.

Participant Number: 38

DC Special Education Cooperative Summer Explore Program:

This paid work-based learning program incorporates independent living and job readiness for students with disabilities who are also members of historically underrepresented communities. Independent living skills such as living alone, financial literacy, transportation, shopping, and cooking were taught to participants. Students were given the opportunity to analyze

neighborhood challenges via an intersectional lens of racism, disability, and prejudice. This program also provided students with the opportunity to work as social media interns.

Participant Number: 17

BroadFutures:

During FY23, neurodivergent students participated in a curriculum that incorporates workforce preparedness, professionalism and effective communication, and stress reduction tools. The program incorporated the arts and mindfulness/yoga.

Participant Number: 1

KBEC:

During FY23, students learned about soft skills and how they effect workplace performance. The program included in-person learning that included job exploration, soft skill training, and work readiness activities.

Participant Number: 29

Outstanding Possibilities Revealed (OPR) ASPIRE Program:

During FY23, OPR offered cohorts for students to participate in a work readiness training program focusing on self-advocacy, career readiness skills, and career exploration.

Participant Number: 44

Project ReDirect (PRD):

PRD offered a job readiness training program focusing on work readiness skills and career knowledge. The program curriculum included all five of the Pre-ETS categories and offered additional activities like first aid certification, travel training and financial advocacy.

Participant Number: 80

SchoolTalk: JumpStart/MBSYEP Program

In partnership with DOES, DCRSA offered participants a work-based learning program focusing on self-advocacy, career readiness skills, career exploration, and disability disclosure for students participating in MBSYEP Program.

Participant Number: 30

Time for Change:

During FY23, students participated in a job readiness training program focusing on self-advocacy, career readiness skills, and employment job search.

Participant Number: 2

Voices of Change Conference 2023

SchoolTalk's Annual Voices of Change Conference 2023 was designed to equip middle and high school students with knowledge and skills to lead self-determined lives through opportunities to LEARN, LEAD, and ACT. Each year, students engage with youth leaders, community-based organizations, and local entrepreneurs and artists who shed light on postsecondary pathways to work, education, and independent living. SchoolTalk provided transition- and employment-related sessions directly to students, which were tailored to fit individual schools' schedules.

2023 Voices of Change Data.

2020 Voices of Change Data

Data Points	Total Number of Youth
Schools who participated in the conference	10
Educators who attended the conference	47
Youth Participants	130
Exhibiting Organizations	11
Exhibiting Individuals	18
Event Staff and Volunteers	53

Youth work-based learning experiences	12
Youth Awardees	4
Miscellaneous (Parents & Educators Supporting Youth Awardees)	6

FY22 Transition Programming Updates

DC Special Education Cooperative:

Next Steps Career Exploration Conference

On December 2nd, 2021, (62) students participated in the annual Next Steps Career Conference. During this event students from DC Charters and DCPS 14+ attended to learn about different careers from our volunteer career experts, and local education and training opportunities. This year's event was 100% virtual and hosted via the virtual platform.

Participant Number: 62

Becoming a Student Ambassador

During January and February 2022, (9) students participated in the Becoming a Student Ambassador program. The purpose of the program was to develop alumni who have the potential to use their voice to influence DC3C programming at a local community level. This was a paid internship opportunity for DC3C alumni that focused on job skills related to effective verbal communication, self-advocacy, and community engagement.

Participant Number: 9

Career Preparation Program (CPP) Exploration

During February and March 2022, (7) students participated in the Career Preparation Program, Exploration. The purpose of the program was to engage students who are at the beginning of their career journey in secondary transition and RSA services. The program provided both a paid work-based learning experience, and job exploration counseling for students.

Participant Number: 7

Career Preparation Program (CPP): Obtainment

During the months of April through June, at least (30) students will be enrolled in the CPP obtainment program hosted by DC Special Education Cooperative. The purpose of the program is to increase the number of people who complete training programs. The program will prepare students for jobs in high demand fields, by offering a paid work-based learning experience leading to integrated employment. DDS in collaboration with the DC Special Education Cooperative looks forward to hosting these annual programs in FY23.

Participant Number: 30

SchoolTalk:

Music Production & Career Development Program

During the month of January and February 2022, SchoolTalk's Music Production & Career Development Program engaged (21) D.C. youth in hands-on music production experiences. Students focused on learning the essentials of songwriting, audio and music production, and the music industry.

Participant Number: 21

JumpStart

SchoolTalk provided supported summer employment experiences for (51) transition-aged DC youth with disabilities, during the summer of 2022. JumpStart is a summer youth employment program for D.C. youth designed to provide individualized supports and skill-building opportunities to successfully complete and learn from their Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program (MBSYEP) worksite placement experience. This is an ongoing partnership with the DC Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and through the DC Department of Employment Service's (DOES) Mayor Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program (MBSYEP).

Participant Number: 51 students

Voices of Change

During Summer 2022, School Talk's 13th Annual Voices of Change Program was held. The program provided a competitive experience to approximately (29) youth. Through the Voices of Change Program, youth used art to build competencies to explore and pursue creative careers in the arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media industry. Students will practice self-awareness & self-expression, and advocate for themselves & their communities. DDS in collaboration with SchoolTalk looks forward to hosting this annual event in the Spring of 2023.

Participant Number: 29

RCM:

Guided Group Discovery (Pre-ETS)

Guided Group Discovery (GGD) brings together small groups of job seekers committed to an employment search. Job seekers are guided through a process of self-exploration and offered an opportunity for peer support. The program is helpful for those who may be struggling to find employment. This year's Guided Group Discovery Project was provided in two phases. Phase 1 introduced students to the concepts of Customized Employment, while Phase 2 built upon the skills acquired during Phase 1. Phase 2 gave students an opportunity to apply what they learned through interactive activities. They created resumes, learned about interview and job search skills, and were able to participate in a Mock Interview Day. The outcome was for participants to create an individual blueprint to guide them as they navigate through their journey of securing employment. This tool provides a peer-to-peer opportunity for jobseekers to identify their interests, skills, and accommodations for employment. This program is also being extended to reach adults in the General Vocational Rehabilitation units in August 2022.

Participant Number: 29

Direct Support Professional Academy

The DSP Academy is a customized vocational training program that upon completion, participants will have all training and certifications needed to be a Direct Support Professional in Washington, DC. The curriculum has been adapted to suit all learning styles and job development has been built into the Academy. A DSP Academy is also provided in Spanish. A stipend is provided for this program. Following completion of the DSP Academy, participants received all the training and certifications required to work as a direct support professional in Washington, DC. All learning styles have been accommodated in the curriculum, and the Academy has job development built right in. Participants in this paid experience receive minimum wage. From June 28 to August 4, the Direct Support Professional (DSP) program was in effect.

Participant Number: 5

DOES:

East of the River:

The East of the River Career Pathways Grant is a locally funded initiative administered by the DOES, Office of Youth Programs (OYP) that provides District Out-Of-School youth ages 18 to 24 (participants) with occupational skills training, financial literacy and work readiness training, and assistance with attaining unsubsidized employment. During summer 2022 through this program, (23) participants will receive an industry recognized credential and assistance with achieving unsubsidized job placement. The purpose of this program is to support innovative workforce-related programs aimed to provide services and/or support to Out-Of-School participants ages 18-24 in the areas of, Work Readiness Training, Financial Literacy, Job Coaching and Transitional Work Experience.

Participant Number: 23

ProjectSEARCH @CAH Program (adult students ages 18-22)

A total of 8 students participated in the virtual transition-to-work program focusing on skills training, career exploration, and individualized job development. This program leads to supported employment.

Participant Number: 8

Workforce Development Center at River Terrace Education Campus

A total of 33 students participated in the virtual transition school-to work program focusing on career exploration and training in employability and independent-living skills through classroom instruction.

Participant Number: 33

Goal 4: Improve coordination with other workforce development agencies providing services at the American Job Centers.

In FY23, DCRSA coordinated with the core WIOA partners through ensuring a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Specialist is available five (5) days per week. To ensure continued coordination, DCRSA strengthened its referral process with DOES. Additionally, DCRSA continued to refer its clients to the OSSE approved vendors for free virtual training and remedial courses. OSSE also provides professional development training for VR Counseling Staff. DCRSA regularly refers to Catholic Charities, Academy of Hope Public Charter School, Latin-American Youth Center, and So Others Might Eat (SOME) for adult education services. This allows for DCRSA staff to continue working collaboratively with the DOES to directly connect persons with additional employment, job readiness, and/or training supports. In addition, this virtual coordination has increased service delivery to individuals throughout all wards with VR Specialists who were not able to be physically in the community at each AJC and other community agencies.

DCRSA has improved existing business relationships and built new business relationships within the community to increase job opportunities and expand DCRSA's employment network. The reason DCRSA has seen this increased success with employers is because of more focused engagement. Additionally, DCRSA staff have a greater sense of urgency for understanding the opportunities for consumers in a challenging economy with enhanced barriers. DCRSA is more proactive with the business community, which ensures the viability of hiring consumers and the enhancements these consumers would actualize in their businesses.

The following events took place in FY23, with different employers in the district:

Employer Spotlights

The below employers met with RSA staff and jobseekers to present their employment opportunities and share why individuals would want to work for their organization. Employers also addressed questions from jobseekers and staff. These employers included:

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Fairmont Hotel

FM Talent woman-owned staffing agency

Leaf Home

DC Department of Human Resources (DC government), Working for Washington Presentation

Career Day Event

DCRSA hosted an in-person Career Day event. Employers from across the city participated in this event.

Business Outreach included:

Hosting a table at the Greater Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Business Expo.

Representing the agency as participant of the DC Chamber of Commerce Workforce Development Committee

Attending the Workforce Investment Council, Skills DC Business Summit

Disability Awareness Education for Employers included the following:

National Disability Employment Awareness Month Event, October 2022

Windmills Disability Awareness training in September 2023

Low Vision Awareness Training for DC Housing Authority staff

U.S. Department of Energy Accessibility Summit

Representation at the DC Board of Trade and Easterseals Candid Conversations Panel with executives from Comcast, Booz Allen Hamilton and Easterseals. The panel discussion can be found on YouTube.

Collaboration with the DC Area Black Deaf Advocates to encourage DDS/RSA employers' partners to participate in their job fair

Additionally, Aspiring Professionals launched Cohort 3 and Cohort 4, which successfully placed interns throughout District of Columbia Government agencies. Applicants are recommended by DCRSA VR Specialists and Employment Coordinators for various position descriptions received by host supervisors. The host agency supervisor conducts the interviews and makes a final selection. Program participants work 32 hours each week. Participants were paid through a contracted staffing agency. If the agency has employment opportunities, participants are invited to apply and interview for jobs. There was a total of nine (9) participants who successfully completed the program. Cohort 3 program internships were hosted by the DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education, U.S. Department of Interior, DC Department on Disability Services, Trinity University, and UnitedHealth Group. Aspiring Professionals Program agency hosts included the DC Department of Buildings (formerly Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs), DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education, DC Department of Forensic Sciences, University of the District of Columbia, DC Department of Transportation, DC Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, and DC Department of Transportation. Since the launch of the program in 2018, approximately 60% of the participants gained employment, who successfully completed the program. Cohort 4 successfully placed four (4) interns, while the remaining participants are scheduled to be placed in 2024.

In a strategic move, DCRSA continues to uphold its active subscription to LinkedIn, leveraging the platform not only to proficiently market its diverse array of services but also to foster meaningful engagements with businesses. Simultaneously, the agency utilizes this digital space as a dynamic showcase, portraying DCRSA not just as an entity but as an exceptional workplace, strategically positioning itself to attract top-tier talent in the ever-evolving landscape of potential employees.

Recommendations

Throughout the fiscal years of 2022 and 2023, DCRSA has demonstrated unwavering commitment to enhancing the intricacies of data collection, financial precision, and communication channels directed towards external stakeholders. In the pursuit of sustained excellence, it is imperative to persist in elevating the training and professional development initiatives for both provider staff and vocational rehabilitation VR Specialists. This ongoing investment is pivotal in cultivating a workforce capable of delivering services that are not only of the highest quality but also inherently person-centered, thus propelling individuals towards competitive, integrated, and community-based employment opportunities. This concerted effort stands as a cornerstone in fortifying DCRSA's mission to foster an environment where excellence is the standard, and individuals are seamlessly integrated into the fabric of the community through meaningful employment.

Closing

The culmination of FY23 marked a highly productive chapter for both DCRSA and the SRC, reflecting a dedicated commitment to enhancing access to exemplary employment outcomes for all residents with disabilities in the District. Throughout this fiscal year, the collaborative efforts of DCRSA and the SRC resonated with opportunities and support mechanisms for individuals facing unique challenges. It is noteworthy to acknowledge the transformative journey undertaken by the SRC, particularly the substantial changes in its membership. These evolutions underscore the adaptability and resilience embedded within the fabric of DCRSA and the SRC, reinforcing their collective pursuit of inclusivity, empowerment, and the continual elevation of standards for the benefit of the diverse and vibrant community they serve.

In the new FY, the SRC looks forward to increasing its membership, updating its bylaws, and continuing its partnership with DCRSA.

THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

The Designated State Unit has reviewed and considered the State Rehabilitation Council's observations, input, and suggestions outlined in the annual report and the recommendations and input sections listed above. The Designated State Unit, DCRSA, agrees with the above recommendations, observations, and input suggested by the SRC's annual plan and its recommendations.

THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

N/A.

REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

A LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY WILL PROVIDE THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WAIVER REQUEST;

This agency has not requested a waiver of statewideness.

THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

This agency has not requested a waiver of statewideness. All State plan requirements will apply.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN WILL APPLY TO THE SERVICES APPROVED UNDER THE WAIVER.

This agency has not requested a waiver of statewideness.

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

DCRSA values its relationships with its federal, state, and local partners including those that are not a direct part of the Workforce Investment System. These partnerships allow for DCRSA to collaborate with other organizations to expand services in community settings and increase the reach to more District of Columbia residents with disabilities. The Administration has finalized cooperative agreements or Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) with several community partners and is working to address any outstanding agreements. There are currently five (5) fully executed MOAs that were implemented in FY23 among the following community partners:

Academy of Hope

Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services

Office of the State Superintendent of Education

Project SEARCH Capital Area Region

Friendship Collegiate Public Charter School

DCRSA currently has 12 active outreach sites in the community and is working with 9 District and community-based agencies to initiate the MOA process. Due to the lasting effects of the COVID-19 public health emergency, many of RSA's previous community outreach sites are no longer available to host RSA VR Specialists. Virtual services have been maintained as well as an expedited referral process. Additional community partners have been identified. In addition, the Transition Unit (TU) has two (2) field sites for adult students with disabilities and DCRSA's TU VR Specialists serve 96 schools across the DC Metropolitan area, including DC students placed in non-public schools in MD.

These community sites include the following diverse settings such as rehabilitation centers, mental health clinics, hospitals, community health centers, homeless shelters, other DC Government Offices, and the court system.

DCRSA has several other partnerships for services reflected in Memoranda of Agreements (MOAs) and Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs) with the following agencies and entities:

The Department of Aging and Community Living

DC Workforce Investment Council

The District of Columbia Public Library

The Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection

The Department of Employment Services (to include one stop centers)

DC Public Schools, DC Public Charter Schools

Child and Family Services Agency,

Project SEARCH NIH and Capital Area Region (formerly known as Embassy Suites and Hilton Hotels),

DC Department of Behavioral Health,

Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE),

The DC Department of Human Resources,

DC Office of Disability Rights,

DC Office of the Chief Financial Officer

Department of Insurance Securities and Banking (DISB)

STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

DCRSA works closely with the Assistive Technology (AT) Center at Disability Rights DC at University Legal Services. The AT Center is a very helpful resource that has supports available for VR clients, as well as other people with disabilities in the community. The AT Center also works very closely with schools in the District. DCRSA invites staff from the AT Center to its all-staff meetings once or twice each year to provide information to staff regarding the resources available there. In addition, the AT Specialist at DCRSA sits on the AT Advisory Council.

The Department on Disability Services' (DDS) Tech First Initiative represents a pioneering effort in aligning with the goals of the Assistive Technology Act, embodying a commitment to fostering independence and empowerment for individuals with disabilities through technology. By prioritizing technology as a first option in planning and service delivery, this initiative not only adheres to but also enhances the principles of the Assistive Technology Act. It emphasizes the importance of accessibility, autonomy, and innovative solutions in the daily lives of individuals with disabilities. The measurable outcomes of this initiative are reflected in its substantial impact, which includes increased adoption of assistive technologies, improved quality of life for service recipients, and a notable shift towards more independent living scenarios. The success of the Tech First Initiative is not just in its adherence to legislative mandates, but in its tangible, positive changes in the lives of those it serves, illustrating the profound effect of integrating technology into support frameworks.

To bring this vision to life, the Tech First Workgroup (TFWG) stands as the catalyst, directly supporting the initiative through strategic action to create a service delivery model that ensures that the people we support have the tech they need to create their own paths and achieve their personal goals. This multifaceted team is pivotal in supporting the goals of the Tech First Initiative through strategic action and dedicated collaboration to establish a service delivery model that prioritizes tech as a key support option — either before or alongside traditional supports.

The major collaborating organizations were:

Technology First Initiative and Work Group Participants

Developmental Disabilities Administration

Rehabilitation Services Administration

Assistive Technology Center

DD Council

Georgetown UCEDD

Quality Trust

Project Action

The Center for Accessibility

St. John's Community Services

RCM of Washington

OCTO Tech Together

Measurable results of the initiative and any lessons learned.

The Tech First initiative funded 17 DDS Providers to participate in SHIFT Enabling Technology Curriculum where 9 out of the 17 provider organizations achieved Technology First Organization Accreditation. The curriculum educates providers on best practices on assisting people with disabilities with person-centered tech exploration, discovery, matching, planning, and implementation. One remarkable achievement has been the sustained momentum among DDS Service Providers who successfully attained Tech First Accreditation within the SHIFT program.

A key catalyst for this success was the establishment of the Enabling Technology Community of Practice (ET CoP) in 2023 among these accredited providers. The ET CoP is a dynamic, self-managed group dedicated to advancing their organizations' abilities in supporting people with disabilities through person-centered tech planning and implementation. Leveraging the best practices acquired through SHIFT, this group collaboratively strives for excellence.

The ET CoP plays a multifaceted role in fostering progress. First and foremost, it serves as a support network, enabling providers to share innovative practices, collaborate on problem-solving, and explore new frontiers in tech innovation through pilot initiatives. Additionally, the ET CoP functions as a valuable feedback loop to DDS, contributing to the development of strategies and recommend service models to advance Tech First efforts. This collaborative approach aims to improve access to technology for the people they support.

To further promote a holistic understanding of tech planning and implementation, DDS's Service Coordination Planning Division also enrolled in SHIFT training in August 2023. This strategic move equips the division with best practices for facilitating discussions during support planning meetings, aligning them with the broader mission of enhancing the quality of life for individuals with disabilities. Additionally, RSA is actively considering enrolling key staff members into the SHIFT program. This aligns with DDS's Tech First initiative and is aimed at integrating person-centered tech planning and implementation best practices into the development process of Individualized Plans for Employment (IPE).

These achievements reflect DDS's commitment to promoting technology's transformative potential in improving the lives of those we serve. As we move forward, DDS remains dedicated to fostering innovation, collaboration, and empowerment within the disability services community.

In August 2022, DDS hosted its inaugural Tech Fest Summit, a cornerstone event aimed at introducing the tech industry and their emerging solutions to the disability services community in the District of Columbia. One of the event's highlights was the unveiling of the Tech First Day Proclamation, signed by Mayor Muriel Bowser. Building on this momentum, DDS partnered with ODR and co-hosted the 2nd Annual Tech Fest Summit, now rebranded as the "Disability Tech Summit." This collaborative effort acknowledged DDS and ODR overlapping target audiences and highlights the essential role technology plays in fostering greater independence for adults' disabilities. The 2nd Annual Disability Tech Summit took place at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center on October 21, 2023, with 656 estimated attendees.

Summary of Lessons Learned from the DDS Provider Enabling Tech Community of Practice (ETCoP):

The Tech First Work Group's recent meeting with providers in the Enabling Tech Community of Practice (ETCoP) has yielded significant insights into the implementation of the Tech First best practices, particularly following the completion of the SHIFT training program. These experiences and lessons learned are pivotal in shaping the agenda for the TFWG's 2024 discussions, aiming to refine and advance the Tech First initiative. Key focus areas identified for future exploration include:

Fostering a Tech-Positive Culture: Emphasizing the importance of creating a supportive environment for technology adoption across DDS, providers, and advocates.

Development of Resource Materials for Support Planning: Enhancing resources for technology exploration, planning, and implementation, ensuring that support plans are comprehensive and effective.

Sustainability of the SHIFT Program: Assessing and developing strategies to ensure the long-term viability and impact of the SHIFT program.

Community-Based Tech Basics Programs: The introduction and expansion of fundamental technology programs within the community to increase accessibility and proficiency.

Strengthening Interagency Collaboration: Focusing on partnerships with key organizations like the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), Center for Independent Living (CIL), Department of Aging and Community Living (DACL), and the Mayor's Office of Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing (MODDHH).

These discussions and strategies emerging from the ETCoP's feedback are crucial in guiding the future direction of the Tech First initiative, ensuring its continued relevance, effectiveness, and impact in empowering individuals with disabilities through technology.

c) Improving access to Assistive Technology through partnership

The Department on Disability Services (DDS) continues its partnership with the Assistive Technology Center to promote the Tech First initiative, leveraging the center as a vital community resource. This collaboration aims to enhance awareness of technological options and support informed decision-making regarding technology acquisition. In the upcoming year 2024, the DDS Tech First Work Group plans to focus on amplifying interagency collaboration. This expansion will involve exploring partnerships with key stakeholders in the District who share a similar commitment to the Tech First vision. These partners include the Statewide Independent Living Council, the Center for Independent Living, the Center for Accessibility, the Mayor's Office of Deaf, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing, and the DC State Broadband and Digital Equity Office. This initiative is a strategic step toward integrating and strengthening technology access and utilization for individuals with disabilities, aligning with broader goals of enhancing independence and accessibility.

d) URL for initiative is <https://dds.dc.gov/node/1543901>

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE; N/A.

4. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

DCRSA collaborates with multiple community agencies to reach out-of-school or disengaged youth including Department on Employment Services (DOES), Department of Behavioral Health (DBH), Department of Youth Rehabilitation (DYRS), Department of Insurance Securities and Banking (DISB), and Child & Family Services Agency (CFSA).

DCRSA continues to strengthen its partnership with DOES, specifically the Office of Youth Programs (OYP). DCRSA coordinates closely with DOES-OYP on its Mayor Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program (MBSYEP) and the East of the River Program. MBSYEP provides an excellent opportunity for paid Work-Based Learning Experience and Job Readiness Training for both in-school and out-of-school transition age youth, ages 14-24. The East of the River (EOTR) Program provides out-of-school young ages 18-24 who are DC residents or wards of the state living in Wards 7 or 8 with the chance to obtain vocational skills training, financial literacy training, and work preparation training in information technology, construction, and entrepreneurship.

DCRSA also has a partnership with the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) to provide a VR Specialist on-site, on at least a monthly basis, or as requested, to offer vocational rehabilitation services to eligible DYRS youth and strengthen placement and re-entry service strategies to further enhance employment opportunities for youth with disabilities returning to the community from secure confinement.

DBH community-based providers offer treatment and support for teens and young people up to age 21 seeking help for substance use disorders (SUD) and/or serious mental illness (SMI). They make referrals to DCRSA that connects youth who are ready to seek employment and require vocational rehabilitation support. In addition, one of the DCRSA VR Specialists shares a site in common with DBH, which is the Latin American Youth Center (Ward 1). The DCRSA VR Specialist assigned to this site participates in outreach presentations and connecting youth to DCRSA services.

DCRSA and CFSA have an MOA to coordinate services for youth transitioning from the foster care system to independence. This is an agreement between CFSA and DCRSA and DCDDA. The MOA covers services provided by the Developmental Disabilities Administration, as well as the Rehabilitation Services Administration. For youth with a physical or sensory disability, not eligible for DDA services, a referral will be made to RSA's Independent Living Services Program for assessment and referral to the necessary services to assist with transition from CFSA to independence. The agreement ensures that these youth will receive appropriate independent living supports as they transition into adulthood. In addition, the agreement provides for DCRSA to have one VR Specialist assigned to CFSA's Office of Youth Empowerment twice per month to provide information about RSA services, conduct intake interviews, and be available to meet with existing DCRSA clients who are also current clients of CFSA.

4. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

DCRSA is not bound to utilize any other contracting vehicles for equipment and/or services that are outside of the District of Columbia's Office of Contract and Procurement purview.

C. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

1. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S PLANS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE- EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AS WELL AS PROCEDURES FOR THE TIMELY DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF INDIVIDUALIZED PLANS FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR THE STUDENTS

Agreement with Public Schools

In alignment with the WIOA, DCRSA and DCPS updated the MOU to include provisions related to the delivery of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for students with disabilities. Since Fiscal Year 2016, DCRSA and DCPS have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding

(MOU) to transfer funds to DCPS to allow for staff to provide support for provision of Pre-ETS in eleven (11) DC Public Schools. This MOU assists in establishing relationships with employers to create work-based learning experiences, provide career counseling, counseling on postsecondary options, and training on independent living skills.

Additionally, DCRSA and River Terrace Education Campus (RTEC), a specialized school apart of DCPS, established an MOA in January 2021. This MOA allows DCPS adult students with disabilities enrolled in the WDC-RTEC are eligible to earn wages while participating in the WBLE program. For the purposes of this MOA, paid work experiences shall include (a) supported work-readiness training and (b) integrated internship experiences. Based on the availability of funding, WDC-RTEC student wages will be consistent with the District of Columbia Minimum Wage (\$16.10/hr.) (<https://www.minimum-wage.org/district-of-columbia>.) for their participation in supported work-readiness training or community-based integrated internships.

DCRSA and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) have an MOA that outlines the process by which all students with disabilities in public, public charter and non-public schools are identified and referred to DCRSA for youth transition and/or VR services. The MOA includes issues related to requirements of WIOA for the provision of pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities.

DCRSA has a human care agreement with a community-based organization that provides special education technical assistance to Public Charter Schools in the District. This provider assists with improving coordination between DCRSA and the Public Charter Schools. Additionally, they coordinate and provide Pre-ETS to students in Public Charter Schools.

There are currently nineteen (19) Public Charter High Schools in the District and six (6) Public Charter Adult Education Schools that provide services to students with disabilities. DCRSA has developed an MOA that has been shared with all Local Education Agencies (LEA) for public charter high schools to better align with the specific and unique needs of each charter high school. DCRSA has a total of thirteen (13) fully executed MOAs established with public charter schools.

Staffing and Team Organization

Staffing for vocational rehabilitation is structured as follows. The Vocational Rehabilitation Services Division within DCRSA now has two (2) Youth Transition Units, including, one (1) program manager fourteen, two supervisors, (14) VR Specialists, one (1) project manager, one (1) community liaison specialist, one (1) employment coordinator, two (2) Rehabilitation Assistants, and one (1) program support assistant.

Development of Individual Plans and Other Activities

The VR Specialists are assigned to all schools serving District of Columbia students with disabilities. They conduct intake interviews, attend IEP meetings, and develop Individual Plans for Employment (IPEs). Additionally, VR Specialists in the transition unit provide and monitor the provision of pre-employment transition activities for all students with disabilities who have open VR cases, as well as all students with disabilities who are potentially eligible for VR services. The VR Specialists determine students' eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services, develop IPEs, and make referrals for necessary transition services to assist students to plan for and obtain successful post-school employment.

INFORMATION ON THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY WITH RESPECT TO:

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;

DCRSA works with the local education agencies (LEAs) to provide technical assistance and training. DCRSA has an agreement in place with the largest LEA within the District that employs staff to provide this technical assistance and training to schools. These staff are deployed to the DC Public Schools to assist school-based staff with coordination and delivery of pre-employment transition services. DCRSA also coordinates with a local non-profit provider to assist with this same delivery of technical assistance to local education agencies that are within the realm of the public charter sector.

DCRSA has been collaborating with public charter schools to establish MOAs with each public charter school that serves as its own LEA. DCRSA has increased its outreach efforts to the public charter school sector during the 22/23 school year to increase the number of MOAs signed with individual LEAs that make up the charter school sector in DC. All charter schools were presented with a draft MOA in the winter of 2023. DCRSA continues to work with the LEAs to sign the MOAs to streamline transition services to youth with disabilities.

DCRSA is accessible to all LEAs via in-person and multimedia platforms such as: Microsoft Teams, WebEx, and Zoom to provide consultation and technical assistance to LEAs across the district. DCRSA also provides meeting spaces to help prepare LEAs to transition students with disabilities from high school to the postsecondary world. This includes meetings for pre-employment transition services and vocational rehabilitation services.

TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

See response no. 1 above.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

DCRSA has a collaborative agreement with the largest LEA in DC, which is DC Public Schools (DCPS). DCPS draws down on pre-ETS and VR funding as allowable by service type via an established process as agreed to and outlined in an MOU between DCRSA and DCPS. This MOU allows DCPS to hire and employ up to three (3) Workforce Development Coordinators with training in secondary special education and/or transition. DCRSA also provides funding to DCPS to allow it to hire and employ up to one (1) Job Placement Specialist with job placement training and/or experience to facilitate paid work experiences for students with disabilities who want to work. DCRSA maintains administrative control of the Workforce Development Coordinators and Job Placement Specialist positions and the funding that supports them. This includes establishing the roles, responsibilities, and requirements for the Workforce Development Coordinators and Job Placement Specialist positions. These criteria include, but are not limited to, a description of duties, minimum qualifications required for the position, and opportunity for the applicant to provide examples of specialized experience pertinent to the position. DCRSA maintains personnel activity reports to substantiate the services provided by DCPS and determines the time spent on monthly pre-ETS and VR activities. DCRSA will continue to work collaboratively with DCPS to hire these positions, when they become vacant, and set the educational standards for each role.

DCRSA will collaborate with DCPS to meet monthly to verify that staff funded through DCRSA are delivering the required activities for Pre-ETS and work-based learning experiences. If DCPS is found to be out of compliance with the expectations outlined in the MOU for staff, written notification will be delivered to the DCPS point of contact within five (5) business days with a proposed action within the notification.

Through the District Government's personnel system of record (PeopleSoft), DCPS tracks and verifies the approved time for Workforce Development Coordinators and Job Placement Specialist spend providing the services pursuant to this agreement and the job tasks and duties set forth in their respective job descriptions. DC RSA has established internal controls for its MOU with DCPS to track the following information:

DCPS' achievement of standards outlined within the MOU for delivery of Pre- Employment Transition Services, work-based learning experiences, and job placement activities;

DCPS' overall program effectiveness and efficiency of delivery of Pre-Employment Transition Services and work-based learning experiences; and

Consumer satisfaction survey results of the DCPS' service delivery.

DCPS employs three (3) Workforce Development Coordinators with funding provided by DCRSA through this MOU. Such staff will provide the following functions:

Develop community partnerships with private businesses and government agencies that could serve as internship sites, job sampling, and paid employment opportunities for students.

Monitor students' progress in any work-based learning experience arranged through the Workforce Development Coordinators.

Provide counseling to students and their families on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive vocational training programs or post-secondary educational programs at institutions of higher education.

Provide workplace readiness training to develop self-advocacy skills and independent living.

Work with teachers to align students' transition goals to situational job sampling activities and assisting teachers with finding situational job sampling opportunities for students.

Coordinate among DCRSA VR Specialists and the school's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team to align IEP transition goals with Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) employment goals.

Review individual student IEP transition plans for the incorporation of Pre-ETS required and coordination activities.

DCPS provides work readiness training sessions to DCPS students with disabilities. The DCPS Post-Secondary Transition Manager work with the DCRSA Supervisory VR Specialists and the DCRSA Transition Project Manager to develop monthly Pre-ETS and outreach sessions to be led by both DCRSA VR Specialists and the DCPS Workforce Development Coordinators funded by DCRSA at all eleven (11) Comprehensive DCPS schools serving transition age students.

DCPS employs one (1) Job Placement Specialist funded by DCRSA through this MOU. The Job Placement Specialist will work with Workforce Development Coordinators and the DCRSA Transition Employment Coordinator on the following job placement tasks including, but not limited to:

Develop community partnerships with private businesses and government agencies that could serve as internship sites, job sampling, and paid employment opportunities for students.

Work with the local workforce development boards, one-stop centers, and employers to develop work opportunities for students with disabilities, including internships, summer

employment and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year, and apprenticeships.

Research data about industries, companies, labor market statistics, and employment trends.

Transfer research findings into meaningful information that can facilitate the employment of specific individuals who are ready for job placement.

Provide services to employers such as teaching them the benefits of hiring people with disabilities.

Perform job analysis to determine job requirements.

Work with employer supervisors to educate them on how to identify the needs of students who require auxiliary aids, services, or other accommodations while on the job.

Maximize the number of students who achieve competitive integrated full-time employment.

Maximize the number of students who achieve competitive integrated part-time employment.

Maximize wages for those placed in competitive integrated employment.

Workforce Development Coordinators attribute 100% of their time to the provision of Pre-ETS required activities. The DCPS Job Placement Specialist attributes 75% of their time to pre-ETS and 25% of their activities to job placement services (VR). All tasks and duties performed by the Workforce Development Coordinators and Job Placement Specialist will represent, or be in direct support of, Pre-ETS or VR activities as designated by monthly personnel activity reports.

DCPS does not assign the Workforce Development Coordinators and Job Placement Specialist tasks or duties that are not in direct support of Pre-ETS required or coordination activities or VR job placement activities. If DCPS and DCRSA agree that all eligible students have received the required activities, then staff members can devote their work to the nine authorized activities.

Workforce Development Coordinators and Job Placement Specialist Pre-ETS tasks or duties shall include the activities listed in section 113(b) and section 113(c)(1)(3)(9) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, and the coordination of transition activities as defined by IDEA.

DCRSA no longer pays the training wages to students with disabilities it supports through the work-based learning program. Effective July 1, 2023, DC minimum wage will increase to \$17/hr., and DCRSA has increased the wages for students participating in paid WBLEs to minimum wage.

All public charter schools have been presented with a draft MOA for school year 23/24. The following responsibilities are identified in those MOAs and are consistent across the public charter school sector.

1. Responsibilities of DCRSA.

a. DCRSA has responsibility for providing eligibility determination, vocational counseling, and job placement services to individuals with disabilities at no cost to local education agencies. The VR Specialist, in conformance with financial and age guidelines, makes eligibility determinations based on DCRSA Eligibility Determination Policy :

b. DCRSA may provide eligible individuals with disabilities with vocational rehabilitation services as defined in 34 CFR § 361.48 (b).

c. DCRSA will participate in a minimum of one parent-teacher conference and/or transition workshop for students and parents at PCS.

d. DCRSA will assign a VR Specialist to the public charter school who will be responsible for identifying the potentially eligible students who are in need of transition services and/or Pre-Employment Transition Services, providing information about DCRSA's services to school

staff and potentially eligible students and their families, including a description of the purpose of the VR program, scope of services, eligibility requirements, and application procedures, and for accepting application referrals from the identified school personnel. The VR Specialist will be responsible for determining eligibility, developing IPEs, and coordinating the services for potentially eligible students at the public charter school. Eligibility determination will occur within 60 days of an application being received by RSA, barring any extraordinary circumstances. An IPE will be developed within 90 days of a student being determined eligible. The coordination of services will begin when the IPE has been approved and signed by all required parties.

e. DCRSA will accept, track, and document all completed applications for DCRSA services. Applications will be entered into DCRSA's electronic case management system. Both the student/parent and school will be contacted within five (5) business days of receipt of the application to provide notification of eligibility determination status. The VR Specialist will work with the school liaison to schedule an intake interview at the student's school.

f. DCRSA will facilitate access to transition opportunities during or after high school such as ProjectSEARCH, internships, trial work experiences, jobs, and career planning and training.

g. DCRSA will work with all eligible and potentially eligible students beginning at age 14.

h. The intake interview, conducted at the school, will provide an overview of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program, and determine if sufficient information has been provided to DCRSA to make an eligibility determination.

i. A DCRSA VR Specialist, with the consent of the adult student or the parent/guardian if the student is under age 18, will attend the student's IEP team meeting when invited to discuss the student's Transition Plan.

j. A DCRSA VR Specialist will be available at the school monthly on the agreed upon standing date of every month to conduct scheduled intake interviews, meet with students to complete a comprehensive assessment, be available to provide guidance and counseling to students who have been found eligible for services, provide job readiness workshops for eligible or potentially eligible students, attend IEP meetings when invited, meet with appropriate staff to discuss progress of the individuals' IPE development and progress toward achievement of goals identified in their transition plans.

k. DCRSA will provide, in compliance with federal and state laws, comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to students determined eligible for VR services. Comprehensive services include all VR services (including transition services) that are necessary to achieve an employment outcome, as indicated in an IPE agreed to by the eligible student and a qualified VR Specialist employed by DCRSA.

2. Responsibilities of the DC Public Charter School:

a. The public charter school will identify a school staff person who will be responsible for coordinating with the assigned VR Specialist.

b. The public charter school will provide private space for the VR Specialist to meet with students, and if available, access to office equipment, computer for student use, access to Wi-Fi or internet, and access to a printer and copier.

c. Assigned school staff will identify students who are potentially eligible for DDS/RSA services. (Students with IEPs or 504 plans, or students with a documented disability).

d. The public charter school will invite the VR Specialist to the IEP meeting when there is a need to provide input on the alignment of the IPE employment goal and IEP Transition Plan. IEP

meeting invitations will be extended to VR Specialist in writing at least 10 business days prior to the meeting date.

Sec. 511 Statement: Under the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA), work-based learning experiences (WBLEs) are a type of pre-employment transition service (Pre-ETS) used to prepare students with disabilities for post-secondary employment, education, and training. WBLEs combine workplace readiness skills training and career & technical education (CTE) curriculum together, to prepare students for competitive integrated employment. DCRSA provides both paid and unpaid WBLEs for eligible and/or potentially eligible students with disabilities. DCRSA uses funding from the Department of Education to provide minimum wages for students engaging in WBLE programs. Students are paid wages at \$17/hr. in adherence to DC minimum wage, which increased on July 1, 2023. Students ages 14-22 can work up to 20 hours per week during their paid internships. DCRSA will adhere to the District's minimum living wage.

DCRSA will provide the coordination necessary to satisfy documentation requirements set forth in 34 CFR part 397 with regard to students and youth with disabilities who are seeking subminimum wage employment; and assure that neither the State educational agency nor the local educational agency 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.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

DCRSA's transition unit has conducted outreach efforts to all DC schools (including charter, public, and non-public), community-based sites, and community events to provide information about the transition services available to students with disabilities. The transition unit is also a part of the greater outreach committee at DCRSA. This committee meets regularly to address outreach efforts and to streamline communication to support community events to get information about pre-employment transition services to members of the DC community. DCRSA's outreach and engagement committee continues to engage and build trust with identified underserved and unserved groups (especially those living in Wards 7 and 8).

E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

The State Agency establishes its cooperative agreements with service providers according to District regulations. To add new vendors for client services, the State Agency follows the District Regulations, found at 27 DCMR 100 et seq.

There is a wide range of DCRSA services partnerships through the current seventy-six (76) Human Care Agreements (HCAs) and Small Purchase Contracts that represent local private non-profit, community rehabilitation providers as indicated in the charts below:

DCRSA Services Partnerships:

1 Axiom	Vocational Services - Supported Employment, Customized Employment and Job Coaching
ABC Technical Solutions Inc	RSA Computers & Laptops

Amazing Love Health Services, LLC	Vocational Services - Job Placement
America Works of Washington DC	Vocational Services - Job Placement, Job Readiness
Anchor Mental Health Association	Evidence Based Supported Employment
Andean Consulting Solutions International	Sign Language Interpreter
Arc of DC, Inc.	Vocational Services-Supported Employment, Discovery Assessment, Customized Employment and Job Coaching Services, Job Readiness Training, Job Placement and Trial Work
Art and Soul Solutions, Inc.	Vocational Services - Supported Employment, Discovery Assessment, Customized Employment, Job Readiness and Job Coaching Services, Job Placement and Pre- Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), Tutoring and Academic Support
Art Enables	Vocational Services-Job Readiness Training and Job Coaching
Bell Davis	Vocational Services - Benefits Planning, Job Placement and Job Stabilization, Supported Employment, Customized Employment, Job Coaching, Job Readiness Training
Best Buddies International, Inc	Vocational Services – Supported Employment, including Discovery Assessment, Customized Employment and Job Coaching; Job Placement; Job Readiness Training and Job Stabilization
Bread for the City	Physician Extender Services
Broad Futures, Inc	Vocational Services - Job Coaching, Job Readiness and Pre-ETS

C.P.R. Medical Transportation	Transportation Services
Center for Innovation Research and Transformation in Education	Vocational Services-Job readiness, Job Placement, Job Stabilizations and Pre-ETS Training

CHW Solutions, Inc.	Medical Consultation
Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center	Project Search License Agreement & Technical Assistance
Circle of Care Quality Services, LLC	Vocational Services - Job Placement, Job stabilization, Job readiness
Cognitive Solutions, LLC	RSA Psychologists
Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind	Vocational Services-Supported Employment, Job Placement, Discovery Assessment, Customized Employment, Job Coaching and Benefits Planning and Job Readiness Training
Community Audiology Services, LLC	Medical Professionals
Community Connections	Vocational Services - Supported Employment, Job Coaching, Job Readiness, Discovery Assessment, Customized Employment and Pre-ETS, Evidence-Based Supported Employment
Congress Heights Community Training and Development Corporation	Vocational Services-Supported Employment, Discovery Assessment, Customized Employment and Job Coaching Services
DC Center for Independent Living	Independent Living Services
DC Public Charter School Cooperative (known as DC Special Education Cooperative)	Vocational Services – Job Placement, Discovery Assessment, Job Coaching, and Job Readiness Training (Including PreETS)
DC Youth Empowerment	Vocational Services - Supported Employment, Job Coaching, Job Readiness, Job Placement, Job stabilization and Stabilization Closure
Deaf Access Solutions, Inc	Sign Language Interpreter
Dixon & Associates, Inc	Career Assessment
Dr. Stephen J Feinberg	Medical Professionals
Dynamic Solutions for the Aging LLC	Personal Care Assistant
EMC2 Educational Consulting dba Onyx Therapy Group	Vocational Services - Job Placement, Supported Employment, Discovery Assessment, Customized Employment, Job Coaching, Job Readiness Training, and Trial Work

Excellent Community Services, Inc.	Vocational Services - Supported Employment, Job Coaching, Job Readiness, Job Training, and Job Placement
Full Circle Employment Solutions, LLC	Vocational Services - Benefits Planning
Galaxy HealthCare Solutions, Inc	Vocational Services-Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment and job coaching services, Job Placement, Job Readiness Training, and Support Service Provider
Global Resources and Support LLC	Vocational Services- Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment and job coaching services and Job Readiness Training
Harper Career Services, LLC	Career Assessment
Health Resources Service Intake Center	Vocational Services- Supported Employment, Discovery Assessment, Customized Employment, Job Coaching, Job Readiness Training, Job Placement, Support Service Provider, Trial Work and Pre-ETS
Hillcrest Children s Center	Evidence Based Supported Employment
Humanity In Transition, Inc	Vocational Services-Supported Employment, Job coaching, Job Placement and Job Stabilization, Personal Care Assistant
Helen Keller National Center	Assistive Technology Services
I AM	Vocational Services -Supported Employment, discovery assessment- customized employment and job coaching services, Job Readiness
Ink Systems, LLC	RSA Computers & Laptops & Misc.
Innovative Day	Vocational Services – Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment and job coaching services, Job Placement, and Job Readiness Training
Interdynamics, Inc.	Career Assessment and RSA Psychologists
Jewish Social Service Agency	Vocational Services: Job Placement, Supported Employment Services, including Discovery Assessment, Customized Employment, Job Coaching, Job Readiness Training, and Trial Work
KBEC Group, Inc.	Vocational Services - Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment and job coaching services and Job Readiness Training and Pre-ETS
Low Vision Services, PLC	Medical Professional Services

MBI Health Services, LLC	Vocational Services-Job Placement, Job Readiness Training, and Evidence Base Supported Employment
Melwood Horticultural Training Center, Inc.	Vocational Services-Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment and job coaching services, Job Placement, Job Readiness Training
Melhor Life Solutions, Inc	Vocational Services – Supported Employment, Customized Employment and Job Coaching
Metropolitan Washington Ear	Blind and Low Vision Services
Newman Contracting Services, Inc	Vocational Services - Job Placement and Job Stabilization, Job Development, Supported Employment, Discovery Assessment, Customized Employment, Job Coaching, Job Readiness Training
Outstanding Possibilities Revealed	Vocational Services - Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment and job coaching services and Job Readiness Training and Pre-ETS
PSI Services III, Inc.	Vocational Services-Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment and job coaching services, Job Placement, Job Readiness Training, Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), Evidence Based Supported Employment
Psychiatric Center Chartered Inc.	Evidence Based Supported Employment
R&J Consulting Group, LLC dba Club Z! In Home Tutoring Services	Tutoring and Academic Support
RCM of Washington, Inc.	Vocational Services-Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment, job coaching services, Job Placement, Benefits Planning, Job Readiness Training and Pre-ETS
Renox	Vocational Services - Job Placement, Job Stabilization, Supported Employment, Job Coaching and Trial Work
Saint Coletta of Greater Washington, Inc.	Vocational Services-Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment and job coaching services, Job Placement, and Job Readiness Training
SchoolTalk, Inc.	Vocational Services-Job Readiness Training and PreEmployment Transition Services
SEEC	Vocational Services - Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment and job coaching services, Job Readiness Training, Trial Work and Pre-ETS

St. John's Community Services	Vocational Services-Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment and job coaching services, Job Placement and Pre-ETS
STEMSkills, LLC	Vocational Services - Job Readiness and Pre-Employment Transition Services
Superior Caring Hands, LLC	Vocational Services- Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment and job coaching services, Job Readiness, and Job Training & Support
TCS Associates	Assistive Technology Assessment, Training, and Devices
The Bridges Center	Vocational Services
The Coles Group	Personal Care Assistant
The MECCA Group, LLC	RSA Psychologists
Time for Change	Vocational Services - Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment and job coaching services and Job Readiness Training and Pre-ETS
Total Care Services, Inc	Vocational Services-Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment and job coaching services, Job Placement, Job Readiness Training, and Support Service Provider, Personal Care Assistant
University Legal Services	Assistive Technology Assessment, Training, and Devices
Urban Equity Consulting Group L.L.C	Vocational Services Job Placement and Job Readiness Training
Verigreen Inc.	Vocational Services-Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment and job coaching services, Job Readiness
V-Tech Solutions, Inc	Personal Care Assistant
Work Opportunities Unlimited Contracts, Inc.	Vocational Services- Supported Employment, discovery assessment, customized employment and job coaching services, Job Placement, Job Readiness Training and Pre-ETS

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.

DCRSA's Evidence-Based Supported Employment program (EBSE) for persons with serious mental illness (SMI) and substance use disorder (SUD) utilizes an evidenced-based approach to help individuals with the most significant disabilities to secure, retain, or regain competitive employment in an integrated setting that pays minimum or better wages, and provides benefits. Supported Employment services are individualized and include, but are not limited to, counseling and guidance, job coaching, follow-along services, and development of natural supports.

DCRSA coordinates EBSE services with the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH). The number of EBSE providers is currently at three (3) with active Human Care Agreements. Staff from the two agencies and the provider agencies meet monthly to ensure effective coordination of services. The VR Specialists provide services at the EBSE provider locations and work as a team to ensure seamless transition of referrals to DCRSA and transition to extended services with DBH.

Developmental Disabilities Administration

DCRSA has improved its partnership with DDS' Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) by revising and updating the DDA's Standard Operating Procedure on RSA & DDA Coordination of Intake and Referral Activities. DCDDA requires its Medicaid waiver supported employment providers to become providers with DCRSA. This improves the transition from DCRSA to extended services with DCDDA. In addition, DCRSA and DCDDA have developed a protocol outlining the procedures for referral and coordination of services and provided training for all staff on this protocol. As part of this referral and coordination process, DCRSA and DCDDA management meets monthly to staff joint cases and troubleshoot any challenges or concerns related to service delivery.

Extended services for consumers are provided by DCDDA, DBH, and DCRSA. DCRSA provides extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities relative to job coaching and necessary job supports to maintain competitive integrated employment. DCDDA administers two (2) Medicaid Home and Community Based waivers, which includes long term supports for consumers with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Supported Employment. The DDA ensures that residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities receive the services and supports they need to lead self-determined and valued lives in the community.

DDA delivers:

Outreach and service coordination services;

Development and management of a provider network delivering community residential, day, vocational, employment and individual and family support services; and

Operation of a comprehensive quality management program Some of these DCDDA services may be required to assist an individual who receives supports from DCRSA under the supported employment grant. DBH provides on-going support through its core mental health agencies.

Three (3) private non-profit organizations (MBI Health, Hillcrest Children's Center, and PSI Services.) are providing people with serious mental illness (SMI) with Evidenced-Based Supported Employment Services. Additionally, there are thirty-nine (39) supported employment providers ARC OF DC INC. (SE, Best Buddies International, Inc., Columbia Lighthouse for Blind, Community Connection, Inc., Congress Heights Community, CW&A, LLC., District Health Care Services, LLC, EMC2 Educational Consulting, Excellent Community Services, Inc., Galaxy HealthCare Solutions, Inc., Global Resources and Support, Health Resources Service Intake Center, Humanity In Transition, I AM, Innovative Day, LLC., Jewish Social Service Agency, KBEC, Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy Institute, MBI Health Services, Melwood Horticultural Training Center, National Children's Center, Outstanding Possibilities Revealed, Project ReDirect, Inc., PSI Services III Inc., RCM of Washington, Inc., Saint Coletta of Greater Washington, SEEC, St. Johns Community Service, Superior Caring Hands, LLC., The Bridges Center, The Brooks Group, LLC., Time for Change, Total Care Services Inc., Verigreen Inc., Vested Optimum Community Services. Inc., and Work Opportunities Unlimited Contracts) who deliver supported employment services that include, but are not limited to, work readiness training (waiver funding), job coaching (supported employment grant funding), and job placement services (general VR grant funding).

DCRSA also utilizes work-based learning experiences and internships to support students and out-of-school youth with the most significant disabilities in Project Search, specifically the ProjectSEARCH Capital Area Region (formerly known as Embassy Suites and Hilton Hotels) and National Institutes of Health.

It should be noted that there are two separate cohorts of Project Search interns:

ProjectSEARCH Capital Area Region (formerly known as Embassy Suites and Hilton Hotels) cohort is comprised of DC Public School students and funding is provided through pre-employment transition services grant funds.

National Institutes of Health (NIH) cohorts are typically comprised of youth who are out of school. For out of school youth, general VR funding is used to support youth in these programs.

Upon successful completion of the ProjectSEARCH program, a youth may be placed in a job that is competitive, integrated, and aligns with the identified employment goal on the consumer's IPE. In this scenario, DCRSA provides supported employment services including job placement and job coaching). All participants in the ProjectSEACRH program who secure employment are provided supported employment services. Once stabilized in employment, these participants are transitioned to extended services, if eligible. Supported employment grant funding is used for these extended services up to age 25, or up to four (4) years, whichever comes first.

One of the challenges in the District has been the lack of an extended service providers for people with developmental disabilities, other than an intellectual disability. The only current source of support for extended services in the District for people receiving supported employment services are the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waivers with DCDDA, that provides services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, supports provided through the Department of Behavioral Health for people with SMI and SUD, Ticket to Work, and natural supports. The changes in WIOA related to the provision of extended services for youth have been helpful in allowing the agency to provide extended supports to youth with developmental disabilities up to the age of 25, or for four (4) years, whichever comes first.

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COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS VR SERVICES; AND

DCRSA has one business relations specialist and four employment coordinators who develop relationships with businesses throughout the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area. These staff collaborate with businesses to educate them about DCRSA services and to identify their staffing needs for the purpose of gaining exposure and identifying employment opportunities for qualified DCRSA jobseekers. Services to businesses include: coordinating with the Aspiring Professionals Internship Program to other District government agencies; conducting disability awareness education training; creating opportunities for businesses to market themselves to people with disabilities through industry spotlights; creating opportunities for businesses to participate in mock interviews with jobseekers and provide feedback; sharing employment announcements with jobseekers; screening and identifying qualified employment candidates; educating business about tax incentives; sharing resources to assist businesses with retaining existing employees and sharing sources for reasonable accommodations; brainstorming potential opportunities to increase the pipeline of qualified talent to businesses; and identifying candidates for internship or volunteer opportunities.

TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

DCRSA has identified one dedicated employment coordinator to provide job development and employment services to support the transition units. These services include support for employers, jobseekers, and students with disabilities. The employment coordinator assigned to the transition units identifies businesses willing to provide paid part-time work experiences for students with disabilities, as well as identifying permanent employment options for youth who have completed their education or training. This employment coordinator also works in the DC Public Charter Schools to provide work readiness training for students with disabilities.

INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

The District of Columbia currently has availability for provision of extended supported employment services through Medicaid for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and people with serious mental illness. The District of Columbia's single-state Medicaid agency ("DHCF") has entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with DDS describing how DDS as the agency responsible for providing services, including extended services, for people with developmental disabilities will collaborate with DHCF as the entity responsible for administering Title XIX of the Social Security Act (D.C. Official Code § 7-771.07(1); see 42 U.S.C. § 1396a).

THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

The waiver services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are managed by the Developmental Disability Administration within the same designated state agency, Department on Disability Services (DDS) that houses DCRSA. The agency implemented its revised protocols regarding the coordination of services between the two administrations, i.e., DCRSA and DCDDA. One protocol addresses the coordination of intakes and referrals between DCDDA and DCRSA for supported employment services and extended services. The other protocol addresses coordination between the VR Specialist and DCDDA Service Coordinator, while a person is served by both administrations. This protocol outlines the provisions for ensuring referral back to DCDDA for extended services through the Medicaid Waiver. There is also a provision that DCRSA will keep the case open for ninety (90) days after waiver services are initiated to ensure there are no gaps in services. DCRSA and DCDDA host monthly collaborative meetings among the management team to discuss and staff joint cases.

THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

The DC Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) is responsible for providing mental health services in the District. DCRSA and DBH continue to work together to provide Evidence-Based Supported Employment Services. The agencies continue to expand these services, whenever possible, adding additional community-based agencies to provide services. DCRSA and DBH have also developed a Memorandum of Agreement clarifying the process for referral to DCRSA for supported employment services and identifying when a case will be referred to DBH for extended services. In addition, the agreement includes provisions for regular meetings between all parties, as well as the provision of cross-training, to ensure that all DCRSA VR Specialists are aware of all mental health services that are available, including Evidence-Based Supported Employment and are aware how to make referrals for these services.

COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT; DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS

THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL WHO ARE EMPLOYED BY THE STATE AGENCY IN THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES IN RELATION TO THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY;

The Administration maintains annual employee profiles within the DDS Office of Human Capital. The Office of Human Capital also provides information to supervisors, VR Specialists, and support staff on relevant training opportunities to enhance service delivery to customers.

Through the Learning Management System (LMS), DCRSA tracks VR Specialists completion of training courses needed to allow VR Specialists to maintain CRC certification.

Staff Directly Providing VR Service Delivery

The total number of personnel employed by the administration in the position of providing vocational rehabilitation service is eighty (80), with nine (9) current VR specialist vacancies. The total number of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Specialists is 45. This includes one VR Specialist who works primarily with independent living and people receiving services through the independent living, older blind program.

The total population served in FY 2023 was 5,694 persons with disabilities, including the vocational rehabilitation program, independent living program, and the independent living for the older blind program. In FY22, the total population served was 5,834 persons with disabilities. In the last two (2) fiscal years, the individuals' cases were closed for a variety of reasons including: loss of contact, referrals that failed to progress to intakes, and persons who did not follow through on intake interview.

The average caseloads of RSA VR Specialists are as follows: VR general caseloads — 125-150:1; Blind and Visually Impaired or Deaf and Hard of Hearing Caseloads — 75-100:1; Transition Caseloads — 125-150:1. In FY23, the average caseload for Blind and Visually Impaired or Deaf and Hard of Hearing Caseload is 103. The average caseload for the Transition unit is 167. In FY23, there were eleven (11) Transition VR Specialists and four (4) sensory VR Specialists who have more than the recommended maximum of cases on their caseloads. Caseloads were high in these units, due to multiple vacancies throughout the fiscal year. Caseload balancing will be addressed in the next fiscal year along with new employees hired in FY24.

Supervision

DCRSA currently has eight (8) VR supervisory specialist positions, and two (2) Program Managers, who are second level supervisors. One Program manager supervises three (3) General VR units, the Supported Employment/Evidence Based Supported Employment Unit, and the VR sensory unit (which serves people who are blind, deafblind, and deaf). The Transition and Outreach Program Manager supervises two VR transition units, and the Intake and Outreach unit. This includes two (2) Transition Supervisors, and one (1) Intake/Outreach supervisor.

Support Staffing

There is a total of ten (10) support staff for DCRSA. There are currently six (6) Rehabilitation Assistants supporting the VR Specialists and five (5) Program Support Specialists (4 of which support the Intake and Outreach unit). There are seven (7) Supervisory VR Specialist positions allotted for DCRSA and one Intake/Outreach Supervisor. Three (3) of those supervisors oversee the general VR units (one [1] positions is open currently), one (1) supervises the Supported Employment/Evidence Based Supported Employment unit, and one (1) supervises the sensory unit. There are two (2) Supervisors who manage the Transition Youth units. There are two (2) project managers who support the general VR and Transition programs.

Recruitment and Language Specialization

There are currently nine (9) VR Specialist vacancies and one (1) Supervisory VR Specialist vacancies that are in the recruitment process.

FY23, DCRSA added one (1) bilingual Spanish staff member and one (1) bilingual American Sign Language member. There are nineteen (19) DCRSA staff who identify as bilingual. Of the bilingual staff, five (5) staff members are certified proficient in Spanish, also fluent in Spanish is DDS Director Andrew Reese. There are four (4) staff who use American Sign Language, three (3) French-speaking RSA staff, and two (2) employees using Amharic. Additionally, there are other bilingual staff who speak the following languages: Yoruba, Igbo, German, Luganda, Swahili, Korean, Tigrinya, Sango, and Patois. In addition, the administration uses the Language Access Line to provide interpretation for consumers who are limited English proficient, or non-English proficient, when bilingual staff are unavailable.

Additionally, DCRSA has partnered with DDS Human Resources department to implement an internal process that prioritizes recruitment and retention of individuals served by RSA as DDS employees. The process includes the following steps:

Before a vacant position is announced, the HR Specialist over recruitment will contact the RSA point of contact ("POC") for any qualified candidates in Status 20 (ready to work). The HR Specialist will send the RSA POC the position description and/or job announcement. The RSA POC will confirm if there are any RSA clients in status 20 qualified for the vacant position within 5 business days and notify the HR Specialist of RSA's intent to forward qualified candidates.

The RSA point of contact will forward the qualified candidate resumes to the HR Specialist within 5 business days of identification.

The HR Specialist will review the resumes to determine whether the candidate meets the minimum qualifications. Thereafter, the resumes will be forwarded to the hiring manager for review and further discussion.

If the Hiring Manager is interested in any of the candidates, the Hiring Manager will arrange an informal meet and greet with the candidate(s). The HR Specialist will assist the Hiring Manager with this process.

The HR Specialist will make an offer to the selected candidate and proceed with the hiring process as a noncompetitive term hire.

An employee may remain in a term hire position for up to 4 years; however, within the first year of employment, the Hiring Manager should ascertain whether the term hire is a good fit and make a recommendation to convert the employee to a permanent position.

If a qualified RSA candidate is not identified within 5 business days of the notification to the RSA POC, the vacancy will be announced without further consideration.

Planning for Attrition

The estimate of the number of persons needed by the agency to provide VR services over the next five years is based on the estimate of the number of persons expected to retire or leave the agency within the next five years. For FY23, the agency incurred 5 separations, while one person retired. In FY24 (YTD) there were a total of 2 separations and no retirements. DCRSA continues to review those staff who are eligible for retirement to plan for vacancies in the upcoming years. DCRSA has been consistent in its leadership positions since FY19.

Staff Certifications, Development, and Performance

Considering the requirement that the agency have staff who have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and of the needs of people with disabilities, DCRSA no longer requires CRC as a requirement for hiring eligibility for VR Specialist positions. This change in certification requirements is due to the updates in the Comprehensive System Personnel Development (CSPD). This change has been in effect as of the 2020 WIOA State Plan. DCRSA does a comprehensive review of all applicants' education, training, and experience as a condition for hire.

In reviewing the performance of the staff who are not yet eligible to sit for the CRC examination, the agency noted that many of these staff are also high performers, in terms of the number of people placed in employment by VR Specialists. Although some staff may not have the CRC credentials, they demonstrate an understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of people with disabilities. Therefore, the agency decided not to terminate these individuals, but to continue to work with staff toward earning the CRC credentials, in order to stimulate professional growth for staff and greater employment outcomes for consumers.

DCRSA does not, however, require the CRC to either become employed as a VR Specialist and/or Supervisory Staff, or to maintain employment. The agency will continue to hire new VR Specialists who are eligible to sit for the CRC; and will continue to provide the necessary support to all existing staff through technical assistance, trainings, and the online learning management system (LMS) training system.

THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

See response no. 1 above.

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.

See response no. 1 above.

This number is not projected to decrease over the next five years, this is the staffing level necessary to effectively run the DC Rehabilitation Services Administration. These are the expected levels of personnel necessary to service all projected consumers over the next five years and takes into account any attrition and/or retirements. In the event of loss of staff, DCRSA's strategy is to refill any open positions to maintain the 108-person level. DCRSA will look to maintain its 54 VR Specialists, 1 deputy director, 4 employment coordinators, 1 business relation specialist, 7 supervisors, 3 program managers, 5 program analysts (Randolph Sheppard), 7 rehabilitation assistants, 5 program support assistants, 1 benefits specialist, 2 community support liaisons, 1 intake specialist, 1 VR Specialist (program evaluator), 3 project managers, 2 quality assurance monitors, 2 management analysts, 2 policy analysts, 1, budget analyst, 1 provider resource specialist, 5 clerical support specialists and 3 contract administrators.

DCRSA is accounting for two (2) attritions and/or departures from the VR program each year for the next five years, which would be a total of 10 positions potentially that could be vacated. Under current DC policy, all DCRSA positions are listed as essential, so for any losses the organization encounters, DCRSA has immediate permission to back fill such vacancies. This will be DCRSA's practice if there are federal funds to support the staff positions. The original counts listed above stand, as DCRSA expects to fill all vacancies over the next five (5) years.

PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM;

The State Agency Office of Human Capital maintains relationships with the local universities that have rehabilitation counseling programs. There are currently two programs in the District of Columbia, one at the University of the District of Columbia and one at George Washington University. The Internship Coordinator for the Agency works closely with both institutions to coordinate internship opportunities. During FY23, the agency had an intern from UDC who primarily supported DCRSA's Transition units. The internship coordinator for the agency works closely with both institutions to coordinate internship opportunities.

RSA Student Enrollment

Institutions	Total # of Students enrolled	# of Interns for FY 2020 at DCRSA from Colleges/Universities	# of students who graduated with certification or licensure or with the credentials for certification or licensure
George Washington University	42	0	Not Available*
University of the District of Columbia	40	1	16 (School year 21/22 data)
University of Maryland Eastern Shore	74	0	12 (School year 21/22 data)
Coppin State University	64	0	24 (School year 21/22)

**Reached out to University points of contact and awaiting data*

II. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND

See response (B)(i) above.

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.

See response (B)(i) above which includes the most recent publicly available information. Sources for data are as follows for each college or university:

George Washington University

Source: <https://gsehd9.drupal.gwu.edu/masters-rehabilitation-counseling>

University of the District of Columbia

Source: <https://docs.udc.edu/cas/UDC-Vital-Statistics-2022-ts23.pdf>

University of Maryland Eastern Shore:

Source: <https://www.wcp.umes.edu/dsv/quick-facts/>

Coppin State University

Source: https://www.coppin.edu/sites/default/files/pdf-library/2022-02/MastersRehabCounseling2020_2021AnnualReport.pdf

PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

Currently, the administration continues recruiting VR Specialists at grade 12 pay level, the highest grade level for a VR Specialist. Applicants at this level must have completed a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling with at least two years of experience. VR Specialists at grades 9 and 11 pay level require only a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling. These VR Specialists are considered entry level (or junior counselor), as opposed to the grade 12 position. The grade 12 position is a more senior level counseling position and has the two-year requisite experience. Furthermore, DCRSA only hires new VR Specialists who are eligible to sit for the CRC examination but do not require the CRC credential. The Administration does not limit hiring to only VR Specialists with a CRC because this could preclude hiring of seasoned VR Specialists as well as new graduates from VR counseling programs in the area, which is one of the best means of recruiting new staff for the Agency.

The Administration has a recruitment plan in place to address the hiring of a sufficient number of VR Specialists. These recruitment efforts include:

- posting vacancy announcements on the DCHR website (at the time any vacancy occurs),
- posting vacancy announcements at community programs and through professional organizations,
- visiting classrooms and faculty at universities,
- increasing its use of interns and volunteers, and
- advertising open positions on indigenous VR Program group emails such as CSAVR.

The recruitment plan consists of two major goals:

Goal 1: Expand recruitment efforts

Objective 1.1: Contact graduate school programs and develop relationships with the program chairs. Maintain appropriate contact information to mail notices of job openings.

Objective 1.2: Schedule attendance at job fairs at colleges and universities.

Objective 1.3: Develop opportunities for paid and non-paid internships with colleges and universities.

Objective 1.4: Participate in research projects, classroom visits, and other activities to raise DCRSA's profile with the above institutions and therefore increase access to potential VR Specialists.

Goal 2: Increase retention efforts

Objective 2.1: Continue DCRSA's new VR Specialist orientation program.

Objective 2.2: Increase opportunities for professional growth through increased opportunities for continuous learning through the Learning Management System (LMS) comprehensive training, in-service training, and workshops.

Objective 2.3: Expand opportunities for employee recognition, including the annual RSA Learning and Innovations Retreat.

Objective 2.4: Provide opportunities for staff to attend national conferences to learn from subject matters experts in vocational rehabilitation.

DCRSA has developed a formalized onboarding program with several weeks of prescribed activities and mentorship to orient new staff to DCRSA. Additionally, DCRSA provides the training needed to effectively utilize the case management system, understand the organizational structure, and develop an understanding of the DC population of jobseekers at large and the subpopulation of jobseekers with disabilities.

This orientation is comprised of seven modules.

Ethics and Confidentiality (1 CRC credit),

Thinking Ethically (1 CRC credit)

Overview of the VR Process,

Intake & Eligibility,

Comprehensive Assessment,

IPE Development,

Overview of Internal Database System, and

DC Policy Review (Review with Supervisor during initial week of employment).

In addition, all supervisory staff have requirements for ongoing management training each fiscal year required as part of their individual performance plans. DCRSA provides an annual awards and training event that celebrates employee success while also creating an environment of learning. Awards are presented to employees for outstanding Customer Service, performance, and teamwork.

DCRSA continues to procure an online learning management system (LMS) that provides weekly, monthly, and annual continuing education for all VR Specialists and DCRSA staff. Additionally, technical assistance webinar opportunities are shared with RSA supervisory VR specialists to distribute to their teams. The Administration encompasses a uniquely diverse staff. Currently, it has several bilingual staff.

Outreach efforts has expanded to attract employees proficient in Spanish. This outreach has included posting job announcements on the local Office of Latino Affairs website and at universities in Spanish speaking countries, as well as doing outreach to graduate VR counseling programs across the country seeking qualified bilingual graduates. The Administration has had success with recruiting qualified supervisory staff, both from within the agency and from other parts of the country.

PERSONNEL STANDARDS

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

DCRSA had established standards requiring that all VR Specialists be eligible to sit for the CRC examination. The agency supported all staff to prepare for and sit for the examination through multiple strategies. At the end of fiscal year 2023, DCRSA has fifty-four (54) VR Specialist positions and seven (7) VR supervisory staff. Of the 7 VR supervisors, 4 have a CRC; however, this is not a mandatory requirement to be a supervisor at DCRSA. Considering the WIOA changes, DCRSA has ensured that agency personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force. Staff hired by DCRSA are vetted to ensure that have knowledge and skills to support the unique needs of individuals with disabilities. DCRSA has found, in certain instances, that staff who lacked the CRC credential could still contribute to the mission of the agency to help people with disabilities obtain employment. Based on the performance of these employees, it was determined that they can contribute to the mission of the agency and that they have the required skills needed to assist persons with disabilities to obtain, maintain, and sustain employment. However, the agency will continue to make supports available to help all VR Specialists working toward obtaining a CRC credential. The agency will also continue its policy of hiring VR Specialists who are eligible to sit for the CRC examination.

To ensure that all staff have the education and experience to support the needs of individuals with disabilities (as defined by WIOA, and to maintain standards consistent with recognized certification, i.e., CRC licensure), DCRSA will continue to take the following steps to support current staff:

DCRSA will pay the one-time cost of the CRC examination.

DCRSA will allot hours during the workday for staff to attend training.

After negotiation with a university offering the rehabilitation counseling program, DCRSA will arrange to offer courses on site.

While DCRSA recognizes that the CRC credential is an added benefit to VR supervisory and/or VR counseling staff, DCRSA does not require this for hire. DCRSA is keeping consistent with regional qualifications and requirements for VR Specialists hiring, retention, or promotion.

THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

See response to question 3A. above.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

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

In 2022 and 2023, DCRSA staff attended various conferences and trainings which included the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR), the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE), National Council of State Administrators Blind, TASH conference, National Association for State Directors in Developmental Disability Systems (NASDDDS), NTACT:C Capacity Building Institute conference, among others. The Agency supports staff in attending these conferences. Staff who attend outside conferences and trainings provide updates and trainings at all staff meetings upon their return, to ensure dissemination of knowledge learned. Following the reorganization of Technical Assistance and Continuing Education services, the US Department of Education has initiated new training entities, such as Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management (VRTAC-QM) and engage National Technical Assistance Center on Transition: The Collaborative (NTACT:C). These training entities are well equipped to provide needed rehabilitation counseling trainings as well as WIOA technical support. In 2023, DCRSA engaged with VRTAC-QM and NTACT:C, which has provided technical assistance related to best practices in vocational rehabilitation services, WIOA performance measures, customized employment, targeted outcomes, and professional development. DCRSA will continue to receive training and technical support from these entities especially as it relates to WIOA and its implications for the vocational rehabilitation program.

PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS.

Administrative staff within the Office of Human Capital are charged with the responsibility to seek out, plan, and coordinate on-site and offsite training opportunities for staff on an ongoing basis. Additionally, the agency continues outreach activities in vocational training programs and colleges and universities to attract young professionals interested in embarking on a career in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling. DCRSA continues to partner with rehabilitation counseling programs at UDC, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, and GWU by providing internship opportunities for graduate students. These internships allow VR interns and students to garner the relevant exposure to and experience from the real world of work by engaging in an array of clinical and non-clinical operations of service delivery across the full spectrum of vocational rehabilitation. In FY23, there was one (1) intern from the University of the District of Columbia.

DCRSA continues to improve coordination with the DC Assistive Technology (AT) Center to ensure that VR Specialists are aware of services available there, and aware of AT services available for persons with disabilities, to know when a referral for an AT assessment is appropriate.

PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

DCRSA will continue to employ personnel who are able to communicate in the native languages of applicants for services and individuals who are limited English proficient and/or non-English proficient. The Administration provides accommodations for special communication needs such as interpreters, specialized services, and materials for individuals who are deaf, blind, or deafblind. American Sign language skills are considered a minimum qualification for positions providing services to persons being served by the sensory unit. The agency seeks to serve individuals with disabilities from the most prevalent six languages identified by the DC Office of Human Rights. The languages include Spanish, Chinese, French, Vietnamese, Korean, and Amharic. The agency will continue to emphasize the bilingual capacity of staff in recruitment

efforts. The agency includes a preference in hiring for candidates who are bilingual. The Agency complies with the DC Language Access Act.

The Human Capital Administration provides training to all staff regarding the DC Language Access Act and provision of services to non-English and limited English proficient people. In FY23, DCRSA added one (1) bilingual Spanish staff member and one (1) bilingual American Sign Language member. There are nineteen (19) DCRSA staff who identify as bilingual. Of the bilingual staff, five (5) staff members are certified proficient in Spanish, also fluent in Spanish is DDS Director Andrew Reese. There are four (4) staff who use American Sign Language, three (3) French-speaking RSA staff, and two (2) employees using Amharic. Additionally, there are other bilingual staff who speak the following languages: Yoruba, Igbo, German, Luganda, Swahili, Korean, Tigrinya, Sango, and Patois. In addition, the administration uses the Language Access Line to provide interpretation for consumers who are limited English proficient, or non-English proficient, when bilingual staff are unavailable.

COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

The Administration staff receives training on a continuous basis, as it relates to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and especially as it pertains to the VR staff in the transition units. The Administration is fully committed to providing effective, coordinated transition services. The agency has created two (2) Transition Units that currently employ one (1) program manager, two (2) supervisors, fourteen (14) VR Specialists, two rehabilitation assistants, one (1) program support assistant, one (1) employment coordinator, and one (1) Transition project manager, to assist in coordinating with all local education agencies and fully implementing the provision of pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities. DCRSA staff participates actively in DC's Secondary Transition Community of Practice, coordinated by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), as well as the DC3C Special Education Cooperative. DCRSA staff also remain active in Partners in Transition activities, which included ongoing activities with DCPS, OSSE and other public and private partners who work with youth with disabilities in the District of Columbia. The transition project manager works with DCPS and public charter schools to develop cross training for education and VR staff on VR and special education issues in transition. In FY23, DCRSA has maintained its Memorandum of Understanding with DC Public Schools to provide four (4) staff to support in the provision of pre-employment transition services, referrals to RSA, and job placements.

J. STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE REHABILITATION NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING WITHIN THE STATE, PARTICULARLY THE VR SERVICES NEEDS OF THOSE WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(a)).

DCRSA conducts a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) of disability services every three years as required by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. In collaboration with provider, Promesa Consulting Group, Inc. and San Diego State University (SDSU), DCRSA's leadership team and DDS contracting officials, the needs assessment project launched in FY23. The data from the CSNA is currently pending and

the results will be shared among the community in FY24. Historically, data collected from the CSNA examines the overall performance of DCRSA, the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, the needs of youth and students with disabilities, and the needs of business. DCRSA has utilized the results from the assessment to refine program development, expand outreach and engagement efforts, and allocate resources to address the needs of people with disabilities.

For FY20, the CSNA included the following themes and recommendations for the Overall Agency Performance area:

To address the lack of information about available VR Programs and Services, the recommendation is to consider launching a community-wide initiative aimed at creating a broad awareness of DCRSA programs and processes. Streamline information to persons with disabilities and families supporting them, including youth in transition and their families, community partners, business partners, advocacy groups and other community-based organizations to inform them about the comprehensive VR services available through DCRSA.

To address the need to offer VR individuals more job development and placement services, DCRSA should consider maintaining a dashboard of persons with disabilities who are ready to work and facilitate access to the dashboard by business and community partners that commit to working with DCRSA to provide placement opportunities. Ensure that candidates have properly formatted resumes and qualifications, so that businesses and community partners have quick access to a qualified pool of potential workers. An additional recommendation is to consider maintaining a centralized database of business partners who are seeking to hire and ensure there is a warm hand-off for people who are supported directly by DCRSA staff and by community rehabilitation service providers.

To address employer perceptions about persons with disabilities, the recommendation is to consider as part of a comprehensive employer engagement and job development program, formal trainings on the benefits of hiring and supporting persons with disabilities; training on understanding reasonable accommodations. Recommendations for strategic change related to accommodations and how to provide them. An additional recommendation is to consider hosting regular initiatives to promote the skills and abilities of persons with disabilities that successfully complete vocational rehabilitation programs.

To address confounding barriers, the recommendation is to consider using the discovery process to document confounding barriers and make the barriers known to others seeking to assist in the VR process. Also, consider closer coordination and partnerships with advocacy groups to help link VR individuals to resources to address confounding barriers. As an alternative, consider compiling reference materials to refer VR to other community resources to address documented confounding barriers.

The CSNA included the following recommendations in needs of persons with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment:

To address the need to make assistive technology more readily available, consider contracting with more community partners who can provide such technological aids and devices, and training or include these services in an MOU with a government agency that can provide devices and training.

To ensure that the needs of persons with disabilities that are thought to be underserved and unserved, especially individuals on the Autism spectrum are addressed, consider implementing additional vocational rehabilitation programs. Also consider partnering with advocacy

organizations that offer unique capabilities to accommodate individuals on the Autism spectrums.

To address the need for a broader emphasis and additional training to implement effective customized employment, consider requiring providers to send staff who are responsible for job development or placement to a regular training and information exchange session with DCRSA designated staff. The sessions could address strategies and best practices; tracking provider staff progress in developing employer relationships; and developing effective tools provider staff can use to assist employers to discover opportunities for customization and realization of efficiencies.

WHO ARE MINORITIES;

The CSNA included the following recommendations for the needs of persons with disabilities from different ethnic groups, including needs of persons who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program:

DCRSA should investigate why there are no individuals coded as veterans that receive services from the organization.

As a matter of course, DCRSA should recruit bilingual VR Specialists for every vacant counseling position.

DCRSA should investigate why the rate of individuals that are Asian and Pacific Islander and Latino who are being served by the organization continue to remain significantly below their occurrence in the general population of the District. The addition of a VR Specialist who speaks Spanish or any of the Asian and Pacific Island languages, may help with establishing community relationships with programs that serve these populations. This potential new staff may increase referrals.

When asked whether barriers to achieving employment goals for clients who are racial or ethnic minorities are different than those of the overall population of people with disabilities, 54% responded "yes." However, staff respondents cited 70.0% of clients that are limited English proficient have barriers that were different from the overall population of people with disabilities.

In addition, during staff interviews, many suggested families need greater support and education about the opportunities of VR services for their eligible family member(s) and for some racial and ethnic minorities there is a lack of family support. However, staff also said DCRSA aims to make extra effort to reach out to racial and ethnic minorities, especially persons with disabilities in Wards 7 and 8. They also felt benefits counseling for racial and ethnic minority families and education on the implications of work on their benefits could encourage more families of persons with disabilities to seek VR program participation for their eligible family members.

Based on these findings, there were no specific recommendations made for this minority subsection; however, to ensure that the needs of persons with disabilities who are thought to be underserved and unserved, DCRSA should consider implementing additional vocational rehabilitation programs to support individuals with disabilities who also fall into the minority category.

WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

The findings of the CSNA in 2020 show the analysis of stakeholder input on barriers and service needs, as well as service system infrastructure issues resulted in the following recommendations for strategic changes to unserved and underserved populations.

To ensure that the needs of persons with disabilities that are thought to be underserved and unserved, especially individuals on the Autism spectrum are addressed, consider implementing additional vocational rehabilitation programs. Also consider partnering with advocacy organizations that offer unique capabilities to accommodate individuals on the Autism spectrums.

WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

The CSNA included recommendations for the needs of persons with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system. The analysis of stakeholder input on barriers and service needs, as well as service system infrastructure issues, resulted in the following recommendations for strategic changes to VR service provisions:

Survey respondents made several suggestions for community rehabilitation provider collaboration, including strengthening the collaboration between DCRSA and VR partners thus improving VR service outcomes.

Community partners also proposed a shared database system with DOES or another core WIOA partner to identify whether VR clients are employed or whether there are records of employment while non-responsive individuals are being pursued.

WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

The CSNA included the following recommendations for the needs of youth with disabilities in transition:

DCRSA should consider strengthening the terms of the DCRSA/DCPS agreement to provide clarity on the services for youth in transition, especially differences between Pre-ETS and VR services.

Expand outreach and education about transition services to ensure that parents and students gain a better understanding of Pre-ETS and VR services. In addition, enhance current data sharing to demonstrate performance outcomes more effectively.

IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

The CSNA included the following recommendations in regarding the need to establish, develop, or improve CRPs in the District:

Consider updating how rehabilitation service providers' information is collected, maintained, and utilized to help persons with disabilities make more informed choices.

Updating the current DCRSA online service provider directory to include updated contact information and performance history, including specialty services provided and job placement history.

To obtain greater provider diversification and augmentation of the provider pool, consider changing the provider recruitment process to diversify and increase the number of providers offering various services to minimize delays in service provisions due to lack of providers to improve informed consent. Specifically, obtain more bilingual service providers that are fluent in a range of languages. Obtain more providers of American Sign Language (ASL) services. Add more providers who offer benefits counseling and assistive technology services. Include providers that offer training in a range of technology products, e.g., computers, tablets, smartphones, and other technology applications.

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

Based on the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment completed in 2020, the data reveals the following needs of persons of transition age:

Skills Development – focus group discussions with youth in transition recognized the need for counseling and guidance on skills training necessary for employment goal achievement. Youth expressed continued interest in activities such as internships, job exploration, and job coaching. Youth also were very excited about the pre-ETS provider programming being offered by certain vendors. It was also reported that youth were interested in programs and internships where they would have opportunities to build self-confidence and learn from others.

Family Participation - youth in transition and parents of youth in transition expressed the need for more family involvement in developing the IPE.

Accommodations – youth focus group participants also expressed a need for more assistance specific to their need for accommodations. DCRSA provides pre-employment transition services directly with their own transition staff and through contracting with service providers. They have developed MOAs with the public schools and have established a strong foundation for the delivery of pre-employment transition services to students that need these services.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES

U.S. Census data reported in the 2020 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment shows the population of persons with disabilities in the District of Columbia within the context of the total District's population. In 2018, the District of Columbia's population estimate was 684,498, and the estimated population of persons with disabilities was 80,368 or 11.6%.

According to the 2019 State Report for County-Level Data: Employment compiled by the Annual Disability Statistics Compendium; it was reported that employment rate for persons with disabilities (Ages 18-64) in the District of Columbia is 36.9%.

[1] These were the cost per participants during PY22:

Cost of Services

SUMMARY INFORMATION				
Service	Participants Served (Cohort Period: 07/01/2022 - 06/30/2023)	Participants Exited (Cohort Period: 07/01/2022 - 06/30/2023)	Funds Expended (Cohort Period: 07/01/2022 - 06/30/2023)	Cost Per Participant Served (Cohort Period: 07/01/2022 - 06/30/2023)
Career Services	3,336	1,390	\$3,460,718	\$1,037.39
Training Services	724	151	\$3,671,837	\$5,071.60
Percent training-related employment¹:		Percent enrolled in more than one core program:		Percent Admin Expended:
N/A		28.0%		N/A

DCRSA projects cost per participant at the same level as PY22 with adjustments for inflation and cost of living. DCRSA projects the number of participants to increase in PY23 and beyond due to increased outreach efforts. DCRSA projects an increase in the number of people served by our Supported Employment Grants in our State Plan for PY24, as DBH and DCDDA look to serve more people with ID/DD, Serious Mental Illness (SMI), and severe Substance Use Disorders (SUD) as mandated by the City Council and the Executive Office of the Mayor. DCRSA can offer job coaching and post-employment supports for participants in the DDA Waiver. For participants in the evidence-based supported employment program, a special Federal Grant is awarded to DBH which allows them to offer some vocational supports. These are different vocational supports than DCRSA provides.

[1] Institute on Disability, 2020. Annual Disability Statistics Compendium: 2020. Durham, NH: University of New Hampshire, Institute on Disability

THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:
THE VR PROGRAM;

See response K1 above.

THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

See response K1 above.

EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION.

See response K1 above.

THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT
RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

See response K1 above.

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.

See response K1 above.

STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

IDENTIFY IF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES WERE JOINTLY DEVELOPED AND AGREED TO BY THE STATE VR AGENCY AND THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, IF THE STATE HAS A COUNCIL, AND JOINTLY AGREED TO ANY REVISIONS

In Fiscal Year 2023, the District of Columbia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) held a total of four (4) quarterly virtual meeting on the following dates:

December 9, 2022

March 2, 2023

June 1, 2023

September 7, 2023

These meetings occurred to standardize consistency and predictability for SRC meetings and reduce the number of instances where there was a lack of a quorum at the majority of the meetings. These sessions are public forums structured to gather information about the employment of persons with disabilities and how the Designated State Unit (DSU) is utilizing funds to accomplish goals and objectives. The DSU provides information about services offered. Every effort is made to provide a variety of avenues for public input whenever issues, concerns, or policy changes are considered. DCRSA has an active policy committee that reviews and comments on proposed regulatory, policy and procedure changes, and reaches out to the SRC for feedback when needed. In FY23, DCRSA continued its focus in developing SOPs and internal documents to ensure all staff understand and comply with the revised policies and procedures that DCRSA has implemented. In FY23, DCRSA's internal policy committee met on a bi-weekly basis to review and update policies and practices so that they are consistent with federal and District regulations. These policies and procedures reflect and incorporate national best practices and are developed with input from the SRC and the community.

DCRSA collaborated with the SRC for the FY 2023 CSNA assessment. The goals and priorities for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment program are in response to both National and State issues, as mandated by Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The focus of their goals and activities includes, but are not limited to, consumer satisfaction, statewide needs assessment, state plan and amendments, policy, extent/scope/effectiveness of services, interagency agreements, and District of Columbia employment programs. These goals were developed, reviewed, and approved by DCRSA and the SRC. Planned program goals to be accomplished by DCRSA were based on agency performance on standards and indicators.

Goal 1: Increase the number of DC residents with disabilities who achieve quality employment outcomes in competitive integrated settings.

Objective 1.1: Increase outreach efforts, with a particular focus on ensuring accessibility of services for people identified as underserved or unserved in the 2023 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, and for people living in wards 7 and 8.

Strategies: DCRSA will:

Maintain an increased presence of bilingual Spanish speaking staff, consistent with 34 CFR 361.18 to support expansion of employment and career-exploration services to the District's Latinx population who represent underserved and unserved residents of the District.

Maintain a sustainable presence of VR Specialists at all three American Job Center Locations, five days a week throughout the District with the addition of the employment coordinators stationed at the AJCs in Wards 7 and 8.

Continue to ensure that intake appointments are offered at either DCRSA's office, one of the AJC locations or a community-based location.

Identify additional outreach sites in wards 7 and 8.

Identify outreach sites in community-based organizations that serve immigrants from Asia/Pacific Islands, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Latin America, and people with physical and sensory disabilities.

Performance Measures by June 30, 2024, and ongoing through June 30, 2028:

DCRSA will maintain sufficient staff fluent in Spanish to assign a Spanish speaking VR Specialist to all limited English proficient or non-English proficient (LEP/NEP) Spanish speaking clients, consistent with the caseload standards included in the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD).

VR services will be provided five (5) days per week at all American Job Centers.

When scheduling intake appointments, DCRSA staff will offer an appointment at a location in the community most accessible to a client's home.

DCRSA will expand its outreach and engagement to at least three (3) additional agencies based in Wards 7 and 8 and will establish an agreement to provide services at each location at least one (1) day per month.

DCRSA will re-establish its (MOA) with the National Rehabilitation Hospital.

DCRSA will expand its outreach and engagement to at least two (2) community-based agencies serving Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants, two (2) serving immigrants from Latin America and will establish an agreement to provide services at each location at least one (1) day per month. DCRSA will sponsor educational and informational activities in underserved and unserved communities.

DCRSA will develop and maintain flyers, brochures, and other printed materials in diverse languages.

DCRSA will expand its outreach and engagement to medical facilities that specialize with people with physical and sensory disabilities and will establish an agreement to provide services at least (1) day per month.

Objective 1.2: Increase the effectiveness of outreach efforts through ongoing evaluation of utilization of outreach sites to ensure that DCRSA staff are placed in the community where the need for VR services is highest.

Strategies: DCRSA will:

Assign VR supervisory staff to each quadrant of Washington, DC to be responsible for managing the relationship between DCRSA and the community-based agencies where outreach services are offered.

Track the number of referrals received and clients seen at each outreach site monthly.

Work with staff at the site to determine what marketing can be done to improve outreach or consider reducing or eliminating VR services in sites that appear to be underutilized.

Performance by June 30, 2024, and ongoing through June 30, 2028:

VR Supervisory Staff will conduct an annual review of all DCRSA Community Sites to evaluate the utilization of the site.

DCRSA will increase outreach sites in the community by twenty percent (20%).

Objective 1.3: Increase the number of people who complete training programs that prepare them for jobs in high demand fields, increasing the number of employment placements in these fields.

Strategies: DCRSA will:

Coordinate with the Workforce Investment Council (DCWIC) staff and the Department of Employment Services (DOES) staff responsible for approving and contracting with eligible training providers, to identify qualified providers in the identified growth industries in the District, including retail, transportation, hospitality, health care, IT, construction, and security.

Provide training to VR Specialists to ensure that they can use labor market information in assisting people to develop employment goals that are consistent with the person's strengths, needs, resources, abilities, capabilities, and prepares the person for work that is available in high demand fields in the District economy.

Establish agreements with additional training providers and coordinate with the DCWIC, OSSE and DOES to ensure that VR clients are able to access training programs provided through other workforce agencies.

Track the number of people completing training programs in high demand fields.
Analyze employment rates for those completing training in high demand fields by agency and by employment field.

Contract with providers that issue industry recognized certification in high demand fields.
Evaluate provider performance annually, including completion rates, employment rates and consumer satisfaction; and make this information publicly available.

Performance by June 30, 2024, and ongoing through June 30, 2028:

DCRSA will obtain baseline data regarding performance outcomes for all current hospitality, health care, IT, construction, and security training providers with which it has agreements. There will be an increase in the number of training providers in identified growth industries in the District with which DCRSA has agreements.

There will be an increase in the number of people served by DCRSA who complete training programs in identified high demand industries.

d. There will be an increase in job placements in high demand industries.

Objective 1.4: Increase the number of people with intellectual disabilities (ID) and serious mental illness (SMI) or substance use disorder (SUD) who obtain and maintain employment through better coordination of supported employment services with the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) and the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH).

Strategies: DCRSA will:

Assign four (4) VR Specialists to work specifically with people referred from DCDDA supported employment services.

Assign four (4) VR Specialists to work with all people referred from DBH for evidence based supported employment services.

Arrange with DBH to provide training for all VR Specialists regarding mental health and substance abuse treatment services available in the District.

Review the DDS Protocol regarding coordination of services between DCRSA and DCDDA, make necessary changes and provide training to all DCDDA service coordinators and VR Specialists.

Performance by June 30, 2024, and ongoing through June 30, 2028:

There will be at least 25 successful closures of people referred for supported employment services by DCDDA.

There will be at least 100 successful closures for people with serious mental illness (SMI) or substance use disorder (SUD) referred by DBH to DCRSA for supported employment services. There will be no gaps in the provision of supported employment services when transitioning people from VR supported employment services to extended supported employment services through either DCDDA or DBH.

All people in transition will receive 90 days of extended services through DCDDA or DBH before their case is closed successfully by DCRSA.

Objective 1.5: Increase agency capacity in serving people who are blind and visually impaired

Strategies: DCRSA will:

Collaborate with community-based agencies that serve people who are blind to develop an outreach strategy to the blind, visually impaired, and deafblind communities.

Identify gaps in services that serve people who are blind, visually impaired, or deafblind.

Identify funding sources that will increase provider capacity to serve people who are blind, visually impaired, or deafblind.

Develop an outreach strategy to identify people who may be interested in and have the necessary aptitude to be successful as vendors with the Randolph Sheppard Program.

VR Specialists serving people who are blind will identify people on their caseload who may have aptitude for entrepreneurial work and would be interested in participating in the Randolph Sheppard Program.

Performance by June 30, 2024, and ongoing through June 30, 2028:

DCRSA will increase the number of referrals of people who are blind to DCRSA for VR services by at least 10% in Program Year 2024 and will maintain this increased level of referrals through PY 2024.

DCRSA will increase the number of service providers who deliver services to people who are blind, visually impaired, and deafblind.

DCRSA will increase the number of vendors in the Randolph Sheppard program by at least two (2) vendors each year.

DCRSA will establish an MOA with the Mayor's Office of Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing

Objective 1.6: Increase the range of employment outcomes.

Strategies: DCRSA will:

Provide person-centered training for VR Specialists and training on provision of comprehensive, holistic assessment for use in eligibility determination and for the comprehensive assessment used to inform the development of the IPE.

Conduct eCASAS assessment at the time of a person's application and provide referrals for appropriate literacy and adult education services.

Expand the provision of job readiness training for DCRSA job seekers, by both DCRSA Business

Relations and Employment Coordinator staff and through contracts with provider agencies as well as in-house.

Review the current process for referral for benefits counseling and identify ways to improve efficiency in this process to increase the number of people who receive benefits counseling.

Performance by June 30, 2024, and ongoing through June 30, 2028:

Ensure that all VR Specialists complete person-centered training.

Provide training on customized employment and employer engagement for VR and provider agency staff and provide training sessions, to increase capability of DCRSA and providers to provide this on an ongoing basis.

Review, update and publish benefits counseling procedures to ensure streamlined access to service.

Increase the number of people who complete the eCASAS assessment ten percent (10%) above the current number.

Increase the number of people who receive job readiness training by ten percent (10%) above the current number.

Increase the number of students who receive at least one pre-employment transition service, including job readiness training, by ten percent (10%) above the current number.

All VR staff will use person-centered planning tools to develop employment goals that better reflect the strengths, interests, abilities, capabilities, and resources of people served by DCRSA.

Maintain the increased level (i.e., 10% above the current number) of people who receive job readiness training.

Ensure that all VR clients receiving SSI/SSDI benefits are offered to attend DCRSA's benefits counseling and orientation sessions immediately after eligibility is determined.

Objective 1.7: Develop additional outreach materials.

Strategies: DCRSA will:

Review and update the Transition Tool Kit.

Develop materials for the General Intake Unit, similar to the Transition Tool Kit, to include at least FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions); Information about Developing an Individualized Plan for

Employment (IPE); the VR Process; Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Changes to the Rehabilitation Act; and Client/Applicant Rights.

Translate all materials as necessary, consistent with the DC Language Access Act.

Develop a plan to distribute materials.

Update the outreach materials provided to businesses.

Performance by June 30, 2024, and ongoing until June 30, 2028:

Outreach materials will be accessible and widely available in the community.

Goal 2: Improve DCRSA service delivery through more efficient operations and a more effective, skilled workforce.

Objective 2.1: Continue to provide regular training for DCRSA staff.

Strategies: DCRSA will:

Provide regular, mandatory training for DCRSA vocational rehabilitation staff based on policies, procedures, protocols, best practices, and trends identified by the agency, and make trainings available electronically.

Improve the DCRSA onboarding process to efficiently and effectively educate new staff about job requirements at DCRSA.

Implement a mentoring program for new staff to shadow and receive guidance from experienced colleagues.

Revise and update employee performance goals to meet the changes of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Provide support to staff who are not currently eligible to sit for the CRC (Certified Rehabilitation

Counselor) examination, consistent with the provisions in the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development above.

Performance by June 30, 2024, and ongoing through June 30, 2028:

Results from the quality case review system and other Quality Assurance Reviews (conducted after the introduction of any new policy or procedure) will show at least 90% compliance with new policies and procedures, or the agency will provide updated training to improve outcomes.

Program Year (PY) 2024-2028, DCRSA will track WIOA performance measures to establish a baseline of performance. By June 30, 2028, DCRSA will meet established WIOA performance standards identified in the Unified State Workforce Development Plan.

Objective 2.2: Retain, train, and recruit experienced and qualified VR staff and service providers to improve services to the low incidence populations, including people who are blind, deafblind, have autism, or other autism spectrum disorders.

Strategies: DCRSA will:

Provide continuous training to staff on customized employment policies, procedures, protocols, and best practices.

Provide continuous training to service providers on customized employment policies, procedures, protocols, and best practices.

Develop and implement outreach plans to recruit providers who can provide services to low incidence populations.

Develop and implement outreach plan on DCRSA services to the low incidence population.

Performance by June 30, 2024, and ongoing through June 30, 2028:

- a. 100% of DCRSA workforce will receive professional development opportunities.
- b. VR Specialists' performance will be 90% compliant in case reviews and as required by standards established in policies and regulations.

Establish and maintain a communication network with service providers in the District.

DCRSA will complete the development and use of the vendor report card system to include the workgroups with the SRC and the provider community.

DCRSA will recruit CBE providers for services to include the blind and deaf, especially job placement and supported employment.

DCRSA will invite providers to be part of trainings provided to staff and relevant to the provider community.

Establish contracts that support consumers achieving the milestones contained in the common performance measures in WIOA to include payment for consumers that retain employment during the second and fourth quarter after exit from the VR Program.

DCRSA will provide ongoing training to staff on HCAs, including the payment structure for job development and placement.

Objective 2.3: Revise VR policies and procedures to ensure that current policies are consistent with the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Strategies: DCRSA will:

Consult with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) regarding the review of all current policies and procedures and revise as necessary.

Upon review of the final federal WIOA rules, update as necessary the District regulations make any necessary adjustments.

Hold required public hearings and provide appropriate public notice to obtain community input on all policy, procedure, or regulatory changes.

Performance by June 30, 2028:

The District's vocational rehabilitation regulations will be consistent with all requirements in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Performance by June 30, 2024, and ongoing through June 30, 2028:

DCRSA will have up-to-date policies and procedures, consistent with federal and District regulations, which reflect best practices and are developed with input from the SRC and the community.

Goal 3: Expand and improve the quality of transition services through improved coordination with the state education agency and all local education agencies and implementation of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities.

Objective 3.1: DCRSA will update the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) to remain in compliance with WIOA requirements regarding provision of services to all students with disabilities, including those who are potentially eligible for VR services, and establish or update agreements with all local education agencies to establish clear processes for referral for VR services, and coordination of pre-employment transition services.

When appropriate, all students attending a DC Public School, Public Charter School or non-public placement can be referred for VR services, including pre-employment transition services beginning at age 14, with the consent of the adult student and/or parent/guardian.

DCRSA will determine eligibility within 60 days of receiving the application and complete the IPE within 90 days of determining eligibility. VR Specialists will visit the schools regularly, on at least a monthly basis, or more frequently for schools that have higher referral numbers.

Transition VR Specialist are available to see students to complete applications, determine

eligibility, complete comprehensive assessment to develop IPEs, provide ongoing counseling and guidance, and provide pre-employment transition services.

Work with OSSE and LEAs to clarify updates and processes for referrals to DCRSA. Provide training to school staff regarding when referral for VR services is appropriate and transition planning should begin.

Performance by June 30, 2024:

MOAs with 18 public charter schools will be in place.

MOA with OSSE will be updated for each fiscal year to remain in compliance with WIOA.

Performance by June 30, 2024, and ongoing through June 30, 2028:

When appropriate, all students attending a DC Public School, Public Charter School or non-public placement will be referred for VR services by age 14, with the consent of the adult student or parent of students under the age of 18.

DCRSA will determine eligibility within 60 days of receiving the application and complete the IPE within 90 days of determining eligibility. VR Specialists will visit the schools regularly, on at least a monthly basis, or more frequently for schools that have higher referral numbers. Transition VR Specialist are available to see students to complete applications, determine eligibility, complete comprehensive assessment to develop IPE, provide ongoing counseling and guidance, and provide pre-employment transition services.

Objective 3.2: Provide opportunities for work experience for students with disabilities resulting in postsecondary education or competitive integrated employment outcomes.

Strategies: DCRSA will:

DCRSA will provide at least 140 paid work-based learning experiences annually for DC Public School students who are enrolled in CTE and/or transition courses aligned to goals for competitive integrated employment and/or postsecondary education.

Each summer, at least 25 eligible students will participate in a pre-ETS employment summer work-based learning experience (e.g., JumpStart).

DCRSA employment coordinator will work with employers to provide paid work-based learning experiences for at least 65 students who attend DC public charter schools.

DCRSA will work with LEAs and employer partners to ensure at least 25 students who participated in a DCRSA funded work-based learning experience will achieve competitive integrated employment or post-secondary education or training following the conclusion of a work-based learning experience or secondary education.

Coordinate with schools to offer benefits counseling for eligible or potentially eligible students, through pre-employment transition services, as appropriate or requested throughout the academic year.

DCRSA will continue to work with DOES to coordinate and provide necessary supports to identified students who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services, to be successful in their

MBSYEP summer work placements. The JumpStart Program provides support to students with most significant disabilities, including a pre-employment “boot camp”, job readiness trainers, travel training, and any additional services needed to support these youth. This program is an interagency effort that includes DCPS, DC Public Charter Schools, community-based agencies, OSSE and DCRSA supported employment provider agencies.

DCRSA will ensure that all students on a certificate pathway have at least one (1) opportunity for a paid work-based learning experience prior to exiting high school.

Prior to exiting high school, all students on a certificate pathway, who are referred to DCRSA for either pre-employment transition services or VR services will have the opportunity to work with DCRSA on resume development, that may include prior employment or work-based learning experiences, obtaining official school records, and/or references from previous supervisors, if available.

Provide communication to transition youth using social media platforms that are familiar to the population.

Performance by June 30, 2024, and ongoing through June 30, 2028:

DCRSA will provide at least 140 paid work-based learning experiences annually for DC Public School students who are enrolled in CTE and/or transition courses aligned to goals for competitive integrated employment and/or postsecondary education.

At least 25 eligible students will participate in a supported employment summer work-based learning experience (e.g., JumpStart).

DCRSA will coordinate with its Pre-ETS providers to establish paid work-based learning experiences for at least 65 students who attend DC public charter schools.

DCRSA will work with LEAs and employer partners to ensure at least 25 students who participated in DCRSA funded work-based learning experience will achieve competitive integrated employment or post-secondary education or training following the conclusion of a work-based learning experience or secondary education.

Coordinate with schools to offer benefits counseling for eligible students, through pre-employment transition services, as appropriate or requested throughout the academic year.

DCRSA will continue to work with DOES to coordinate and provide necessary supports to identified students who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services, to be successful in their MBSYEP summer work placements.

DCRSA will ensure that all students on a certificate pathway have at least one (1) opportunity for a paid work-based learning experience prior to exiting high school.

Prior to exiting high school, all students on a certificate pathway who are referred to DCRSA for either pre-employment transition services or VR services will have the opportunity to work with DCRSA on resume development, that may include prior employment or work-based learning experiences, obtaining official school records, and/or references from previous supervisors, if available.

Objective 3.3: Provide Pre-ETS services to students with disabilities that lead to post- secondary education or competitive integrated employment.

Strategies: DCRSA will:

Have its VR Specialists provide monthly job readiness training sessions in DC local education agencies for students with disabilities who are potentially eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

As needed, DCRSA will issue a solicitation seeking qualified providers to provide pre-employment transition or VR services to students with disabilities, as authorized in their individual plans for employment (IPEs).

DCRSA will work with DCPS and Public Charter Schools to track students who have 504 plans and identify other students with disabilities who may be potentially eligible for VR services.

Performance by June 30, 2024, and ongoing through June 30, 2028:

At least 75% of students with IEPs or 504 plans will receive at least one Pre-ETS service during the 2023-2024 school year.

Goal 4: Improve coordination with other workforce development agencies providing services at the American Job Centers.

Objective 4.1: Establish data sharing agreements with DOES and OSSE that will enable DCRSA to have access to post-case closure wage and education data for VR clients.

Strategies: RSA will:

Update and finalize an MOA with OSSE that will enable DCRSA to have access to the data management system used by the core WIOA partners that will provide information regarding VR client's participation in training programs, as well as have access to OSSE post-secondary data regarding participation in college and university.

Establish MOA with DOES to have access to the system that will provide national aggregate employment data regarding employment for people who exit VR services.

Performance by June 30, 2028:

DCRSA will be able to track employment and education data on all people who exit the program.

DCRSA will coordinate with the one-stop operator to ensure AJC partners share data to provide access to individual data across systems regardless of where the individual's point of entry and facilitate multiple points of entry, cross agency individual employment planning, and resource sharing.

Objective 4.2: Improve coordination of services at American Job Centers

Strategies: DCRSA will:

Work with DOES, DHS and OSSE to provide cross-training for staff in American Job Centers.

Provide evaluation of accessibility of all AJCs to the one-stop operator and provide technical assistance to support them in making necessary changes to ensure that all AJCs are accessible for people with disabilities, including people with physical and sensory impairments.

Performance by June 30, 2024, and ongoing through June 30, 2028:

American Job Centers will be accessible and provide all required core services.

The AJC partners will share data to provide access to individual data across systems regardless of where the individual's point of entry and facilitate multiple points of entry, cross agency individual employment planning, and resource sharing.

Objective 4.3: Improve Coordination of Services to Businesses:

Strategies: DCRSA will:

Coordinate with the Business Services Group at the Department of Employment Services to ensure that business outreach by government agencies occurs in a more coordinated manner.

Establish relationship with the Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD), and with small, local businesses in DC, to inform them about supports available for employees with disabilities.

Provide business roundtables regularly throughout the year to provide education to businesses about employing people with disabilities.

Work with business partners to conduct business roundtables and to develop education materials for businesses.

Performance by June 30, 2024, and ongoing through June 30, 2028:

DCRSA will have at least two (2) business roundtables throughout each year.

DCRSA will increase the number of small businesses with which it has relationships by ten percent (10%) yearly.

DCRSA will provide services, in terms of disability education, to these businesses. DCRSA is drafting the most recent Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment which will be published in winter 2024; this assessment, as well as agency consumer satisfaction surveys and agency performance reports informed the development of this plan. The District will publish its Unified Workforce Development State Plan Modification in March 2026 and will hold several public forums to hear feedback on the plan, including the program specific plan for vocational rehabilitation and supported employment services. The goals and priorities for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported employment program are in response to both National and State issues, as mandated by Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The goals and activities include but are not limited to consumer satisfaction; statewide needs assessment; state plan and amendments; policy; extent/scope/effectiveness of services; interagency agreements; and District of Columbia employment programs. These goals were developed, reviewed, and approved by DCRSA and the SRC. Planned program goals to be accomplished by the DCRSA were based on agency performance on standards and indicators.

IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

See response l above.

ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

See response l above.

THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

See response l above.

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.

See response l above.

ORDER OF SELECTION

WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES

DCRSA has discontinued its OOS (Order of Selection) and will not utilize the OOS for the 2020 – 2024 State Plan, no justification needed for this section.

THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

DCRSA has discontinued its OOS (Order of Selection) and will not utilize the OOS for the 2020 – 2024 State Plan, no justification needed for this section.

THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS

DCRSA has discontinued its OOS (Order of Selection) and will not utilize the OOS for the 2020 - 2024 State Plan, no justification needed for this section.

WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER; AND

See response to C above.

HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

See response to C above.

IF THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS ELECTED TO SERVE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS, REGARDLESS OF ANY ESTABLISHED ORDER OF SELECTION, WHO REQUIRE SPECIFIC SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT

Not Applicable

N. GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS

SPECIFY THE STATE'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
DCRSA's state goal is to increase the number of persons with disabilities who are significantly disabled and qualify for supported employment services such as job coaching, and post-employment supports. The priority is to serve more persons with significant disabilities in the supported employment program through the current partnerships with DC Developmental Disability Administration (DDA) of the Department of Disability Services and the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) using Title VI funding.

As previously stated within this plan, this improved coordination has included refinement of a protocol with DCDDA regarding the referral process from DCDDA to DCRSA for VR services, the referral from DCRSA to DCDDA for extended supported employment services through the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver, and coordination of services between the administrations when a person is being supported by both.

In addition, there has been improved coordination with DBH, including the continued use of a Memorandum of Agreement regarding referral, coordination of services and training of staff, as well as a significant expansion in the number of Evidence-Based Supported Employment (EBSE) community rehabilitation providers.

DCRSA's Evidence-Based Supported Employment program (EBSE) for persons with serious mental illness (SMI) and substance use disorder (SUD) utilizes an evidenced-based approach to help individuals with the most significant disabilities to secure, retain, or regain competitive employment in an integrated setting that pays minimum wage or better, and provides benefits. Supported Employment services are individualized and include, but are not limited to counseling and guidance, job coaching, follow-along services, and development of natural supports.

DCRSA coordinates EBSE services with the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH). DCRSA has significantly improved its coordination with DBH since 2015. The number of EBSE providers is currently at three (3) with active Human Care Agreements. Staff from the two agencies and the provider agencies meet monthly to ensure effective coordination of services. The VR Specialists provide services at the EBSE provider locations and work as a team to ensure seamless transition of referrals to DCRSA and transition to extended services with DBH.

A consistent number of people were referred by DCDDA and DBH, as well as a consistent number of successful employment outcomes, and with expectations to increase this number for PY 2023 and PY 2024. DCRSA is coordinating with the internal operations team to bring on

additional DCDDA providers to the DCRSA network. DCRSA will continue its efforts to streamline the referral process.

DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED, WITH FUNDS RESERVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 603(D), FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING: THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 4 YEARS; AND

The Section 603(d) (supported employment grant) funds reserved for youth will be used primarily to support youth who participated in ProjectSEARCH and obtained employment aligned with the participant's IPE goal following completion of the ProjectSEARCH Program. The agency currently supports two (2) ProjectSEARCH sites at National Institute of Health (NIH) and Capital Area Region (formerly known as Embassy Suites and Hilton Hotels). Participants in the Capital Area Region site are students, as defined by WIOA. Therefore, funds reserved for the provision of pre-employment transition services and not 603(d) funds, are being used to support students with disabilities at this site. DCRSA continues to support youth with disabilities through extended service, who have completed the ProjectSEARCH program year and are employed following the program's completion and placed in competitive, integrated employment aligned with the youth's IPE goal. The provision of supported employment services will be up to 24 months, or longer if necessary and documented, and youth with the most significant disabilities may receive extended services for up to (4) years or until the youth turns 25 years old.

The funds available to support youth in extended services are helpful in the District, as the District's developmental disability agency supports only persons with intellectual and development disabilities (IDD). DCRSA will use extended services to support youth with other significant disabilities who do not qualify for DCDDA services, as they achieve stabilization in employment, as defined by the agency's supported employment policy, but continue to require ongoing supports to be successful in employment. The agency will also rely on natural supports and ticket to work support in developing long-term planning with youth with disabilities, to ensure comprehensive supports are in place to support youth who transition from supported employment with the VR program. The provision of supported employment services will be up to 24 months for adults, or longer if necessary and documented, and youth with the most significant disabilities may receive extended services for up to (4) years or until the youth turns 25 years old.

DCRSA will continue coordinating with the DC Department of Behavioral Services Youth Services Programs. DBH continues to offer supported employment services for youth. DCRSA will continue to coordinate provision of supported employment services for youth in the same way it has been coordinating with the adult DBH programs.

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.

See response to A above.

STATE'S STRATEGIES

THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

DCRSA continues to expand and improve services provided to people with disabilities via outreach methods throughout the District of Columbia. The agency expands and directs its outreach activities to reach people who are identified as unserved and underserved in the state. According to the 2020 CSNA, unserved and underserved populations include people with autism and significant cognitive disabilities, including those who live in Wards 7 and 8, and those with co-existing behavioral health conditions. Therefore, DCRSA continues its efforts to further expand outreach to these population groups in order to ensure that services are available, inclusive, and accessible. DCRSA currently has 12 active outreach sites in the community and is working with 9 District and community-based agencies to initiate the MOA process. Due to the lasting effects of the COVID-19 public health emergency, many of RSA's previous community outreach sites are no longer available to host RSA VR Specialists. Virtual services have been maintained as well as an expedited referral process. Additional community partners continue to be identified.

Additionally, in FY23, DCRSA established a Memorandum of Understanding with the Workforce Investment Council to enhance the workforce system through a presence in each of the American Job Centers in the District where District Residents can start the intake process for eligibility as well as receive continued services with a VR Specialist. DCRSA has drafted the FY24 MOU for full execution.

In FY23, DCRSA, consistent with 34 CFR 361.18, has added one (1) bilingual Spanish staff member and one (1) bilingual American Sign Language member. There are nineteen (19) DCRSA staff who identify as bilingual. Of the bilingual staff, five (5) staff members are certified proficient in Spanish, also fluent in Spanish is DDS Director Andrew Reese. There are four (4) staff who use American Sign Language, three (3) French-speaking RSA staff, and two (2) employees using Amharic. Additionally, there are other bilingual staff who speak the following languages: Yoruba, Igbo, German, Luganda, Swahili, Korean, Tigrinya, Sango, and Patois. In addition, the administration uses the Language Access Line to provide interpretation for consumers who are limited English proficient, or non-English proficient, when bilingual staff are unavailable. There are multiple bilingual employees holding various positions in the agency from Supervisory roles to VR Specialist roles.

The agency continues to maintain compliance ratings for both Eligibility Determination and timely completion of Individual Plans for Employment at or above 90%. The agency tracks both metrics during its monthly performance meeting with executive leadership. During these meetings, leadership does a deep dive into any areas where these metrics have declined in any given month. Strategies are discussed and implemented with VR supervisors for ensuring minimum compliance with these key performance indicators (KPIs). DCRSA has seen consistent high performance in these KPIs.

DCRSA has engaged in multiple efforts with the state education agency, local education agencies and the Department of Employment Services to improve outcomes for transition-aged youth. DCRSA works with the Center for Independent Living and the Statewide Independent Living Council to improve and strengthen coordination of independent living and vocational rehabilitation services. In FY 2023, DCRSA assisted in supporting the resource plan of the SILC by hosting the virtual event entitled "2023 Consumer Forum and Youth Summit", to maximize the limited resources available in the District to meet IL needs of people with disabilities. Consistent with requirements under WIOA to assist people, particularly those with most significant disabilities to obtain competitive, integrated employment, DCRSA has maintained its level of supported employment services it is providing. DCRSA collaborates with Evidence-Based Supported Employment Providers that contract with the agency. DCRSA maintains an MOA with the Department of Behavioral Health to clarify the coordination between the

agencies in provision of supported employment services to people with serious mental illness (SMI) and substance use disorders (SUD). Coordination of services is further strengthened with the Developmental Disabilities Administration in the Department on Disability Services to increase the number of people with intellectual disabilities who receive supported employment services. DCRSA expects to see a significant increase in the number of people with SMI, SUD, or IDD who achieve successful employment outcomes, but also a very significant increase in the cost of providing supported employment services.

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

DCRSA utilizes an Assistive Technology (AT) Specialist who provides the following services: evaluations/assessments and recommendations upon eligibility, consults, procurement of assistive technology, integration, tech support, training, and plan implementation continuously. The AT specialist meets with individual clients when they have questions related to AT. The Specialist also works with Partners: DC Public Libraries, Public Schools, Department of Employment Services, UDC, Department of Aging and Community Living, and DCDDA. In addition, the AT Specialist works with specialized providers, programs, and centers such as: Public Charter Schools, DC Assistive Technology Program at University Legal Services, Byteback, TCS Associates, and Model Cities Senior Wellness Center. The AT Specialist serves as the DCRSA representative on the AT Community Advisory Board at ULS, the DC Assistive Technology grantee. DCRSA works closely with the AT Center at University Legal Services. ULS conducts presentations at DCRSA all staff meetings as requested to advise VR Specialists about the services provided by the AT Center.

Aside from the in-house AT specialist on staff, DCRSA also maintains a human care agreement with private community-based providers who conduct AT assessments. Lastly, the DCRSA AT specialist, as well as staff at the AT Center at ULS, have been providing technical assistance to the Department of Employment Services. The technical assistance provided includes assessment of current accessibility of all one-stop locations and provide recommendations for necessary accommodations to ensure accessibility services at the American Job Centers.

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

DCRSA continues its intentional efforts to increase outreach and engagement to individuals with disabilities, attempting to focus on unserved and underserved communities. As indicated above, the agency has established agreements with other government agencies and community based, non-profit agencies that are in communities, or serve clients, identified in the 2023 comprehensive needs assessment as unserved or underserved such as Wards 7 and 8 and individuals who are non-English proficient or limited English proficient. DCRSA has continued to strengthen its partnerships with agencies that represent unserved and underserved communities and is directly working with stakeholders to better understand their needs. In FY22 and FY23 DCRSA continued to collaborate with agency partners to host its annual Latinx Conference for people with disabilities and their families. The conference was designed to provide Spanish speaking people with disabilities and their family members with access to information, support, and marketing materials in their native language and assist District agencies to better understand the experiences and needs of Latinos within the disability

community. The feedback received from the listening sessions continued to be utilized by District agencies to inform best practices to better engage this community.

DCRSA is a member of the Mayor's Racial Equity Cohort. DCRSA collaborates with the Mayor's Office of Racial Equity (ORE) to apply a racial equity lens across government operations. The Office of Racial Equity (ORE) identified DCRSA as one of the agencies that will consistently engage with ORE while:

- Piloting racial equity tools;
 - Completing a departmental assessment of racial equity; and
 - Developing a Racial Equity Action Plan (operationalizing change).
- The goal of having all agencies implementing best practices to create a racially equitable DC, will be addressed using a phased approach.

During FY 2022 and 2023, DCRSA continued its intentional efforts to increase outreach and engagement efforts to individuals with disabilities, attempting to focus on unserved and underserved communities. As part of the agency's community engagement strategy, DCRSA's outreach and engagement committee continues to engage and build trust with identified underserved and unserved groups (especially those living in Wards 7 and 8). The committee meets monthly and includes the outreach team, intake staff, Public Information Specialist, Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists, Language Access Coordinators, and public-facing staff to discuss the agency's engagement efforts in building relationships with constituents. In order to complete this goal, the committee continues to implement its three-year plan which includes: Continue building the agency's knowledge of underserved and unserved groups through expanding relationships with community agencies that serve these groups, trainings to RSA staff on outreach policies and procedures, and reviewing existing data (e.g., CSNA 2023 and client demographics on the DC population)

Enhancing the community's general knowledge of DCRSA's mission through the distribution of materials in various formats, improving access to information on agency website, participation in community fairs, forums, and educational workshops.

Sponsoring educational, informational, cultural, and social events for underserved and unserved populations (e.g. engagement events to the Ethiopian/ Eritrean Communities, Annual Latinx Conference on Disabilities designed to provide Spanish speaking people with disabilities and their family members with access to information, support, and resources in their native language).

Strengthening relationships with community organizations who are trusted by the identified underserved and unserved groups through more collaboration and communication (i.e. monthly or quarterly meetings, collaborative presentations, or other activities) .

Increasing DCRSA's virtual presence through social media, websites, virtual events, and virtual communications that may attract people with disabilities and their families.

Throughout FY23, the agency has participated in over one hundred and thirty (130) community-based events, with a majority targeting the identified underserved and unserved communities. The agency has worked to improve outreach efforts, such as sponsoring educational, informational, cultural events, and strengthening relationships with community organizations. Efforts are focused on working and engaging with community organizations that the Latinx Community trusts. More collaboration and communication occur during monthly or quarterly meetings, collaborative presentations, or other activities. Over the last five years,

DCRSA collaborated with other partner agencies and hosted the annual Latinx Conference for people with disabilities and their families. The Spanish language only conference was designed to provide Spanish-speaking people with disabilities and their family members with access to information, support, and resources in their native language. The conference also assisted District agencies in understanding the needs and experiences of the Latinx community with disabilities. At each year's conference, there is a dedicated listening session to provide an opportunity to hear from people who share their experiences and recommendations on what they would like to see from the District government. Based on the feedback from the community, DCRSA has hired additional Spanish-speaking staff, sponsored the Spanish-speaking Direct Service Professionals, and revised policies to enhance language access and cultural competence.

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)

DCRSA has engaged in several efforts with both the state education agency, the local education agencies and other non-education agencies providing services to youth, including the Child and Family Services Agency, which provides services to foster care youth, the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, which provides services to youth in the Juvenile Justice System and the Department of Employment Services.

The District has executed an MOA with the State Education Agency, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), which addresses issues related to the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services. There is an updated MOU with the largest local education agency in the District, the DC Public School system. This MOU includes provisions regarding referrals for VR services, data sharing, and agreements regarding the provision of pre-employment transition services.

The District has a unique challenge with the number of Public Charter Schools, each of which is its own local education agency. DCRSA has been working to develop agreements with each of these schools. There are currently twenty-three (23) secondary schools and nine (9) adult education schools that serve students with disabilities up to the age of 22. To assist in engaging with these schools, DCRSA established a contract with a community-based agency that has experience in providing technical assistance for issues related to the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in the Public Charter Schools. This agency assists in engaging with each of the schools, and in developing plans for the provision of Pre-ETS at each of the schools. DCRSA is also working closely with DOES to ensure that students with disabilities have access to the summer youth employment program. DCRSA collaborates with DOES to provide any necessary supports, including pre-employment transition services to ensure the success of students in their summer work experience. Through a DCRSA contract with an experienced provider, the 2022 and 2023 SYEP JumpStart program provided job readiness training to youth with mental and physical disabilities in the District of Columbia in the form of Soft-Skills Development and Transitional Work Experiences. Students also received travel training during the duration of the program in collaboration with Battles Transportation. The purpose was to provide students with disabilities with a short-term, door-to-door service. Battle's Transportation worked closely with students in a group setting to help them get to and from employment, as well as learning the skills needed for safe, independent, and timely travel. The JumpStart program was initially founded through the efforts of DCRSA in collaboration with the Secondary Transition Community of Practice. All job readiness training provided was

designed to support persons with mental and physical disabilities. This training supports the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to obtain and maintain economic self-sufficiency and independence resulting from gainful employment. All JumpStart participants are either DCRSA clients and/or found to be potentially eligible for VR Services. The SYEP JumpStart Program represents an effective model for providing DC youth with disabilities with quality paid work experiences, during high school. The program also provides an excellent opportunity for DCRSA, DOES, and DC schools to explore the systemic facilitators and barriers to providing effective pre-employment training services mandated under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

DCRSA works with OSSE and other members of the Secondary Transition Community of Practice to provide an annual transition forum for transition students and their families. For FY 2023, DCRSA sponsored the annual transition forum in partnership with SchoolTalk, and OSSE. DCRSA has continued to collaborate with community provider, SchoolTalk, Inc., to host the annual transition conference for DCPS and DCPCS students. SchoolTalk hosted the annual the Voices of Change Conference on May 15th, 2023. SchoolTalk provided transition and employment-related sessions directly to students, which were tailored to fit individual schools' schedules and the individuals' needs. The conference provided (12) youth work-based learning experiences. This year, there were approximately 250 attendees. Of the attendees were (10) DC schools across the District who participated in the Voices of Change Conference.

IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE

The District of Columbia Rehabilitation Services Administration continues to add new Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) that partner to provide an array of vocational rehabilitation services to consumers. Additional services available to the consumer through the Human Care agreements include job readiness services, trial work experiences, job placement, and benefits analysis and planning. The human care providers continue to work collaboratively with the agency's Business Relations Unit to provide job readiness training and supports to consumers, and to link consumers to potential employers. DCRSA has no intention of utilizing authority for the establishment, improvement, or development of a CRP.

The Administration has four (4) staff who work as provider relations specialists, who are responsible for supporting the network of approved CRPs. In addition, DCRSA has two (2) additional staff who serve as external quality assurance monitors, as well as one internal quality assurance monitor, to identify needs and maintain and improve their quality. The Administration provides joint training with the Human Care Agreement CRP partners, to ensure that collaboration yields the desired results in supported employment, job placement, and career assessment services. DCRSA has focused its effort to increase employment outcomes for consumers, particularly those with developmental disabilities and serious mental illness.

In FY 2023, DCRSA renewed, updated, and/or established new agreements with all existing and/or new job placement and supported employment providers. These are performance-based agreements. Some updates and changes were made in the payment structure to incentivize providers with successful employment placements. In addition, funding was given to supported employment providers to conduct Discovery Assessments and Customized Employment. With increased emphasis on these services, DCRSA anticipates more successful outcomes for consumers in supported employment plans. The District participates in the Employment First State Leadership Workgroup. As part of the technical assistance provided through this program, technical assistance is being provided to some of the community rehabilitation providers.

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), performance measures for the vocational rehabilitation program are Wages 2nd and 4th quarters after exit, employer engagement, Measurable Skills Gains (MSG), Credential Attainment, and average hourly wages. The specific performance standards will be addressed in the Unified State Workforce Development Plan. To adhere to the performance metrics, DCRSA has taken several approaches to improve its overall performance. DCRSA works with the vendor that provides the electronic case management system to ensure required data is captured including employment rates 2nd quarter after exit and 4th quarter after exit. DCRSA continues its collaboration with other Department of Labor (DOL) partners and/or state agencies to develop reporting. This report accounts for median earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit and working with other workforce agencies in the state to ensure that all measures have a common definition. DCRSA works closely with the performance management unit at DDS to help streamline and report on required data. The administration continues to improve its monitoring of progress in training and education programs to provide accurate information on performance regarding completion of training, credential attainment, and measurable skills gains. Additionally, DCRSA is gathering more accurate data about the performance of existing training providers to assist in improved informed choice of providers and improved outcomes for clients. The agency is working with federal and local partners as DCRSA has engaged in the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) agreement. As a member of the SWIS agreement, DCRSA captures pertinent data for WIOA reporting. DCRSA is working with the vendor for the Case Management System to enhance the system to capture the necessary reporting data. Furthermore, DCRSA is establishing new protocols for following up with clients in post-employment to check on their progress and provide information about availability of ongoing services.

Standard I

Indicator A Employment Rate – Second Quarter after Exit: The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program (for title I Youth (A1), the indicator is the percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit):

Strategy 1: Ensure VR Specialists are following up with consumers to identify the necessary documentation to track employment.

Strategy 2: Strengthen collaboration with the DC Department of Employment Services (DOES), through the MOA process to ensure that DCRSA can capture the necessary employment and wage data to verify employment after exit.

Strategy 3: Work with the internal Performance Team to help develop tracking and reporting to show compliance and/or omissions by counseling staff relative to obtaining employment documentation.

Strategy 4: Ensure that the RSA 911 Quarterly Case Management Report review conducted by the Performance Team and the Program Staff align and can detect anomalies, errors, and or omissions relative to this data.

Strategy 5. DCRSA has secured training through an online learning management system (LMS). This is mandatory for all VR Specialists to engage and there is a required course relative to case management that speaks to securing and documenting this information.

Strategy 6. Ensure Supervisory Staff are doing monthly reviews with their VR Specialists to make sure appropriate case notes, actions, and documentation are taking place to ensure this data is captured timely and appropriately.

Strategy 7. Performance goals for each VR Specialist have been aligned to WIOA Performance metrics, including emphasis on obtaining documentation for MSGs and credentials attained. Indicator B Employment Rate – Fourth Quarter after Exit: The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program (for title I

Youth (B1), the indicator is the percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit):

Strategy 1: Ensure VR Specialists are following up with consumers to identify the necessary documentation to track employment.

Strategy 2: Strengthen collaboration with the DC Department of Employment Services (DOES), through the MOA process to ensure capture of the necessary employment and wage data to verify employment after exit.

Strategy 3: Work with the internal Performance Team to help develop tracking and reporting to show compliance and/or omissions by counseling staff relative to obtaining employment documentation.

Strategy 4: Ensure that the 911 review conducted by the Performance Team and the Program Staff align and can detect anomalies, errors, and or omissions relative to this data.

Strategy 5. DCRSA has secured training through an online learning management system (LMS). This is mandatory for all VR Specialists to engage and there is a required course relative to case management that speaks to securing and documenting this information.

Strategy 6. Ensure Supervisory Staff are doing monthly reviews with their VR Specialists to make sure appropriate case notes, actions, and documentation are taking place to ensure this data is captured timely and appropriately.

Strategy 7. Maintain performance goals for each VR Specialist that have been aligned to WIOA

Performance metrics, including emphasis on obtaining documentation for MSGs and credentials attained.

Indicator C Median Earnings – Second Quarter after Exit: The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program:

Strategy 1: Ensure VR Specialists are following up with consumers to identify the necessary documentation to track employment.

Strategy 2: Strengthen collaboration with the DC Department of Employment Services (DOES), through the MOA process to ensure capture of the necessary employment and wage data to verify employment after exit.

Strategy 3: Work with the internal Performance Team to help develop tracking and reporting to show compliance and/or omissions by counseling staff relative to obtaining employment documentation.

Strategy 4: Ensure that the 911 review conducted by the Performance Team and the Program Staff align and can detect anomalies, errors, and or omissions relative to this data.

Strategy 5. DCRSA has secured training through an online learning management system (LMS). This is mandatory for all VR Specialists to engage and there is a required course relative to case management that speaks to securing and documenting this information.

Strategy 6. Ensure Supervisory Staff are doing monthly reviews with their VR Specialists to make sure appropriate case notes, actions, and documentation are taking place to ensure this data is captured timely and appropriately.

Strategy 7. Maintain performance goals for each VR Specialist that have been aligned to WIOA Performance metrics, including emphasis on obtaining documentation for MSGs and credentials attained. Strategy 8: Continue to work with VRTAC-QM and NTACT: C to ensure use of best practices to capture and report this data.

Indicator D Credential Attainment: The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program.

A participant who has attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is included in the percentage of participants who have attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent only if the participant also is employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program.

Strategy 1: Ensure VR Specialists are following up with consumers to identify the necessary documentation to track credential attainment.

Strategy 2: Part of the VR Specialist's Performance Goals is to ensure timely follow up with people served. This information is captured by the VR Specialist and readily available in each individual case file.

Strategy 3: Work with the Performance team to set up monthly, quarterly, and annual reporting that will provide a holistic evaluation of credential attainment throughout VR.

Strategy 4: Work with the Operations Staff (Contract Administrator over Universities and Training) to ensure engagement with universities, colleges, and training programs to consistently track monthly credentials attained.

Strategy 5: Connect with local colleges and universities to disseminate information to students with disabilities related to the agency's services. This will aid in the success of the consumer and can be used to collect credential data once the student has been successful in completing the program(s).

Indicator E Measurable Skills Gains (MSG): During a program year, the percentage of program participants who are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized

postsecondary credential or employment, and who are achieving measurable skill gains. MSGs are defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment. Depending on the type of education or training program, documented progress is defined as one of the following:

Documented achievement of at least one educational functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary education level;

Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;

Secondary or postsecondary transcript or report card for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards;

Satisfactory or better progress report, towards established milestones, such as completion of on-the-job-training or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training; or
Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks such as knowledge-based exams.

Strategy 1: Ensure VR Specialists engage with persons supported to obtain progress and document MSG throughout the life of the case.

Strategy 2: Include MSG language in the VR Specialists Performance Goals is to ensure proper follow-up with persons supported are taking place so that this information is captured and readily available in each individual case file.

Strategy 3: Work with the Performance team to set up monthly, quarterly, and annual reporting relative to MSG captured and reported.

Strategy 4: Connect with local colleges and universities to disseminate information to students with disabilities related to the agency's services. This will aid in the success of the individuals served and can be used to collect credential data once the student has been successful in completing the program(s).

Strategy 5: Continue to work with the VRTAC-QM to ensure use of best practices to capture and report this data.

Strategy 6: Ensure Supervisory Staff review this with their VR Specialists as part of their monthly case review process to ensure compliance with capturing and documenting MSG.

Strategy 7. Confirm that performance goals for each VR Specialist have been aligned to WIOA Performance metrics, including emphasis on obtaining documentation for MSGs and credentials attained.

Indicator F: Effectiveness in Serving Employers: WIOA sec. 116(b)(2)(A)(i)(VI) requires the Department of Labor and the Department of Education to establish a primary indicator of performance for effectiveness in serving employers. The Departments are piloting three (3) approaches designed to gauge three (3) critical workforce needs of the business community. DCRSA has elected to measure approaches 1 and 3 as its performance indicators under this requirement:

Approach 1 - Retention with the same employer - addresses the programs' efforts to provide employers with skilled workers;

Approach 2 - Repeat Business Customers - addresses the programs' efforts to provide quality engagement and services to employers and sectors and establish productive relationships with employers and sectors over extended periods of time; and

Approach 3 - Employer Penetration Rate - addresses the programs' efforts to provide quality engagement and services to all employers and sectors within a State and local economy.

Strategy 1: Increase the number of business engagements performed by Business Relations Specialist on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis, making this a requirement of their job accountabilities.

Strategy 2: Ensure Business Relations Specialist is engaging with existing business partners and tracking on a quarterly basis engagement and outcomes.

Strategy 3: Continue to develop the agency's Employment First initiative, a concept designed to facilitate the full inclusion of people with the most significant disabilities in the workplace and community.

Strategy 4: Increase the use of Customized Employment enabling persons with significant disabilities the opportunity to achieve successful employment outcomes and then providing this model to employers for them to replicate to stimulate employer penetration, engagement, and retention. DCRSA offers training and certification to service providers to increase capacity in

Customized Employment.

Strategy 5. Work with the DDS performance team to set up a scorecard with employers that will provide success rates and challenges for employers to identify strengths and weaknesses to better service people supported.

STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The State Director for DCRSA represents the agency on the Workforce Investment Council. Since FY2015, the director has served in this capacity on three (3) work groups that seek to improve the coordination and quality of services provided through the workforce investment system. The three (3) work groups includes: reviewing Employment Engagement strategies, coordination of State Agencies, and employment for persons who are underserved and unserved with disabilities. The work group assisted State Agencies in providing resources, supports, and trainings to facilitate successful employment outcomes for individuals served. The District and the American Job Center Sub-Committee continues to meet monthly to discuss the coordination of services among core service providers at the American Job Centers. Additionally, the employment for persons who are underserved and unserved with disabilities workgroup seek opportunities within the workforce to stimulate training, inclusion, and hiring for the aforementioned individuals.

HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

The Department on Disability Services (DDS) is the parent agency that oversees DCRSA for District of Columbia and oversees all DCRSA's goals and priorities as they relate to the CSNA. DCRSA reports to DDS who in turn reports to the Executive Office of the Mayor for the District of Columbia related to performance metrics. The Department on Disability Services will continue to work with the performance management systems to help promote ongoing strategic planning. DDS monitors systems that promote close oversight of DCRSA's progress in achieving the goals and priorities identified in the State Plan and the CSNA. These goals are also aligned with goals established in the agency's city plan. DDS has a monthly performance review meeting, which reviews current agency performance and measures performance against goals established in the State and City Plans. On a quarterly basis, these reviews include an evaluation of DCRSA's progress on all strategies and initiatives identified in each plan. In addition, within DCRSA, there are weekly senior staff meetings at which each manager is responsible for reporting on progress on performance and initiatives. To monitor ongoing performance, each supervisor utilizes the agency's electronic case management query system to monitor the progress of all cases within their unit. The Quality Assurance and Compliance (QA) unit conducts quarterly consumer satisfaction surveys. DCRSA utilizes a quality review system, which requires each supervisor and QA monitor to conduct quality review of a number of cases (depending on the VR Specialist's current performance) from each VR Specialist's caseload. The results of these surveys are used to guide future training and identify the need for policy or procedure updates. DCRSA has a policy committee that meets regularly to review policies, standard operating procedures, and practices. As any new policy is introduced, training is provided for all staff, and a QA review of compliance with the new training is provided.

SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

Technology First

In FY23, the Department on Disability Services (DDS) continues its partnership with the Assistive Technology Center to promote the Tech First initiative, leveraging the center as a vital community resource. This collaboration aims to enhance awareness of technological options and support informed decision-making regarding technology acquisition. In the upcoming year 2024, the DDS Tech First Work Group plans to focus on amplifying interagency collaboration. This expansion will involve exploring partnerships with key stakeholders in the District who share a similar commitment to the Tech First vision. These partners include the Statewide Independent Living Council, the Center for Independent Living, the Center for Accessibility, the Mayor's Office of Deaf, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing, and the DC State Broadband and Digital Equity Office. This initiative is a strategic step toward integrating and strengthening technology access and utilization for individuals with disabilities, aligning with broader goals of enhancing independence and accessibility.

In August 2022, DDS hosted its inaugural Tech Fest Summit, a cornerstone event aimed at introducing the tech industry and their emerging solutions to the disability services community in the District of Columbia. One of the event's highlights was the unveiling of the Tech First Day Proclamation, signed by Mayor Muriel Bowser. Building on this momentum, DDS partnered with ODR and co-hosted the 2nd Annual Tech Fest Summit, now rebranded as the "Disability Tech Summit." This collaborative effort acknowledged DDS and ODR overlapping target audiences and highlights the essential role technology plays in fostering greater independence for adults' disabilities. The 2nd Annual Disability Tech Summit took place at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center on October 21, 2023, with over 650 attendees.

DSP Academy

For FY23, there were two (2) sessions of the DSP Academy that were offered to adults and youth. The DSP Academy provides participants with exposure to a variety of career paths within the Health & Human services sector and offers the short-term option of securing employment as a DSP post-graduation. The DSP Academy was created in response to a national shortage of Direct Support Workers across the nation. With the District of Columbia being an Employment First State, it was a natural extension of efforts to increase employment and build capacity in the workforce.

Latinx Conference on Disabilities FY 22

DCRSA, along with its partners, hosted its 4th annual Latinx Conference for people with disabilities and their families. The conference was attended by individuals with disabilities, family members, and agency staff. The Spanish-language-only event was designed to provide Spanish-speaking people with disabilities and their family members with information in their native language on the theme of “Employment for All.” During the conference, attendees heard from various government and community-based organizations discussing employment services in the District. Afterward, attendees participated in a resource fair.

Latinx Conference on Disabilities FY23

DCRSA, along with its partners, hosted the 5th annual Latinx Conference for people with disabilities and their families. The conference was held on September 30, 2023, and 150 individuals representing individuals with disabilities, family members, and agency/organization staff attended. The Spanish-language-only conference was designed to provide Spanish-speaking people with disabilities and their family members with access to information, support, and resources in their native language. The conference was held at Columbia Heights Educational Campus at no cost to attendees. The conference theme was Promoting Health & Well-Being: Know Your Rights! During the conference, attendees participated in sessions on Mental Health Supports, Future Planning, and Healthy Relationships. During the conference, participants heard from various government and community-based organizations discussing supports and services in the District. Attendees also heard from people with disabilities on the importance of self-advocacy. At the end of the conference, a resource fair was held.

Person-Centered Organization Employment Innovations Workgroup

The purpose of the workgroup is to promote strategies and best practices resulting in improved person-centered employment outcomes and financial well-being for persons with disabilities in the District of Columbia through programs, policies, and capacity building within DDS and its partners. Members of the workgroup reflect over 15 partner agencies who promote workforce services across the District.

The Employment First Summit

DCRSA and its community partners hosted the Employment First Summit. The event focused on hearing from employers, jobseekers, organizations, and advocates about innovative work in DC relating to the hiring of people with disabilities.

The Summit was held at the MLK Library on October 31, 2023, from 9 am – 4 pm. This year’s theme was Solutions for Advancing Access and Equity! The event was attended by 222 individuals with disabilities, family members, and agency/organization staff.

DCRSA, in collaboration with the DD Council, co-lead the Employment First Leadership Workgroup. The Employment First Leadership Workgroup is an executive leadership group of DC government representatives who have been working together since 2012 to learn about Employment First and collaborate on and create strategies to move Employment First forward

in DC. This group also shares resources and presents Employment First strategies across government entities.

Provider and Resource Fair FY23

DCRSA hosted its annual Provider and Resource Fair. The Provider and Resource Fair offered District residents with disabilities and their family's opportunities to engage with organizations that provide a variety of supports. Participants met with DDS Providers, DC government agencies, and other community-based agencies providing supports and services to DC Residents with disabilities. During the event, attendees attended sessions in the following areas:

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Services for DC residents with sensory needs and independent living services

Future planning

Assistive Technology

Benefits Counseling

Transition Services

Approximately 550 individuals attended the in-person event held at the Washington Convention Center. Eighty-five service providers and community partners participated, delivered an overview of their services, and shared essential resources with attendees.

2023 SILC Consumer Forum and Youth Summit

DCRSA, in collaboration with the DC Statewide Independent Living Council held the 2023 SILC Consumer Forum and Youth Summit. The purpose of the event is to promote independent living services for District residents with disabilities. The theme of the event was the Impact of COVID-19 on DC's Disability Community. During the event, attendees attended sessions on housing, employment, transition services and mental health services. Over 150 individuals attended this in-person event held at the Washington Plaza hotel.

Latinx Presentation Series

DCRSA, with its partners, hosted presentation series. The Latinx Presentation Series to provided Spanish-speaking people with disabilities, and their family members access to information, support, and resources in their native language. The series was held quarterly, and topics included:

Education advocacy

Access to Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Language Access

Financial Education and Literacy

Self-Care and Wellness

Employment readiness

DCRSA Learning and Innovations Retreat

DCRSA continues to host its annual learning and innovations retreat titled "Evolving the Employment Experience, Building Capacity and Strengthening Connections."

DCRSA retreat attendees:

gained knowledge on national best practices in WIOA, Customized Employment, and person and family-centered thinking to enhance the employment experience for people in need of services and supports; participated in a wellness activity to improve employee health and well-being; and

participated in an interactive activity to enhance innovative and collaborative VR practices. recognized for VR achievements in performance.

Based on the retreat evaluation survey feedback, ninety-six percent (96%) of attendees agreed that the information presented supported the work they do every day. DCRSA utilizes this data to inform session topics for the next year's retreat.

DCRSA and Human Resources Partnership:

DCRSA has partnered with DDS Human Resources department to implement an internal process that prioritizes recruitment and retention of individuals served by RSA as DDS employees. The process includes the following steps:

Before a vacant position is announced, the HR Specialist over recruitment will contact the RSA point of contact ("POC") for any qualified candidates in Status 20 (ready to work). The HR Specialist will send the RSA POC the position description and/or job announcement. The RSA POC will confirm if there are any RSA clients in status 20 qualified for the vacant position within 5 business days and notify the HR Specialist of RSA's intent to forward qualified candidates.

The RSA point of contact will forward the qualified candidate resumes to the HR Specialist within 5 business days of identification.

The HR Specialist will review the resumes to determine whether the candidate meets the minimum qualifications. Thereafter, the resumes will be forwarded to the hiring manager for review and further discussion.

If the Hiring Manager is interested in any of the candidates, the Hiring Manager will arrange an informal meet and greet with the candidate(s). The HR Specialist will assist the Hiring Manager with this process.

The HR Specialist will make an offer to the selected candidate and proceed with the hiring process as a noncompetitive term hire.

An employee may remain in a term hire position for up to 4 years; however, within the first year of employment, the Hiring Manager should ascertain whether the term hire is a good fit and make a recommendation to convert the employee to a permanent position.

If a qualified RSA candidate is not identified within 5 business days of the notification to the RSA POC, the vacancy will be announced without further consideration.

DC Government as Model Employer:

The following events took place in FY23, with different employers in the district:

Employer Spotlights

The below employers met with RSA staff and job seekers to present their employment opportunities and share why anyone should want to work for their organization. Employers also addressed questions from job seekers and staff.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Fairmont Hotel

FM Talent woman-owned staffing agency

Leaf Home

DC Department of Human Resources (DC government), Working for Washington Presentation
Career Day Event

RSA hosted its first post pandemic Career Day event. Employers from across the city participated in the following:

Business Outreach

RSA hosted a table at the Greater Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Business Expo.

RSA represented the agency as participant of the DC Chamber of Commer Workforce Development Committee

Workforce Investment Council, Skills DC Business Summit

Disability Awareness Education for Employers

National Disability Employment Awareness Month Event, October 2022

Facilitated Windmills Disability Awareness training on September 6, 2023

Coordinated Low Vision Awareness Training for DC Housing Authority staff

Represented RSA at the DC Board of Trade and Easterseals Candid Conversations Panel with executives from Comcast, Booz Allen Hamilton and Easterseals. The panel discussion can be found on YouTube.

U.S. Department of Energy Accessibility Summit

Collaborated with the DC Area Black Deaf Advocates to encourage DDS/RSA employers' partners to participate in their job fair

In FY23, The Aspiring Professionals launched Cohort 3 and Cohort 4, which successfully placed interns throughout District of Columbia Government agencies. Applicants are recommended by DCRSA VR Specialists and Employment Coordinators for various position descriptions received by host supervisors. The host agency supervisor conducts the interviews and makes a final selection. Program participants work 32 hours each week. They are paid through a contracted staffing agency. If the agency has employment opportunities, participants are invited to apply and interview for a job. There was a total of nine (9) participants who successfully completed the program. Cohort 3 program completers include the DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education, U.S. Department of Interior, DC Department on Disability Services, Trinity University and UnitedHealth Group. Cohort 3 Aspiring Professionals Program agency hosts included the DC Department of Buildings (formerly Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs), DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education, DC Department of Forensic Sciences, University of the District of Columbia, DC Department of Transportation, DC Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, and DC Department of Transportation. Since the launch of the program in 2018, approximately 60% of the participants gained employment, who successfully completed the program. Cohort 4 successfully placed four (4) interns, while the remaining participants are scheduled to be placed in 2024.

DCRSA has also secured a subscription to LinkedIn to allow the agency to market its services, engage with businesses, and showcase DCRSA as a great place to work for potential employees. Additionally, DCRSA will fund a position whose primary role is located at DCRSA and who spends time at DCHR. This person provides training to district agencies regarding hiring persons with disabilities, as well as aiding District citizens with disabilities to obtain gainful,

competitive, integrated employment in District Government agencies. This staff has expertise and focused attention on recruiting, hiring, and retaining employees with disabilities throughout the DC government and providing technical assistance to DC agencies regarding employment of people with disabilities. This FTE will also split days at DCRSA and DCHR to help facilitate the mission of the VR agency. DCRSA has oversight of this position via the responsibilities set forth in the MOU with DCHR.

OVERCOME IDENTIFIED BARRIERS RELATING TO EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE VR SERVICES

DCRSA continues to strengthen its presence in the community with intentional outreach and engagement activities targeting underserved groups. The agency participated in a variety of outreach events on an almost weekly basis, the vast majority of which targeted the District's most underserved communities. DCRSA has expanded its presence at all three American Job Centers as VR Specialist are assigned five (5) days per week. DCRSA currently has 12 active outreach sites in the community and is working with 9 District and community-based agencies to initiate the MOA process, as well as an expedited referral process. Additional community partners have been identified, site to ensure that the administration's resources are being used efficiently.

During the 2022-2023 school year, DCRSA continued its monthly partnership meetings with DC Public Schools and the community-based agency to discuss coordination of services, updates to programming, as well as problem-solving for Pre-Employment Transition service delivery.

EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS 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: IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS

In order to be held accountable for ensuring that the above-mentioned strategies are being implemented and VR goals are being met, it is important to have a system in place to evaluate and report on the progress being made. The District proposed the following related to evaluation and goal attainment based on the goals and priorities identified during the PY2022 modified state plan:

Goal 1: Provide continued support to three (3) mental health supported employment providers to increase successful employment outcomes for individuals with mental health disabilities.
Strategy: The Administration will continue to support the Human Care Agreements with three (3) providers of mental health supported employment services to support staff at each site to assist in increased referrals to DCRSA and the development of placement and employment opportunities through supported employment.

Goal 2: Implement improved procedures with DCDDA to ensure that more persons referred from DCDDA achieve a successful outcome.

Strategy: Four (4) VR Specialists are designated and assigned to work specifically with this population which is an increase from three VR Specialists. These VR Specialists will continue their relationships with DCDDA staff, to ensure effective referrals. In addition, these VR Specialists are offered Employment First training, to be familiar with customized employment

services available to DCRSA clients and participate in customized employment assessment and discovery training.

In FY 2023 (122) cases were successfully closed for the EBSE unit. DCRSA continues to improve the coordination of services and timeliness of referrals for moving people from referral into supported employment services. DCRSA continues to implement these changes through FY2023. There are four (4) VR Specialists specifically assigned to EBSE cases. These four (4) VR Specialists attend staff meetings at each of the EBSE three (3) provider agencies. The staff at DBH, DCRSA, and provider agencies meet monthly. DCRSA and DCDDA continue to improve effective coordination of services. DCRSA has an assigned VR Supervisor who is responsible for the unit that provides supported employment services to people referred from DBH or DCDDA. This includes the four (4) VR Specialists who work with DBH referrals and four (4) VR Specialists to work with DDA referrals. This supervisor meets weekly with the VR Specialists to review the progress of all cases referred to by DCDDA. Additionally, the supervisor attends a monthly collaborative meeting with DCDDA to coordinate, plan, and monitor joint cases to address any barriers, needed resources, or concerns that may impact goals with cases.

Goal 3: Transition - Expand and improve the quality of transition services and improve coordination with the state education agency and all local education agencies.

Strategy: DCRSA continues to have success in coordinating with the largest local education agency, DC Public Schools (DCPS), which serves roughly half of the students with disabilities in DC. In addition, the administration participates with the Secondary Transition Community of Practice, facilitated by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE).

DCRSA supported 30 youth who participated in the JumpStart/MBSYEP facilitated by SchoolTalk. The program was available to Collegiate students eligible for Pre-ETS programs, District of Columbia Public School, and Public Charter School youth with significant disabilities. The goal was to provide successful summer job experience. The program began in June 2023 and commenced in August 2023. Through the JumpStart/MBSYEP program, the youth who participated were provided with an individualized supported employment experience and earned wages. The youth engaged with job readiness trainers provided by Work Opportunities Unlimited and SchoolTalk.

In collaboration with RCM of Washington, Inc., a DC-based adult disability services provider, DCRSA offered the Direct Support Professional (DSP) Academy, commonly referred to as the DSP Academy. For FY23, there were two (2) sessions of the DSP Academy: one (3) adult and one (2) youth. The DSP Academy provides participants with exposure to a variety of career paths within the Health & Human services sector and offers the short-term option of securing employment as a DSP post-graduation. The DSP Academy was created in response to a national shortage of Direct Support Workers across the nation. With the District of Columbia being an Employment First State, it was a natural extension of efforts to increase employment among transitioning youth and build capacity in the workforce.

In FY 22, following the completion of the DSP Academy, participants received all the training and certifications required to work as a direct support professional in Washington, DC. All learning styles have been accommodated in the curriculum, and the Academy has job development built right in. Participants in this paid experience received minimum wage. A total of five (5) Pre-ETS individuals participated in this program. The DSP Academy model holds tremendous possibility for reproduction across the nation, as it is a strategy to address the DSP workforce crisis and push forward the mission of the Employment First movement. Most importantly the DSP Academies set up DC to have successful opportunities for consumers for years to come.

During school year 2022-2023, DCRSA and DCPS continued to coordinate implementation of pre-employment transition services at all DCPS comprehensive high schools. In addition, DCRSA is working with DCPS to provide pre-employment transition services through curriculum support for middle school students. DCRSA collaborates with DCPS to provide paid work-based learning experiences during the current school year to students participating in the Workforce Development Center at River Terrace, and for students participating in the career exploration/CTE/Career Academy courses at DCPS high schools. In FY 2023, DCRSA provided supports for paid work-based learning experiences for 367 students. DCRSA continues to improve its collaboration with DC Public Charter Schools.

In FY 2023, DCRSA renewed its human care agreement with a community-based agency that has experience in working with the Public Charter Schools to assist in this coordination and in implementation of Pre-ETS services in Public Charter Schools. DCRSA continues its partnership to improve collaboration with DC Public Charter Schools.

In addition, DCRSA transition team hosted retreats with DC Public Schools, community-based agencies, and VR Specialists and staff assigned to these schools to discuss coordination of service at each school during the 2022-2023 school year. DCRSA continues its monthly partnership meetings with DC Public Schools and the community-based agency to discuss coordination of services, updates to programming, as well as problem solving for service delivery.

Goal 4: Maintain and sustain a Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship Program.

Strategy: Through close consultation with the SRC, DCRSA continues to implement its Supported Employment Policy. Training is ongoing to all DCRSA staff on the implementation of the self-employment policy to support clients pursuing entrepreneurial endeavors. DCRSA continues to operate and expand its entrepreneurial opportunities through the Randolph-Sheppard program (for people with low vision or who are blind).

DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

See response to A above.

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:

IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS

Similar to the section above, the District proposes the following to evaluate the extent to which the Supported Employment program goals were achieved based on the goals identified in the PY2022 state plan modification, including strategies contributing to goal achievement and factors impeding goal achievement:

Goal 1: Provide continued support to three (3) mental health supported employment providers to increase successful employment outcomes for individuals with mental health disabilities. The Administration will continue to support the Human Care Agreements with three (3) providers of mental health supported employment services to support staff at each site to assist in increased referrals to DCRSA and the development of placement and employment opportunities through supported employment.

Goal 2: Implement improved procedures with DCDDA to ensure that more persons referred from DCDDA achieve a successful outcome. DCRSA continues to improve the coordination of services and timeliness of referrals and moving people from referral into supported employment services. There are now four (4) VR Specialists designated and assigned to work specifically with this population. These VR Specialists developed relationships with DCDDA staff to ensure effective referrals and coordination of joint services. Both program goals were achieved relative to supported employment.

DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES
In FY22 and FY23, high staff turnover with both provider agencies and DCRSA staff negatively contributed to reaching its goals and priorities. Supported Employment VR Specialists and provider agencies need retraining through participation in Employment First trainings, customized employment assessment, and discovery training.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

DCRSA continues working through barriers that exist when collecting data on its performance accountability measures identified under section 116 of WIOA. DCRSA is working with core WIOA partners to establish the necessary Memoranda of Agreement to collect the data necessary to report on these measures. There are still barriers with collecting and sharing data among the agencies. There are FERPA concerns related to sharing protected student information and HIPAA related challenges to sharing client privileged information. There is still no operating repository that streamlines and collects the necessary data for WIOA reporting requirements. DCRSA still struggles with internal case processing systems that are not set up to extrapolate WIOA data reporting requirements. The Case Management System used by DCRSA has technical barriers to sharing information with other WIOA partners. DCRSA continues to work with the Case Management System purveyor to establish metrics that align with WIOA requirements. DCRSA will continue to collaborate with its internal performance management team to extract data as part of the WIOA metrics and requirements.

PY 20 Statewide Performance Report:

BY PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS								
	Total Participants Served	Total Participants Exited (Cohort Period: 07/01/2022 -		Employment Rate (Q2)2 (Cohort Period: 07/01/2022 - 06/30/2023)	Employment Rate (Q4)2 (Cohort Period: 01/01/2022 - 12/31/2023)	Median Earnings (Cohort Period: 07/01/2022 - 06/30/2023)	Credential Rate ³ (Cohort Period: 01/01/2022 - 12/31/2023)	Measurable Skill Gains ³ Cohort Period: 7/01/2022 - 06/30/2023)

	(Cohort Period: 07/01/2022 - 06/30/2023)	06/30/2023)		Num	Rate	Num	Rate	Earnings	Num	Rate	Num	Rate
Total Statewide	3,336	1390	Negotiated Target		Baseline		Baseline	Baseline		Baseline		20.0%
			Actual	489	31.4%	471	29.2%	5,199	67	21.5%	143	36.3%

HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED

DSP Academy

For FY23, there were two (2) sessions of the DSP Academy that were offered to adults and youth. The DSP Academy provides participants with exposure to a variety of career paths within the Health & Human services sector and offers the short-term option of securing employment as a DSP post-graduation. The DSP Academy was created in response to a national shortage of Direct Support Workers across the nation. With the District of Columbia being an Employment First State, it was a natural extension of efforts to increase employment and build capacity in the workforce.

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The DSP Academy model holds tremendous possibility for reproduction across the nation, as it is a strategy to address the DSP workforce crisis and push forward the mission of the Employment First movement. Most importantly the DSP Academies set up DC to have successful opportunities for consumers for years to come.

DCRSA Learning and Innovations Retreat

DCRSA continues to host its annual learning and innovations retreat titled “Evolving the Employment Experience, Building Capacity and Strengthening Connections.”

DCRSA retreat attendees:

gained knowledge on national best practices in WIOA, Customized Employment, and person and family-centered thinking to enhance the employment experience for people in need of services and supports;

participated in a wellness activity to improve employee health and well-being; and

participated in an interactive activity to enhance innovative and collaborative VR practices. recognized for VR achievements in performance.

Based on the retreat evaluation survey feedback, ninety-six percent (96%) of attendees agreed that the information presented supported the work they do every day. DCRSA utilizes this data to inform session topics for the next year’s retreat.

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Provider and Resource Fair FY23

DDDS-RSA hosted its annual Provider and Resource Fair. The Provider and Resource Fair offered District residents with disabilities and their families opportunities to engage with organizations that provide a variety of supports. Participants met with DDS Providers, DC government

agencies, and other community-based agencies providing supports and services to DC Residents with disabilities. During the event, participants attended sessions in the following areas:

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Assistive Technology

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Transition Services

Approximately 550 individuals attended the in-person event held at the Washington Convention Center. Eighty-five (85) service providers and community partners participated, delivered an overview of their services, and shared essential resources with attendees.

2023 SILC Consumer Forum and Youth Summit

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In FY22, the total cost of innovation and expansion activities was approximately \$31,754, which includes expenses for the SILC. In FY23 YTD, the total cost of innovation and expansion activities was \$12,004. 16. There were no innovation and expansion activities used for the SRC.

Q. QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

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

Supported Employment services are available to any DCRSA client who is certified as having a most significant disability and for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred. These services are also reserved for clients whose employment has been interrupted or intermittent because of a disability and for whom an appropriate plan for extended services can be developed. DCRSA supports persons with serious mental illness (SMI), or substance use disorder (SUD) who requires the use of Evidence-Based Supported Employment services. This population receives evidence-based supported employment services including job development, job placement, job stabilization, and job stabilization closure. There is no authorization for intake and assessment issued by DCRSA, as these services are covered by the Department of Behavior Health. DCRSA also provides persons with intellectual and other developmental disabilities with Supported Employment services. The community rehabilitation providers provide this population with supported employment services which include intake summary and assessment, person-centered employment plan, job development, job placement, and job coaching. In addition, human care agreements include Discovery Assessment and Customized Employment as services offered to this population. Each provider delivers individualized services as directed by informed choice. The Supported Employment provider efforts are focused on competitive placements in integrated work settings.

With their Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist's assistance, clients make informed choices to select their vocational goals on their individualized plan for employment. If the person

supported chooses to modify that goal during the supported employment process, their VR Specialist assists with this request and the new goal is implemented. Every effort is made to ensure clients are placed in jobs that are consistent with their interests and abilities. Employment Specialists and Job Coaches work with persons supported to teach them about workplace expectations and the required tasks.

Employment Specialists and Job Coaches ensure that individuals served are aware of who to ask when assistance is needed on the job. Time is spent with the person on the worksite, who is identified as the natural support person, to ensure that they are comfortable and prepared to provide workplace support as needed to the client. The person identified as the natural support completes training in techniques and strategies to assist the person supported to complete the tasks required. The person providing natural supports also identifies the areas in which prompting, or feedback may be appropriate to ensure accurate completion of all assigned work tasks. The workplace supervisor also receives training, to ensure that, if the primary natural support person leaves, another person can be identified who is willing to accept that role. Contacts are made by the Employment Specialist or Job Coach with the person supported on an as-needed basis. Additionally, follow-up contacts are made each month with the supervisor to ensure problems are identified early in the employment process and a person receives the assistance they need to maintain employment. The Employment Specialist or Job Coach provides travel training as needed. The Employment Specialist or Job Coach makes certain that transportation funds are available to assist the person supported in job retention as needed. Some youth who are receiving Supported Employment services have participated and completed the Project SEARCH program. These participants may have been offered competitive, integrated employment aligned with their IPE goal. These individuals utilize the provision of support employment services in the form of job coaching. DCRSA continues to provide extended services to the youth for four (4) years or up to age 25. After the client reaches age 25, the client transitions to the DCDDA waiver for continued supports or transitioned to natural supports in the community.

THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES

DCRSA continues to implement its Supported Employment Policy and Procedure and follows its Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on the Coordination of Case Management-Service Coordination Provided by DCRSA and DCDDA. These documents clarify issues related to the timing of transition to extended services. The timing of the transition to extended services is defined in DCRSA's Supported Employment standard operating procedure.

As part of DCRSA's SOP, the VR Specialist must determine that the criteria for job stabilization established in the IPE have been met. The VR Specialist will then send the Service Coordinator (SC) and the Supervisory Service Coordinator a "Transition to Extended Support Services" notification letter via email. The letter informs the Service Coordination team that the person has been determined to be stabilized in employment and that DCRSA will provide Supported Employment services for a minimum of 30 days following placement. The VR Specialist awaits the approval of Extended Supported Employment Services which are requested after placement. Services will transfer to extended services in 30 calendar days. If there is a delay of more than two (2) weeks, the VR Specialist and SC will elevate the issue to their respective supervisors for resolution.

For people who will receive Evidence-Based Supported Employment services through the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH), the agreement between DCRSA and DBH provides that the transition from services funded through VR transfer to extended services funded through

DBH. This occurs 90 days after placement when the DCRSA case is successfully closed. DCRSA provides the funding for the services (Job Placement, Job Stabilization, and Job Closure) for the full 90 days after a person begins employment. If the person loses the job, the 90 days start over when a new position is obtained by the client. DCRSA ensures that the person is stable in the position before the responsibility for funding extended services is transitioned to DBH. DCRSA provides an assigned VR Specialist to each DBH site providing Evidence-Based Supported Employment to plan, coordinate, monitor, and authorize all services contracted by the provider to deliver (Job Development, Job Placement, and Job Stabilization Closure).

In accordance with the VR services portion of the WIOA Unified State Plan and section 101(a)(22) of the Act, DCRSA shall provide supported employment services for a period of no more than 24 months. If there are special circumstances, the eligible person and VR Specialist jointly agree to extend the time to achieve the employment outcome identified in the IPE. Funds are made available through the VR program allotment for persons with a most significant disability who are eligible under the Supported Employment program.

DCRSA shall use funds allotted under the Supported Employment program to provide supported employment services and to provide extended services in accordance with the requirements in section 604(b) (2) of the Act and 34 CFR §363.4(a) (2), to youth with the most significant disabilities for a period of time not to exceed four years, or until such time that a youth reaches the age of 25, thereby no longer meeting the definition of a "youth with a disability" in 34 C.F.R. § 361.5(c)(58), whichever occurs first.

DCRSA shall reserve and expend 50 percent of the allotment under the Supported Employment program for the provision of supported employment services, including extended services, to youth with the most significant disabilities.

DCRSA shall provide not less than a 10 percent non-federal contribution for the 50 percent of allotment reserved to serve youth with the most significant disabilities.

DCRSA shall not pay more than 2.5 percent of the State's Supported Employment program allotment on administrative costs.

Supported employment services provided through community rehabilitation providers shall be purchased, monitored, and provided in accordance with the terms outlined in a Human Care Agreement or other contracting vehicle.

Supported employment shall be in competitive, integrated employment or, if not in competitive employment, in an integrated work setting in which the person is working toward competitive, integrated employment on a short-term basis.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL) CERTIFICATIONS
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

DSU – DCRSA

AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION [16] AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN [17], THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS [18], POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER SECTION 111 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT

ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Department on Disability Services (DDS) – Agency

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; 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;

THE STATE LEGALLY MAY CARRY OUT EACH PROVISION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

ALL PROVISIONS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT ARE CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW.

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

Darryl T. Evans - State Director for DC Rehabilitation Services Administration

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

Darryl T. Evans - Deputy Director DDS/RSA

Signatory information	Enter Signatory information in this column
Name of Signatory	Darryl T. Evans
Title of Signatory	State Director for DCRSA/ Deputy Director DDS/RSA
Date Signed	

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The designated State agency or designated State unit (as appropriate) listed above is authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by WIOA*, and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act. **

As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the designated State agency listed above agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;

As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated State agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan*, the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan; **

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;

The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement.

All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law.

The Authorized Representative listed above has the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement;

The Authorized Representative listed above has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services;

The agency that submits the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.

Footnotes

Certification 1 Footnotes

Public Law 113-128.

** Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

Certification 2 Footnotes

All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

** No funds under title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

*** Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76,77,79,81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3485; and the State VR Services Program regulations.

Certification 3 Footnotes

* No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

** Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in

*** under Certification 2 footnotes

Additional Comments on the Certifications from the State Certification Regarding Lobbying — Vocational Rehabilitation

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

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 Page 309 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.

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

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.

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

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