NEW HAMPSHIRE PYS 2024-2027

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act State Plan

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State Workforce Innovation Board 43

The State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) is chaired by a businessperson and 51% of all members are business representatives. The Board is charged with implementing WIOA in New Hampshire in a way that meets the demands for a 21st century workforce including the following priorities: 43

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Overview

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VI. Program-Specific State Plan Requirements for Core Programs

- Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs Activities and Assurances
- Wagner-Peyser Act Program and Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP)
- Adult Education and Family Literacy Program Activities and Assurances
- Vocational Rehabilitation Program Activities and Assurances
- Appendix 1: Performance Goals for the Core Programs

VII. Program-Specific Requirements for Combined State Plan Partner Programs

Note: Requirements for Combined State Plan partner programs are available in a separate supplemental document.

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- 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))) (SNAP)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants
- Unemployment Insurance
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Reintegration of Ex-Offenders program (programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))

I. WIOA State Plan Type and Executive Summary

A. WIOA State Plan Type

This is a combined plan.

Combined Plan Partner Program(s)

- Adult
- Youth
- Dislocated Worker
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants
- Unemployment Insurance
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Reintegration of Ex-Offenders program (programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))

B. Plan Introduction or Executive Summary

The New Hampshire Core Partners collaborated with other partners and the public to develop the 2024-2028 Combined State Plan. To complete the plan, focus groups were conducted throughout the state, along with statewide public hearings, and engagement with the State Workforce Investment Board to develop the comprehensive plan to further implement WIOA with continuous improvement of the delivery of system services and outcomes. Through a strategic planning process,

II. Strategic Elements

A. Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis

1. Economic and Workforce Analysis

Economic Analysis

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

(i) Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. *Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.*

Current long-term employment projections are that the number of jobs in the state will increase by 6.6 percent between 2022 and 2032, from 751,549 to 801,399, or 4,948 annually. This continued deceleration in employment growth is a result of demographic changes to New Hampshire's workforce. An aging population that is exiting the workforce and the state's low birth rates reduce the population of younger individuals entering the state's workforce. The needs of the state's workforce is likely to outpace the available labor pool, with many industries facing a high number of openings but a decreasing labor force.

New Hampshire's largest industry sectors by employment include Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Government, and Manufacturing, each employing between 70,000 and 100,000 workers. The largest occupations in the state are Office and Administrative Support, Sales and Related, Management, Food Preparation and Serving, and Transportation and Material Moving Occupations, each employing between 50,000 and 100,000 workers. Many of these industries and occupations are also among the fastest growing in the state, such as the healthcare sector, which employs nearly 100,00 individuals in the state and is expected

to grow by at least 10% between 2022 and 2032. The following sections explore the future needs of the state by analyzing the projected growth of the state's industry sectors and occupational clusters, as well as the needs of employers, to better inform strategic planning for workforce support and education.

(ii) Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. *Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.*

Emerging Industry Demand (2- and3-digit NAICS)

- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services is projected to see the fastest growth over the next 10 years, with Management of Companies and Enterprises also growing by more than 20%. Both industries have a high educational attainment mix among primary occupations, as well as high average wages across the industry sectors.
- The healthcare industry is projected to remain the largest in the state in terms of employment, employing more than 100,000 individuals by 2032. As the state's population ages and mortality rates decline, employment in this industry will continue to become more critical.
- A significant deviation from New Hampshire's previous industry and workforce assessment is the projection for the "Accommodation and Food Services" industry cluster. While the 2020-2030 projections showed an increase of over 11,000 jobs, 2022-2032 projections anticipate just under 3,000. This is not a sign of industry contraction, instead, a result of massive job loss in the industry during the COVID-19 pandemic, most of which was regained in the last two years. Growth projections for the industry are instead returning to pre-COVID norms.
- Retail Trade is projected to see an increasingly steep decline with over 5,700 jobs or 6% of the industry and fall from the second to the third largest industry cluster in the state. This is largely a result of changing consumer preferences, as well as increased automation in retail stores. Some retail occupations are anticipated to shift to other industries, such as Transportation and Warehousing, notably, these transformations will alter the skill and certification needs of employers.
- Manufacturing is projected to grow by 1,409 or 2%. However, the number of anticipated job openings in the industry will likely be high, as the industry has a high percentage (34.2%) of older workers nearing retirement (age 55+).

Table A: Industry Sectors by Employment in New Hampshire, 2022-2032, 2-digit NAICS

NAICS	Sector	2022 Employment	2032 Employment	2022 - 2032 Change	2022 – 2032 Change %
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	4,297	4,726	428	10%
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	631	698	68	11%
22	Utilities	2,118	2,234	115	5%
23	Construction	43,061	44,411	1,350	3%
31	Manufacturing	72,167	73,576	1,409	2%
42	Wholesale Trade	31,956	37,555	5,598	18%
44	Retail Trade	92,425	86,628	(5,797)	(6%)
48	Transportation and Warehousing	18,599	20,054	1,455	8%
51	Information	12,572	12,527	(45)	(0%)
52	Finance and Insurance	29,998	31,654	1,655	6%

53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	10,069	10,634	566	6%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	53,695	65,885	12,191	23%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	10,634	12,924	2,290	22%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	44,432	49,739	5,307	12%
61	Educational Services	28,210	29,390	1,179	4%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	97,554	107,533	9,979	10%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	14,701	16,380	1,680	11%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	59,529	62,471	2,941	5%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	35,010	37,408	2,398	7%
90	Government	88,415	88,931	516	1%
99	Unclassified Industry	1,710	3,219	1,509	88%
Source: Lightcast™, 2022					

Emerging Occupation Demand

Table B presents projected occupational growth and openings for the projection period from 2022 to 2033.

Table B: Occupations by Employment in New Hampshire, 2022-2032, 2-Digit SOC				
SOC	Occupation	2022 Employment	2032 Employment	Average Annual Openings
11-0000	Management Occupations	55,846	62,721	5,167
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	48,095	53,979	4,682
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	26,146	32,354	2,348
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	15,350	17,573	1,315
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	6,602	7,439	683
21-0000	Community and Social Service Occupations	12,595	14,273	1,320
23-0000	Legal Occupations	3,946	4,080	289
25-0000	Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	46,360	46,916	4,391
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	12,211	13,478	1,426
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	44,517	49,473	3,105
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations	25,599	28,652	4,184
33-0000	Protective Service Occupations	12,807	13,260	1,423
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	55,823	59,044	11,229
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	27,619	29,420	4,021

39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations	20,180	21,667	3,800
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	74,924	75,375	10,206
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	98,889	97,657	11,690
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	2,849	2,989	460
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations	32,748	34,152	3,083
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	28,558	30,780	2,872
51-0000	Production Occupations	43,404	43,531	4,886
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	54,432	57,177	7,642
55-0000	Military-only occupations	2,284	2,582	294
Source: Lightcast™, 2022				

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

To gain insight into real-time employer skill and certification needs, a review of online job postings for New Hampshire for the 12 months from January to December of 2022 was conducted using Lightcast™ labor insight tools. The tables following look at those postings broken down by usual entry-level educational attainment, industry, and occupation to gain further insight into the needs of employers.

Table C shows the projected growth in employment broken out by the usual entry-level education required, as well as annual job openings. The fastest growing categories are for workers with a degree higher than a high school diploma, with growth for those with bachelor's and master's degrees increasing by 13%, and associate's degrees rising by 10%. Jobs that require a high school diploma or equivalent have had the highest average annual job openings in 2022, largely due to the high turnover rate among associated occupations. As is further discussed in the workforce analysis section, jobs for those with higher levels of educational attainment are both more resilient in times of economic downturn, and generally pay higher wages, leading to lower turnover and fewer annual job openings.

Table C: Projected Job Growth by Usual Entry-Level Education, 2022-2032					
Usual Education Required for Entry-Level Employment	2022 Employment Estimate	2032 Employment Estimate	2022-2032 Change	2022-2032 % Change	Average Annual Job Openings
No formal education required	154,690	157817	3127	2%	25,947
High school diploma or equivalent	284,462	294825	10363	4%	34,660
Postsecondary non-degree award	47,169	50748	3578	8%	5,639
Some college, no degree	22,662	23228	566	2%	2,571

Associate's degree	17,514	19258	1744	10%	1,855
Bachelor's degree	187,688	211846	24158	13%	17,056
Master's degree	15,725	17694	1969	13%	1,310
Doctoral or professional degree	19,369	20363	994	5%	1,185
Total, All Occupations	751,783	798,574	46,791	6%	90,516
Source: Lightcast™, 2022					

Table D shows job postings broken down by industry sector. The sectors with the largest number of job postings in 2022 include HealthCare, Administrative & Support & Waste Management & Remediation Services, and Retail Trade, all of which were reported to have more than 20,000 job postings. Health Care and Social Assistance, as discussed above, is one of the largest and fastest-growing sectors in the state and across the nation. Manufacturing, with the fourth-highest job postings, is also notable. While the sector is not growing rapidly, as previously discussed, it has one of the fastest-aging workforce compositions. As the manufacturing labor force begins to age out and retire, job postings will continue to be much higher than net growth in the sector.

Table D: Top Job Postings in New Hampshire in 2022 by Industry Sector		
Industry Sector Code	Industry Sector	Job Postings
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	240
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	
22	Utilities	1,216
23	Construction	2,210
31	**Manufacturing**	**18,587**
42	Wholesale Trade	6,678
44	**Retail Trade**	**20,341**
48	Transportation and Warehousing	5,156
51	Information	4,594
52	Finance and Insurance	10,969
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2,405
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	13,935
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	552
56	**Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services**	**22,441**
61	Educational Services	13,741
62	**Health Care and Social Assistance**	**30,139**
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1,414
72	Accommodation and Food Services	7,692
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	3,433
Source: Lightcast™, 2022		

Table E displays the 25 occupations with the highest number of job postings in 2022. Many of these occupations fall in line with the largest industry postings, including those within the healthcare and retail sectors. Also notable are those occupations related to transportation and distribution, as well as technology specialist occupations, both of which are growing in demand.

Table E: Top Job Postings in New Hampshire in 2022 by Occupation		
O*NET Code	Occupation	Job Postings
29-1141.00	Registered Nurses	11,073
41-2031.00	Retail Salespersons	8,035
41-1011.00	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	5,731
15-1252.00	Software Developers	4,657
53-7062.00	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	4,590
41-4012.00	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	4,082
43-4051.00	Customer Service Representatives	3,758
31-1131.00	Nursing Assistants	3,348
11-9111.00	Medical and Health Services Managers	3,043
51-9199.00	Production Workers, All Other	2,783
53-7065.00	Stockers and Order Fillers	2,769
29-2061.00	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	2,729
11-9199.00	Managers, All Other	2,728
35-3023.00	Fast Food and Counter Workers	2,726
43-6014.00	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	2,704
49-9071.00	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	2,579
53-3032.00	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2,470
11-1021.00	General and Operations Managers	2,275
37-2011.00	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	1,860
27-1026.00	Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	1,771
11-2021.00	Marketing Managers	1,759
13-1071.00	Human Resources Specialists	1,755
49-3023.00	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	1,599
31-9092.00	Medical Assistants	1,566
Source: Lightcast™, 2022		

Although occupations require specific skill sets, knowledge, or expertise, there are also specific skills that span a wide variety of occupations, and which can increase the range of occupations for which an individual is qualified. Table X displays the 25 most requested skills in job postings in 2022. The table shows that among all job postings in New Hampshire in 2022, “communications,” “customer service,” and “management” skills were the most cited. Many of the most cited skills are what are often referred to as “soft skills,” those that are often more difficult to teach directly in workforce training but are vitally important to a majority of employers. Emphasizing these skills to job seekers and supporting job-training that stresses them can improve job seeker’s ability to succeed in the state’s labor market.

Table F: Most Requested Skills in 2022 Job Postings	
Skill	Job Postings 2022

Communications	77,854
Customer Service	59,346
Management	53,041
Sales	39,647
Operations	38,160
Leadership	36,911
Detail Oriented	27,899
Problem-Solving	25,370
Planning	22,754
Writing	22,610
Valid Driver's License	21,759
Interpersonal Communications	19,026
Lifting Ability	18,779
Microsoft Office	17,341
Merchandising	16,902
Microsoft Excel	16,808
Registered Nurse (RN)	16,675
Computer Literacy	16,490
Nursing	16,340
Multitasking	16,284
Coordinating	16,191
Organizational Skills	16,011
Self-Motivation	14,670
Research	14,565
Project Management	14,492
Source: Lightcast™, 2022	

Workforce Analysis

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 for items (i)-(iii) below. Populations analyzed must include individuals with barriers to employment described in the first paragraph of Section II.

(i) Employment and Unemployment. *Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the State.*

In 2022, New Hampshire's unemployment rate averaged 2.6%, dropping both from the previous year as well as pre-COVID rates and reaching a 10-year low. The state's labor force grew by 9,814 or 1.3%. New Hampshire has shown strong labor force growth while maintaining a very low unemployment rate, different from many states with comparable unemployment rates. Table G presents key labor force metrics from the U.S. Census Bureau's "*Current Populations Survey.*"

Table G: Key Annual Labor Force Metrics						
Year	Civilian Non-Institutionalized Population	Civilian Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Labor Force Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate
2022	1,159,452	766,672	747,339	19,333	66.1%	2.5%
2021	1,150,014	756,858	731,117	25,741	65.8%	3.4%
2020	1,140,447	764,137	713,144	50,993	67.0%	6.7%
2019	1,129,954	780,540	760,516	20,024	69.1%	2.6%

2018	1,120,839	770,469	750,285	20,184	68.7%	2.6%
2017	1,112,624	758,133	736,918	21,215	68.1%	2.8%
2016	1,097,720	752,478	731,002	21,476	68.5%	2.9%
2015	1,089,562	746,317	720,832	25,485	68.5%	3.4%
2014	1,083,434	743,756	711,740	32,016	68.6%	4.3%
2013	1,075,451	743,036	704,023	39,013	69.1%	5.3%
Source: US Census Bureau, Current Populations Survey						

Labor force participation grew marginally between 2021 and 2022, but has not reached pre-COVID rates, still 3% behind the 2019 annual average. Overall employment grew by 16,222 in 2021, while unemployment dropped by 6,408.

Demographics of the Labor Force

Table H displays labor force participation and unemployment by age group, according to the American Community Survey's 2022 5-Year Estimates. Apart from those under 20, many of whom are still in K-12 education, unemployment rates were highest among residents ages 20-24 (6.5%) and 25-29 (4.6%). Unemployment rates were lowest among residents ages 45-59 (2.3%). These rates further add to the results of an aging population, though labor force participation remains highest among residents in the prime working age between 25 and 54. Labor force participation among older residents continues to rise, as financial needs require more individuals to stay in the workforce, alongside the decrease in mortality rates.

Table H: Labor Force Participation and Unemployment Rate by Age		
Age	Labor Force Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate
Age 16 and over	66.6%	3.6%
Age 16 to 19	50.4%	8.2%
Age 20 to 24	79.4%	6.5%
Age 25 to 29	88.3%	4.6%
Age 30 to 34	85.4%	3.2%
Age 35 to 44	86.6%	3.3%
Age 45 to 54	85.9%	2.3%
Age 55 to 59	79.0%	2.3%
Age 60 to 64	66.5%	2.9%
Age 75 and over	30.9%	3.1%
Source: American Community Survey 2022 5-Year Estimates		

Among the largest groups likely to face barriers in the workforce are veterans and individuals with disabilities. Veterans in New Hampshire saw a lower overall unemployment rate and a higher labor force participation rate in 2022 than the state as a whole, according to the American Community Survey, both of which are up from 2020. Residents with disabilities, however, continue to see much lower labor force participation rates and higher unemployment, especially among those with cognitive, self-care, and independent living difficulties. Table I shows the labor force participation and unemployment rates for veterans and residents with disabilities. It's important to note that this data shows those who are eligible to participate in the workforce, meaning it doesn't take into account those that are institutionalized or otherwise not a part of the eligible labor pool. Just 50% of all disabled residents were active in the workforce in 2022, more than 16% lower than the state average, and for those with self-care difficulties, participation was as low as 28.2%.

Table I: Labor Force and Employment for Veterans and Individuals with Disabilities		
Population Description	Labor Force Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate
Veterans	85.3%	1.4%
All Residents		
With a Disability	49.9%	3.3%
With a Hearing Difficulty	58.4%	2.9%
With a Vision Difficulty	56.2%	6.1%
With a Cognitive Difficulty	47.8%	11.6%
With an Ambulatory Difficulty	30.7%	7.6%
With a Self-Care Difficulty	28.2%	8.9%
With an Independent Living Difficulty	34.7%	12.4%
Source: American Community Survey 2022 1-Year Estimates		

Long Term Unemployment

Long-term unemployment is defined as a period of unemployment lasting 27 weeks or more. Although New Hampshire's unemployment rate has reached a 10-year historic low, the percentage of unemployed individuals who are categorized as "long-term unemployed" has changed little in recent years. In 2018 the long-term unemployment rate stood at 18.2 percent, down from 18.8 in 2017 and well below the peak of 31.8 weeks near the end of the "great recession" in 2010. Still, the rate is much higher than the pre-recession percentage of 12.9 weeks in 2007. These data highlight the fact that even in an economy with a strong labor market there are factors that remain and that are associated with individuals having difficulty finding reemployment after job loss. Table J shows the share of long-term unemployment by age and sex. Individuals between the ages of 25 and 34 share the largest portion at 23.7%, with between the ages of 25 to 34 second at 19.9%. This data highlights the increased difficulty younger workers are facing following job loss, and potentially reflects a disparity in younger workers' access to employment pathways and the resources necessary to re-enter the workforce.

Table J: 2022 Share of Long-Term Unemployed by Age and Sex						
Age	Total	% of Total	Men	% of Total	Women	% of Total
Age 16 and over	5,739	100%	3,258	56.8%	2,481	43.2%
Age 16 to 19	236	4.1%	153	2.7%	79	1.4%
Age 20 to 24	812	14.2%	520	9.1%	293	5.1%
Age 25 to 34	1,363	23.7%	773	13.5%	590	10.3%
Age 35 to 44	1,144	19.9%	625	10.9%	520	9.1%
Age 45 to 54	865	15.1%	459	8.0%	406	7.1%
Age 55 to 64	922	16.1%	498	8.7%	419	7.3%
Age 65 and over	406	7.1%	232	4.0%	175	3.0%
Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Census Bureau "Current Populations Survey"						

Older Workers

The labor force participation rate of individuals ages 55 and older has continued to increase in recent years, as the number of younger workers entering the workforce declines. Many industries are seeing a consistently aging workforce, though some are affected more heavily than others. Table K shows the percentage of workers ages 55 and older by industry sector in 2022. 9 sectors consist of more than 30% workers ages 55 and over, an increase from 7 in 2017. The largest of these industries is the manufacturing sector, employing nearly 25,000 workers ages 55 and over, who make up 34.2% of the workforce. The table also highlights a trend among these aging industry sectors, in that many require certification or education in trades, which younger residents are increasingly unlikely to receive. While the share of workers falls below 30%, the Health Care and Social Assistance sector has the largest number of workers ages 55 and over at nearly 28,000. As the industry sector continues to grow, it may be another sector to monitor, as many occupations in the sector also requires significant training and certification.

Table K: Percentage of Workers Age 55+ by Industry Sector			
NAICS Code	Industry Sector	Workers Age 55+	% Workers Age 55+
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1788	41.6%
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	256	40.5%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	4007	39.8%
31	Manufacturing	24692	34.2%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	11760	33.6%
42	Wholesale Trade	10491	32.8%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	5993	32.2%
22	Utilities	639	30.2%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	16186	30.1%
23	Construction	12390	28.8%
61	Educational Services	8085	28.7%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	27820	28.5%
51	Information	3555	28.3%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	2960	27.8%
52	Finance and Insurance	8207	27.4%
90	Government	23684	26.8%
44	Retail Trade	24557	26.6%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3889	26.5%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	11409	25.7%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	9018	15.1%
Source: Lightcast™, 2022			

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

New Hampshire's labor demand continues to evolve as industries' composition adjusts to changing technology and demographics. Both the occupational mix and the demographic makeup of the workforce are diversifying within industries and across the greater economy. The combined effects of these changes make planning efforts especially challenging for education and training providers, workforce development organizations, and others addressing the labor market needs of individuals, businesses, and geographic regions.

Beyond the difficulties associated with predicting the industrial and occupational shifts in a changing state economy, in New Hampshire, a majority of the state's population is part of a larger, New England regional labor market. Access to a broader regional labor market allows New Hampshire residents to take advantage of employment opportunities in industries or occupations in neighboring states that may not exist, or which have fewer opportunities, within New Hampshire. The education and training community is charged with preparing a workforce to meet the needs of New Hampshire employers and, at the same time, preparing individuals to find well-paying, quality jobs wherever they are located.

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

Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

Table L shows educational attainment levels for New Hampshire's population ages 25 and over by gender, and Table M shows educational attainment levels for the state broken down further by age groups.

New Hampshire continues to see high educational attainment levels for those 25 and above. Nearly 95% of the state's population has at least a high school degree or equivalency, and 41% of the state's population has a bachelor's degree or higher. Attainment is relatively consistent across age groups, those between the ages of 25 and 44 the most likely to have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Table L: Educational Attainment, Population Age 25+

	Total	Male	Female
Less Than 9th Grade	2.0%	2.1%	2.0%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	4.2%	5.0%	3.3%
High School Graduate or Equivalency	27.2%	28.9%	25.5%
Some College, No Degree	17.5%	17.3%	17.8%
Associate's Degree	10.1%	8.8%	11.3%
Bachelor's Degree	23.7%	23.6%	11.3%
Graduate or Professional Degree	15.4%	14.4%	16.3%
High School Graduate or Higher	93.8%	92.9%	94.7%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	39.0%	38.0%	40.1%

Source: American Community Survey 2022 5-Year Estimates

Table M: Educational Attainment by Age

	Age 18-24	Age 25-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-64	Age 65+

High School Graduate or Higher	87.6%	96.2%	94.8%	94.3%	93.6%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	13.9%	44.6%	45.5%	40.3%	38.0%
Source: American Community Survey 2022 5-Year Estimates					

Table N shows New Hampshire's labor force and unemployment rates broken down by educational attainment and highlights the reality that employment status is heavily impacted by education. Those without a high school diploma are nearly 2 times as likely to have experienced unemployment in 2022 than the state average, and more than 2 times as likely as those with a bachelor's degree or higher. Labor force participation increases by 17.1% for those with a high school degree versus those without and reaches nearly 89% for those with a bachelor's degree or higher. Access to education greatly improves an individual's ability to participate in the labor force, as well as significantly decreases the likelihood of risking unemployment. Data also shows that increased educational attainment impacts the length of unemployment, higher educational attainment correlating with a lower share of the residents experiencing long-term unemployment (27 weeks or greater).

Table N: Employment Status by Educational Attainment, 2022		
	Labor Force Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate
Less than high school graduate	60.3%	4.6%
High school graduate or equivalency	77.4%	3.0%
Some college or Associate's Degree	82.5%	2.3%
Bachelor's degree or higher	88.7%	1.9%
Source: American Community Survey 2022 5-Year Tables		

(iv) Comparison of Economic and Workforce Analytical Conclusion

2. Workforce Development, Education, and Training Activities Analysis

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

(A) The State's Workforce Development Activities. Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop delivery system partners.

Workforce development activities in New Hampshire are executed by the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA), NH Employment Security, the NH Department of Education (DOE), and the NH Community College System along with an extensive network of contracted service providers and additional partners. There is also a direct connection to the NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) New Hampshire Employment Program (NHEP) that serves individuals who are receiving TANF Cash and have a 20- or 30-hour work requirement. To ensure seamless service delivery for participants, there has been close collaboration both within and across these partner agencies. This collaboration has seen success in eliminating redundancy, more efficiently using resources, and improving customer experience over the past several years.

In an effort to ensure alignment with Governor Sununu's vision for job growth and stability in the state, activities, including education and training, highlights New Hampshire's commitment to delivering programming that meets the needs of both jobseekers and employers.

New Hampshire Works- The New Hampshire Works Consortium plays a pivotal role in delivering one-stop operator services and overseeing 12 American Job Career Centers across the state. NH Works offers a comprehensive suite of services catering to the needs of both job seekers and employers. As the statewide One-Stop Operator for the NH Works System, the Consortium integrates the expertise of various agencies to effectively address the workforce development goals of the state, serving as the primary customer-facing job search and employment resource center.

Guided by the State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) and its committees, the NH Works Consortium functions as the One-Stop Operator and holds a standing committee position within the SWIB structure. Members assigned by the Office of Workforce Opportunity, including the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, State Director, and other executive-level staff from state agencies responsible for the six WIOA core programs, actively contribute to overseeing system-wide workforce development strategies and goals. The Consortium's primary focus is on the design and implementation of resources, policies, and procedures to continually enhance the quality of operations at NH Works Centers, aligning them with SWIB visions and objectives for the overall betterment of the state's workforce development initiatives. Other committees include:

- The Consortium – comprised of commissioner and director-level staff from each of the WIOA core programs as well as other partners to provide a connection between the workforce system and policy makers and create a communication network among partner agencies.
- Interagency Business Team (IBT) – comprised of individuals who have day-to-day contact with the business community; facilitates communication between partner agencies' employer services functions.
- Professional Development Team (PDT) – exists to promote capacity building and professional development among workforce system staff members.

NH Works One-Stop Centers play a crucial role by offering co-located Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) services, including NH Employment Security (the WIOA Dislocated Worker Service Provider), Vocational Rehabilitation, and the WIOA Adult Service Provider (Southern New Hampshire Services, Inc.). The Department of Health and Human Services provides a link to the New Hampshire Employment Program (NHEP) for eligible adults (TANF and SNAP) who may also qualify for and benefit from workforce assessment, training, and education. Additionally, various partner services are accessible through the internet or on an itinerant basis at the NH Works Center, ensuring a wide range of support for individuals.

The co-location of workforce services has significantly contributed to a seamless and customer-focused service delivery model at NH Works Centers. For job seekers, a clear and effective process is established upon entering a one-stop center, starting with a front-end intake process. Job seekers can readily access education and training resources, career information, labor market information, skill and interest assessments, job search assistance, workshops, counseling, and more. Co-enrollment in workforce programs is a common and streamlined practice, providing individuals with comprehensive support.

On the back end, interagency and inter-program referral processes facilitate regular information sharing among case managers and program staff, whether in-person or through technology. In specific cases involving adults, youth, or business clients, case managers from different programs or service providers may jointly

attend meetings to ensure a smooth transition between or co-enrollment in programs.

A notable aspect of success lies in the general misunderstanding by the public regarding the specific workforce services they receive. The terms NH Works, Employment Security, WIOA, and specific services like Job Training Fund or Unemployment Insurance are used interchangeably by both job seekers and business customers. The effective branding of NH Works and the co-location of services have proven successful in blending resources. This ensures that customers recognize NH Works as the go-to place for any workforce development need, fostering a unified and accessible approach to services.

Workforce activities that are conducted through the NH Works office, for both jobseeker and business customers, include:

- Unemployment Insurance claim processing support
- Labor Market Information –information and statistics regarding occupations, wages, community-specific data, high-demand, and high-growth sectors
- On-the-Job-Training to provide specific occupational skill training
- Job Training Fund[1] opportunities for businesses focused on upskilling incumbent workers
- Return to Work opportunities, focusing on unemployed individuals.
- SCSEP employment programs for senior citizens
- Veteran's services
- Migrant worker services
- Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment
- Granite State Jobs Act programs (WorkNowNH, WorkInvestNH, Reentry Program)
- Job fairs held by Employment Security and promoted to all agency clients and employers.
- Boot camps and job-seeking workshops, as well as Pathway to Work for those interested in self-employment.
- Training program information, including sector initiatives and employer-driven programs.
- Resource center and computer labs, providing access to job listings, upcoming job fairs, free job-seeker resource materials, and more.

NH Works Center staff undergo specialized training to effectively cater to the diverse needs of customers. This includes Job Placement Specialists and Employment Counselor Specialists for job seekers, and Employer Representatives or Veteran Employer Representatives for business customers. Despite being based at the same NH Works Center, these professionals target specific customer segments, ensuring a more personalized approach. Open lines of communication and a referral process have been implemented to reduce redundancy and enhance customer service. Agency leadership actively promotes cross-training and information sharing on various programs and services. While NH Works Center staff specialize in workforce system knowledge and skills, they also possess sufficient understanding of other programs and services to make effective referrals. Core and non-core WIOA program staff consistently promote programs to all customers.

To serve business customers, program staff regularly engage directly with employers, conducting site visits to identify current training needs or available job opportunities. This approach not only supports employers but also provides real-time employment information for job seekers. The Interagency Business Team works to streamline access to services offered by each workforce program. A partnership with the Division of Economic Development has led to the establishment of a Business Resource Center, promoting programs in finance, international trade, state and federal procurement contracts, and tax credit programs. Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion programs, managed by OWO, are coordinated with the Division of Economic Development, leveraging existing ties to the business community. Business Resource Specialists collaborate

with NH Works partner staff to assist employees affected by layoffs or business closures, discussing benefits, programs, and opportunities for dislocated workers. This includes job training or retraining programs, unemployment insurance, counseling, workshops, and other resources available to all job seekers. Regular meetings in communities around the state provide real-time information on employer needs, which is then matched to the individual needs of NH Works and partner agency customers.

NH Employment Security (NHES) contracts with Southern New Hampshire Services, Inc. (SNHS) to serve as the primary service provider for WIOA Adult employment and training services. This relationship grants participants access to a range of services through the Community Action Programs Association, including energy assistance, health, food and nutrition assistance, Hispanic/Latino community services, housing, and homeless programs, TANF work programs, and various supportive and volunteer services. NHES provides direct service delivery for WIOA Dislocated Worker programs.

The partnership between America's Youth Teenage Unemployment Reduction Network, Inc. (MY TURN) and New Hampshire Jobs for America's Graduates (NH JAG) focuses on providing core-WIOA employment and training services to economically disadvantaged youth. This includes both in-school and out-of-school youth, with services tailored to enhance career awareness, work-ready skills, and increased academic skills leading to academic and/or employment credentials/outcomes. Referrals and release forms within the NH Works system facilitate information sharing to best serve the unique needs and barriers of the youth population.

New Hampshire Department of Education (DOE) - The NH DOE administers core and non-core WIOA services, including Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), and Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs.

The Bureau of Adult Education provides funding for programs serving 7,000 adults annually who are improving their basic educational skills leading to a high school credential. The Bureau also administers the statewide HiSET (High School Equivalency Test) which results in approximately 1,800 adults each year receiving their certificate. ABE programs serve as the foundation and basic building blocks of all workforce development services, as the importance of individuals having foundational skills in math and reading continues to grow. This holds particularly true when looking at past entry-level jobs for job-seeker customers and closing the gap with high-demand skills and occupations.

ABE staff participates in workforce agency partner meetings and NH Works counselors work with students on-site in ABE classes, called "What's Next", to introduce career inventories, and career pathways, and promote resources available through NH Works. Adult students also work with an Adult Career Pathways Coordinator, present in the classroom, who meets with students to discuss goals, challenges, and recalibrate employment expectations. This coordinator also builds bridges with local community colleges, CTE centers, and certificate programs to further facilitate adult students to continue into post-secondary education after completing ABE coursework. ABE staff also receive referrals from workforce partner agencies for customers who do not have a high school diploma or are basic skills deficient.

The Bureau also provides refugee service programs. With approximately 500 local employers in refugee resettlement areas, ABE staff work closely with employers and develops programs in partnership to provide employees with on-site English literacy training.

The Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) provides assistance to eligible persons with disabilities throughout the state to gain and retain employment outcomes through the provision of direct vocational rehabilitation services, as funded under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. VR is a joint

State/Federal program that seeks to empower people to make informed choices, build viable careers, and live more independently in the community. To that end, VR supports the following programs and priorities:

- Disability Determination Services
- Independent Living
- Rehabilitation Services
- Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Transition

VR operates under the awareness that collaboration with other agencies, community groups, and employers is what makes their services most meaningful for their customers. There has been continued outreach to the business community on the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities. VR staff also work to ensure other public workforce system resources are fully accessible, and closely align the personal interests of clients with the current job market, using the labor market information that is available. Currently there are strong relationships with local employers, regional workforce coalitions, community organizations such as Goodwill, and co-enrollment for customers such as On-the-Job-Training programs. Students are able to gain real world work experience through the Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO) program. The NH Department of Education supports and encourages local school districts to adopt policies that encourage 'extended learning'. Extended learning refers to the primary acquisition of knowledge and skills through instruction or study outside of the traditional classroom methodology, including, but not limited, to:

- Apprenticeships
- Community service
- Independent study
- Online courses
- Internships
- Performing groups
- Private instruction

Several vendors provide direct services for those with disabilities throughout the state. A close collaboration between VR, the state legislature, families, the governor's commission, Developmental Disability Council, and other stakeholders resulted in the passing of State Bill 47 to eliminate subminimum wage for individuals with disabilities in New Hampshire – a great success in closing the unemployment gap for this demographic.

On the national level, there is a trend that individuals with disabilities become isolated after leaving the secondary education system and lose access to many of the resources that are available, resulting in high unemployment for this segment of the population. VR staff are committed to closing this gap for New Hampshire residents and leveraging many national resources in addition to the local and state level workforce services. A data system has been developed specifically for individuals with disabilities, called the Talent Acquisition Portal. Project Search, a national partnership for people with significant developmental disabilities, teaches work behavior, job skills, soft skills, communication, and other fundamental tools for success. Pepnet2 is a national partnership dedicated to increasing education and career choices for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

The Bureau of Career Development supports Career and Technical Education (CTE), including career pathway development that leads to further education and employment opportunities for students. Activities include,

but are not limited to:

- Providing direction for the system of 30 secondary regional career and technical centers and sub-centers
- Supporting career clusters/pathways
- Supporting facility development and renovation at the secondary regional centers
- Managing the use of federal CTE funds for program improvement at secondary and postsecondary institutions and correctional facilities
- Working closely with the NH Department of Education's Division of Higher Education that regulates/licenses private, postsecondary (i.e., post high school) career (i.e., job related schools. These schools are non-degree granting.
- Connecting secondary and postsecondary institutions (Tech Prep/School to Work)
- Supporting introductory offerings beginning at the middle school level leading to career and technical education
- Services of the Office of Civil Rights Compliance and Equity
- Disbursement of state tuition and transportation funds for CTE students

CTE centers use the National Career Cluster framework and work-based-learning is not just promoted, but integral to students' education. School administration, instructors, and staff members support internships, job shadows, industry tours, apprenticeships, and other work experiences for students. Some CTE centers have staff dedicated solely to developing business connections in the community to enhance these opportunities for students. There is close collaboration with high school guidance counselors, providing college information and tours, soft skills training and National Career Readiness Certificate preparation, portfolio development, mock interview opportunities, and more for students. By integrating career exposure to academic education, students are more prepared for both college and the workforce.

CTE programs are grounded in relevant industries and business needs, with regional advisory boards and individual program-specific local boards led by business representatives driving the curriculum and learning outcomes for students. The state legislature is also working to have career and college planning as required coursework in K-12 education, which would require students to create and annually update an individual plan.

In addition to the provision of programmatic content, skills, and knowledge CTE instructors integrate career and college readiness throughout their curriculum. CTE centers bring the real world of work into the classroom through Career & Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs), guest experts, simulated workplace experiences, and virtual job shadows. Additionally, partnerships between industry and CTE provide opportunities for students to gain real-world experience through internships, job shadows, industry tours, cooperative programs, and/or part-time employment opportunities. These activities help facilitate the development of student's soft skills as well as career-specific requirements. The development of teacher externships provides CTE instructors with industry-current current skills due to participation as active learners within the facilities of their local industry partners. These skills then return to the CTE center and benefit students throughout the instructor's programs.

Articulation agreements (AA) and dual enrollment (DE) opportunities provide CTE students with opportunities to gain college credits while enrolled in CTE programs. The number of such agreements between CTE centers and postsecondary is continuously increasing and covers a broader range of career areas. Early college access is offered at low and/or no cost and is a benefit that may greatly reduce the

financial burden incurred by CTE students and their parents/ guardians as they pursue postsecondary education.

Apprenticeships - The Workforce Training Program of The Community College System of NH is a robust initiative funded through Federal Grants from the U.S. Department of Labor. Launched in 2017, the program has significantly expanded Registered Apprenticeships and Pre-apprenticeships in non-traditional sectors. The impact is evident with the establishment of over 100 new Registered Apprenticeship Programs and more than 15 Pre-Apprenticeship Programs. The program has provided crucial support to over 800 apprentices, aiming to build a sustainable infrastructure for Pre-Apprenticeship to Registered Apprenticeship pathways. Focused on promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and access, it strives to improve statewide apprenticeship resources and networks. The initiative fosters collaboration, connecting industry leaders, employers, state and community organizations, education providers, and career seekers to collectively develop New Hampshire's workforce.

With an industry-led approach, paid jobs, structured on-the-job learning, mentorship, supplemental education, and a commitment to diversity, quality, and safety, the program emphasizes the importance of credentials. Support services, including a scholarship of $2,000, up to $1,500 for various needs, and referrals to state and local resources, aim to alleviate financial barriers for apprentices. The program's four fully staffed Regional Hubs (Northern, East-Central, Southern, and Western) feature apprenticeship coordinators, developers, and specialists providing technical assistance, support for employers and apprentices, assistance in program development and registration, and connections for career seekers with tailored programs and support services. The holistic support structure ensures apprentices receive assistance throughout the program, reducing barriers to success and fostering a thriving workforce in New Hampshire.

Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH) - The Community College System of New Hampshire is deeply integrated into the workforce system, working closely with the NH DOE Bureau of Career Development services, and providing post-secondary training programs fulfilling WIOA, CTE Perkins, and employer-directed skill training needs. There are seven campuses across the state, plus satellite locations and programs offered for local employers; which speaks to their dedication to serving the communities and support local employers and the regional industries. Programs are designed to prepare students for today's job market and/or successful transfer to higher-level degrees at four-year colleges.

The Community College System has invested in supporting programs that are driven by local industry needs. CCSNH has aligned its work with New Hampshire's top priority as it transitions through its recovery and expansion phase of the economy. Recently there has been an increased focus on identifying employment trends in the most in-demand sectors and working directly with employers to build programs around specific skills that are seeing shortages. CCSNH programs prepare NH residents for all of the sectors noted in the report, with particular strength in healthcare, technicians across multiple industries, hospitality, IT, business professions, skilled trades such as HVAC, welding, electrical systems technology, electrical line workers and many other training programs.

The Community College System of New Hampshire's WorkReadyNH is one initiative that was developed through both state funding from the UI Trust Fund and administered by New Hampshire Employment Security (NHES) and previous funding supported by a U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration TAACCCT Grant. WorkReadyNH is an employability skills training program designed to meet the needs of New Hampshire businesses.

It is a joint endeavor by the Community College System of NH, Office of the Governor, BEA, Employment

Security, and NH Works, and funded by the State of New Hampshire's Unemployment Insurance Fund and contracted with NHES. This program provides training, at no cost to the participant, in skills employers have identified as essential in the workplace. The program is delivered at the community colleges where participants engage in remedial skill building (i.e., math and reading). They are then exposed to over 60 hours of job seeking and soft skills curriculum that includes:

• Skills Showcasing	• Employer Expectations
• Business Ethics	• Building Better Teams
• Workplace Sensitivity	• Critical Thinking
• Effective Communication	• Conflict Resolution

In addition to these skills, participants have the ability to earn a nationally recognized credential.

- National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC). The NCRC gauges an individual's level in reading for information, locating information, and applied mathematics. This multi- agency program is another example of how New Hampshire is working with partners across the workforce system. Participants from TANF, WIOA, SNAP, ABE, and others are often co-enrolled to coordinate career services and resources. New Hampshire is dedicated to continuing this model of collaboration through the WorkReadyNH program.

Community College System staff also serve on workforce partner agency committees (e.g., SWIB, NH Works Consortium, Interagency Directors Group, etc.) and have established strong relationships at both the local and state level.

Department of Health and Human Services - As part of NH's workforce development system, the New Hampshire Department of Health, and Human Services (NH DHHS) provides services to eligible families, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly Food Stamps), cash assistance, medical assistance, childcare, and medical savings. Once eligible, families or individuals may have access to Workforce Development (WFD) Services through the NH Employment Program (NHEP) and/or SNAP Employment & Training (E & T) Program.

Trained NHEP Career Coaches and SNAP E&T staff assist participants with the development of a comprehensive Employability Plan which outlines goals in the following workforce areas:

- High School Credential Attainment
- Career Exploration, including job readiness and job searching assistance.
- Industry Sector Training & Credentialing Attainment
- Employability Skills, including the development of a comprehensive portfolio (Resume, Cover letter, References etc.
- Work Experience and Unpaid Internships to gain the necessary skills to become employed.
- Career Ladder Employment, including direct placement, apprenticeships, and On-the Job-Training

Limited financial support services related to employment needs may be available, such as vehicle repair, mileage reimbursement, tuition & training fees, assistance to tools of the trade (computers, uniforms, work

attire, etc.).

DHHS collaborates with all of the NH Workforce partners in order to provide and facilitate quality services and opportunities geared toward preparing NH citizens to enter into high wage, career ladder employment in high demand industries.

The Financial Assistance to Needy Families Program (TANF) provides cash assistance to families with dependent children through the following programs of assistance which include, New Hampshire Employment Program (NHEP); Family Assistance Program (FAP); Interim Disabled Parent (IDP) program; or Families with Older Children (FWOC):

- The New Hampshire Employment Program (NHEP) is the mandatory work program that provides parents with job preparation, work, and support services to enable them to permanently attach to gainful employment while providing financial assistance that allows children to be cared for in their own homes.
- The Families with Older Children (FWOC) program helps families that include a child who is over age 18, and under age 20, but still a full-time student in high school or the equivalent. These children meet the definition of a dependent child under State of New Hampshire law, but not under federal regulations. The FWOC program has a mandatory work requirement for the able-bodied parent.
- The Interim Disabled Parent (IDP) program provides assistance to families in which a parent is temporarily unable to participate in work programs due to their own medical condition. The IDP program has a mandatory work requirement only for the able-bodied adults in the household, and provides the same employment and training supports as the mandatory work program for able-bodied adult.
- The Family Assistance Program (FAP) provides financial assistance for families in which the children are deprived of the care of both parents due to continued absence or disability. The children may be cared for by the disabled parent (or parents) or by a caretaker relative. The relative is the designated guardian for a child/children deprived of the support of both parents. The relative caretaker may or may not be included in the case. There is no mandatory work requirement for the Family Assistance Program. In a relative caregiver case, if the relative chooses to be included in the assistance group for financial assistance, the relative would be mandatory for the work program, and case would be considered an NHEP case.

All TANF programs have the same cash eligibility requirements, and the same benefit limits. To qualify, the dependent children must lack parental support or care due to death, continued absence or because at least one parent in a two-parent home is disabled. TANF cash assistance is available for a maximum of 60 months (about 5 years). There is no limit on receipt of assistance for the children in families headed by a relative who does not receive TANF assistance for him/herself.

Parents of families eligible for TANF cash assistance are also eligible for Medicaid; children of TANF eligible families are eligible for Children's Medicaid (CM). Employment and Training Programs and Support Services assist adults receiving cash benefits through the TANF program. Employment and training services are provided by the Bureau of Family Assistance (BFA) and other inter-agency staff located in your local District Office.

Childcare Assistance assists parents engaged in work, training, or educational activities. Payments to childcare providers are coordinated by BFA in cooperation with the Child Development Bureau. Emergency

Assistance assists families with dependent children who may qualify for TANF in obtaining and keeping safe and healthy permanent housing.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides eligible individuals and households with benefits to buy food items at grocery stores, and other participating food retailers. It also gives recipients a chance to learn more about purchasing and preparing nutritious meals.

Eligibility and benefits are calculated based on household size, income, expenses and resources. Individuals may qualify even if they own their home, have no home, or live with someone else. They can have a job and do not have to have children as long as their household meets eligibility guidelines.

New Hampshire's Food Stamp Employment & Training (FSET) program is designed to assist Food Stamp recipients in obtaining and maintaining employment.

New Hampshire operates a voluntary FSET program for all interested Food Stamp recipients. Failure to meet program requirements does not result in clients being sanctioned, or in any reduction or loss of Food Stamp benefits.

The State's strategy for assisting those in the FSET program is to provide participants with job search assistance which includes:

- Assessment, case management, resume review and referral to community agencies providing job search assistance such as the NH Works American Job Centers,
- The provision of mileage reimbursement for transportation expenses incurred while seeking employment,
- Referral to education and training programs such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program, and
- Referral to job search training assistance programs, such as the WorkReadyNH program, offered within the NH Community College system.

Cross-agency Collaboration - To effectively address the education and skill needs of the workforce and meet the employment requirements of employers, the New Hampshire workforce system emphasizes close collaboration and coordination among all partner agencies. By pooling resources and braiding funding, the workforce system enhances its ability to serve both job seekers and business customers. In addition to the collaborative efforts mentioned earlier, core and non-core WIOA partners engage in various collaborative initiatives:

1. **Consortium and Commissioner-Level Meetings:**
    - Regular meetings are held to leverage opportunities, share best practices, align policies, and make operational decisions. These interactions enhance communication and coordination at both policy and operational levels.

2. **Local NH Works Partner Meetings:**
    - Quarterly meetings take place in six different regions, bringing together individuals from various agencies involved in workforce services. This includes representatives from Employment Security, WIOA Adult and Youth contractors, TANF, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, resettlement agencies, and more. These meetings facilitate information sharing and improve communication among agencies.

3. **Regional Roundtable Discussions:**
    - Community partners engage in roundtable discussions in regions like the North Country and Keene, fostering collaboration and partnerships with local employers.

4. **Job Fairs and Events:**
    - All partners, including employers, education/training programs, and agency programs, are invited to job fairs and events for job seekers. This promotes a holistic approach to workforce development.

5. **Business Outreach within the One-Stop System:**
    - Collaboration is effective when conducting business outreach within the one-stop system. Partner agencies share case notes and information on business customers, ensuring coordinated support.

6. **Collaboration Between Community College System (CCS) and Career and Technical Education (CTE):**
    - CCS and CTE work closely together, offering dual credit opportunities, sharing funding streams, recruiting at education and job fairs, and promoting career pathways.

7. **Collaboration Between Adult Education (ABE) and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR):**
    - Successful collaboration, especially when programs are co-located, allows ABE to teach remedial English and math courses at Great Bay Community College. This partnership optimizes resources and better serves students by reserving financial aid for college-level coursework.

The Granite State Jobs Act of 2019 was enacted to enhance access to job-training programs, incorporating various components such as structured onsite lab or classroom training, basic skills development, quality improvement, safety training, management and supervision, and English as a second language. This legislation introduced two key economic and workforce development initiatives – WorkInvestNH and WorkNowNH – aiming to strengthen partnerships and resources like WorkReadyNH, focusing on soft skills and job readiness.

WorkInvestNH Program:

- Available to businesses in New Hampshire and those intending to locate within the state, contributing quarterly taxes to the NH Unemployment Trust Fund.
- Allows businesses to upgrade workers' skills through the fund.
- Workers, residents of New Hampshire or employed by entities within the state, can receive training.
- Training provided by the vendor of the entities' choice, with consultation from the College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH) for quality and cost effectiveness.
- Customized training at each campus to meet specific company needs.

WorkNowNH Program:

- Funded through the Job Training Fund, designed to provide intensive case management services to individuals receiving Granite Advantage (Expanded Medicaid) or traditional Medicaid.
- Connects job-ready participants with available job opportunities, offering support for those not job ready.
- Businesses hiring WorkNowNH participants are eligible for reimbursement during the training period, covering 50% of the employee's salary up to a maximum of $5,000.

WorkNowNH Services Include:

- Intensive case management
- Job search and job readiness assistance
- Referral services to education/training/apprenticeship programs
- Referral to community services for those not work ready.
- On-The-Job employment placement
- Direct job placement

Employment Supports for Recipients:

- $5,000 in tuition payments covering basic education costs.
- $160 per month for mileage reimbursement up to 3 months; an additional month if in approved training
- $100 for childcare registration fees
- Up to $5,000 reimbursement for up to six months to entities hiring through an On-The-Job Training (OJT) opportunity contract.

These programs serve as valuable resources for both businesses addressing workforce challenges and individuals seeking employment, fostering skill development, and promoting economic growth in the state.

	Enrolled	Transportation	Tuition	Books, fees, supplies	Childcare Reg Fees
2020	322	36	206	152	2
2021	432	30	314	216	2

NH Employment Security developed a program that provides services to those currently in federal, state or county correctional facilities who are soon to be released. Prior to being released, participants that are within 6 -12 months of release will be eligible to receive employment services to include:

- Workshops on resume writing, interviewing, job search, and how to network within a job fair.
- One-on-one assistance with resumes and barrier resolution
- Mock interviews with employers
- Recruiting events
- Job Fairs
- Soft handoff to American Job Center (AJC) staff

Upon release the majority of the participants will be eligible for Expanded Medicaid or Traditional Medicaid, making them eligible for WorkNowNH services and support.

<u>Sector-Based Initiatives</u>

The New Hampshire Sector Partnerships Initiative (SPI) has been instrumental in addressing the workforce needs of the state by focusing on high-growth sectors. Originating with support from a federal National Emergency Grant, SPI strategically aligns with New Hampshire's major economic and employment sectors. These sectors, namely manufacturing, healthcare, hospitality, technology, and infrastructure (with a focus on construction), are coordinated with private industry employers, educational institutions, training providers, and community-based organizations.

Key Successes in Each Sector:

1. Construction Sector:
- Established a sector advisory group, identified goals, and launched the sector in September 2018.
- Developed materials outlining a career pathway in construction, emphasizing it as a well-paying and offshore-proof career.
- Created messaging to promote construction careers and increased industry involvement in NH Construction Career Days.
- Participated in community and high school job fairs and supported Manchester's Parkside's Construction Careers Program.

2. Healthcare Sector:
- Formed five healthcare regional workforce groups to collaborate on common goals.
- Engaged with hospitals, nursing homes, etc., for industry involvement.
- Implemented strategies through LNA Conference, LPN programs, Care for the Aging workforce website, health career camps, and career pathway development.

3. Hospitality Sector:
- Hosted the 2nd annual NH Hospitality Month, accommodating 500 students on 78 tours at 54 properties.
- Provided coursework through Granite State College on leadership, communications, conflict resolution, and more.
- Launched the Explore NH Careers website, soon to be the host of the new Hospitality Hub.

4. Manufacturing Sector:
- Placed 27 students in six different manufacturing companies from Spaulding High School.
- Revived the machining program at Nashua North High School.
- Conducted in-school composite programs with Great Bay Community College at Rochester High School.
- Organized successful events like Manchester Millyard Roundtable and Manufacturing month activities.

5. Technology Sector:
- Hosted the state's first Technology month, engaging over 2,200 students.
- Partnered with Dover Adult Learning Center for an eight-week Code Exploration course.
- Coordinated stakeholder meetings, individual tours, and CTE competency reviews with industry professionals.

These sector partnerships aim to develop pipelines for employment and training opportunities, benefiting both employers seeking skilled workers and individuals aspiring to meaningful career pathways. The success stories highlight the effectiveness of this collaborative and industry-focused approach in addressing workforce challenges in New Hampshire.

Additional initiatives aimed at addressing workforce development include:

- 10,000 Mentors – promoting the personal connection between businesses and students.
- Tech Alliance – the Tech Alliance creates a vibrant ecosystem for technology companies that want to launch, grow, or relocate in New Hampshire. They are committed to expanding the tech-driven economy by building partnerships, enhancing workforce skills and knowledge, and shaping public policy.
- 65 by 25 – goal for 65% of the population to have had a post high school educational experience

by 2025.

- Project SEARCH at the University of New Hampshire – an on-campus program designed to promote post-secondary education for high school students.
- Regional Center for Advanced Manufacturing – a training facility focused on Advanced Manufacturing that also does outreach to promote careers in manufacturing. A program in Product Design and Safety Studies was developed specifically based on workforce needs.
- New Hampshire Business Education Coalition – the New Hampshire Coalition for Business & Education (NHCBE) is a sounding board for good ideas to improve education in the Granite State and an advocacy group for good ideas that show promise.

The Coalition will also look to support existing education initiatives in New Hampshire that are successful and making a difference.

- Expanded Running Start programs – dual enrollment between state community college and university systems have been developed. A 2+2 program allows students to apply to both community college and the state university system at the same time. If a student maintains a certain GPA during 2 years at a community college, they have the opportunity for automatic admission into a state university for the remaining 2 years to finish an undergraduate degree.

(B) The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities. Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A), directly above.

Strengths

The strength of the New Hampshire workforce development system lies in its robust emphasis on cross-agency collaboration, a cornerstone that has resulted in several notable strengths:

1. **Collaboration and Partnership:** The system brings crucial workforce stakeholders to the table, fostering a collaborative environment where individual partners and programs function as a cohesive team. This collaborative approach extends to sharing services, information, and funding. Given the state's size and limited budget for workforce development, this collaboration is essential, allowing partners to stretch resources, blend, and braid funds strategically to maximize outcomes.
2. **State Leadership Vision:** New Hampshire's workforce development system benefits from the visionary leadership of the Governor. The Governor has spearheaded initiatives that significantly impact talent attraction, retention, and development. Noteworthy initiatives include the Millennial Advisory Council, the Recovery Friendly Workplace, and the Infants in the Workplace Initiative, reflecting a commitment to holistic workforce development.
3. **Availability of Services:** The state allocates substantial resources to provide comprehensive services for residents who are unemployed or underemployed, actively engaging in workforce programs and services. These efforts align with the current workforce needs of the state, exemplified by programs created under the Granite State Jobs Act.
4. **Alignment with Business Needs:** Employment and training activities are meticulously aligned with the needs of employers. Sector-based strategies and labor market intelligence play a pivotal role in shaping the development of education and training initiatives. This alignment ensures that workforce development efforts are responsive to the dynamic needs of the business community.
5. **Sector Partnerships Initiatives:** Sector partnerships serve as a driving force behind business and industry participation, creating a demand-driven system. These partnerships play a crucial role in identifying specific skills, licensures, and certifications that are critically needed by local employers. By focusing on sector-specific collaboration, the workforce development system can address the precise requirements of the job market and enhance overall workforce readiness.

Overall, the New Hampshire workforce development system's strengths underscore a commitment to collaboration, adaptability to business needs, and a visionary approach to leadership, ensuring that workforce programs effectively contribute to the state's economic growth and resilience.

Weaknesses

In the face of rapid growth and advancement in the state, the New Hampshire workforce system recognizes the opportunity to enhance its effectiveness in meeting the evolving needs of businesses and job seekers. However, several challenges persist, and the state continues to identify solutions for the following key issues:

1. **Economic and Social Uncertainty (Post-Pandemic):**
    - *Talent Pool and Population Demographics:* The declining population and available talent pool pose significant workforce challenges. Finding skilled individuals to meet the demands of

businesses, particularly for small enterprises, remains a struggle, hindering growth opportunities.

2. **Workforce Housing:**
    - *Limited Affordable Housing:* Affordable housing scarcity, especially in certain areas, hampers talent attraction efforts. The difficulty in welcoming new residents and workers is exacerbated by the limited availability of places to live, even when cost is not a primary consideration.

3. **Employment Barriers:**
    - *Transportation, Childcare, Substance Abuse, Soft Skills, and Language Barriers:* Barriers to entering the workforce, including transportation issues, childcare availability, substance abuse concerns, soft skills development, and language barriers, persist. Stakeholders work on innovative solutions within resource constraints.

4. **Communication and Information Sharing:**
    - *Cross-Agency Collaboration:* While cross-agency collaboration is a strength, effective communication across all levels of each agency remains a challenge. System leaders aim to institutionalize processes that ensure seamless communication throughout organizations, fostering continued collaborative efforts.

5. **High Cost of Post-Secondary Education:**
    - *Affordability of Education:* The high cost of post-secondary education in the state, coupled with lower wages and societal pressure to pursue traditional four-year institutions, presents a weakness. Mitigation efforts involve supporting alternate pathways to education.

6. **Outreach and Awareness:**
    - *Public Awareness of Services:* Generating awareness of the services offered by the workforce development system is a persistent challenge. Partners strive to identify effective marketing strategies and improve outreach to potential business and individual customers.

7. **Board Development:**
    - *Continuous Improvement:* Emphasis on continuous improvement for board members and operations is crucial. Efforts focus on reengaging board members and establishing better board structures through well-defined bylaws.

Addressing these challenges requires a collaborative and innovative approach, leveraging resources effectively to implement sustainable solutions. As the workforce system adapts to the dynamic landscape, ongoing efforts aim to strengthen its ability to support businesses and job seekers in New Hampshire.

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

Under the guidance of a visionary Governor, strong leadership, and the support of the State Workforce Innovation Board, the state continues to demonstrate its capacity to sustain and maintain a system focused on customer-centric principles and innovation. Through the development and continued implementation of the WIOA Combined State Plan, partners and stakeholders from numerous state agencies successfully deliver services in a cohesive manner that benefits job seekers and business customers.

Due in part to the small size of the state, partner agencies have been able to form strong, collaborative relationships even when not able or required to be co-located. The mechanisms that have been put in place for coordination and collaboration have greatly allowed the State to expand its capacity through the use of networks as much as possible. Workforce development activities and funding streams are being aligned efficiently and leveraged where appropriate and increasing support from local business partners and other community groups. The capability of the State will only improve as these strategies continue to grow and partners can utilize new resources and address new challenges.

[1] The Job Training Fund is a state-funded program in New Hampshire.

B. State Strategic Vision and Goals

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

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

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

    a. Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment6 and other populations.7
    b. Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

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

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

1. Vision:

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

In our vision for the New Hampshire Workforce System, we aspire to cultivate an integrated and accessible workforce system that provides a continuum of high-quality education, training, and career pathways. With a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, we envision a system that aligns workforce, education, and economic development investments, streamlining resources for optimal efficiency. This forward-looking system leverages technology and data to enhance accessibility and outcomes, ensuring user-friendly platforms and data-driven insights. By executing an industry-led strategy and fostering collaborations, our vision sees businesses actively shaping talent needs, helping the workforce system to establish a responsive pipeline of skilled workers. This approach creates a resilient and adaptable workforce system that

not only meets current demands but anticipates and addresses the evolving needs of businesses and workers, fostering inclusive economic prosperity for the state of New Hampshire

Alignment of Workforce Services

Strategic alignment among service providers is foundational for integrated service delivery, streamlining the customer experience by reducing redundancy. Collaborative synergy among diverse service providers such as the community college, career and technical education centers, and other eligible training providers enables resource pooling and coordinated efforts, ensuring comprehensive services for job seekers and businesses. This approach optimizes resource utilization and results in enhanced employment outcomes for individuals.

A critical aspect of this initiative will involve strategically dismantling silos among workforce partners to facilitate more coordinated efforts addressing the multifaceted needs of job seekers. Siloed approaches lead to fragmented services and inefficiencies, which make the public workforce system ineffective and difficult to navigate. By fostering collaboration, service providers can align goals and strategies, working cohesively to meet the diverse needs of job seekers.

Moreover, the alignment of service providers and the dissolution of silos not only enhance outcomes but also lead to a more efficient utilization of resources. Collaborative synergy among diverse service providers allows the leverage of collective resources and expertise, ensuring more effective services. This approach ensures sensible resource use, providing better value for money invested in workforce services.

Worker Prioritization

The overarching objective of this prioritization strategy is to enhance workers' skills and competitiveness, empowering them to access improved employment opportunities, command higher wages, and contribute significantly to the economy. This strategic focus not only fosters individual empowerment but also plays a pivotal role in mitigating unemployment and underemployment rates.

The BEA is positioned to implement prioritized systems for workers, strategically designed to structure services for both securing, retaining, and advancing employment. This strategic shift involves transitioning from generic training programs to outcome-driven measures that closely align with the intended purpose of WIOA services, by leveraging modern data sources. Acknowledging the diverse needs of workers, the prioritization effort necessitates a nuanced understanding and targeted addressing of distinctive requirements. This spans specific skills training, job placement assistance, and addressing barriers to employment.

Furthermore, the BEA will ensure equitable delivery of WIOA services, aiming to ensure uniform access for all workers, irrespective of background or circumstances. This commitment is particularly directed towards workers from underserved communities and backgrounds.

Modern Training

The rapid evolution of technology and automation necessitates modern training programs that focus on emerging industries. Such programs are essential for equipping workers with the skills required to adapt to technological shifts and maintain competitiveness in the job market. The strategic alignment of training with evolving industry demands will position New Hampshire as a proactive force, ensuring better employment outcomes for job seekers amidst technological transformations.

In a strategic role, the BEA will cater to the workforce needs of employers actively seeking skilled workers in growing and emerging industries. The provision of training in these areas not only addresses the skilled workforce requirements of employers but also enhances job placement outcomes for job seekers.

Acknowledging the challenges faced by underrepresented individuals in meeting the qualifications for traditional training programs, the implementation of additional supports and "on-ramp" programs will be imperative. These targeted initiatives will serve as conduits for disadvantaged workers to access training in rapidly evolving industries, mitigating barriers they often encounter in traditional training programs and significantly contributing to improved employment outcomes.

2. Goals

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

(A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment6 and other populations.7

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

- Goal 1: Develop and implement a comprehensive workforce system by aligning workforce, education, and economic development investments.

  The purpose of this goal is to ensure a coordinated and strategic approach to workforce development that complements planning and investments that are already underway in education and economic development. By fostering alignment across workforce development, education, and economic development, the state seeks to streamline resources, build efficiencies and ensure a unified focus on a shared set of goals. This approach seeks to not only optimize the effectiveness of individual investments, but also promote a comprehensive and integrated workforce system that addresses the evolving needs of businesses and workers.

- Goal 2: Enhance accessibility and outcomes of the workforce system by leveraging technology and data.

  Stakeholders throughout the State of New Hampshire recognize the power of technology and envision a workforce system where technology is used to enhance the experiences of businesses, workers, and stakeholders. By investing in user-friendly platforms, this goal aims to make essential information, resources, and services easily accessible to a broader audience. Moreover, improved systems can allow the state to harness the potential of data to inform decision-making processes within the workforce system. This entails utilizing data analytics to gain insights into trends, gaps, and areas of improvement, enabling the state to make informed policy decisions and allocate resources more effectively.

- Goal 3: Provide access to a continuum of high-quality education, training, and career pathway opportunities that will attract and retain businesses and employees.

  To enhance its workforce system, New Hampshire will look to expand the depth and breadth of services available to jobseekers, with a particular focus on tailoring training solutions to meet the evolving needs of both businesses and workers. While the current system offers a range of services,

this goal acknowledges the imperative to further enrich the available resources and opportunities. This includes customized workforce training programs to meet the needs of business, earn and learn opportunities and wrap around supports for workers, as well as short term training credentials. By providing a continuum of high-quality education and training, the aim is to offer diverse pathways for skill development and career advancement regardless of where a worker is on their current career pathway.

- Goal 4: Support business and jobseeker growth through workforce practices that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

  New Hampshire recognizes the importance of building a workforce system that is a champion of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in support of both businesses and jobseekers. To be competitive in the fight for talent, today's businesses must prioritize inclusivity to remain competitive. As a result, the workforce system is committed to its role in ensuring that its outreach and services to both businesses and workers reflect this diversity of the state.

- Goal 5: Execute an industry led strategy to meet employer needs and establish a pipeline of skilled workers for future demand.

  While New Hampshire has strong relationships with the business community, this goal aims to further fortify those relationships by executing an industry-led strategy that actively involves businesses in shaping talent needs and responding to evolving trends. Recognizing that businesses are at the forefront of driving economic demand, this goal emphasizes the necessity of formal and informal collaboration between the workforce system and industry stakeholders. Through mechanisms such as sector partnerships, the goal seeks to establish a direct line of communication where businesses can inform the workforce system about their current and future talent requirements. This proactive engagement not only ensures that the workforce is equipped with the skills essential for the industry but also establishes a responsive pipeline of skilled workers to meet anticipated demands.

3. Performance Goals – INSERT PERFORMANCE DATA FROM NH STAFF

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

4. Assessment

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

The ongoing evaluation of the workforce development system in New Hampshire is integral to maintaining quality services that align with state and federal requirements. System partners regularly convene to assess program effectiveness, promote efficiencies, coordinate services, and discuss key monitoring findings. These evaluations also include the review of best practices from other states, examining performance outcomes for core WIOA programs, and sharing customer satisfaction results. The aim is to inform continuous improvement within the system.

In the current year, the State of New Hampshire, through a competitive procurement process, awarded a contract for a Statewide Workforce Needs Assessment. This comprehensive assessment, using both qualitative and quantitative data collection, focused on ensuring that workforce services operate in alignment with the vision outlined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The assessment utilized a secret shopping experience, gathered feedback from stakeholders, and evaluated the successes of existing programs and strategies to provide insights into the system's strengths and areas for improvement.

The recommendations derived from the assessment cover topics such as digital modernization, employer engagement, and service delivery. Looking ahead, these efforts will continue to drive the evolution and enhancement of the workforce development system. The commitment to regular evaluations, collaboration among system partners, and the incorporation of assessment findings into strategic planning underscore the state's dedication to delivering effective and responsive workforce services. Future initiatives will build upon the recommendations provided in the assessment, ensuring a dynamic and adaptive system that meets the evolving needs of the workforce and maximizes outcomes for all stakeholders. Program Monitoring activities, including federal reviews, will persist, reinforcing the state's commitment to compliance, accountability, and ongoing improvement. Resolving challenges identified in monitoring activities will remain a priority, contributing to the system's resilience and its ability to provide high-quality services to the residents of New Hampshire.

C. State Strategy

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

Include discussion of specific strategies to address the needs of populations provided in Section (a).

1. *Describe the strategies the State will implement, including industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations and career pathways, as required by WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D). "Career pathway" is defined at WIOA section 3(7) and includes registered apprenticeship. "In-demand industry sector or occupation" is defined at WIOA section 3(23).*
2. *Describe the strategies the State will use to align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available to the State to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with the strategic vision and goals described above. Also describe strategies to strengthen workforce development activities in regard to weaknesses identified in section II(a)(2).*

. Goal 1: Develop and implement a comprehensive workforce system by aligning workforce, education, and economic development investments.

- Strategy 1.1: In-demand occupations awareness campaign that complements existing the BEA Workforce Attraction campaign

  The BEA's Workforce Attraction campaign elevates five strategic goals to facilitate collaborative economic development and strengthen New Hampshire's economy:
  - Retain and Recruit a Modern Workforce
  - Connect New Hampshire's World Class Tourism Assets to Talent Recruitment
  - Focus on Building Resiliency in High-Growth Sectors

        - Build on New Hampshire's Entrepreneurial Legacy to Fuel Innovation
        - Recognize the Role of Infrastructure in Driving the Economy

      To accomplish these goals, it will be imperative for the State to identify in-demand occupations and create systems to fill these occupations with qualified and well-trained workers.

    - Strategy 1.2: Coordinate with the education system including K-12 education, career technical education, adult education, and post-secondary education to develop career pathways for in-demand occupations and industries.

      Career pathways for in-demand occupations and industries are instrumental in bolstering the economy by strategically developing the skills needed in specific sectors. Aligned with labor market demands, these pathways address talent shortages, enhance workforce productivity, and contribute to overall economic output. Additionally, career pathways support economic mobility, offering individuals opportunities for upward progression and improved earning potential. Effective career pathways require intentional coordination with businesses, and education providers

    - Strategy 1.3: Leverage BEA connection to economic development to ensure New Hampshire's talent development system is informed by economic development practitioners and businesses.

      States with robust economic development systems have cultivated ecosystems designed not only to attract external talent but also to cultivate talent from within. The BEA maintains a strong collaboration with statewide economic development initiatives, bolstered by partnerships with talent development entities such as the community college, K-12 educational institutions, adult education providers, and more. These partnerships serve as conduits for seamless information sharing, empowering economic and workforce development practitioners throughout the state with valuable insights and knowledge.

- Goal 2: Enhance accessibility and outcomes of the workforce system by leveraging technology and data.
    - Strategy 2.1 Modernize Virtual Services and Web Presence: Launch a comprehensive initiative to modernize virtual services and elevate the web presence of the workforce system.

      As workforce services continue to transition to online and virtual service provisions, it will be important for the State of New Hampshire to have comprehensive modern and accessible services. This strategy will focus on revamping online platforms to enhance user-friendliness and ensuring continuous updates to keep information current. Job seekers and employers will be able to effectively and efficiently find resources to support their distinctive needs.

    - Strategy 2.2 Data-Driven Decision Making: Drive a culture of data-driven decision making among workforce professionals by providing training in data analysis tools and methodologies. Modern data systems allow decision makers to gain insights into trends, patterns, and correlations that enable them to understand local and regional context and execute strategies

effectively. By creating a culture of data-driven decision making, professionals will be equipped with the skills to gather insights into workforce trends, evaluate program effectiveness, and inform policy development. This will lead to better outcomes for job seekers and employers.

- Strategy 2.3 Enhance business and jobseeker outreach through technology: Utilize digital platforms to connect businesses more directly with the workforce system, raising awareness for the services available and to encourage ongoing engagement.

  By strategically employing technology, New Hampshire will create heightened awareness about the array of services offered by the workforce system and facilitate more direct and personalized interactions between businesses and potential employees, such as virtual career guidance and tailored resources. The integration of technology in outreach efforts will not only optimize efficiency but also ensure a more individualized and responsive approach, aligning the workforce system more closely with the specific needs of businesses and jobseekers alike. This strategy will serve as a catalyst for a modern, user-friendly, and results-oriented engagement model that significantly elevates the impact and effectiveness of outreach initiatives.

- Goal 3: Provide access to a continuum of high-quality education, training, and career pathway opportunities that will attract and retain businesses and employees.
  - Strategy 3.1: Expand wrap around and supportive services available to workers participating in training

    Wraparound services are instrumental in overcoming barriers to learning and reskilling, addressing issues like confidence, interest, and age-related concerns. Particularly beneficial for vulnerable groups, these services offer financial coaching and mental health counseling to facilitate career transitions. They also contribute to workforce stability by providing unconventional benefits, enhancing employee well-being and job satisfaction.

  - Strategy 3.2: Expand customized training solutions to meet the needs of business needs

    Expanding customized training solutions will provide opportunities for the New Hampshire workforce to address skill gaps, enhance worker learning experiences, and create qualified workers by equipping workers with the necessary skills to acquire knowledge to adapt to emerging skills required by the modern worker. This will be accomplished by collaboration with regional businesses, the community college system, and other eligible training providers.

  - Strategy 3.3: Deploy uniform and consistent professional development

    To effectively execute WIOA services, it is important that New Hampshire has knowledgeable, well trained staff members that can assist businesses with their various needs and connect them to resources across the state. The BEA will carry out a formalized training process to all members of the business services team that focuses on what resources exist and which resources are best used in specific situations and will drive high impact outcomes.

- Goal 4: Support business and jobseeker growth through workforce practices that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

    - Strategy 4.1: Deploy Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) training and professional development for staff

      Proper DEIA training will help staff members around race, social justice, and equity that will be necessary to help staff navigate difficult conversations around social justice. Furthermore, it will promote awareness and understanding of how to work with individuals from diverse backgrounds. These professional development opportunities will be created by using existing publicly available training opportunities, in conjunction with local and regional DEIA training providers.

    - Strategy 4.2: Implementation of best practice outreach and recruitment strategy for targeted populations including diverse workers including underrepresented populations, seniors, veterans, immigrants, etc.

      By leveraging intentional efforts, the BEA aims to bridge gaps and connect these diverse individuals with meaningful training opportunities designed to empower them for successful entry into strong, fulfilling jobs. Through this strategic initiative, the BEA is not only fostering equity but also fortifying our workforce with a rich tapestry of talented individuals.

    - Strategy 4.3: Partner with community-based organizations to raise awareness of the New Hampshire workforce system and available services and resources.

      Individuals from varied backgrounds often find connection through nonprofit agencies and community-based organizations, drawn to the comprehensive services these entities provide. The BEA will pursue collaborative partnerships with these organizations, to create a stronger and more supportive ecosystem that delivers accessible workforce development services.

- Goal 5: Execute an industry led strategy to meet employer needs and establish a pipeline of skilled workers for future demand.

    - Strategy 5.1: Develop industry led, customized training programs that prioritize not only new workers, but also upskilling of incumbent workers

      In addressing the workforce demands of employers, it is crucial to ensure that both new and incumbent workers have access to robust training options. An important aspect of this approach involves crafting these training opportunities in close collaboration with employers and industry partners to guarantee their relevance and effectiveness.

    - Strategy 5.2: Data informed and proactive talent forecasting and planning

      As industries continue to evolve, it will be important to leverage data to forecast growth and develop comprehensive strategies, such as training and education programs, to meet this

growth. This will allow the BEA to connect job seekers to in demand jobs that pay sustainable wages.

- Strategy 5.3: Create a strategic vision for the Interagency Business Team

  Developing a strategic vision for the Interagency Business Team (IBT) in the New Hampshire Workforce system aims to optimize collaboration among diverse partners. By aligning individual organizational goals, clarifying roles, and fostering open communication, the plan seeks to unify efforts towards a shared vision. Ultimately, this strategic approach intends to enhance collaboration, promote knowledge sharing, and maximize the collective impact of the IBT.

- Strategy 5.4: Invest in Business Services Team training and professional development

In our commitment to continuous improvement, the BEA will invest in training and professional development initiatives will keep staff members abreast of industry trends, technological advancements, and evolving best practices. This will allow the Business Services Team to better serve employers and keep them informed on evolving trends to develop and retain workers.

III. Operational Planning Elements

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

A. State Strategy Implementation

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include–

1. State Board Functions

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

Overview of New Hampshire's Workforce Development Structure:

The New Hampshire Office of Workforce Opportunity (OWO) plays a key role as the state-level administrative entity for the administration of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds designated for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. This financial support is provided by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL). The Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA) serves as the state entity fiscal agent and the official recipient of WIOA funds. Oversight and technical assistance from USDOL's Region I Philadelphia/Boston office ensure federal compliance and support for OWO.

Designation as a "Single State Local Area": New Hampshire, under the directive of the Governor and in accordance with section 106(d) of WIOA, has been designated as a "Single State Local Area." This distinctive status has led to the establishment of a highly integrated governance and administrative structure. This

structure is designed to provide policy direction, establish performance goals, and ensure effective oversight, holding the entire workforce development system accountable.

Role of State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB): The State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) serves as the advisory body, guiding the development, updating, and evaluation of the planning process. This strategic oversight ensures that workforce development programs in New Hampshire remain responsive to the dynamic economic development and labor market needs of the state. SWIB collaborates with the New Hampshire Works Consortium (The Consortium) and the NH Works American Job Centers to execute the functions of a state workforce board as outlined in section 101(d) of WIOA.

Coordination between State and Local Agencies: State agencies work in a cohesive manner to oversee the implementation of various workforce development programs. Local agencies or community-based administrative arms of state agencies are entrusted with the management of workforce programs and the direct provision of services to customers.

Collaborative Workforce Development System: The New Hampshire workforce development system, illustrated in subsequent pages, facilitates collaboration among SWIB, the New Hampshire Works Consortium, and NH Works American Job Centers. This collaborative effort ensures the effective execution of state workforce board functions, with a nuanced approach considering New Hampshire's status as a Single State Local Area.

Functions of a State Workforce Board under WIOA:

1. **Development and Updating of the State Plan:**
    - SWIB plays a central role in shaping and revising the State Plan.
2. **Review of Statewide Policies and Programs:**
    - SWIB conducts a thorough review and offers recommendations for aligning workforce development programs.
3. **Continuous Improvement of the Workforce Development System:**
    - SWIB focuses on identifying barriers, developing strategies for career pathways, ensuring effective outreach, and improving the one-stop delivery system.
4. **Identification and Dissemination of Best Practices:**
    - SWIB oversees the effective operation of one-stop centers and facilitates the development of impactful local boards and training programs.
5. **Development of Statewide Policies Affecting One-Stop Delivery:**
    - SWIB formulates policies for effective one-stop center operation, allocation of infrastructure funds, and roles of entities within the one-stop delivery system.
6. **Technological Improvements and Data System Alignment:**
    - SWIB strategizes for technological advancements, digital literacy, and aligning data systems across one-stop partner programs.
7. **Allocation Formulas for Fund Distribution:**
    - SWIB designs allocation formulas for the equitable distribution of funds for employment and training activities.

8. **Preparation of Annual Reports:**
    - SWIB compiles comprehensive annual reports, presenting the progress and outcomes of workforce development programs.
9. **Development of Statewide Workforce and Labor Market Information System:**
    - SWIB takes the lead in establishing a robust statewide system for workforce and labor market information.
10. **Promotion of Statewide Objectives:**
    - SWIB develops policies to enhance workforce development system performance and align with statewide objectives.

The collaborative efforts of OWO, BEA, SWIB, and local agencies create a dynamic and responsive workforce development system in New Hampshire, ensuring the alignment of programs with the evolving economic landscape and labor market needs.

The State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) shoulders significant responsibilities mandated by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These responsibilities encompass the development, implementation, and modification of the State Plan, ensuring its adaptability to dynamic economic landscapes. SWIB engages in a thorough review of statewide policies and programs, offering recommendations to align and enhance the coherence of workforce development initiatives. Moreover, SWIB provides guidance on strategic actions to align workforce development programs, reviewing and commenting on State plans for one-stop partners' programs outside the core, fostering a comprehensive and streamlined workforce development system. In essence, SWIB's diligent efforts contribute substantially to shaping a responsive and cohesive workforce development framework aligned with the broader economic needs of New Hampshire.

The State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) is actively engaged in the continuous enhancement of the workforce development system in New Hampshire. This includes:

- Identifying and addressing barriers within the system to enhance coordination, alignment, and prevent duplication of programs and activities.
- Developing strategies to facilitate the use of career pathways, providing workforce investment activities, education, and supportive services for individuals, including low-skilled adults, youth, and those with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, to enter or retain employment.
- Creating strategies for effective outreach and improved access for individuals and employers who could benefit from services provided through the workforce development system.
- Expanding strategies to meet the needs of employers, workers, and jobseekers, particularly through industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations.
- Identifying regions, including planning regions, and designating local areas, taking into account New Hampshire's status as a Single State Local Area.
- Continuously improving the one-stop delivery system in local areas, with a focus on providing technical assistance to the statewide one-stop delivery system, given the absence of local boards in New Hampshire.
- Developing strategies to support staff training and awareness across programs supported under the workforce development system.

- Updating comprehensive State performance accountability measures, including State-adjusted levels of performance, to assess the effectiveness of core programs in the State, considering New Hampshire's Single State Local Area status.
- Identifying and disseminating information on best practices, including effective operation of one-stop centers, business outreach, partnerships, and service delivery strategies, especially for individuals with barriers to employment.
- Developing effective local boards, focusing on factors contributing to enabling local boards to exceed negotiated local levels of performance, sustain fiscal integrity, and achieve other measures of effectiveness. The SWIB will emphasize the development of an effective state board and its subcommittees and contractors, enabling the state to surpass negotiated levels of performance.
- Implementing training programs responsive to real-time labor market analysis, utilizing direct assessment and prior learning assessment to measure an individual's prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences. These programs evaluate such skills and competencies for adaptability, supporting efficient placement into employment or career pathways.

The SWIB is actively involved in the development and review of statewide policies governing the coordinated provision of services through the State's one-stop delivery system, as outlined in section 121(e). This involves:

- Establishing objective criteria and procedures for use by local boards in assessing the effectiveness and promoting continuous improvement of one-stop centers, ensuring that the State utilizes these criteria and procedures universally for the assessment of all one-stop centers.

- Providing guidance for the allocation of one-stop center infrastructure funds under section 121(h), ensuring equitable distribution and effective utilization of resources to enhance the overall functionality of one-stop centers.

- Defining policies concerning the appropriate roles and contributions of entities carrying out one-stop partner programs within the one-stop delivery system. This includes developing approaches to facilitate equitable and efficient cost allocation within the system, ensuring transparency and fairness in resource distribution among partner programs.

The SWIB is engaged in developing comprehensive strategies for technological enhancements within the one-stop delivery system to ensure improved access and quality of services and activities. These strategies include:

- Enhancing digital literacy skills, as defined in section 202 of the Museum and Library Services Act (20 U.S.C. 9101), referred to in this context as 'digital literacy skills.' This involves initiatives to empower individuals with the necessary skills to navigate and utilize digital technologies effectively.

- Accelerating the acquisition of skills and recognized postsecondary credentials by participants, fostering a learning environment that supports the attainment of relevant skills and credentials for career advancement.

- Strengthening the professional development of providers and workforce professionals, ensuring that those involved in delivering services through the one-stop delivery system have access to continuous training and resources to enhance their expertise.

- Ensuring that technology is accessible to individuals with disabilities and those residing in remote areas, promoting inclusivity and equitable access to services.

Additionally, the SWIB is focusing on the development of strategies to align technology and data systems across one-stop partner programs. This involves enhancing service delivery and improving efficiencies in reporting on performance accountability measures through:

- Designing and implementing common intake processes, data collection mechanisms, case management information systems, and performance accountability measurement and reporting processes.
- Incorporating local input into the design and implementation of these systems, fostering collaboration and coordination of services across one-stop partner programs.

The development of allocation formulas for the distribution of funds for employment and training activities for adults, and youth workforce investment activities, to local areas as permitted under sections 128(b)(3) and 133(b)(3);

The preparation of the annual reports described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 116(d);

The development of the statewide workforce and labor market information system described in section 15(e) of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49l–2(e)); and

The development of such other policies as may promote statewide objectives for, and enhance the performance of, the workforce development system in the State.

The following describes the relationship between the board's operational structure, including sub-groups within the workforce development system, and the implementation of the state board functions described in points 1 through 12 above. The table below provides an outline of each group's function(s), but is not meant to be all inclusive as many groups overlap within the collaborative system. Several of the functions of a state board also take a different form in New Hampshire due to the state's status as a single state workforce area.

Group	Function
State Workforce Innovation Board	1-12
Executive Committee	1-12
Performance and Evaluation Committee	4, 8, 12
Sector Partnership Initiative Committee	3(d)
Strategic Planning Committee	1, 2
One-Stop Operators Consortium	3,5,6,8,12
Youth Interagency Directors Group	3, 12
Interagency Business Team	3(b)(d)
Professional Development Team	3(g), 7
Sector Strategy Team	3(d)

State Workforce Innovation Board

The State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) is chaired by a businessperson and 51% of all members are business representatives. The Board is charged with implementing WIOA in New Hampshire in a way that meets the demands for a 21st century workforce including the following priorities:

- Career Awareness and Exploration
- Providing Advocacy and Policy Guidance

- Talent Attraction and Retention
- System Communication and Collaboration
- Work-based Learning
- Soft Skill Development

The SWIB mission is to promote and advocate for talent development by partnering with businesses, agencies, educational institutions, and organizations to support a unified workforce development system that meets the needs of industry. The Board's vision is that healthy and vibrant communities provide a workforce to meet industry needs and create a competitive economic advantage for New Hampshire.

The SWIB and the workforce ecosystem stakeholders in New Hampshire have collaboratively identified the following goals to continue efforts that will give the state competitive advantage in workforce development:

- Promote services available through the talent development system to support businesses and individuals.
- Enhance the talent development system by focusing on system advocacy and partner collaboration and communication.
- Support a demand-driven talent development system that bases strategies, services, and investments on a data-informed approach that anticipates the needs of businesses.
- Create a talent development system that leverages talent attraction, retention and development strategies.
- Provide and improve access to work-and-learn opportunities that are aligned with business and industry needs including the development of career pathways.

Executive Committee
The Executive Committee is chaired by the Chairperson of the Board and is comprised of current SWIB members. The Executive Committee has the authority to exercise all powers of the Board. Each member of the Executive Committee serves a 1-year term, or until his or her successor is duly elected and takes office. Membership consists of the Chair, Vice Chair, and the chairpersons of the three standing committees of the SWIB. The Chairperson has general charge and supervision over the OWO affairs, in conjunction with the State Board and Executive Committee, and works as a microcosm of the board. The Executive Committee allows the board to be flexible and proactive in the needs of the workforce development system.

Performance and Evaluation Committee
The Performance and Evaluation sub-committee consists of representatives from business and core and non-core program agencies. The group provides leadership and direction for the development, implementation, and oversight of WIOA performance measures. The team is also tasked with establishing standards for the NH Works System to improve statewide uniformity for customer services and delivery. The group oversees the Eligible Training provider list system. By including business representation, the team ensures that these activities align with industry demands and assist in the overall customer-centric focus of the workforce development system.

Sector Partnership Initiative Committee
The Sector Partnership Initiative Committee advises Sector Partnerships, Key Industry Networks, and Business Services. The committee oversees development and improvement of industry sector strategies across the state of New Hampshire to ensure that the education and training system is delivering the skills needed by employers to address workforce needs and challenges.

Sector partnerships are employer-driven, sustained partnerships of business, workforce development, education, and other community stakeholders. They are facilitated by a convener or intermediary organization that is trusted by the industry. Sector partnerships work to identify the highest priority workforce challenges and opportunities within a specific industry and develop solutions for multiple employers within a geographic region, driven by industry need. This committee is working to advance the New Hampshire Sector Partnership Initiative.

Strategic Planning Committee (ad hoc)
The Strategic Planning sub-committee consists of representatives from the Board leading the development, maintenance, and implementation of the SWIB strategic plan. The group provided input into the development of the Board's vision, mission, goals, and strategies, and is tasked with providing guidance and direction throughout the life of the strategic plan.

One-Stop Operator Consortium (NH Works Consortium)
The NH Works Consortium is a standing committee of the SWIB and serves as the One-Stop Operator in New Hampshire. Membership is assigned by the OWO on behalf of the Board, and is comprised of Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, State Director and/or other executive level staff from the state agencies responsible for the 6 WIOA core programs and other workforce system partners (i.e., NH Employment Security (NHES), NH Department of Education (DOE), NH Community College System (CCSNH), NH Department of Business & Economic Affairs (BEA), NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Service provider (currently the Community Action Association). The Commissioner of NHES serves as the Chair of the Consortium. Decisions at the Consortium level are reached by a consensus, or in consultation with the SWIB and/or the Governor, as appropriate. The Consortium guides the work of the Interagency Business Team (IBT) and Professional Development Team (PDT), which in turn works with management staff within each partner agency, creating a flexible system that can respond to the needs of the State. The Consortium also oversees the implementation of system-wide workforce development strategies and goals at the service delivery level, consistent with the vision and goals set forth by the SWIB. The Consortium is the primary committee charged with designing and implementing continuous improvement tools and processes for the day-to-day operations at the NH Works Centers.

Interagency Business Team

The Interagency Business Team (IBT) is a system improvement team established by the SWIB in collaboration with the NH Works Consortium. Members are assigned by the OWO in consultation with the NH Works Consortium. Like the other groups, the IBT includes core and non-core partners of this plan, as well as additional agencies outside of the plan. IBT members must currently have a position within their agency that allows for them to have day-to-day contact with the business community and therefore have a working knowledge of their local NH Works service delivery system and the direct needs of the businesses in their respective areas.

The IBT functions as a collaborative mechanism to facilitate communication between partner agencies involved with current and ongoing employer services offered through the NH Works Centers. The IBT is a strategic alliance of the system partners, providing a streamlined employer service structure. This helps to eliminate duplicated services and promotes information sharing among agencies. The goal of the team is to identify strategies for better coordination of business services and provide a frontline voice to policy makers. Recommendations identified by the IBT for continuous improvement, and/or replication of best practices for

working with employers at the local level, are submitted to the IDG for comment prior to being submitted to the NH Works Consortium for further discussion and/or final approval.

Professional Development Team

The Professional Development Team (PDT) is an interagency team established by the IDG in collaboration with the NH Works Consortium. The team serves as a state-level capacity building and planning team whose mission is to "Build the Capacity of NH Works Staff to Enhance Customer Service" within the workforce development system. The PDT's primary customers are NH Works Center staff and WIOA Youth providers. Team members coordinate partner agency training opportunities to reduce duplication, leverage existing training resources (e.g., trainers, training funds, training rooms, etc.) from within the system and/or the region to affect system efficiencies, as well as plan, develop and implement staff training opportunities. The PDT approach fosters continuous improvement throughout the system by the sharing information and skill development among the partners. All decisions at the PDT level are submitted as recommendations to the IDG for further discussion. Training plans and/or other staff training recommendations are reviewed and approved by the IDG and submitted to the NH Works Consortium for final approval.

Sector Strategy Team

The Sector Strategy Team is a team developed to assist in creating a more demand-driven workforce system that is flexible to the needs of business and jobseekers. The team is focused on sector strategies that include regional, industry-focused approaches to workforce and economic development that improve access to good jobs and increase job quality in ways that strengthen a specified industry's workforce. The Sector Strategy Team utilizes a multi-entity team-based approach to align the needs of business with the services delivered in the workforce system. In addition the Sector Strategy Team is tasked with spearheading the system's career pathway agenda. The team works under the guidance of the Office of Workforce Opportunity and reports to the Sector Partnership subcommittee of the Board.

2. Implementation of State Strategy

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

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

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

The lead State agencies responsible for WIOA core programs and non-core programs included in the combined plan are the Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA), New Hampshire Employment Security (NHES), and New Hampshire Department of Education (DOE). Program responsibility is detailed in the table below.

State Agency Program Responsibility	Core Program	Non-Core Program

Business and Economic Affairs	Adult (Title I) Dislocated Worker (Title I) Youth (Title II)	Senior Community Service Employment Program (Title V Older Americans Act)
NH Employment Security	Wagner-Peyser (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by Title III)	Trade Adjustment Assistance for Worker Program (Chapter 2, Title II Tract Act)
		Jobs for Veterans State Grants (Title 38, Chapter 41)
		Unemployment Insurance
		Re-employment Services and Eligibility Assessment Program (RESEA)
		Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program
		Granite State Jobs Act (WorkNowNH, WorkInvestNH, Reentry Program)
NH Department of Education	Adult Basic Education and Family Literacy (WIOA Title II)	
	Vocational Rehabilitation (Title I Rehabilitation, as amended by Title IV)	

The NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs, New Hampshire Employment Security (NHES), and New Hampshire Department of Education (DOE) will work in partnership to carry out the goals of the SWIB through the network of collaboration described in Section III(a)(1). The workforce development system core and non-core partners will execute the following goals and strategies.

Goal 1: Develop and implement a comprehensive workforce system by aligning workforce, education, and economic development investments.
Strategies:

- Strategy 1.1: In-demand occupations awareness campaign that complements existing the BEA Workforce Attraction campaign.
- Strategy 1.2: Coordinate with the education system including K-12 education, career technical education, adult education, and post-secondary education to develop career pathways for in-demand occupations and industries.
- Strategy 1.3: Leverage BEA connection to economic development to ensure New Hampshire's talent development system is informed by economic development practitioners and businesses.

Goal 2: Enhance accessibility and outcomes of the workforce system by leveraging technology and data.
Strategies:

- Strategy 2.1 Modernize Virtual Services and Web Presence: Launch a comprehensive initiative to modernize virtual services and elevate the web presence of the workforce system.

- Strategy 2.2 Data-Driven Decision Making: Drive a culture of data-driven decision making among workforce professionals by providing training in data analysis tools and methodologies.
- Strategy 2.3 Enhance business and jobseeker outreach through technology.

Goal 3: Provide access to a continuum of high-quality education, training, and career pathway opportunities that will attract and retain businesses and employees.
Strategies:

- Strategy 3.1: Expand wrap around and supportive services available to workers participating in training.
- Strategy 3.2: Expand customized training solutions to meet the needs of business needs.
- Strategy 3.3: Deploy uniform and consistent professional development.

Goal 4: Support business and jobseeker growth through workforce practices that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.
Strategies:

- Strategy 4.1: Deploy Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) training and professional development for staff.
- Strategy 4.2: Implementation of best practice outreach and recruitment strategy for targeted populations including diverse workers including underrepresented populations, seniors, veterans, immigrants, etc.
- Strategy 4.3: Partner with community-based organizations to raise awareness of the New Hampshire workforce system and available services and resources.

Goal 5: Execute an industry led strategy to meet employer needs and establish a pipeline of skilled workers for future demand.
Strategies:

- Strategy 5.1: Develop industry led, customized training programs that prioritize not only new workers, but also upskilling of incumbent workers.
- Strategy 5.2: Data informed and proactive talent forecasting and planning.
- Strategy 5.3: Create a strategic vision for the Interagency Business Team.
- Strategy 5.4: Invest in Business Services Team training and professional development.

B. Alignment with Activities outside the Plan

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

New Hampshire understands that in order to implement a functional and effective workforce development system, partnerships outside of the non-core programs must be developed and maintained. These partnerships cover a wide array of programs and services to assist jobseekers in overcoming barriers and/or increasing their employability skills, and thereby creating a pipeline of talent that businesses need for success. These partners and programs include:

New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP)
- Division for Children, Youth and Families (Juvenile Justice and Child and Family Services)

New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA)

- Rapid Response Services
- Business Resource Center for Economic Development
- Collaborative Economic Development Regions (CEDRs)
- Talent Attraction and Tourism New Hampshire Employment Security
- Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers

Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH)

- Post-Secondary Education Services
- Carl Perkins Funds
- Apprenticeship (DOL Grants) NH DOE
- K-12 Education US Department of Labor
- Job Corps
- Registered Apprenticeships

The emphasis on work-based learning opportunities and industry-driven initiatives in New Hampshire signifies the success of collaborative efforts among stakeholders, involving both core and non-core partners as identified in the workforce development plan. A key objective of the State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) is to enrich access to work-and-learn opportunities aligned with business and industry needs, with a special focus on crafting career pathways. The federal Office of Apprenticeships plays a pivotal role in achieving this objective through its apprenticeship program, providing tailored training for businesses, establishing career pathways, and fostering collaboration between core partner staff and the Office of Apprenticeship.

Key Initiatives and Collaborations:

1. Apprenticeship Program:
    - Facilitation of customized training for businesses through apprenticeship programs, aligning training with identified business needs.
    - Close collaboration between core partner staff and the Office of Apprenticeship, addressing specific requirements of businesses.
    - Activities encompass needs identification, participant recruitment and placement, and provision of wraparound supportive services for positive outcomes.
2. Community College System of NH:
    - Operation of multiple Department of Labor (DOL) grants dedicated to implementing and expanding apprenticeship opportunities in the state.
    - Partnerships with DOL contributing to the growth of apprenticeships and work-based learning experiences.
3. Promotion of Apprenticeship Opportunities:
    - Active promotion of apprenticeship opportunities to unemployed and underemployed job seekers by partners, including WorkNowNH.

- WorkNowNH's on-the-job training program supporting targeted populations seeking work-based learning opportunities for workforce reintegration.

4. Collaboration with TANF Program:
   - Strong collaboration with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program to provide on-the-job training dollars.
   - Focus on individuals not necessarily seeking apprenticeships but who would benefit from work-based learning experiences.
5. SNAP Education & Training Collaboration:
   - Collaboration between SNAP Education & Training and WIOA programs to increase referrals, fostering credential building for enhanced employment potential.
6. Transportation Coordination:
   - Recognition of transportation as a barrier, leading to engagement with the State Coordinating Council for Community Transportation.
   - Discussions aimed at coordinating transportation services to minimize duplication, enhance availability, and optimize resources.
   - Participation in the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation's 10-year plan, ensuring customer voices are considered.
7. Broad Collaboration Beyond the Combined Plan:
   - Acknowledgment that many workforce development activities extend beyond the scope of the Combined Plan.
   - Close collaboration with partners outside the plan, demonstrating a comprehensive and integrated approach to workforce development.

These collaborative efforts underscore the commitment to addressing workforce challenges through strategic partnerships and initiatives, promoting a holistic and effective approach to workforce development in New Hampshire.

C. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals

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

The NH Workforce Innovation Board, in collaboration with its subcommittee, the NH Works Consortium, assumes responsibility for overseeing the operations of the twelve (12) NH Works American Job Centers, as detailed earlier. These NH Works one-stop centers serve as the primary interface for individuals within the workforce development system. The Office of Workforce Opportunity contracts its adult, dislocated workers, and, when applicable, National Emergency Grant services to NH Employment Security. NH Employment Security further subcontracts the adult program to the Community Action Association. To ensure a cohesive and customer-centric service, staff from the Community Action Association, NH Employment Security, and NH Department of Education - Vocational Rehabilitation are co-located.

For individual job seekers, a well-defined and efficient process is in place upon entering a one-stop center, commencing with a comprehensive intake process. This process ensures that job seekers have access to a diverse range of services and activities, including but not limited to:

NH Works Center Services	Determination of Eligibility
	Assessments
	Labor Exchange Information
	Labor Market Information
	Unemployment Insurance Information
	FAFSA Assistance
	Development of Individual Employment Plan
	Group Counseling
	Individual Counseling
	Career Planning
	Internships
	Short-Term Per-Vocational Services (soft skills such as communication, punctuality, and personal maintenance skills)
	Workforce Preparation Activities (i.e., MS office, keyboarding, and Internet)
	Financial Literacy
	Determination of Eligibility
	Follow-up Services
Training Services – WIOA 134(c)(3) and 122(a)(3)	Occupational Skills Training
	Registered Apprenticeships
	Adult Education and Literacy
	Customized Training – Employer-Driven
Supportive Services – WIOA 134 (d)(2)	To Support Career and Training Services

Co-enrollment in both core and non-core programs is a common practice, facilitated by the utilization of a universal referral form for interagency service delivery. In instances where co-enrollment proves beneficial to the individual, a comprehensive multi-agency case management team meeting is conducted. During this meeting, a services strategy is formulated, and a designated "lead" case manager is assigned to coordinate services, ensuring the elimination of service duplication.

In addition to the WIOA services detailed earlier, individuals have the opportunity to access a range of additional services through NH Works centers, including energy assistance, health services, food and nutrition assistance, Hispanic/Latino community services, housing and homeless programs, as well as various supportive and volunteer services. All activities adhere to the statutory requirements of each program and are accessible to individuals without discrimination.

The New Hampshire Job Matching System (JMS) serves as a collaborative platform for all program partner agencies, both core and non-core. This system facilitates cooperation among partners when providing various forms of job search assistance. Memorandums of Understanding and Formal Data sharing agreements are in place among the following partners (as also detailed in Section II (a)(2)):

NH Department of Employment Security and the Department of Business and Economic Affairs, Office of Workforce Opportunity to apportion and coordinate administration of the Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Service and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Grant with Title I of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act – This non-financial agreement between NHES and BEA was created in order to carry out the provisions of the RESEA program and the provisions of the Subchapters and to assure that services provided within the One-Stop Delivery System under these two programs do not overlap resulting in duplication of services.

NH Rapid Response (Non-Financial Memorandum of Understanding) – The purpose of the Rapid Response Memorandum of Understanding is to provide an understanding of the NH Rapid Response Process and to outline joint partner's roles in providing important NH Works Rapid Response Activities to affected dislocated workers. These procedures incorporate elements of flexibility and accountability into the New Hampshire Rapid Response Process so that an effective and timely early intervention response can be offered to affected workers, and responsibility for delivery of these services can be assigned.

NH Works One-Stop Operator Consortium for operation of the NH Works One-Stop Centers – The Workforce Innovation Board and the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA), NH Department of Education (DOE), NH Health and Human Services, Division of Family Assistance (DHHS), NH Employment Security (NHES), Community College System of NH (CCSNH), Community Action Association of NH (CAP) have an MOU for the purpose of continuing the NH Works One Stop partnership as a “single service delivery system” or “One- Stop Delivery System” under WIOA, to engage in a joint planning process, and to establish the general terms and conditions under which the partnership will operate.

NH Employment Security and NH Dept. of Business and Economic Affairs, Office of Workforce Opportunity, to apportion and coordinate administration for the Trade Act of 1974 as amended by the Trade Adjustment Assistance Reform Act of 2002 – This agreement ensures the program do not overlap nor duplicate programs and activities and agrees on joint activities.

NH Works One-Stop Operator Consortium and Adams and Associates – Manchester Job Corps Center – This agreement constitutes a memorandum of understanding between the Adams and Associates - Manchester Job Corps Operator and the NH Works One-Stop Operator Consortium (NH Works Consortium), for implementation upon federal award by US Dept. of Labor. The NH Works Consortium is an established subcommittee of the State Workforce Innovation Board. New Hampshire is a single state service delivery area, and as such has one state level board responsible for the State’s WIOA one-stop delivery system known as NH Works.

Services to Veterans – Memorandum of Understanding among NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs , NH Employment Security, Southern NH Services, NH Department of Education, NH Health and Human Services and Community College System of NH is to establish a non-financial agreement among the above mentioned NH Works partners concerning their respective roles and responsibilities to “ensure maximum effectiveness and efficiency are achieved in providing services and assistance to eligible veterans” in accordance with funding agencies’ statutes and participation in Capstone activities and other outreach to transitioning service members.

Copies of these MOUs may be found on the NH Works website, nhworks.org. Formal data sharing agreements exist across the following partners:

- NH Employment Security and the Office of Workforce Opportunity (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs)
- NH Employment Security and Vocational Rehabilitation

Interagency partner referrals for clients are made using the Release of Information Form, both English and Spanish versions, which can be found in Appendix 2.

Information sharing is key to the collaboration, coordination, and alignment of services to individuals in New Hampshire. As described above the SWIB, and the NH Works Consortium, lead the effort at the state level. On the local level NH Works partners hold quarterly meetings. These meetings are held in six (6) different regions across the state, which includes representatives from Employment Security, WIOA, Vocational Rehabilitation, TANF, resettlement agencies, contractors, and others involved with workforce services or wraparound supportive services. These quarterly meetings ensure open communication and system alignment.

Moving forward, New Hampshire will continue the collaboration outlined above. To better improve coordination of services and activities, there will be an increase in professional development. This will be accomplished through the recommendation of the PDT sub-group. Cross training agency staff will ensure the NH Works Centers remain a vibrant one-stop center where staff can provide direct linkages and meaningful information on partner services as outlined in WIOA 121(e). Challenges directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic have hindered professional training and as the State of New Hampshire recovers from the pandemic, professional development will increase.

D. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers

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

The Interagency Business Team (IBT) serves as a crucial collaborative mechanism in New Hampshire's workforce development system, focusing on coordinating and aligning services to employers at both state and community levels. It acts as a strategic alliance involving partners from core, non-core, and external programs, working together to streamline employer services, eliminate duplication, and enhance information sharing among agencies.

A. **Communication Facilitation:**
    - Facilitates communication among partner agencies, specifically addressing services to employers.
    - Aims to create a streamlined employer service structure, avoiding duplicated efforts and promoting information sharing.

B. **Sector Strategies and Demand-Driven Initiatives:**
    - Focuses on sector strategies and demand-driven initiatives to align workforce development efforts with industry needs.
    - Spearheads the implementation of Neoserra, a business intelligence tool for accessing and updating business information.

C. **Business Resource Specialists (BRS):**
   - A team of NH Works partner staff, known as Business Resource Specialists (BRS), deliver a range of services to businesses.
   - Services include labor exchange information, customized services (screening, referrals, employer applications, recruitment events), HR consultation, and labor market information.

D. **Alignment with Statutory Requirements:**
   - Ensures that all activities and services conform to the statutory requirements of each program, making them accessible to all employers.

Current Efforts and Future Collaboration Goals:

1. **Career Pathways and Talent Pipeline:**
   - Utilizes career pathways to develop a talent pipeline aligned with business needs across education levels (K-12, CTE, adult education, post-secondary).
   - Incorporates information on in-demand pathways to guide educational and workforce development initiatives.
2. **Representation at Job Fairs:**
   - Ensures representation of core partner programs, including adult education and vocational rehabilitation, at all job fairs organized by Employer Services.
3. **Work-and-Learn Opportunities:**
   - Develops more opportunities for work-and-learn experiences with employers, focusing on increased referrals among youth and adult education programs.
4. **Interaction with Adult Education Directors:**
   - Facilitates increased interaction between local Adult Education Directors and businesses to better understand local needs and align services accordingly.
5. **Community-Level Coordination:**
   - Conducts regular BRS team meetings at the community level, involving NH Works staff and partners.
   - Allows for discussions on employer needs and matching them to individual needs of NH Works and partner agency customers, fostering a customer-centric workforce system.
6. **Professional Development and Cross-Training:**
   - Through the Professional Development and Training (PDT) subgroup, conducts ongoing professional development for BRS staff across agencies.
   - Aims to facilitate cross-training, information sharing, and resource maximization among BRS staff.

The IBT's collaborative efforts highlight a commitment to enhancing employer services, fostering partnerships, and creating a responsive and efficient workforce development system in New Hampshire.

E. Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions and other Education and Training Providers

Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's community colleges, adult education providers, area career and technical education schools, providers on the State's eligible training provider list, and other education and training providers, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system. WIOA section 102(b)(2)(B)(iv). Include how the State's strategies will enable the State to leverage other Federal, State, and local investments to enhance access to workforce development programs at these institutions.

The State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) in New Hampshire recognizes the significance of fostering strong partnerships with educational institutions, particularly focusing on the state's network of community colleges and other post-secondary education institutions, to provide and improve access to work-and-learn opportunities aligned with business and industry needs. The key strategy involves leadership by the NH Department of Education (NH DOE), serving as a core and non-core program partner. NH DOE represents the K-12 education system, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Career and Technical Education (CTE), actively participating in key committees and groups, including the SWIB, Industry Data Group (IDG), Interagency Business Team (IBT), and the NH Works Consortium.

The representation from the Community College System of NH (CCSNH) on various committees ensures alignment between workforce initiatives and post-secondary education, strengthening collaboration between workforce development efforts and community college programs. This institutionalized partnership with NH DOE and CCSNH representatives across various committees ensures sustained collaboration and coordination between workforce development and educational systems.

This collaborative effort acknowledges the crucial role of education in meeting the demands of businesses and maintaining a skilled workforce, preparing a future workforce through a pipeline of skilled workers. Recognizing that engagement with education needs to exist at every level, from strategic committees to service-level staff, it aims to establish true demand-driven education and training systems.

The engagement with educational institutions initiates through the functions of key committees and sub-groups, including the SWIB, IDG, IBT, and the NH Works Consortium, ensuring that collaboration is strategically aligned with workforce development goals and industry needs. The focus of these collaborative efforts is on creating a responsive and skilled workforce that can meet the evolving demands of businesses in New Hampshire.

A key strategy of the State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) is to enhance the infrastructure for both employers and individuals to pursue a spectrum of work-based learning opportunities, including internships, apprenticeships, and other work experiences. These opportunities play a critical role in bridging education and training options with the needs of New Hampshire's businesses.

To engage all training providers offering opportunities leading to in-demand careers, the state will leverage the eligible training provider list (ETPL). Inclusion on the ETPL requires that training programs align with occupations in industry sectors that are in demand and result in the completion of industry-recognized credentials, national or state certificates, or degrees, encompassing all relevant competencies, licensing, and certification requirements.

Recognizing Registered Apprenticeship as a vital strategy, New Hampshire values these programs for providing a broader range of work-based and demand-driven training opportunities for jobseekers. Apprenticeship programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act (NAA) are exempt from initial

eligibility procedures to be listed on the ETPL, but they must annually verify their program status to remain included.

As the state continues to foster the development and expansion of sector partnerships, it will actively solicit participation from various education and training providers to contribute to the design, development, and delivery of occupation-specific training. Ongoing engagement with these providers is crucial for the creation of robust community-based career pathways that align with the evolving demands of the workforce.

F. Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials

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

With support from initiatives such as Employment Security and NH DOE, efforts will be made to enhance access to postsecondary credentials, starting with a focus on high school diploma or equivalency attainment. This involves ensuring that NH Works participants lacking a high school diploma are referred to Adult Basic Education (ABE) for necessary services. Commitment to work-readiness programs, such as WorkReadyNH, will facilitate participants' introduction to or reconnection with the education system.

These initiatives, coupled with the state strategies outlined in Goals 3 and 5 of the combined plan, aim to significantly improve access to postsecondary credentials. New Hampshire will adopt a demand-driven system to pinpoint essential training leading to credentials based on business needs. This information will guide the development of comprehensive career pathways, ranging from high school diploma attainment to advanced degrees. These career pathways will establish a robust pipeline of skilled and credentialed workers, meeting the present and future demands of businesses in New Hampshire.

G. Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies

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

At the state level, the Office of Workforce Opportunity is a unit within the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA). BEA was established by an act of the New Hampshire State Legislature in July 2017. The department is comprised of the Division of Economic Development, the Division of Travel and Tourism Development and the Division of Planning. In its authorizing legislation, RSA 12-O:24 required the Department, with input and assistance from the Council of Partner Agencies (CPA) established under RSA 12-O:7 and other public and private organizations with whom it chooses to work, to develop a rolling 10-year economic development strategy and operating plan. OWO and SWIB staff will work to ensure that the work of the Board is in alignment with the State's economic development priorities on a rolling basis as implementation occurs. Further, OWO assisted in the drafting of the Economic Recovery and Expansion Strategy (ERES). The ERES plan serves as a framework for the State of New Hampshire's long term economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and an opportunity to improve the economic ecosystem within the state.

Through joint staff meetings with Economic Development as well as representation on IBT, the Consortium, and Workforce Innovation Board, ensures coordination with economic development strategies. Furthermore, OWO coordinates Rapid Response responsibilities with the Division of Economic Development (DED), and DED is actively involved in the state's sector development effort. One of the strategies outlined under Goal 3

of the combined plan is to ensure increased communication with local economic development agencies in addition to at the state level. This will increase collaboration by engaging more community economic development partners to identify the needs of businesses, allowing for further consistent messaging and information. By coordinating at a state and community level, New Hampshire will establish an industry-driven system focused on the needs of both jobseekers and businesses.

B. State Operating Systems and Policies

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

1. State operating systems that support coordinated implementation of State strategies (for example labor market information systems, data systems, communication systems, case management systems, job banks, etc.).

Effective communication is integral to the functionality of New Hampshire's workforce system. Open lines of communication are established through various channels, including Commissioner-level agency representatives on the State Board, the Governor's direct relationship with the State Board Chair, partner agency representation on the State Board subcommittees, and staff providing committee support. Meeting minutes and products are shared with stakeholders, and sub-committee Chairs present updates to the full board on their work, activities, and recommendations during quarterly meetings.

To disseminate information, the system employs several standard mechanisms of communication, such as

- State Board meeting announcements are regularly posted on the NH Work's website. The yearly meeting calendar is publicly discussed and voted upon, with additional announcements made during public presentations and meetings with partner agencies.
- State Board minutes, meeting audio recordings, and transcriptions of the audio are consistently made available on the NH Work's website for public access.
- Committee minutes are included in State Board packets during each meeting, ensuring comprehensive documentation of committee activities.
- Committee Chairs provide updates on committee activities at each meeting, offering insight into ongoing efforts and progress.
- Board and committee members are kept informed about federal and state initiatives, with relevant directives forwarded to them and communicated during committee meetings as appropriate.
- Written policies, procedures, and agreements are distributed via the internet to relevant stakeholders, including board members, committee members, management staff, program operators, and local one-stop teams, ensuring widespread accessibility.

The interagency business team utilizes Neoserra, a customer relationship management system (CRM), across multiple agencies with business-serving staff. Initially designed for a narrower audience, it was expanded to meet the needs of a wider group, facilitating the coordination of business contacts, assisting with recruitment, retention, and expansion efforts, and fostering connections among partners in the workforce development system. Neoserra has played a crucial role in providing a consistent information framework among partners, eliminating some duplication of effort, and making processes more user-friendly for businesses and participants.

The Economic Labor Market Information Bureau (ELMIB) serves as the State's primary agency for furnishing labor market information to relevant agencies and partners. ELMIB, recognized with awards, has tailored numerous reports and publications to meet the specific needs of NH Works Center staff. Additionally, they provide training to local staff, simplifying labor market information and making it a practical tool for employment counselors and customers alike. ELMIB staff actively engages at both the state and local levels, offering training, technical assistance, presentations, workshops, products, and various services to the State Board, partners, community agencies, employers, and local One-Stop Center staff, thereby contributing to a coordinated understanding of the labor market and available data.

The New Hampshire Job Match System (JMS) is accessible via the internet for all customers and partners, as well as at One-Stop Centers. Encouraging customer registration in the JMS, irrespective of services received or program participation, is a standard practice across all programs. Employers are directed to the JMS, granting them access to information on all registered jobseekers across different programs.

While not all partner programs use a common case management system due to varying legal requirements, New Hampshire has successfully consolidated the WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) case management system with the Title III Wagner-Peyser tracking system. Collaborative efforts are implemented on individual cases where a customer is receiving or is eligible for services from multiple programs. NH Works partners, including VR, ABE, WIOA Title I, Community College System of NH, and the TANF agency, utilize the Performance Accountability and Customer Information Agency (PACIA) unit at NH Employment Security for processing wage data necessary for calculating WIOA-required performance measures.

The data collection and reporting processes for WIOA Title I Adult and Youth programs have transitioned to the case management system administered by Geographic Solutions. This shift, managed through a contract overseen by NH Employment Security, mandates the utilization of this system for all entities receiving Title I WIOA funds. The Economic Labor Market Information Bureau (ELMIB), designated as the Performance Accountability and Customer Information Agency (PACIA) by the Governor of New Hampshire, is entrusted with performance analysis and reporting functions under WIOA.

ELMIB generates performance-related items for submission to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) as part of the WIOA Quarterly Summaries and Annual Report. This process involves integrating the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) with UI wage records and program cost data from various sources, including the NH Department of Education, NH Employment Security, the Community College System of NH, the Department of Business and Economic Affairs, and WIOA Eligible Training Providers. Additionally, ELMIB conducts program evaluation tasks, responding to partner requests and analyzing WIOA participant data based on various characteristics.

System integration is actively promoted, encouraging the use of a single client record for program participants served under WIOA. The Geographic Solutions case management system has the capability to record and report partner services. New Hampshire has implemented Workforce Connect to streamline data collection and customer tracking, enhancing user experience through a Single Sign On (SSO) Registration and Integrated Registration, eliminating the need for multiple User IDs, Passwords, and Portals. The three-module Workforce Connect software suite includes Single Sign On (SSO), Integrated Registration, and a Dashboard providing users with personalized information.

In an ongoing effort to further connect and integrate participant data, the Bureau of Adult Education initiated the collection of social security numbers starting on July 1, 2019. This implementation is a work in

progress. Performance management occurs at various levels within the system, involving the State Workforce Innovation Board, the Performance and Evaluation Committee, the One-Stop Operator Consortium, and the Interagency Directors Group. Financial performance management is overseen by the Executive Committee of the State Board, with reports and recommendations shared across all levels of system management.

2. The State policies that will support the implementation of the State's strategies (for example, co-enrollment policies and universal intake processes where appropriate). In addition, provide the State's guidelines for State-administered one-stop partner programs' contributions to a one-stop delivery system and any additional guidance for one-stop partner contributions.

New Hampshire has developed a variety of policies to govern the workforce system, ensure high quality services, promote collaboration among system partners, and outline legislative, regulatory, and quality requirements for the workforce system. The NH Works Memorandum of Understanding governs one-stop partner programs' contributions to the one-stop delivery system. Each partner/program that is physically located in the one-stop center(s) contributes to the NH Works One-Stop Center operations using a square footage allocation based on FTE. In addition to the core programs, the following partner programs (not currently physically co- located) are required to provide access through the one-stops:

- Adult Education and Literacy Act (ABE)
- Job Corps
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

These partners/programs are linked virtually through online service access to a program staff member via American Job Center resource rooms and through cross-trained front desk staff and other, physically co-located, partner staff that can provide information and referrals.

Adult Basic Education, as a required partner, must contribute to the cost of infrastructure and certain additional services. The TANF agency is strongly encouraged, but may opt out per the Governor, to contribute to the cost of infrastructure and certain additional services. In the spirit of collaboration and inclusion, the TANF agency is contributing its fair share. Even if not physically co-located within the Job Centers, a significant number of ABE, TANF and smaller number of SCSEP and Job Corps customers use the NH Works American Job Center network to access services such as:

- Individualized services,
- Using resource room computers to research information, complete assessments, conduct work searches, and communicate with off-site program staff,
- Using resource room staff assistance for the above services and for general information,
- Using other resource room equipment such as copiers, scanners, fax machines, or assistive technology for individuals with disabilities,
- Obtaining labor market information,
- Attending reemployment workshops,
- File grievances or appeals, etc.

These services are utilized in direct benefit of the additional partners and programs identified and in support thereof and will, therefore, be proportionately paid for.

The SWIB selected two different allocation bases – as outlined in the Allocation Bases per Cost Item section below – to determine overall Partner contributions. This was done in an effort:

- To remedy the imbalance of non-physically represented Partners, and
- To comply with the requirement of Partners' contributions having to be in proportion to the Partners' use of the one-stop center(s) and relative benefit received.

Partner financial contributions to the one-stop delivery system.

Partner Contribution Amount: By Allocation Base

Partner Program	Agency	FTE Cost	Customers Served	Total	Capped Total
Employment Services (ES)	Employment Security	$1,195,187	7,524	$1,195,187	$1,195,187
Reemployment Services (RESEA)	Employment Security	$791,542	5,739	$791,542	$791,542
Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)	Employment Security	$153,086	100	$153,086	$153,086
Local Veterans Employment Rep. (LVER)	Employment Security	$218,865		$218,865	$218,865
Partner Program	Agency	FTE Cost	Customers Served	Total	Capped Total
Disabled Veterans Outreach Prog. (DVOP)	Employment Security	$376,934	100	$376,934	$376,934
Unemployment Insurance (UI)	Employment Security	$1,525,478	20,258	$1,525,478	$1,525,478
Pathway to Work (PTW)	Employment Security	$15,946	76	$15,946	$15,946
Mature Worker (MW)	Employment Security	$1,145	28	$1,145	$1,145
WorkNowNH	Employment Security	$638,098	600	$638,098	$638,098
Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)	Education	$313,414	1,177	$313,414	$119,328

Dislocated Worker (WIOA)	NHES/BEA	$354,363	212	$354,363	$134,919
Disadvantaged Adult (WIOA)	NHES/BEA	$284,015	253	$284,015	$108,135
SCSEP State	NHES/BEA	$472	45	$472	$180
SCSEP National	Operation Able	$2,034	194	$2,034	$774
Adult Basic Education	Education/Second St	$42,862	4,088	$42,862	$16,319
TANF/SNAP	Health & Human Services	$15,727	1,500	$15,727	$5,988
Job Corps	NH Job Corps	$3,114	297	$3,114	$1,186
NFJP - NHMEP**	Education	$ -	125	$ -	$ -
NFJP - NEFWC	NEFWC	$ -	15	$ -	$ -
Career and Technical Education	Education	$99,836	9,522	$99,836	$38,011
Housing and Urban Development*	HUD	$ -	-	$ -	$ -
Career and Technical Education	Education	$99,836	9,522	$99,836	$38,011
Housing and Urban Development*	HUD	$ -	-	$ -	$ -
CDBG*	DHHS	$ -	-	$ -	$ -
WIOA Youth	Education	$1,929	310	$1,929	$735
WIOA Emergency Health Care	**BEA**	**$1,814**	**173**	**$1,814**	**$691**
WorkReadyNH	NHES/CCSNH	$3,429	327	$3,429	$1,305
Apprenticeship Grants	CCSNH	$692	66	$692	$263

Bolded programs are collocated partners contributing to the Operational Budget. Grants are time-limited programs and may not be available from year-to year

* Noncontributing programs (not operational in NH)

** Customers are minors not served by NHWORKS centers

By Cost Category

Partner Program	Agency	Infrastructure Cost	Shared Services	Career Services	Total	Capped Total
Employment Services (ES)	Employment Security	$306,475	$719,914	$168,799	$1,195,187	$1,195,187
Reemployment Services (RESEA)	Employment Security	$202,970	$476,781	$111,791	$791,542	$791,542
Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)	Employment Security	$39,255	$92,210	$21,621	$153,086	$153,086
Local Veterans Employment Rep .(LVER)	Employment Security	$56,122	$131,832	$30,911	$218,865	$218,865
Disabled Veterans Outreach Prog. (DVOP)	Employment Security	$96,655	$227,044	$53,23 5	$376,934	$376,934
Unemployment Insurance (UI)	Employment Security	$391,169	$918,863	$215,4 46	$1,525,478	$1,525,478
Pathway To Work (PTW)	Employment Security	$4,089	$9,605	$2,252	$15,946	$15,946
Mature Worker (MW)	Employment Security	$294	$690	$162	$1,145	$1,145
WorkNowNH	Employment Security	$163,624	$384,354	$90,120	$638,098	$638,098

Partner Program	Agency	Infrastructure Cost	Shared Services	Career Services	Total	Capped Total
Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)	Education	$122,058	$124,129	$67,227	$313,414	$119,328
Dislocated Worker (WIOA)	NHES/BEA	$138,006	$140,347	$76,010	$354,363	$134,919

Disadvantaged Adult (WIOA)	NHES/BEA	$110,609	$112,485	$60,921	$284,015	$108,135
SCSEP State	NHES/BEA	$472	-	-	$472	$180
SCSEP National	Operation Able	$2,034	-	-	$2,034	$774
Adult Basic Education	Education/Second St	$42,862	-	-	$42,862	$16,319
TANF/SNAP	Health& HumanSvcs	$15,727	-	-	$15,727	$5,988
JobCorps	NHJobCorps	$3,114	-	-	$3,114	$1,186
NFJP-NHMEP**	Education	-	-	-	-	-
NFJP-NEFWC*	NEFWC	-	-	-	-	-
Career and Technical Education	Education	$99,836	-	-	$99,836	$38,011
Housing and Urban Development*	HUD	-	-	-	-	-
CDBG*	DHHS	-	-	-	-	-
WIOA Youth	Education	$1,929	-	-	$1,929	$735
WIOA Emergency Health Care	BEA	$1,814	-	-	$1,814	$691
WorkReadyNH	NHES/CCSNH	$3,429	-	-	$3,429	$1,305
Apprenticeship Grants	CCSNH	$692	-	-	$692	$263

Required Partners per WIOA regulations, not contributing to the NH Works System infrastructure costs:

- The Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program, administered through the National Farmworker's Council, the program is a nationally directed, locally administered program of services for migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs). NFWC offers Employment and Training grants. The NFJP program in NH does not serve sufficient numbers of individuals to leverage costs associated with benefit from the NH Works centers based on program participation. In New Hampshire, the farmworker population is dwindling each year. Last program year the program served 15 individuals. Funds leveraged would be miniscule and further reduced compared to the time and effort needed to affect pennies on the dollar.
- National Farm Workers Education program administered by the NH Department of Education (DOE) served approximately 125 students each year; however, the student are primarily young students not in the labor market.
- Housing Urban Development (HUD) Funds for Employment and Training Activities – HUD has reviewed NH's request for contributions to the IFA and determined that the programing in NH does not fit the

criteria for participation. The NH Works Consortium and USDOL are in receipt of HUD's response that stipulates that no funds qualify and/or are available to support NH's one-stop IFA costs. The NH Works Consortium will review HUD's funding status prior to the renewal of this MOU.

- The NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is the administrative entity for Community Development Block Grant funds. DHHS has verified that the CDBG annual report filed with the State does not show funds expended for employment and training purposes. The Community Action Association, as recipients of GDBG funds locally, further supports this assessment. The NH Works Consortium will review the use of CDBG funds in NH, prior to the next MOU update.
- NH does not currently operate a Youth Build grant.

For additions and updates, the NH Works Consortium will lead the development of state policies and their communication and implementation, including guidelines for state-administered one- stop programs' contributions to the one-stop delivery system. Policies and procedures will comply with all requirements outlined by WIOA and respective federal and state legislation.

They will be disseminated to all partner agencies and used to provide guidance to the workforce system and implement the State Plan. In addition to coordination among core partners, the NH Works Consortium will continue to encourage coordination with non-core partner agencies to strengthen the alignment between the Governor's vision and the goals and strategies that are outlined in this plan to meet that vision.

Copies of policies that support the implementation of the State's strategies may be found at https://www.nhworks.org/

3. State Program and State Board Overview

A. *State Agency Organization*

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

This structure represents a top-down hierarchy where the Governor oversees the State Workforce Innovation Board, which, in turn, collaborates with various State Agencies, the NH Works One-Stop Operator Consortium, and the Interagency Directors Group. Each State Agency is presented as a separate branch under SWIB, indicating their connection to the overall governance structure.

Governor

SWIB

State Agencies - DHHS - NHES - DBEA - NH DOE - CCSNH

NH Works One-Stop Operator Consortium

Interagency Directors Group

The Governor appoints Commissioners for each state agency. The Chancellor for the Community College System of New Hampshire is appointed by the CCSNH Board of Trustees. The Governor also appoints the Chair of the State Workforce Innovation Board and all other board members consistent with WIOA procedures. With the exception of DHHS—due to the size of the agency- the heads of each entity listed in the chart above are appointed members of the SWIB. In addition, the Governor holds monthly Commissioner meetings which

allows for further cross-communication and information sharing specific to workforce development efforts related to the services and programs listed in the table below.

State Agency	Program
NH Department of Education	CTE Programs
	Vocational Rehabilitation
	Adult Basic Education
NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs	Office of Workforce Opportunity
	Administrative entity for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker & Youth
	Workforce board staff charged with leading the State's strategic planning for workforce issues and system policy making guidance
	Agreement with NHES to serve as primary operator for WIOA Dislocated Worker funds and WIOA Adult is contracted with Community Action Association.
	Administers the WIOA Youth program
	Administrative entity for State SCSEP program
	MSHA – State Mine Safety Training grants
NH Employment Security	Wagner-Peyser
	Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers
	Unemployment Insurance
	Jobs for Veterans' Service Grant
	Performance Accountability and Customer Satisfaction (via contract with BEA)
	Foreign Labor Certification
	WOTC/WTW Tax Credits
	Labor Market Information Services
	Trade Assistance Program
	Re-employment Services and Eligibility Assessment Program
	Granite State Jobs Act (WorkNowNH, WorkInvestNH, Reentry program)
	WIOA Dislocated Worker and WIOA Adult (through a contract with Community Action Association)
NH Health & Human Services	TANF Programs – NHEP work program
	Division for Children, Youth, and Families (Juvenile Justice and Family Services)
	Service Link/Agency on Aging
	SNAP programs
Community College System of New Hampshire	Post-secondary education services (eligible training provider for WIOA)
	Carl Perkins funds

	WorkReady NH (via contract with NHES)
	DOL Apprenticeship Grants
NH Department of Labor	WARN ACT (state and federal enforcement)
	Labor laws/enforcement
Sub-recipients - Primary Service Provider	Program
Community Action Programs	State SCSEP Service Delivery (CAPBMCI contractor via contact with BEA)
	WIOA Adult (via contract with NHES through agreement with BEA)
	NHEP - DHHS TANF Work Program (via a contract with DHHS)
Project Second Start	Adult Education program implementation statewide /local level services – via contract with NH DOE

The Office of Workforce Opportunity (OWO) operates as the central administrative entity overseeing the allocation and utilization of WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth funds in New Hampshire, with the Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA) serving as the state's fiscal agent and official grant recipient of WIOA Title I funds. Federal oversight and technical assistance are provided by the USDOL Region I Philadelphia/Boston office.

In its capacity as a single-state service delivery area, New Hampshire has strategically crafted a well-aligned governance and administrative framework, establishing policies, setting performance goals, and ensuring robust oversight to maintain the accountability of the workforce development system. The State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) functions as the advisory body, actively contributing to the development, updating, and evaluation of the planning process. This ensures that workforce development programs remain highly responsive to the evolving economic and labor market needs of New Hampshire.

The coordinated efforts of state agencies play a pivotal role in overseeing the effective implementation of various workforce development programs. Meanwhile, local agencies, including local administrative arms of state agencies, are entrusted with the responsibility of program management and the provision of services to the end customers.

The organizational structure described above focuses on primary state-level program operators. However, it is important to note that the broader workforce development system encompasses numerous programs and services aimed at preparing individuals for employment and training. New Hampshire's established infrastructure facilitates comprehensive planning, policymaking, and accountability across a spectrum of workforce programs.

A range of committees, such as the One-Stop Operator Consortium (the Consortium), Interagency Directors Group, Interagency Business Team, Professional Development Team, Sector Strategy Team, Sector Partnership Initiative Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, and the Performance and Evaluation Committee of the SWIB, play integral roles in developing cohesive policies, strategies, and managing performance across diverse programs. The functions and roles of these committees were detailed in Section III (a)(1) State Board Functions.

B. *State Board*

Provide a description of the State Board, including—

A membership roster is found in Appendix 3. The Governor of NH is currently appointing new members to the board. A new membership roster will be updated when the appointments are complete. However, Christine Brenan is remaining on the Board. She is the Assistant Director of the NH Department of Education and satisfies the requirement for Vocational Rehabilitation and Title II as both of these entities fall under the Department of Education.

8/9/2022: The State of NH has been informed that an independent appointment for the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation must occur. The Governor of the State of NH will be notified as he will need to make an appointment for this seat as well as any other appointments to maintain the correct ratio of the board. This appointment process is lengthy and will take the state some time to complete. The Office of Workforce Opportunity will continue to work with the Governors office to fulfill this requirement.

Required SWIB Members	Who May Satisfy The Requirement	Member
The Governor (WIOA Section 101(b)(1)(A))	The Governor	Jonathan Melanson (Proxy)
Representatives of State Legislature (WIOA Section 101(b)(1)(B))	One member of each chamber of the State legislature (to the extent consistent with State law), appointed by the appropriate presiding officers of such chamber.	Senator Kahn Representative Hatch
	Board Chair –selected by the Governor	Michael Kane
Representatives of Business (WIOA Section 101(b)(1)(C)(i))	The majority (51%)of the board must consist of representatives of business who: • are owners of businesses, chief executives or operating officers of businesses, or other business executives or employers with optimum policy-making or hiring authority; • represent businesses (including at least one representative of small business), or organizations representing businesses and provide employment opportunities that, at a minimum, include highquality, work-relevant training and development in in- demand industry sectors or occupations in the State; and • are appointed from among	Brandon Wagner Dwight Davis Page Tim Sink Michael Somers Anya Burzynski David Cioffi Mike Alberts Jim Proulx John Hennessey Eric Proulx Gary Thomas

	individuals nominated by State business organizations and business trade associations.	Steve Norton Julie Demers
Representatives of Workforce (WIOA Section 101(b)(1)(C)(ii))	Not less than 20 percent shall be representatives of the workforce within the State, who must include: • Two or more representatives of labor organizations, who have been nominated by State labor federations; • One or more representative, who must be a member of a labor organization or a training director, from a joint labor- management registered apprenticeship program, or if no such joint program exists in the State, such a representative of a registered apprenticeship program in the State; In addition to the representatives enumerated above, the Governor may appoint one or more representatives of the following organizations to contribute to the 20 percent requirement • 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; and training, or education needs of eligible youth, including representatives of organizations	Robert Martel Marc G. Beaudoin Eric Batchelor (Apprenticeship) Kelly Clark (AARP) Katherine Merrow Tamer Koheil (Job Corps)
Representatives of Government ((WIOA Section101(b)(1)(C)(iii))	The balance of State Board membership must include: • the lead State officials with primary	Christine Brennan (Educ.) Taylor Caswell (BEA)

	responsibility for the core programs; and • two or more chief elected officials (collectively representing both cities and counties, where appropriate). In addition to the representatives enumerated above, the Governor may appoint such other representatives such as: • State agency officials from agencies that are one-stop partners (including additional one-stop partners whose programs are covered by the State plan, if any); • State agency officials responsible for economic development or juvenile justice programs in the State; organization, as such terms are defined in section 166(b); and • State agency officials responsible for education programs in the State, including chief executive officers of community colleges and other institutions of higher education.	George Copadis (NHES) Anythony Giunta (Mayor) Charlene Lovett (Mayor) Beth Doiron (Educ.)

NOTE: The previous plan contained:
I. Membership roster

II. Board activities

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

A. Assessment of Core and One-Stop Program Partner Programs

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

New Hampshire, as a single workforce area, will assess its core programs through the oversight activities conducted by the interagency management teams described throughout this plan and on-going continuous improvement strategies including but not limited to the following:

- Program Monitoring of WIOA Title I and SCSEP programs.
- NH Works Customer Satisfaction Surveys – participants, employers, and staff.
- On-going assessment of performance conducted by the Performance and Evaluation Committee (e.g., recommend performance standards, review partner performance, and make recommendations for improvement).
- Vocational Rehabilitation Agency/State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) will conduct a Comprehensive Needs Forums Assessment.
- Annual state level third party program monitoring and audits.
- Third-party evaluations, as needed.
- Professional Development Team activities that focus on providing training to improve services.
- Comprehensive One-Stop Center Certification and ADA Compliance, no less than once every two years.

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

All partner programs included in the plan will be addressed as referenced in (4)(A) immediately above. Other one-stop partner programs may be assessed through similar strategies as those listed, or through the use of newly designed assessment tools/strategies applicable to specific program services as they are developed. All core NH Works partners will submit their performance reports annually to the SWIB for review.

B. Previous Assessment Results

For each four-year state plan and state plan modification, provide the results of assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the Unified or Combined State plan during the preceding 2-year period (i.e. the 2-year period of the plan modification cycle), in accordance with methods described in 4(A)

The Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) maintains a consistent and effective approach to monitoring the performance of WIOA Title I programs on a quarterly basis. This regular assessment ensures that programs are meeting established objectives and making progress toward their goals. Additionally, SWIB members actively participate in the NH Employment Security Unemployment Advisory Committee, contributing to the review of Wagner-Peyser Performance.

As part of its commitment to ongoing oversight and enhancement of performance outcomes, the SWIB's Workforce Development Policy Committee dedicates its focus to assessing the performance of NH Works partners and eligible training providers. This committee not only establishes and monitors partner performance metrics but also engages in the proactive identification of continuous improvement strategies. These strategies encompass areas such as credentials, skills gains, and business performance.

Furthermore, the committee collaborates closely with the Consortium, working in tandem to implement and manage improved processes. This collaborative effort ensures that the workforce development system remains dynamic, responsive, and aligned with the evolving needs of both individuals seeking employment and the businesses driving economic growth in New Hampshire. SWIB’s dedication to performance monitoring and enhancement reflects its commitment to achieving optimal outcomes and fostering a resilient and effective workforce development ecosystem.

Program Year 2022 WIOA monitoring activities included the following major activities.

- OWO staff successfully conducted 12 individual program and fiscal desk reviews.
- Onsite monitoring activities were carried out, resulting in 13 program and fiscal reports, with diligent resolution of any findings or disallowed costs identified during these reviews.
- The onsite reviews with service providers encompassed Equal Opportunity monitoring, ensuring compliance with relevant standards.
- Both desk reviews and onsite reports highlighted persistent concerns related to the WIOA Youth programs.
    - The challenges faced by the subrecipients of WIOA Title I Youth funds were specifically noted, including difficulties in staffing, the implementation of new site locations, and effective expenditure of funds.
- Ongoing efforts are directed towards addressing and resolving these challenges to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the WIOA Youth programs.

The commitment to thorough monitoring reflects OWO's dedication to ensuring the integrity and success of the workforce development initiatives.

Any corrective action items identified through the monitoring process at either the state or local level have been fully resolved. Monitoring reports are reviewed and approved by a member and the chair of the State Workforce Innovation Board annually.

Semi-annually customer satisfaction surveys are administered to NH Works customers Each NH Works Center provides new customers with a Customer Satisfaction Survey upon entering the Center for the period of one month, twice a year. In PY20, 100% of the customers who completed a survey rated their local NH Works office very good to excellent overall.

Questions	Yes		No		Other	
Did we provide you with the information you were looking for?	35		0		0	
Did we explain our services and/or programs to your satisfaction?	35		0		0	
Is there anything else that we could have done for you that was not offered?	3		32		0	
Overall	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Blank
Scores	0	0		9	26	0

Previously, the Customer Satisfaction Survey for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth customers employs two primary methods for distribution: a direct web link and a Survey Monkey email. Upon a customer obtaining employment or exiting the program, a Career Navigator facilitates the delivery of the Customer

Satisfaction Survey through a web link. Automated Survey Monkey emails are sent to customers after their file exits the Job Match System (JMS), the case management system, ensuring timely and systematic feedback collection. To enhance accessibility and convenience, a Survey Monkey reminder email is dispatched to customers fourteen days later if the initial survey remains incomplete. Southern New Hampshire Services, the adult program provider, implemented a comprehensive approach for gathering customer satisfaction feedback. This involved utilizing both Survey Monkey and Microsoft Forms, leveraging their user-friendly interfaces.

Additionally, a novel method of surveying was introduced in Program year 2022 through text messaging, proving to be remarkably effective in elevating completion rates. This multi-faceted approach reflects a commitment to obtaining thorough and diverse feedback from participants, ultimately contributing to the continuous improvement of the workforce development programs.

Participants were asked to rate their experience in response to the following questions:

- Overall satisfaction with the WIOA services you received at the NH Works office.
- Considering all of the expectations you may have had about the services offered, to what extent did the services you received meet your expectations.
- Thinking back on the WIOA services you received at the NH Works office, how helpful would you say the services you received were in preparing you for finding employment?
- Now think of the ideal program for people in your circumstances. How well do you think the services you received compare with the ideal set of services?
- Please select the answer below that best describes your current employment status.
- How would you rate the quality of the help you received from your employment counselor?
- If you need employment and training services in the future, how likely is it that you would use the services offered at the NH Works office?

Fifty-four percent (54.3%) of participants exiting the program completed a survey. Below are the Key Survey Metrics:

- Overall Program Satisfaction: 4.7 out of 5 stars
- Services Meeting Expectations: 4.8 out of 5 stars
- Employment and Training Support Satisfaction: 93%
- Participants Intending to Recommend WIOA Adult to others: 96%

Amid the impact of COVID-19 on the state, NH Employment Security (NHES) responded proactively by initiating Virtual Job Fairs. In the fiscal year 2022, a total of sixty-six (66) Job Fairs took place, engaging 1,722 employers. Collectively, employers reported a substantial 121,255 job openings, indicating a robust engagement in the virtual job fair platform.

Significantly, sixty-two percent (62%) of the participating employers reported meaningful interactions with potential employees who responded to their position openings. This resulted in at least two hundred and nineteen (219) interviews conducted as an outcome of the Virtual Job Fairs, highlighting the tangible impact of these events in facilitating connections between employers and job seekers.

Feedback from the employers underscores the success of the initiative, with eighty-one percent (78%) expressing their intent to attend future NHES hosted job fairs. Additionally, twenty-two percent (22%) indicated uncertainty about future attendance, reflecting the dynamic and evolving nature of workforce engagement strategies in response to changing circumstances, such as those presented by the ongoing

pandemic. The positive response from both employers and the outcomes in terms of interviews conducted demonstrate the effectiveness and adaptability of virtual platforms in fostering employment opportunities during challenging times.

NH SWIB, along with the respective NH Works partner teams, will continue to monitor the quarterly and annually established performance outcomes of the core NH Works partners. Failure to meet the performance standard(s), as negotiated with their respective federal partner will result in continuous improvement plan(s), which may include technical assistance, to ensure that each partner meets the negotiated standard for each standard and that the NH Works system, as a whole, exceeds the federal standard for each performance measure.

For those performance indicators where baseline data is being tracked, we will continue to use a "phased in" approach to be used in negotiation for establishing a future performance standard.

In addition, the NH Department of Education, Bureau of Adult Education conducted reviews of all local program providers that included local program report cards, which compare local enrollment, measurable skill gain and outcomes to statewide results; desk reviews to identify areas of strength and areas needing improvement; and a self-assessment checklist to guide local directors through a thorough examination of their performance data and creation of an action plan to improve. Technical assistance was provided to individual programs as needed. Under AEFLA state leadership activities as a part of the high-quality professional development system, an evaluation of each professional development activity was conducted at completion of the training and again at 60 and 90-day intervals to assess the application of new skills in the classroom. The Bureau of Adult Education does not currently conduct a statewide customer satisfaction survey of students.

NH DOE, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (NHVR) monitoring activities included the following activities:

- A federal review, conducted by the US Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) in 2019 which included onsite component in May 2019. In reviewing the program there was one (1) area of finding and two (2) recommendations. There were no disallowed costs identified. NHVR has been working to address the area of finding and anticipates being able to satisfy the required corrective action.
- In addition, assessment activities which included focus groups and key informant interviews identified some areas where NHVR can explore further to enhance performance and services to participants, including strategies to address smooth transition when there is turnover of counselors and community rehabilitation program staff; updated and ongoing training and cross training with partner agencies; and need for continued interagency communication, and outreach.
- Survey of Agency staff identified areas where staff identified performance could be improved with additional training in the areas of career pathways, including credential attainment and measurable skill gain and providing services to students.
- As noted above, NH SWIB, along with the respective NH Works partner teams, will continue to monitor the quarterly and annually established performance outcomes of the core NH Works partners, which includes NHVR.

Copies of prior partner performance measures are on file with their respective federal partner or by request.

C. *Evaluation*

Describe how the State will conduct evaluations and research projects of activities carried out in the State under WIOA core programs; how such projects will be coordinated with, and designed in conjunction with, State and local boards and with State agencies responsible for the administration of all respective core programs; and, further, how the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education under WIOA (WIOA Section 116(e)).

System evaluation, woven into the operational practices of partners, is ongoing to ensure we continue to offer quality services that comply with state and federal requirements. System partners meet regularly to assess program effectiveness through the review of new and current programs to promote efficiencies, coordinate and reduce duplication of services, discuss key monitoring findings, review best practices internal and from other states, review performance outcomes for core WIOA programs, and share formal and informal customer satisfaction results in an effort to inform system change.

The COVID-19 Pandemic caused major impacts on the economic landscape and workforce systems throughout the nation. This was no different in New Hampshire. Once a state with some of the lowest unemployment rates in the country, New Hampshire saw unemployment claims that taxed the system and caused a ripple effect to the WIOA programs. With our New Hampshire Works System offices closed to the public for more than a year, a stay-at-home order and pandemic unemployment benefits, the WIOA programs saw a decrease in enrollments and expenditures.

The WIOA system in New Hampshire includes 4 partner programs that are administered by three State Agencies:

- WIOA Workforce Services (Title I) – NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs
- Adult Education (Title II) NH Department of Education
- Wagner-Peyser (Title III) NH Employment Security
- Vocational Rehabilitation (Title IV) NH Department of Education

In PY20, NH Employment Security became the subrecipient of both the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker and Adult programs. NHES is also the state agency which administers unemployment benefits for the state. During the pandemic, the agency had to leverage all staff and resources on processing pandemic unemployment claims.

In an effort to see what effect the pandemic had on our system, the New Hampshire Employment Security (NHES), Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau conducted one specific system evaluation for both PY2019 and PY2020. The report provided us with an Estimated Economic Impact of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Expenditures in New Hampshire for both 2019 and 2020. The NHES Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau (ELMI) used an Input/Output Model to estimate the impact of WIOA expenditures on New Hampshire. ELMI used the REMI PI+ model developed by Regional Economic Models, Inc. The updated version of the Policy Insight model generates estimates of the total regional effects of any specific policy initiative. The model is calibrated to New Hampshire for policy analysis and forecasting.

We compared the information and found that there were two areas of biggest impact. The first was the amount of expenditure. In looking at expenditures, we compared 2018-2019, 20192020, 2020-2021 as this would provide us with a normal year, a ¼ COVID year, and a full COVID year. Of greatest interest is the change from 2018-2019 to 2020-2021. WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs had a -22% change in expenditures while Wagner-Peyser had a 79% change in expenditures. However, also of note is the change in

expenditures from 20192020, a ¼ COVID year to 2020-2021. WIOA Adult, DW, and Youth programs saw a -19% change in expenditures while Wagner-Peyser saw a -76% change in expenditures. Please see Appendix A for the full report.

Additionally, we saw a big impact on the number of jobs supported by WIOA expenditures. For example, in 2019, 674 jobs were supported by WIOA expenditures, and $47.0 million (in fixed 2012 dollars) worth of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was generated due to WIOA expenditures. In 2020, only 544 jobs were supported by WIOA expenditures, and $38.9 million (in fixed 2012 dollars) worth of GDP was generated due to WIOA expenditures.

Additional evaluations included:

- Program Monitoring, including federal reviews are an important component of system evaluation for compliance with WIOA regulations, as well as State policy and procedures for program and financial management. Program Year 2020 WIOA monitoring activities included the following major activities.
- OWO staff completed 51 individual program and fiscal desk reviews.
- Annual "virtual" on-site visits were conducted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These remote reviews generated 21 programs and fiscal reports. There were no major corrective action items or disallowed costs resulting from these monitoring activities.
- On-site "virtual" reviews with service providers included Equal Opportunity monitoring.
- Desk reviews and "virtual" on-site reports document the on-going concerns regarding the under-enrollment and under-expenditure of funds for the WIOA Dislocated Worker program, the Mature Worker Demonstration project, and the National Emergency Health Grant (Opioid Grant). All three programs faced challenges meeting performance throughout the program year.

NHES, as a part of the grant process, is required to conduct an RESEA Evaluation Project. New Hampshire will monitor and evaluate the re-employment of RESEA claimants using the following criteria: occupations / career paths / industries that claimants are entering upon re- employment; wages for claimants upon re-employment; returning to the same occupation or entering into a position in another industry; Demand occupations v. non-demand; Higher level positions. We will use Labor Market Information including but not limited to the Job Locator, Average Wage, OES, and a High Demand Occupations (HDO) report developed based on Office of Workforce Opportunity (WIOA) thresholds. The HDO report is also linked to Work Keys. This project will determine to what level we are also meeting employers' needs. Working with our Labor Market Information

Bureau, with their knowledge of the state of New Hampshire and the supporting data, we will determine how best to meet the needs of the employers as well as the job seekers to build the workforce for New Hampshire. This evaluation will also support the state Sector Partnerships data and work.

The Interagency Work Groups (Consortium and IBT) will work with Board and other partners to integrate evaluation and research projects that impact the workforce system in New Hampshire.

5. Distribution of Funds for Core Programs

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

A. Title I Programs

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

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

New Hampshire's WIOA Allotment policy can be found at www.nhworks.org. New Hampshire as a single workforce area that receives minimum state funds employs a basic methodology consistent with the federal requirements for distribution of funds by funding source. There is one statewide contractor for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker state formula funds and two statewide contractors for Youth funding. Contractors are required to ensure an equitable distribution of funds and services statewide.

For youth programs, a minimum of 75% of all funds must be expended for Out-of-School Youth; and a minimum of 20% of youth subrecipient funds for work-based learning.

Subrecipients are required to offer summer youth employment opportunities that link academic and occupational learning as part of the menu of services required by WIOA. The summer youth employment activity is not a stand-alone program. WIOA Youth subrecipients must integrate a youth's participation in summer employment into a comprehensive strategy for adding the youth's employment and training needs. Youth participating in any WIOA funded element must be provided with a minimum of twelve months of follow-up.

When a youth is enrolled as an out-of-school youth, he/she maintains that designation regardless of any new enrollment in education, until the youth is exited from the WIOA participation.

In addition, state and local contractors are required to develop annual enrollment plans, line- item budgets, staffing plans, and required WIOA policy and procedures maintained as an operation manual. All documents are submitted to the OWO for final approval to ensure locally distributed funds are being expended in accordance with WIOA and Board parameters.

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

As stated in the previous section New Hampshire's WIOA Allotment policy can be found at https://www.nhworks.org/. New Hampshire as a single workforce area that receives minimum state funds employs a basic methodology consistent with the federal requirements for distribution of funds by funding source. There is one statewide contractor for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker state formula funds and two statewide contractors for Youth funding. Contractors are required to ensure an equitable distribution of funds and services statewide. In determining distribution of local area allocations for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, contractors use the same three equally weighted formula factors that are used to determine the state allocations.

These factors are:

- Relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment
- Relative excess number of unemployed individuals
- Relative number of economically disadvantaged.

When fully funded, WIOA Dislocated Worker grant funds are distributed as follows:

- 60% to local workforce areas (no less)

- 25% for Rapid Response activities (up to)
- 15% for statewide activities

In addition, state and local contractors are required to develop annual enrollment plans, line- item budgets, staffing plans, and required WIOA policy and procedures maintained as an operation manual. All documents are submitted to the OWO for final approval to ensure locally distributed funds are being expended in accordance with WIOA and Board parameters.

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

See previous section.

B. *Title II*

I. *Describe the methods and factors the eligible agency will use to distribute Title II funds.*

The New Hampshire Department of Education awards multiyear grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers within the state to enable the eligible providers to develop, implement, and improve adult education and literacy activities in New Hampshire. The State utilizes a competitive process for awarding grants and contracts unless a sole source process is warranted consistent with OMB guidelines. The competitive processes are handled through a Request for Proposals (RFP) from eligible applicants. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) promotes coordination between the State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) and the programs funded under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), collectively known as Adult Education programs. To ensure alignment with the State's workforce plan, per Section 107(d)(11)(B)(i), the Board is required to review the applications submitted by providers who are interested in operating an Adult Education program. The Board is responsible for evaluating the extent to which the eligible applicant's grant activities are aligned with the education and training activities identified in the State Plan, as well as the applicant's ability to demonstrate organizational effectiveness supporting successful outcomes. To this end, applicants are required to address how they will assess the quality of their programs, including the process of reviewing and analyzing data for the purposes of informing program decisions and improving program performance.

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.

New Hampshire Department of Education ensures that all eligible providers have 1) direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants or contracts and 2) the same grant or contract announcement process and application process is used for all eligible providers. Adult programs are awarded in response to an RFP , which is solicited once every four years. RFP announcements are posted on the State Procurement Website and shared with all party agencies to post on their websites as well.

C. *Vocational Rehabilitation Program*

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

New Hampshire designates one state agency to administer all Vocational Rehabilitation services, including those for individuals who are blind, thus does not need to split the distribution of funds.

6. Program Data

A. Data Alignment and Integration

Describe the plans of the lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs, along with the State Board, to align and integrate available workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through postsecondary education, and to the extent possible, the Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan. The description of the State's plan for integrating data systems should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date. Describe data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including the State's process to collect and report data on co-enrollment, and for those present in the one-stop centers.

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

Currently, all partner programs except Adult Education use the NH Employment Security Unemployment Insurance Data for calculation of performance measures related to employment, retention, and wage gain through a data exchange. Furthermore, Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I funded programs transmit their reporting data for calculation of performance measures for all of its funds. Financial agreements exist between the NH Employment Security and the respective partner for these services. It is certainly our vision to continue these relationships and provision of management information data sharing systems for determining various partner performances.

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

The NH Works Partners continue to explore methods for integration of data systems beyond performance reporting. NHES and WIOA Title I share the same case management system effective September 2020 and the new Workforce Connect system will help to coordinate upfront services for shared customers. Many of the partners receive no state funds and as a minimum- funded state for federal funds, limited resources exist. As explained earlier, recent efforts to streamline the process between WIOA Title I and Wagner-Peyser services will significantly improve the integration of data for those programs other partners have a computerized case management system that meets their funding stream's specific requirements with several million dollars invested in each system. To integrate a partner case management system for a streamlined intake and service delivery system will require additional funding targeted for this purpose.

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

New Hampshire's Board recognizes the value of aligning partner's technology and data systems for common intake, data collection, eliminating duplication of services and more effective management of the system. However, with limited resources, the Board will continue to explore new methodologies and funding sources to help us achieve these goals. To address this issue, utilizing grant funds from the US Department of Labor received by NH Employment Security, the Workforce Connect system, which provides a common entry portal and registration for NH Work customers, was launched on January 28, 2020.

IV. Describe the State's data systems and procedures to produce the reports required under section 116, performance accountability system. (WIOA section 116(d)(2)).

Using existing methodologies for reporting and performance accountability system in collaboration with PACIA at NHES, we are prepared to update our case management system and related computer scripts to gather needed information for reporting. The IDG will take the lead in working with partner agencies to develop appropriate process and formats for required reports. Furthermore, Adult Education is working to develop an agreement with NH Employment Security to gather and share related information to the extent allowable under the law.

B. Assessment of Participants' Post-Program Success

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

New Hampshire Workforce partners will utilize WIOA performance standards for determining effectiveness for individuals served within these programs, both within the program as well as post-program outcomes. WIOA Title I will provide a year of post training follow-up services. In addition, customer satisfaction surveys are administered semi-annually to NH Works customers. The Performance and Evaluation Committee will monitor the quarterly outcomes of the programs using the federal standards. As time and need permits, additional state standards may be established.

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

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

With the exception of Adult Education, New Hampshire Workforce Partners have existing contracts and relationships with NH Employment Security to utilize quarterly UI wage records for performance accountability, evaluation, and a source for workforce and labor market information consistent with Federal and State Law. NH Employment Security will be working with Adult Education to expand their services to include Adult Education to the extent allowable in the law.

D. Privacy Safeguards

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

All partners maintain participant confidentiality at all times.

- Confidentiality requirements include any information regarding project applications or participants and their immediate families that make be obtained through application forms, interviews, test, reports from public agencies or counselors, or any other source.
- Reasonable steps are taken to ensure the physical security of all data gathered and inform each of its employees, contractors and subrecipients having any involvement with personal data or other confidential information of the laws and regulations related to confidentiality.

7. Priority of Service for Veterans

(2) Describe how the State will implement the priority of service provisions for covered persons in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act, codified at section 4215 of 38 U.S.C., which applies to all employment and training programs funded in whole or in part by the Department of Labor.

The State of New Hampshire is committed to implementing the priority of service provisions for covered persons in compliance with the Jobs for Veterans Act, as outlined in section 4215 of 38 U.S.C. This commitment extends to all employment and training programs funded, either wholly or partially, by the Department of Labor. The priority of service provisions ensures that covered persons, particularly veterans, receive precedence in accessing these programs and related services.

Program operators are required to provide priority of service to veterans and others eligible for all WIOA and Wagner-Peyser funded activities, including technology–assisted activities.

Priority of service means that covered persons are entitled to take precedence over noncovered persons in obtaining employment, training, and placement services as required by VPL 07-09, TEGL 10-09 and TEN 15-10. More specifically, veterans and other eligible either receive access to a service earlier in time than a non-covered person or, if the resource is limited, veterans and other eligible receive access to the service instead of or before the non-covered person. The term "covered person" means any of the following individuals: (A) A Veteran, (B) The spouse of any of the following individuals (i) Any veteran who died of a service-connected disability, (ii) Any member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who, at the time of application for assistance under this section, is listed, pursuant to section 556 of title 37 and regulations issued thereunder, by the Secretary concerned in one or more of the following categories and has been so listed for a total of more than 90 days: (I) missing in action, (II) captured in line of duty by a hostile force, or (III) forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government or power, (iii) Any veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability, (iv) Any veteran who died while a disability so evaluated was in existence.

In implementing priorities of service, program operators must ensure veterans and other eligible receive basic career services and individualized career services before other non- covered individuals. Additionally, they must ensure veterans and other eligible receive first priority on waiting lists for training slots and are enrolled in training prior to non-covered persons. However, once a non- covered participant is enrolled in a workshop or training class, priority of service is not intended to allow veterans and other eligible to bump the non-covered participant from that class or service.

Program operators must ensure that priority of service is applied by all subrecipients of DOL funds. Pertinent language is included in contracts, sub grants, solicitations for proposals, memorandums of understanding, and other service provision agreements.

The application of priority of service varies depending on the eligibility requirements of the particular program. There are four basic categories of DOL-funded programs: universal access programs, programs that require participants to meet specified eligibility criteria, programs with statutory priorities, and programs with discretionary priorities. The following describes how priority of service applies to these basic types of programs.

Universal Access Programs; for workforce programs that operate or deliver services to the public as a whole without targeting specific groups (e.g., WIOA basic career services), veterans and eligible spouses receive priority of service over all other program participants.

Programs with Eligibility Criteria. Eligibility criteria identify basic conditions that each participant in a specific program is required to meet. For example, for the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, every participant is required to meet program eligibility requirements (e.g., age, selective service registration, etc.). A veteran or eligible spouse must first meet all of the eligibility criteria in order to be considered eligible for participation in the program. Once determined eligible for participation, the veteran or eligible spouse receives priority for participation in the program and receipt of services.

Programs with Statutory Priorities. In addition to the eligibility criteria that all participants are required to meet, some programs have priorities that target certain populations and establish a rank order for enrolling or serving participants (e.g., the WIOA priority for Adult funds to serve recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient). While veterans' priority is required under federal law and cannot be waived, it is not intended to displace existing eligibility requirements and statutory priorities. Therefore, in these instances, veterans and eligible spouses must first meet both the program's eligibility and statutory priority criteria to receive priority for participation in the program and receipt of services. Program operators must determine the status of each individual veteran or eligible spouse and apply priority of service in the following order:

- Veterans and other eligible who meet the program's statutory priority requirement (e.g., veterans and other eligible who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient).
- Non-covered persons who meet the program's statutory priority requirement (e.g., non- covered persons who are recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient).
- Veterans and other eligible who do not meet the program's statutory priority requirement.
- Priority populations established by the Governor and/or Local Workforce Development Board.
- Non-covered persons outside the program's statutory priority requirement.

Programs with Discretionary Priorities. Programs with discretionary priorities may make an effort to provide a certain level of service to a particular group. However, the law does not mandate that the target group be served before other eligible individuals. With respect to priority of service, the only feature that distinguishes discretionary targeting programs from universal access programs is the additional application of the discretionary targeting criterion to non-covered persons. Therefore, program operators must apply priority of service in the order below:

- Veterans and other eligible
- Non-covered persons within the discretionary targeting group.
- Non-covered persons outside the discretionary targeting group.

Income Eligibility Requirements. When determining eligibility for programs that have a statutory requirement to serve low-income individuals, many types of military service-related income are exempt. Specifically, the following pay, financial allowances, and financial benefits must be disregarded for veterans, transitioning service members, or any other individuals for whom these amounts would normally be applied in making an eligibility determination.

- Military pay or allowances paid while on active duty.
- Military pay or allowances paid by the VA for vocational rehabilitation, disability payments, or related VA-funded programs (including the VA work study allowance), and including any financial benefits received under the following chapters of Title 38 U.S.C.:

- Chapter 11 - Compensation for service-connected disability or death.
- Chapter 13 - Dependency and indemnity compensation for service-connected deaths.
- Chapter 30 - All-volunteer force educational assistance program.
- Chapter 31 - Training and rehabilitation for veterans with service- connected disabilities.
- Chapter 33 – Post-9/11 educational assistance.
- Chapter 35 - Survivors' and dependents' educational assistance.
- Chapter 36 - Administration of educational benefits.
    - Any benefits received under Title 10 U.S.C. Chapter 106 - Educational assistance for members of the selected reserve.

In contrast, the following types of military-related income are included in low- income calculations:

- Pension payments authorized by Title 10 U.S.C., such as those received by military retirees, whether or not their retirement was based on disability.
- Pension benefits paid under Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 15 – Pensions for low-income, wartime veterans who are disabled for reasons not connected or related to their military service.

It is also important to note that VA benefits for education and training services do not constitute "other grant assistance" under WIOA's eligibility requirements.

Therefore, veterans and other eligible who are eligible for the GI Bill or other forms of VA funded education or training are not required to coordinate their entitlement to those benefits with their eligibility for WIOA-funded training, as stipulated under 20 CFR Section 680.230. Specifically, program operators may not require veterans and others eligible to exhaust their entitlement to VA-funded training prior to enrolling them in WIOA-funded training.

Identifying Veterans and Other Eligible -Program operators must put processes into place to ensure that veterans and other eligible are identified at the point of entry and given an opportunity to take full advantage of priority of service. The point of entry includes physical locations such as NH Works Centers, as well as websites such as NHES Job Match System, and other virtual service delivery resources. These processes should ensure that veterans and other eligible are aware of their entitlement to priority of service, the full array of employment, training, and placement services available under priority of service, any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and services, and in cases of online points of entry, how to access assistance via the nearest NH Works Office. Priority of service is provided starting with the receptionist in the AJC, who is the initial point of contact. A series of questions are asked to efficiently identify veterans or an eligible spouse of a veteran. Veterans and eligible persons are identified at this point and provided priority of service.

Documenting Eligibility for Priority of Service -It is not necessary for staff to verify the status of a veterans and other eligible until the individual undergoes eligibility determination and is enrolled in a WIOA individualized career service or training service. Until the point at which the participant receives an individualized career service or training service, an individual who states they meet the veterans' priority eligibility criteria must be accorded veterans' priority of service on the basis of self-attestation. In those instances in which eligibility determination and enrollment in a WIOA individualized career service occur at the point of entry, a covered person must be enrolled, provided immediate priority, and permitted to follow-up subsequently with any required verification of his or her status as a covered person.

Local Policy and Procedures -Program Operators must establish policy and procedures for implementing priority of service for veterans and others eligible within existing service delivery strategies. Local policies must

ensure that veterans and other eligible are identified at the point of entry and given an opportunity to take full advantage of priority of service. These policies must ensure that veterans and other eligible are aware of their entitlement to priority of service, the full array of employment, training, and placement services available under priority of service, and any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/or services. Additionally, program operators must ensure that written copies of local priority of service policies are maintained at all service delivery points and, to the extent practicable, posted in a way that makes it possible for members of the general public to easily access them. The definitions listed below are for the purposes of implementing priority of service only. The definitions of "veteran" and "eligible spouse" applicable to the priority of service requirement are different from, and broader than, than the definitions of "veteran" and "other eligible persons" applicable to services provided by the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialist and Local Veterans' Employment Representative staff. Priority of service is provided right away, starting at the reception desk in all of the NH Works offices, which is the initial point of contact.

A series of questions are asked to identify potential covered persons, who are then provided an intake form to complete, and efficiently direct customers to the appropriate services. Veterans and others eligible are notified of their entitlement to priority of service at this time by AJC staff. Information on priority of service is also displayed on signage in the NH Works offices as well as on our website and is also represented in our labor exchange system.

Covered Person – a veteran or eligible spouse.

Eligible Spouse – the spouse (including the same-sex spouse) of any of the following:

1. Any veteran who died of a service-connected disability.

2. Any member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who, at the time of application for the priority, is listed in one or more of the following categories and has been so listed for a total of more than 90 days: i. Missing in action.

    a. Captured in the line of duty by a hostile force.

    b. Forcibly detained or interned in the line of duty by a foreign government or power.

3. Any veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability, as evaluated by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

4. Any veteran who died while a disability, as indicated in category c. of this definition, was in existence.

A spouse whose eligibility is derived from a living veteran or service member (i.e., categories b. or c. above) would lose his or her eligibility if the veteran or service member were to lose the status that is the basis for the eligibility (e.g., if a veteran with a total service-connected disability were to receive a revised disability rating at a lower level), or upon divorce from the veteran or service member.

Note: A surviving spouse who is a widow or widower AND remarries on or after December 16, 2003, AND on or after attaining age 57, is entitled to continue to receive Dependency and Indemnity Compensation.

Non-covered Person – any individual who neither meets the definition of veteran nor the definition of eligible spouse.

Point of Entry – the point at which a veteran or eligible spouse expresses an interest in receiving employment, training, and placement services. It may be in-person or online, and can include physical locations such as reception areas, resource areas, and self- services in a NH Works Center, as well as websites such as NHES Job Match System, and other virtual service delivery resources.

Priority of Service – with respect to any qualified job training program, a covered person shall be given priority over a non-covered person for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services provided under that program, notwithstanding any other provision of the law. Priority includes giving access to such services to a covered person before a noncovered person or, if resources are limited, giving access to such services to a covered person instead on a non-covered person.

Program Operator – a recipient or subrecipient of DOL funds for a qualified job training program.

Qualified Job Training Program – any program or service for workforce preparation, development, or delivery that is directly funded, in whole or in part by the DOL.

Recipient – an entity that is awarded federal financial assistance, in whole or in part, directly from the DOL or through a sub award for any qualified job training program.

Subrecipient – an entity that is awarded federal financial assistance through a subaward funded by the DOL IB) for any qualified job training program.

Veteran – a person who served at least one day in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. Active service includes full- time duty in the National Guard or a Reserve component, other than full-time duty for training purposes. Active service does not include full-time active duty performed by National Guard personnel who are mobilized by state rather than federal authorities.

The term “veteran” is defined in WIOA Section 3(63).

The term “eligible spouse” is defined in Section 101 of title 38, United States Code. The term “priority of service” is defined in WIOA Section 133(b) and 134(c)(3)(E).

The State Veteran Services plan defines the veteran priority of service for Wagner-Peyser pursuant to the Jobs for Veterans Act. Priority is given to veterans for all new job listings posted on the NHWorks Job Match System by placing new job orders on a twenty-four-hour veteran hold during which time the job order is only viewable by staff for the referral of veterans, and on-line the job order can only be viewed by registrants that are identified as veterans.

NH Works monitors priority of service through review of the States Performance Outcome Data, quarterly Manager’s Report on Service to Veterans and observation. In addition, the WIOA adult program tracks veteran enrollments quarterly, monitoring access and outcomes to ensure veterans receive priority services. Local sub-recipient policy and process manuals outline the veteran priority process to be followed. For program year 2020, veterans represented 4.6% of total participants in the adult and dislocated worker WIOA funded program.

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

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) with regard to the physical and programmatic

accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

The collaborative partnerships that exist with collocation of partner agency staff from Employment Security (Wagner-Peyser, WIOA services for dislocated workers, Veterans Services, Farm Workers, Trade Act, Re-employment Services and Eligibility Assessment, Granite State Jobs Act – WorkNowNH, WorkInvestNH, Reentry program); Vocational Rehabilitation (people with disabilities, adult basic education); Community Action Agency (WIOA services , displaced homemakers, low-income individuals and connects to CAP services such as Head Start, Fuel Assistance, and other support programs); Older Worker Program (employment and support programs); and Granite State Independent Living (benefit specialists for the disabled) ensures that the full range of employment and training programs are accessible in one location to meet the needs of specific target populations. In addition, although no longer co-located, a close relationship and co-enrollment exists with the NH Employment Program (TANF recipients).

Collectively, these partner agencies form a network of internal and external resources and services accessible to individuals in need of specific and/or specialized assistance in overcoming barriers to employment. In addition, One-Stop Career Centers are fully accessible and offer a variety of specialized equipment and resources to address the needs of people with disabilities, and through the "language line" and access to interpreter services, people with limited English-speaking proficiency are able to access information and services.

The State will continue to support enhanced services to those with significant barriers to employment through a variety of new and ongoing strategies. Accessibility and quality of service provision will continue to be evaluated affecting greater access to employment opportunities for people with disabilities and will continue to be addressed through the collaborative partnership established through the Governor's Task Force on People with Disabilities, which is directly linked to One-Stop center activities, and continuous improvement strategies that include staff development and adopting new approaches to service delivery will be planned for and implemented to achieve improved services and outcomes.

As referenced earlier, all partners provide employment and training services in response to the needs of individuals with disabilities. One of the NH Works Partners, NH Department of Education, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) focuses on individuals with significant disabilities. They are co-located at each of the twelve NH Works offices. VR has productive relationships with all of the NH Works partners. Together they assist those mutual customers with disabilities in obtaining necessary services to improve their ability to obtain and maintain employment. The long-term strategy to improve services to and employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities includes plans for promotion and development of employment opportunities, job counseling and job placement. This is achieved through individual and partner resources, as appropriate. Joint services to employers have included those listed below and similar events are anticipated for the future:

- Yearly employment leadership awards to highlight employers with inclusive hiring practices for people with disabilities.
- Business to business expos
- Business summits
- Chamber of Commerce events

- Partnering for staff capacity at large job fairs (i.e. Merrimack Premium Outlets, etc.) VR personnel also provided partner placement staff with the Association of Community

Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) model. This training program improved the job placement and coaching skills of youth staff assisting people with disabilities in obtaining and maintaining employment. Furthermore, NH Vocational Rehabilitation was recognized in 2012 as the Business Assistance Organization of the Year by the Business NH Magazine and the NH Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives.

The Professional Development Team has included programs pertaining to serving individuals with disabilities. In the spring is the annual NH Works Training Conference where traditionally a workshop regarding this training need occurs. In addition, on-going trainings pertaining to serving individuals with disabilities will occur as the need is determined by the Professional Development Team.

The State's one-stop certification process for its comprehensive center includes a review of the Center using the Americans with Disabilities Act Checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal. Furthermore, all of the partner programs require accessibility in both rented and state-owned properties.

9. Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals who are English Language Learners

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

New Hampshire’s One Stop Career Centers are each equipped with tools and staff to support the needs of individuals with limited English proficiency. Computer labs at One-Stop Career Centers offer extensive computer-based learning tools and are the state’s main effort to provide basic skills, literacy, and English as Second Language training to WIOA customers on a drop-in, open- access basis. If a customer is determined in need of these services, they are referred directly to WIOA Title II Adult Education services for remedial basic skills, English as a Second/Other Language and related services.

IV. Coordination with Combined State Plan Programs

V. Common Assurances

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that:	
1.	The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member rep- resents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;
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;
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;
4.	(a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administrating the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;
5.	The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;

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);
7.	The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;
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;
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;
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);
11.	Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and
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.

VI. Program-Specific State Plan Requirements for Core Programs

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

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

Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I-B. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following with respect to activities carried out under subtitle B—

General Requirements

(a) Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas.

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

New Hampshire is a single workforce area, and therefore does not designate regions or local workforce development areas. Infrastructure funding is negotiated at the state level with individual partner entities through the One-Stop Operator MOU process, appeals are handled through NH Employment Security, and ultimately the Governor if necessary.

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

New Hampshire is a single workforce area, and therefore does not designate regions or local workforce development areas. Infrastructure funding is negotiated at the state level with individual partner entities through the One-Stop Operator MOU process, appeals are handled through NH Employment Security, and ultimately the Governor if necessary.

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

New Hampshire is a single workforce area, and therefore does not designate regions or local workforce development areas. Infrastructure funding is negotiated at the state level with individual partner entities through the One-Stop Operator MOU process, appeals are handled through NH Employment Security, and ultimately the Governor if necessary.

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

New Hampshire is a single workforce area, and therefore does not designate regions or local workforce development areas. Infrastructure funding is negotiated at the state level with individual partner entities through the One-Stop Operator MOU process, appeals are handled through NH Employment Security, and ultimately the Governor if necessary. The dispute resolution process is for use by the Partners when one or more parties to this agreement are unable to reach the agreement necessary to execute the MOU. A disagreement reaches the level of dispute resolution when an issue arises out of the development and negotiation of an

MOU that is not easily coming to a point of resolution. It is the responsibility of the SWIB Chair (or designee) to coordinate the MOU dispute resolution to ensure that issues are being resolved appropriately. Any party to the MOU may seek resolution under this process. All Parties shall actively participate in negotiations in a good faith effort to reach agreement. Disputes should be resolved informally to the extent possible. Should informal resolution efforts fail, the dispute resolution process must be formally initiated by the petitioner seeking resolution. The petitioner must send a notification to the SWIB Chair (or designee) and all Parties to the MOU regarding the conflict. The SWIB Chair (or designee) shall place the dispute on the agenda of a special meeting of the SWIB's Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall attempt to mediate and resolve the dispute. Disputes shall be resolved by a 2/3 majority consent of the Executive Committee members present. The decision of the Executive Committee shall be final and binding unless such a decision is in contradiction of applicable State and Federal laws or regulations governing the Partner agencies. The right of appeal no longer exists when a decision is final. Additionally, final decisions will not be precedent setting or binding on future conflict resolutions unless they are officially stated in this procedure. The Executive Committee must provide a written response and dated summary of the proposed resolution to all Parties to the MOU. The SWIB Chair (or designee) will contact the petitioner and the appropriate Parties to verify that all are in agreement with the proposed resolution.

(b) Statewide Activities.

(1) Provide State policies or guidance for the statewide workforce development system and for use of State funds for workforce investment activities.

Policies and MOUs governing the workforce development system may be found at the NH Works website: www.nhworks.org.

All of the State partner agencies are following NH State Laws and Accounting principles which can be found at NH Manual of Procedures. In addition, the Department of Education Bureau of Federal Compliance has information available related to federal fund related fiscal requirements. This information can be found here: Bureau of Federal Compliance | Department of Education (nh.gov)

As a single workforce area, funds are distributed as outlined in the federal statue. The State does not currently provide the Office of Workforce Opportunity with any state funds to assist with Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth funding.

(2) Describe how the State intends to use Governor's set aside funding for mandatory and discretionary activities, including how the State will conduct evaluations of Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth activities.

The Governor's Set aside funding may be used for system costs including operation of the One-Stop delivery system, disseminating the state list of eligible training providers, conducting evaluation of programs or activities, technical assistance, capacity development, and activities for hard to serve populations. In the past, the Governor released the use of discretionary funds to support state sector development efforts and the Recovery Friendly Workplace

Initiative, as recommended and approved by the Board. Discussions are currently in process for determining the best use for discretionary funds.

(3) Describe how the State will utilize Rapid Response funds to respond to layoffs and plant closings and coordinate services to quickly aid companies and their affected workers. States also should describe any layoff aversion strategies they have implemented to address at risk companies and workers.

Rapid Response is a complex, challenging, and invaluable service. The extensive collaboration between multiple, separate state and federal agencies, private entities, and community support has proven invaluable to NH companies and their workers. Rapid Response customers have benefited immensely from the partnerships with economic development activities, apprenticeships and incumbent worker programs, Trade Act programs, and numerous reemployment programs. Partner assistance has also provided vocational, health, financial, and educational resources and support to workers and their families. The experience and dedication of the Rapid Response Partners, State and Local Teams, and Federal support has consistently allowed for the highest level of quality and service delivery to participants throughout NH.

In addition to the on-site services provided through response for layoff and closure events, Rapid Response provides an ongoing, comprehensive approach to identifying, planning for, and responding to layoffs, and preventing or minimizing their impacts wherever possible. To ensure high quality and maximum effectiveness, successful rapid Response strategies include at least the following:

- Informational and direct reemployment services for workers;
- Solutions for businesses in transition (growth and decline);
- Convening, facilitating, and brokering connections, networks, and partners; and,
- Strategic planning, data gathering, and analysis designed to anticipate, prepare for, and manage economic transition.
- Aligning sector strategies to support layoff aversion activities.

Rapid Response activities are defined as those activities that include initial contact with the affected company including all state and federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) activities, company fact-finding activities, lay-off aversion activities, and contact with and coordination of the local Rapid Response Team for the purpose of planning and implementing Rapid Response information sessions.

Employee Retention Activities:

Employee Retention activities are generally defined as those which include contact with a company when the company is faced with issues that could impact their workforce. Causal issues and possible solutions are assessed, alternatives to layoffs are discussed and guidance is offered regarding working and communication with the workforce during difficult times.

Employee Retention is an integral element of Rapid Response activities. Also, included are sector partner activities that address preventative measures designed to mitigate and/or avert

layoffs in industry sectors based on labor market indicators of potential economic downturns and/or business/industry input.

State Dislocated Worker Unit Administrator (DWUA)

The State Dislocated Worker Unit Administrator (DWUA) within BEA oversees the operations of Rapid Response activities. The DWUA works directly with the Division of Economic Development (DED) Regional Business Resource Specialists to compile timely and relevant reports to the Commissioner of BEA; is responsible for the design and production of reports, Dislocated Worker packets, and other public and internal documents and reports; and notification to employers regarding state and federal WARN Act laws and related information.

Division of Economic Development (DED) Regional Business Resource Specialist(s)

The DED Regional Business Resource Specialist(s) is the primary liaison with affected employers experiencing a layoff(s) during the initial development and deployment of rapid response informational sessions. The DED Regional Business Resource Specialists, working with the DWUA, are responsible for making the initial contact with any company facing a major layoff, plant closing or other similar mass job dislocation for the purposes of:

- Soliciting employer buy-in and timely commitment to helping affected dislocated workers,
- Working with a local Rapid Response team from NH Works partners to arrange a meeting(s) of affected employees for the purpose of describing available services,
- Facilitating the Rapid Response meeting and introducing partner presenters,
- Collecting/updating the information needed to complete a “Fact Finding Report” and RR follow-up report.

If applicable, this should be done at an on-site meeting with company officials. The Regional Business Resource Specialists are also responsible for ensuring that results of the fact finding research will be sent via email to members of local Rapid Response Team, the Office of Workforce Opportunity State Director, the NHES Operations Director and others as deemed appropriate.

Any layoffs, plant closing, or mass job dislocation due to natural or other disasters shall be reported by staff from all participating agencies to the DWUA as soon as possible. The quickness and conciseness of information is paramount in providing initial Rapid Response Services to displaced workers.

Local Rapid Response Team (Local Dislocated Worker Unit)

Local Rapid Response teams are comprised of partner agency personnel in the affected NH Works Center as well as other agencies and organizations as necessary. Required partners include:

- The DED Regional Business Resource Specialist
- Local NHES Manager
- WIOA Workforce Development Coordinator

When appropriate, other partners such as those listed below, may be included:

- Department of Education: Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, Bureau of Adult Education
- NHES Trade Act staff
- Labor union representative (if a collective bargaining unit is affected)
- Managers or designated representatives of other partner agencies (e.g., Health and Human Services)
- Affected company representative
- Local officials
- NH or US Department of Labor
- NHES LMI staff (economic data input)
- Community College representation

The responsibilities of the Local Rapid Response Team(s) include the delivery of services at the local level. Among the activities they will undertake are:

- Participate in the presentation of information and distribution of Dislocated Worker Packets AND Rapid Response Worker Surveys to affected dislocated workers (both Rapid Response meeting attendees and non-attendees).
- Plan and coordinate any allowable initial services necessary to assist affected dislocated workers.

State Rapid Response Team (State Dislocated Worker Unit)

In the event of major layoffs and/or closures impacting a community or region's economy and workforce, the Dislocated Worker Unit Administrator will convene a partners meeting comprised of policy level decision makers, including but not limited to:

- The Governor's Office
- Chair, Statewide Workforce Board
- Department of Business & Economic Affairs
- NH Employment Security
- NH Department of Labor
- NH Department of Health & Human Services
- NH Department of Education: Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, Bureau of Adult Education
- Area elected officials
- Labor-Management Committee (if applicable)

The responsibility of the State Rapid Response Team is to develop strategy and identify resources to determine needed services and the most efficient delivery of services.

The Statewide Rapid Response lead is the Dislocated Worker Unit Administrator (DWUA). The DWUA oversees the operations and implementation of the initial NH Works Rapid Response services and activities described in the Non-Financial Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Working with local NH Works partners as well as appropriate federal, state and local officials and agencies, the DWUA will supervise development of prospective strategies for addressing dislocation events and ensuring rapid access to the best range of allowable assistance.

Rapid Response Procedures

A minimum of twenty-five (25) displaced workers must be affected for full services (i.e. formal rapid response information sessions) to be implemented under the Rapid Response procedure, with consideration given to available resources in the local NH Works center. When the number of layoff are less than twenty-five (25), the affected dislocated workers will be provided with an information packet and will be referred to NH Works offices for assistance.

Worker participation is critical to the success of the readjustment process and is ensured when employer cooperation is an early and collaborative part of the process. To achieve the highest level of worker participation, the DED Regional Business Resource Specialist will contact company officials to confirm the information regarding layoff or closure activity, describe NH Rapid Response services and request a list of dislocated workers with contact, occupational, and profile information, as available. In the event of a twenty-five-person or more layoff/closure, the DED Regional Business Resource Specialist will request input from the company to complete a Rapid Response Fact Finding Report and cooperation with arranging a Rapid Response Information Session. Smaller groups of affected workers will be provided with Rapid Response Packets.

Receipt of a state or federal WARN Act by any personnel shall immediately be forwarded to the NH Commissioner of Labor, with copies to the Commissioner of BEA; the DWUA; and the Commissioner of Employment Security. The NH Department of Labor shall maintain a list of all state and federal WARN Act notices received.

A Rapid Response Information Session will be offered to the dislocated workers in a timely manner, preferably on site at the company. The main purpose of the Rapid Response Informational Session with affected workers is to inform them of the availability of re-employment services. The meeting also helps workers cope with the emotional, financial and job-hunting stresses that accompany unemployment. A Rapid Response informational meeting is facilitated by the DED Regional Business Resource Specialist.

(4) Describe the State policies and procedures to provide Rapid Responses in cases of natural disasters including coordination with FEMA and other entities.

In the event of a Natural Disaster, the Dislocated Worker Unit (DWU) shall convene partners immediately to coordinate a comprehensive response specific to the emergency situation. The work of the DWU shall include activities necessary to plan and deliver services to enable dislocated workers to transition to new employment as quickly as possible, following a natural or other disaster resulting in a mass job dislocation. Appropriate to the level and/or nature of a dislocation, the Dislocated Worker Unit Administrator will convene a partners meeting comprised of policy-level decision makers from core partners and others as needed. This meeting may include, but not be limited to:

- The Governor's Office staff

- Chair, Statewide Workforce Board
- Department of Resources & Economic Development
- NH Employment Security
- NH Dept. of Labor
- NH Dept. of Health & Human Services
- NH Department of Education: Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, Bureau of Adult Education
- Area elected officials
- Labor-Management Committee (if applicable)

The responsibility of the State Rapid Response Team is to develop strategy and identify resources to determine needed services and the most efficient delivery of services. This may include the inclusion of FEMA, if appropriate and necessary for the situation.

As appropriate, the DWU will follow guidance provided in the NHES Unemployment Insurance (UI) Information Technology (IT) Continuity of Operations Plan, which details procedures for preparing alternate sites and associated activity-specific plans and procedures to help ensure the safety of personnel and to allow essential staff to continue mission critical operations in the event of an emergency; and/or follow the guidance provided in the State Disaster Preparedness Plan as needed.

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

Once a company has been certified for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), NHES contacts the certified company in order to request a layoff list with addresses, separation date, etc. Upon receipt of the layoff list, the information is loaded into NHES' database and a letter advising them of a certification is immediately sent. Benefits Information Sessions are scheduled, and all adversely affected workers are invited to attend through a direct mailing. A comprehensive overview of the benefits and services is given and NHES staff schedule one-on-one assessment interviews with the workers at that time. A WIOA staff person is invited to attend the sessions to describe the benefits of co-enrolling in their programs. Rapid Response services are utilized for every worker group that files a TAA provision through the NH Works/American Job Centers staff. Rapid Response services are utilized for every worker group that files a TAA provision through the NH Works/American Job Centers staff.

The Rapid Response specialist will pull together a team of experts to provide information about and access to services, such as the following, in a centralized and convenient location before the layoff or closure occurs:

- Unemployment Insurance;
- Health and pension benefits;
- Job search activities;
- Education services;
- Training Program;
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and NAFTA/TAA programs;
- Social Services programs;
- Community and economic development activities;
- Emergency assistance; and.
- Crisis counseling.

In addition to the on-site services provided through response for layoff and closure events, Rapid Response provides an ongoing, comprehensive approach to identifying, planning for and responding to layoffs, and preventing or minimizing their impacts whenever possible. To ensure high quality and maximum effectiveness, successful Rapid Response strategies include at least the following:

- Informational and direct reemployment services for workers;
- Solutions for businesses in transition (growth and decline);
- Convening, facilitating, and brokering connections, networks, and partners; and
- Strategic planning, data gathering, and analysis designed to anticipate, prepare for, and manage is faced with issues economic transition.

As the company is being processed as a Trade Act Company, the client may receive dislocated worker services including eligibility certification, assessment, training, and/or placement services. Once the company is certified eligible for the Trade Act, the individual will be dually enrolled.

(c) **Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Requirements**.

(1) Work-Based Training Models. If the State is utilizing work-based training models (e.g. on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, and customized training) as part of its training strategy and these strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan, describe the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

If the State is utilizing work-based training models (e.g. on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, and customized training) as part of its training strategy and these strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan, describe the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

The Return to Work program is one part of the Governor's NH Working Initiative. The Return to Work program is an opportunity for a trainee to get their foot in the door and learn new skills and an opportunity for a New Hampshire employer to train without the accompanying

costs for full-time or part-time job openings that they have. The training must be authorized through the Department of Employment Security prior to the beginning of the training. The training program may be up to six weeks, and a maximum of 24 hours per week per benefit year.

Claimants are required to submit paper weekly claims for benefits timely and meet all other unemployment compensation eligibility requirements. Claimants will continue to receive their

weekly unemployment compensation benefits during the training program. A Return to Work claimant trainee must be able and available to seek and accept work during this period. A non-claimant trainee is required to complete a weekly status form to NHES. The trainee is covered under a state provided Workers Compensation program.

In addition, adult, dislocated worker, NEG, and youth may be enrolled in On-the-Job Training programs. The term "On-the-Job Training" (OJT) means training by an employer that is provided to a participant paid while engaged in productive work in a job that –

1. Provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job;

2. Provides reimbursement to the employer of up to 50% of the participant wage rate for the cost of providing the training and additional supervision related to the training; and

3. Is limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained, not exceeding 6 months, and taking into account the content of the training, the prior work experience of the participant, the skills gap between the participant's education and experience level and the skills required for the job, and the service strategy of the participant, as appropriate.

The State of New Hampshire supports on-the-job training (OJT) as an important training service for WIOA clients to receive the skills necessary to transition into meaningful employment. Prior to the establishment of an OJT contract, employers are screened to ensure the job provides a wage that meets the participant's needs and to ensure the employer meets all regulatory aspects to be eligible for OJT funds. The length of OJT training is determined through research of the O*Net system to identify the complexity of the specific job in conjunction with the participant's current level of skill in that occupation.

The State of New Hampshire uses work-based training models including on-the-job training, internships, and registered apprenticeships. Each of these work-based training models provides participants with the opportunity to quickly develop occupational skills and expertise in their area of training. Additionally, while they are acquiring new skills and/or improving their existing skills, they may be earning a wage as well. Job Developers reach out to employers to connect interested participants with appropriate opportunities. WIOA career navigators monitor work-based learning to ensure the participant is progressing and meeting their goals as well as the needs of the employer.

Work-based learning programs allow employers to have an active role in the development of the participants training plan. In close collaboration with the job developer and career navigator, employers tailor the training plan to meet both their business needs and the

participant's occupational and professional development interests. Additionally, if an employer participates in an on-the-job-training or a Youth internship opportunity, they are eligible to receive wage reimbursements while the participants are in training.

WorkInvestNH, , which is funded with state unemployment insurance trust fund, and requires a dollar-for-dollar match, is managed on the state level and provides training assistance for incumbent workers to employers. Businesses may apply for assistance by completing an application at www.nhjobtrainingfund.org. On the local level (statewide), Adult and/or Dislocated funds (20% maximum expenditures) support incumbent worker training in sector industries to assist with expenses associated with new or upgraded skills training for permanent company workers. Training is focused in occupational skills training such as industry or company specific work skills, technical computer skills, new manufacturing technologies and/or equipment operation training. Eligibility guidelines and application details are available at www.snhs.org. Although no customized training programs currently exist, we may pursue this training strategy if circumstances warrant.

(2) Registered Apprenticeship. Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy for service design and delivery (e.g., outreach to sponsors and prospective sponsors, identifying potential participants and connecting them to apprenticeship opportunities).

Local one-stop staff maintains communication with Office of Apprenticeship representatives for the purposes of sharing information on apprenticeship opportunities. Direct access to Apprenticeship information for Region I can be found on the NH Works website. USDOL apprenticeship staff is available to answer any questions that staff may have about apprenticeship in general, or a particular training program. In addition, the Community College System of New Hampshire, a NHWorks Consortium member, through their Department of Labor State Apprenticeship Expansion grant, will work to strengthen ties between key partners. Staff and partners will continue to receive training and information about apprenticeship opportunities being developed by CCSNH, and will collaborate around leveraging funds through WIOA for apprenticeship programs as well as working to build a pipeline to apprenticeship for dislocated & disadvantaged workers across the state.

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

ELIGIBLE TRAINING PROVIDER POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy and procedures govern the operation of the statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) in New Hampshire. They address the activities of the Governor, State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) and their NH Works locations, and those training providers who wish to offer services to individuals whose training is funded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This directive supersedes the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and establishes the minimum performance standards for initial and subsequent eligibility for training providers who list training programs on the ETPL. New Hampshire is a single state entity, with the State serving as the state and local board, with a single ETPL system.

- Establish procedures for determining the initial and subsequent eligibility of public and/or private training providers to be included in the statewide ETPL.
- Establish procedures for Registered Apprenticeship Programs to be included in the statewide ETPL.
- Emphasize informed customer choice, performance accountability, and continuous improvement.
- Develop and operate the ETPL in partnership with the SWIB. The ETPL is designed to gather and display useful information on training providers, their services and the quality of their programs.
- The Office of Workforce Opportunity (OWO) receives applications from training providers for listing. In partnership with NH Employment Security (NHES), OWO staff determines if the applicant meets State criteria for listing.
- The OWO will accept and verify certain information forwarded by training providers, compile them into a comprehensive state list (the ETPL), and disseminate the ETPL with cost and performance information to the AJC (American Job Center) system. The ETPL is available online at www.nscite.org.
- WIOA Counselors may issue an Individual Training Account (ITA) to an adult, youth or dislocated worker (eligible participant) to fund training services after the customer's needs have been determined. The training provider must be selected from those listed on the ETPL (exceptions are listed in Section III). The eligible individual will then compare the offerings on the ETPL, and, with the assistance of WIOA staff, select the most appropriate training program.

Pursuant to Section 122(a)(3) of WIOA, apprenticeship programs registered with the U.S. Department of Labor, Apprenticeship and Training Division are automatically eligible to be included on the ETPL. USDOL and the State of New Hampshire are committed to developing apprenticeship opportunities for the citizens of New Hampshire. A Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) is a proven model of apprenticeship that has been validated by the U.S. Department of Labor or a State Apprenticeship Agency. RAPs enable and energize more employers to participate and provide them access to larger talent pools that have been trained for entry-level management positions, thereby meeting industry demands and reducing unemployment rates across the country.

This rigorous vetting process on the national level allows the registered apprenticeship program to bypass the initial or continued eligibility applications under these procedures. Although registered apprenticeship programs are automatically eligible, the program will not be included on the ETPL unless the program sponsor notifies the OWO. However, TEGL 8-19 states that all sponsors need to be notified of their right to be included on the list and sponsors need to consent to be on the list. The US Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship in NH will provide contact information to staff at OWO of all new apprenticeship programs on a quarterly basis. OWO staff will email (or mail) all new registered apprenticeships within 30 days of receiving the list. An informational letter about the ETPL and the benefits of being included on the list, as well as the instructions and information required to register the apprenticeship will be included or attached to the email.

As stated earlier, Registered Apprenticeship sponsors interested in being on the ETPL will not be subject to the same application and performance information requirements as other

providers. All Registered Apprenticeship occupations for which registered apprenticeship programs are accepting applications or actively conducting apprenticeship training are considered an in-demand occupation for the purposes of ETPL eligibility. Once an apprenticeship program is registered on the ETPL, the program will remain on the ETPL until the program is no longer registered with the US Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship in NH or until the provider notifies OWO, in writing, of their intention to be removed from the list. Additionally, OWO in coordination with the Office of Apprenticeship will verify the status of RAPs at least every two years to ensure that they remain registered by DOLETA and remove any apprenticeship program from the ETPL that is no longer registered with DOLETA.

Unlike registered apprenticeship programs, pre-apprenticeship programs do not have automatic eligibility for the ETPL. Pre-apprenticeship programs are subject to the same eligibility process and performance requirements as are all other eligible training providers.

Apprenticeship programs that request to be on the ETPL are required to provide the following information to OWO:

1. Occupations included within the registered apprenticeship program;
2. The name and address of the registered apprenticeship program sponsor;
3. The name and address of the Related Technical Instruction provider, and the location of instruction if different from the program sponsor's address;
4. The method and length of instruction; and,
5. The number of active apprentices.

Registered Apprenticeship programs are not subject to performance reporting or review by the state to be approved for the ETPL, as provided in 20 CFR 680.470. Registered apprenticeship programs are required to comply with all laws and rules regarding apprenticeship programs including but not limited to CFR29, Part 29 and Part 30 and applicable labor laws in the State of New Hampshire.

Definition of a Program of Training Services

A program of training services, as referred to in the WIOA regulations, section 680.410(a), is one or more courses or classes, or a structured regimen that leads to one of the following:

1. A recognized post-secondary credential, secondary school diploma or its equivalent;
2. Employment; or
3. Measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment.

Providers are entities eligible to receive WIOA funds for adult and dislocated worker participants who enroll in training. Potential providers include:

1. Institutions of higher education that provide a program which leads to a recognized post-secondary credential;
2. Entities that carry out programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act;
3. Other public or private providers of a program of training services, which may include joint labor-management organizations and eligible providers of adult

education and literacy activities under title II if such activities are provided in combination with occupational skills training; and

4. Local Boards if they meet the conditions of WIOA. NOTE: NH does not have a Local Board.

In order for a provider of training services to receive WIOA funds, its program(s) must be listed on the ETPL. These programs may provide training services, such as:

1. Occupational skills training, including training for non-traditional employment;
2. Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs;
3. Training programs operated by the private sector;
5. Skill upgrading and retraining;
6. Registered Apprenticeship programs.
7. Entrepreneurial training; and
8. Job readiness skills, adult education and literacy activities provided in combination with any other training service outlined above.

Under WIOA section 134(c)(3)(G), limited exceptions allow local areas to provide training through a contract for services rather than Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) in order to maintain consumer choice. These programs are not included on the ETPL. These exceptions include:

1. On the Job Training
2. Customized training
3. Incumbent worker training
4. Transitional employment
5. Instances where the Board determines there are insufficient numbers of eligible providers of training services in the local area.
6. Where the Board determines an exception is necessary to meet the needs of individuals with barriers to employment (including assisting individuals with disabilities or adults in need of adult education and literacy services)
7. Where the Board determines that it would be most appropriate to award a contract to an institution of higher education or other eligible provider to facilitate the training of multiple individuals in in-demand industry sectors or occupations (where the contract does not limit customer choice)
8. Pay-for-performance contracts

A. The OWO will use the NH Works Source for Consumer Information on Training and Education (NSCITE) ETPL Module for accepting applications from providers to be listed on the ETPL. The OWO will make determinations for initial and subsequent eligibility of providers.
B. The OWO will establish policies requiring performance above the state minimum standards for providers to be included on the ETPL.
C. The OWO will ensure that the data supplied by providers for ETPL eligibility is complete, accurate and current. This includes approval to operate by NH Higher Education Commission[6], or another agency that verifies accreditation and issues licenses to training providers, such as NH Department of Safety.
D. The OWO will also ensure that providers meet the state's minimum performance standards. Providers must supply evidence of their reported outcomes. Aggregate performance reports will be pulled annually around January/February for OWO to review training providers' performance and ensure providers meet the state's minimum performance standards. The OWO will post them in a way that makes them easily available for public access. This section does not apply to Registered Apprenticeships.
E. The OWO will have agreements with approved training providers that include provisions requiring providers to maintain sufficient records and to make these records available for monitoring or audit by the state.
F. The OWO will work with local and regional employers and education providers to ensure that training programs provide credentials, certificates and/or skills that are valued by employers within priority industry sectors identified in the State plan. Training must result in the awarding of an industry-recognized credential, national or state certificate or degree, including all industry appropriate competencies, licensing and/or certification requirements.
G. The OWO will ensure that ITAs being provided are for training programs that support a career pathway for the client in a growing, in-demand and/or priority industry sector as identified in the State plan. ITAs will be provided in instances where it can be demonstrated that there is a demand for workers in the field of employment being sought by the client, and that training will result in increased earnings and career pathway opportunities.

1. All new and current ETPL providers will be required to register in NSCITE and submit their request to the OWO for approval to have programs listed on the ETPL.
2. Once approved by the OWO, the provider shall enter all the program information, completing all the required fields, including performance data in NH Works Source for Consumer Information on Training and Education (NSCITE). Eligibility is determined on a program-by-program basis for each provider. Instructions and definitions are provided to assist with this process.
3. The OWO will use the NH Works Source for Consumer Information on Training and Education (NSCITE) ETPL Module for accepting applications from providers to be

listed on the ETPL. The OWO will make determinations for initial and subsequent eligibility of providers.

4. The OWO will establish policies requiring performance above the state minimum standards for providers to be included on the ETPL.
5. The OWO will ensure that the data supplied by providers for ETPL eligibility is complete, accurate and current. This includes approval to operate by NH Higher Education Commission, or another agency that verifies accreditation and issues licenses to training providers, such as NH Department of Safety.
6. The OWO will also ensure that providers meet the state's minimum performance standards. Providers must supply evidence of their reported outcomes. Aggregate performance reports will be pulled annually around January/February for OWO to review training providers' performance and ensure providers meet the state's minimum performance standards. The OWO will post them in a way that makes them easily available for public access. This section does not apply to Registered Apprenticeships.
7. The OWO will have agreements with approved training providers that include provisions requiring providers to maintain sufficient records and to make these records available for monitoring or audit by the state.
8. The OWO will work with local and regional employers and education providers to ensure that training programs provide credentials, certificates and/or skills that are valued by employers within priority industry sectors identified in the State plan. Training must result in the awarding of an industry-recognized credential, national or state certificate or degree, including all industry appropriate competencies, licensing and/or certification requirements.
9. The OWO will ensure that ITAs being provided are for training programs that support a career pathway for the client in a growing, in-demand and/or priority industry sector as identified in the State plan. All training programs must ensure equitable access to diverse customers including those with disabilities. When training funding is limited, those individuals who are identified as being a priority of service participants shall receive funding based on their priority of service. In addition, ITAs will be provided in instances where it can be demonstrated that there is a demand for workers in the field of employment being sought by the client, and that training will result in increased earnings and career pathway opportunities.
10. All providers are required to enter performance data for each program listed on the ETPL and provide evidence to the OWO that they have met the minimum performance criteria. Programs that do not include performance data will not be approved for listing on the ETPL.
11. Providers should be prepared to provide a copy of their accreditation and license to operate as a training provider.
12. Out of State Training Providers - New Hampshire has reciprocal agreements with Massachusetts, Vermont, and Maine that allow qualifying WIOA participants in New Hampshire to use ITAs to enroll in a program of training identified on those states' ETPL, and for WIOA participants in those states to use ITAs to enroll in training programs on New Hampshire's ETPL. Final approval for using a New Hampshire -

funded ITA at a Massachusetts, Vermont, or Maine training provider rests with New Hampshire WIOA service providers.

13. Other out-of-state training institutions that are not operating within New Hampshire and with which New Hampshire does not have a reciprocal agreement must apply to be on New Hampshire's ETPL. In general, training providers should have a permanent location in NH in order to be included on the ETPL. NH will consider a program as ETP- eligible if it is on the ETPL in the state in which it is located. To find ETP Lists in other states, go to servicelocator.org. In sum, out-of-state providers (aside from those in NH's bordering states) must meet the following criteria for consideration of inclusion on NH's ETPL:
    a. Meet the eligibility requirements established in this policy
    b. Meet the licensing requirements of its home state, and
    c. Be listed on its home state's Eligible Training Provider List.

14. Distance Learning - Training programs in which the majority of training is delivered via distance or online learning must meet the following requirements:

    a. Training providers must have a mechanism for student interaction with an instructor or instructors.
    b. Providers Headquartered Outside of New Hampshire: Training providers must have a process in place that ensures periodic assessment of each student.
    c. Training providers' policy must describe the responsibilities of each party (training provider, participant) to the distance or online learning experience.

Procedures apply to all training providers, with the exception of Registered Apprenticeship, in light of the detailed application and vetting procedures under which apprenticeship programs become registered. Initial eligibility is based on the following:

1. Meeting State minimum performance criteria, as approved by the State Board.
2. Training must be for occupations in industry sectors that are in-demand7. Training must result in completion of an industry-recognized credential, national or state certificate, or degree, including all industry appropriate competencies, licensing and/or certification requirements.
3. Providers must provide evidence of accreditation and/or licensure with the appropriate state or other governing entity to have their programs listed on the ETPL. Potential entities include:
    a. NH Department of Education
    b. NH Higher Education Commission
    c. University System of NH Board of Trustees
    d. NH Department of Safety
    e. NH Board of Nursing
    f. NH Division of Fire Standards
    g. NH Division of Public Health Services
    h. NH Board of Barbering, Cosmetology and Esthetics
    i. Postsecondary institutions eligible under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA) and offering programs leading toward an associate degree, baccalaureate degree, or certificate

Additionally, Eligible Training Providers must provide the following for Initial Eligibility:

1. Evidence that programs result in the awarding of an industry recognized credential, national or state certificate, or degree, including all industry appropriate competencies, licensing and/or certification requirements.
2. Student grievance policy and procedure.
3. Refund policy and procedure.
4. Cost information, including tuition and fees.
5. Describe whether the provider is in partnership with a business or multiple businesses.
6. Information that addresses alignment of the training services with in-demand industry sectors and occupations, to the extent possible.
7. Information related to the indicators of performance, which include: For all students (includes every student enrolled in a WIOA-approved training program)
    a. Unsubsidized Employment During the Second Quarter after Exit
    b. Unsubsidized Employment During the Fourth Quarter after Exit
    c. Median Earnings at the Second Quarter After Exit
    d. Credential Attainment Rate

All providers must meet the minimum established performance criteria, as approved by the State Board.

Providers that are licensed by the Department of Safety, the Division of Public Health Services or the Board of Barbering, Cosmetology and Esthetics must provide additional documentation, including:

1.

a. documentation of liability insurance
b. documentation of surety bond insurance in the amount of 10% of last year's annual gross income or a minimum of $10,000
c. most recent audit or audited financial statement

2.

Providers that are licensed by the Department of Education (DOE) must follow the rules and regulations of DOE and provide the documentation as set forth in the NH Code of Administrative Rules 300 (Appendix D) and NH Statute RSA 188-G (Appendix E).

Providers receive initial eligibility for only one fiscal year for a particular program.

After the initial eligibility expires, these initially eligible providers are subject to the application procedures for continued eligibility (Section VII).

In order to assist participants in choosing employment and training activities, the OWO will disseminate the list of eligible training providers and accompanying performance and cost information to the Board and to members of the public online including through websites and

searchable databases, including the NH Works, one-stop delivery system and its program partners throughout NH.

The OWO will update the list regularly and provider eligibility will be reviewed according to the procedures determined herein.

The ETPL will be accompanied by appropriate information to assist participants in choosing employment and training activities. Such information will include:

1. Recognized post-secondary credential(s) offered
2. Performance information
3. Cost information, including tuition and fees

Training providers are responsible for providing updated information through NSCITE. The OWO will accept any changes to data displayed for providers and programs listed on the ETPL and will update the list as necessary.

Training Providers will apply for biennial renewal for an eligibility period to span the respective following two fiscal years (July 1-June 30) by December 1. Providers must provide the following information during reapplication:

1. Up to date provider information
2. Up to date information on each program, including cost (tuition and fees).
3. Student data for calculation of performance information8, which includes:
    a. Unsubsidized Employment During the Second Quarter after Exit
    b. Unsubsidized Employment During the Fourth Quarter after Exit
    c. Median Earnings at the Second Quarter after Exit
    d. Credential Attainment Rate
    e. Program Completion Rate for WIOA participants

Upon receipt of completed information and student data, OWO will make a determination of continuing eligibility. OWO's determination of continued eligibility will be based upon the information supplied by the provider, as well as consideration of the provider's continued ability to offer high quality programs resulting in industry-recognized certificates and recognized post-secondary credentials in in-demand industry sectors and occupations. OWO will also consider the timeliness and accuracy of submitted performance reports as well as to ensuring approved trainings are physically and programmatically accessible for individuals who are employed and individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities.

The ETPL and performance/cost data for each training program will be published for the State Board, NH Works Centers and general public consumption.

The period of eligibility will last for the following two fiscal years (July 1-June 30).

A training provider and/or its program may be denied inclusion in or removed from the state ETPL for the following reasons:

1. The initial and/or renewal application was not completed, was not completed by established due date, or was missing required information.

2. Performance data was not submitted or was not submitted by established due date.
3. The training provider intentionally supplied inaccurate information.
4. The training provider substantially violated any requirement under WIOA, state or local laws and policy.
5. The training provider loses its license or accreditation of its accrediting body.
6. Upon setting minimum levels of performance, a provider or program that fails to meet such levels will be removed.

If OWO denies eligibility for listing a provider's program on the ETPL, the provider will be notified in writing within 30 days of this decision, with the reason(s) for denial and information on the appeal process. If a training provider chooses to appeal, the training program that is subject to removal shall remain on the ETPL until the appeal has concluded and a final determination is made. If WIOA students are currently enrolled in a program that is subject to removal or has been removed, those students will be allowed to complete the program.

A provider choosing to appeal a decision must submit a written appeal to the Director of OWO within 30 calendar days of the issuance of the denial notice. The written appeal must include:

- a statement of the desire to appeal;
- specification of the program in question; and
- Specifically and in detail, the grounds and the reasons upon which it claims that the denial is invalid.

OWO will not consider any factual or legal grounds for relief that are not set forth in the appeal. OWO will determine whether a hearing for the purpose of fact-finding is necessary and will issue a decision not later than 30 calendar days from either the date a hearing is held, or the date the appeal request is received by OWO.

Providers and Programs that have been removed from or denied listing on the ETPL may be reinstated after two years by applying through the initial application process. A provider who has been removed from the list for noncompliance is liable to repay all adult and dislocated worker-training funds received during the period of noncompliance.

Unsubsidized Employment during the Second Quarter after Exit

The employment rate is represented by the following formula: Numerator = Total number exiting the program (both completers and non-completers) during the 12-month reporting period with wages reported in the 2nd quarter subsequent to the exit quarter (the calendar quarter containing the exit or completion date); Denominator = Total number exiting the program (both completers and non-completers) during the 12-month reporting period.

Unsubsidized Employment during the Fourth Quarter after Exit

The employment rate is represented by the following formula: Numerator = Total number exiting the program (both completers and non-completers) during the 12-month reporting period with wages reported in the 4th quarter subsequent to the exit quarter (the calendar quarter containing the exit or completion date); Denominator = Total number exiting the program (both completers and non-completers) during the 12-month reporting period.

Median Earnings at the Second Quarter after Exit

This measure calculates the median quarterly wage at the second quarter after exit of individuals exiting the training program (both completers and non-completers) during the reporting period with wages in the 2nd quarter subsequent to the exit quarter (the calendar quarter containing the exit or completion date).

The calculated median quarterly wage is then divided by 520 hours (the standard amount of hours considered full time employment in a calendar quarter) to arrive at an hourly rate for comparison to the Federal Minimum Wage.

Credential Attainment Rate

The credential attainment rate for participants reflects the following formula: Numerator = Total number of Participants who obtain a recognized post-secondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation or 1 year after exit; Denominator = Total number of Participants exiting the program (both completers and non-completers) during the 12-month reporting period.

Program Completion Rate

The program completion rate for WIOA Participant populations reflects the following formula: Numerator = Total number completing program during the 12-month reporting period.

Denominator = Total number exiting the program (both completers and non-completers) during the 12-month reporting period.

The denominator (total number WIOA Participants exiting the program) is defined as the total number of new program enrollments and number of active (continuing) students during the 12- month reporting period minus the total number still enrolled in the program at the conclusion of the reporting period.

Completers: Any student who successfully attained the desired outcome of the program they were enrolled in leading to a nationally or state recognized certificate, credential, degree, or diploma.

Completion Rate: Total number of students completing the applicable program divided by the total number of individuals exiting the program (both completers and non-completers) within the 12-month reporting period.

Employment Rate: Total number of students exiting (both completers and non-completers) from the applicable program that obtained unsubsidized employment in the 2nd and 4th quarters subsequent to the exit quarter (the calendar quarter containing the exit or completion date), divided by the total number of students exiting the program.

Exiters: All participants in the program who left during the reporting period, no matter what the reason and regardless of their start date. Defined as the total number of new program enrollments and number of active (continuing) students during the 12-month reporting period minus the total number still enrolled in the program at the conclusion of the reporting period.

Exit Quarter: The calendar quarter containing the exit or completion date of a student.

Median Earnings: Median wage expressed as an hourly rate for all students exiting the applicable program and obtaining unsubsidized employment.

Reporting Period: The 12-month period that corresponds with the most recent WIOA Program year, running from July 1 through June 30 of the subsequent year.

Unsubsidized Employment: Any employment where the employee's wages are not directly paid in whole or in part by federal funds. Employment in the military is considered unsubsidized employment.

WIOA Program Year: The WIOA Program Year begins July 1 and ends on June 30 of the subsequent year.

Providers of training programs will be required to submit student data annually. The following circumstances will be considered in order to avoid excluding programs from the ETPL who serve a small population of students or have no WIOA clients.

No WIOA Participants: If a program serves no WIOA clients during the reporting period, the program is considered to have met any possible future State Performance measures for the WIOA measures (Program Completion Rate).

No Students: If a program did not have any enrollments during the reporting period, it will not be held to performance requirements. Training providers will indicate this by indicating an enrollment number of zero during renewal application periods.

Small Populations: If a program serves fewer than ten students (or if fewer than 10 students can be located in UI Wage Records), it will not be held to performance requirements for that Program Year. Instead, the program will group students over two consecutive years to calculate performance.

Example 1: If the WIOA Participant population of a program is five and the All Student population is 25, the program will be exempted from the WIOA measure (Program Completion Rate) but the program will need to meet the All Student measures. For the subsequent year, the WIOA Participant population of the previous (exempted) year will be included in the WIOA performance measures.

Example 2: If the WIOA Participant population of a program is 12, but only 7 of those individuals have employment records, the program will be exempt from the Median Wage measure for WIOA participants that year (as only 7 records will be available to calculate measure). For the subsequent year, the WIOA Participant population of the previous (exempted) year will be included in this WIOA performance measures.

(4) Describe how the State will implement and monitor for the Adult Priority of Service requirement in WIOA section 134 (c)(3)(E) that requires American Job Center staff, when using WIOA Adult program funds to provide individualized career services and training services, to give priority of service to recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient (including English language learners).

Priority of Service is managed through policy and procedure established to ensure services and funds are focused on addressing the employment needs of target populations. Monitoring

the priority for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with the requirements of WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E) within each of the state's NH Works Centers is managed by tracking plan versus actual enrollment plans developed for target populations annually and monitored monthly. In addition, a review of quarterly federal performance reports, which track participant, exit and performance outcomes by target population, is used to assess compliance.

New Hampshire's Priority of Service Policy can be found at

www.nhworks.org: https://www.nhworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Priority-of-Service-Policy.pdf

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

New Hampshire is a single area state and therefore transfer decisions are made on the state level. The process for transferring funds is initiated after careful consideration of current and potential impact to priority target populations, impact on the local economy and/or in response to state strategies implemented to address labor market needs for additional service and/or training needs. Requests are initiated by NH BEA/OWO via a formal request to the SWIB. Upon SWIB approval, the Chair will submit a formal request to the Governor for final approval.

(6) Describe the State's policy on WIOA and TAA co-enrollment and whether and how often this policy is disseminated to the local workforce development boards and required one-stop partners Trade Act Sec. 239(f), Sec. 235, 20 CFR 618.325, 20 CFR 618.824(a)(3)(i).

(7) Describe the State's formal strategy to ensure that WIOA and TAA co-enrolled participants receive necessary funded benefits and services. Trade Act Sec. 239(f), Sec. 235, 20 CFR 618.816(c)

(8) Describe the State's process for familiarizing one-stop staff with the TAA program. 20 CFR 618.804(j), 20 CFR 618.305

(d) **Youth Program Requirements**. *With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA, States should describe their strategies that will support the implementation of youth activities under WIOA. State's must-*

(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.[1] Further, include a description of how the State assists local areas in determining whether to contract for services or to provide some or all of the program elements directly.

1. Competitive and Non-Competitive Grant and Contract Award Process

The State utilizes a competitive process for awarding grants and contracts unless a sole source process is warranted consistent with OMB guidelines. The competitive process, including those for youth services, are handled through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The State Workforce Board, through the Office of Workforce Opportunity oversees the RFP process. The State maintains a RFP mailing list, and public announcements are posted on the OWO's website, in newspapers and with other media, as appropriate.

2. Criteria Used in Awarding Youth Grants

Grants for youth activities are awarded at the State level through the New Hampshire State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) in response to successful application for grant funds solicited through a formal Request for Proposal (RFP) process.

The RFP stipulates that the following guidance and conditions will apply in awarding grants to providers of youth services:

- Proposal submissions will be reviewed to ensure that all the required documentation, signatures, and assurances are included.
- The cost of the proposal will not be the sole determinate factor for selection.
- The proposal contents will be reviewed and scored using a rating criterion and point system.
- A minimum of 75% of the funds are allocated to programs that serve out-of-school youth and up to 25% of the funds will be allocated to youth currently enrolled in educational activities.
- Respondents may choose to apply to serve in-school youth only, out-of-school youth only, or both.
- The goal is to distribute funds throughout the geographic regions of the state based on the receipt of satisfactory applications.
- The State Workforce Innovation Board/Office of Workforce Opportunity reserves the right to allocate funds as appropriate based on the quality of proposals, past performance, and the statewide minimum of 75% out-of-school funding.
- The State Workforce Innovation Board in conjunction with the Office of Workforce Opportunity establishes a review panel and conducts a comprehensive, fair and impartial evaluation of all proposals received that meet the Request for Proposals minimum requirements.
- Proposals that do not meet minimum criteria will not be funded.
- Applications will be ranked based on the score assigned by the panel after careful evaluation

by panel members.

- Final decisions will be based on the application score, the regional and minimum funding requirements, high performing contractors, the judgment of the review team and the State Workforce Innovation Board in conjunction with the Office of Workforce Opportunity, and where applicable, the Governor and NH Executive Council approval process.

All proposals received in response to the WIOA Youth RFP process are evaluated in accordance with the criteria and rating system specified in the RFP application packet. A typical RFP evaluation process would include criteria such as the following:

Rating Factor 1: Program Management and Organizational Capacity

Rating Factor 2: Past Outcomes

Rating Factor 3: Program Design

Rating Factor 4: Program Components

Rating Factor 5: Collaboration with Youth Serving Agencies

Rating Factor 6: Budget

Rating Factor 7: Leveraged Resources and Sustainability

Rating Factor 8: Employer/College Connections Bonus

Criteria for Determining Effective Youth Providers

To guide the youth funding award process, and help interested providers better understand the vision, goals and priorities established by the State Workforce Innovation Board, the State Workforce Innovation Board has identified seven areas for consideration in determining effective providers of youth services. They are as follows:

1. Meeting Needs: Programs should meet the needs of at-risk youth populations and underserved communities while providing a broad range of services that meet the academic, employment, and youth development needs of young people. Programs should be aimed at ensuring that economically disadvantaged youth in school and out of school have the opportunities and support needed to become productive members of the workforce and achieve economic self-sufficiency.

2. Youth Development: Effective programs are built on a well-conceived and implemented approach to youth development. A commitment to youth development is exemplified by a conscious and professional reliance on youth development principles, including high expectations, caring relationships, holistic service strategies that build responsibility and identity, and a view towards youth as resources. Key strategies the State Workforce Innovation Board is looking for in this area are providing adult mentors for every possible youth participant, integrating social and support services into programming, addressing transportation barriers to youth access, accommodating a variety of learning styles, and providing follow-up services for young people when they exit in order to ensure their continued success.

3. Skill Development: Effective programs clearly emphasize the development of skills, knowledge,

and competencies that lead to jobs and careers. Programs should strongly link work and learning and academic and occupational learning. All Dropout Recovery (out-of-school youth) programs are required to provide occupational skills training concurrently with work readiness and academic training. Key strategies the State Workforce Innovation Board is looking for in this area are linkages to apprenticeships, community colleges and employers, transition services, and how participants will gain academic credit and skill credentials.

4. Involvement of Employers and Links to Local Labor Markets: Programs should have the strong involvement of local employers and should be linked to local labor market needs and growing economic sectors as determined by the occupations in-demand list for New Hampshire. Programs should provide effective connections to intermediaries with strong links to the job market and local and regional employers.

5. Collaboration and Leveraging Partnerships: Programs are sought that demonstrate how partnerships and the involvement of the community will be used to meet the program goals. Involving the local community means developing real partnerships among educational institutions, employers, community-based organizations, private sector employers, and/or other organizations and members of the community interested in youth. Respondents are encouraged to access resources from these partnerships and use them in the program to provide quality youth opportunities.

6. Producing Results: Programs should ensure that young people are gaining the skills to complete high school or its equivalent and transition to postsecondary education, advanced training or skilled employment. Programs should track these results and strive to continuously improve their programs and their outcomes for youth based on information and data.

(2) Explain how the State assists local workforce boards in achieving equitable results for out-of-school and in-school youth. Describe promising practices or partnership models that local areas are implementing and the state's role in supporting and scaling those models within the state for both in-school and out-of-school youth.

The NH State Workforce Innovation Board is committed to coordinating existing resources and identifying new resources specific to achieving improved outcomes for out-of-school youth.

Working with the NH Department of Education (e.g., ABE, CTE, VR and In-school Programs) to strengthen the connections for students who drop out of or leave school without the skills necessary to obtain suitable and sustainable employment, the State Workforce Innovation Board will play a lead role in coordinating and leveraging resources. The work of the State Workforce Innovation Board will be further supported by the NH Works system of partner agencies, which include Job Corps, Youth Build (when an active grant is in place) and the various community-based organizations focused on services to youth.
Strategies to achieve improved outcomes will include some or all of the following:

- Develop and identify clear and concise pathways to achieving individual education/employment goals.
- Connect out-of-school youth with state developed sector training and/or job opportunities.
- Encourage credential-granting training options.

- Expand work-based learning and training opportunities that allow youth to explore employment options – e.g., Return to Work, OJT, Apprenticeship, Internship, Work experience (paid or unpaid), etc.
- Increase co-enrollments in/across core programs to maximize available resources for the provision of comprehensive work and training supports i.e., full complement of wrap around services to support success.
- Streamline referral processes to minimize "dropouts"
- The Granite Workforce initiative served low-income parents who are at or below 138% of the Federal Poverty Guideline. This program was offered as a pilot program led by the NH Department of Health and Human Services in coordination with the NH Employment Security. Other named partners include NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs, NH Community College System, NH Department of Education and other education and training agencies. In addition, community-based organizations could respond to a request for services for the provision of additional barrier resolution and/or support services as necessary and appropriate. The success of this pilot program has led to the adoption and continuation moving forward as WorkNowNH.

(3) Describe how the State assists local workforce boards in implementing innovative models for delivering youth workforce investment activities, including effective ways local workforce boards can make available the 14 program elements described in WIOA section 129(c)(2); and explain how local areas can ensure work experience, including quality pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship, is prioritized as a key element within a broader career pathways strategy.

As outlined in WIOA, the New Hampshire Youth Programs will promote the following program elements to support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, entry into postsecondary education, and career readiness for participants:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential;
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component academic and occupational education, which may include—
    a. Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
    b. Internships and job shadowing; and
    c. On-the-job training opportunities;
4. Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
5. Internships and job shadowing; and
6. On-the-job training opportunities;

7. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
8. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate;
9. Supportive services;
10. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months;
11. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate;
12. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate;
13. Financial literacy education;
14. Entrepreneurial skills training;
15. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and
16. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.
17. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupational cluster.

These program elements were included in the RFP for youth service providers for PY21/24. Any provider receiving funds from the State will be required to provide these elements to its participants either through its program or program partners. Through annual on-site monitoring and file review, OWO staff will ensure that programs are providing the participant's needed essential elements.

(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.

New Hampshire's State Workforce Innovation Board in collaboration with the Office of Workforce Opportunity, the grant recipient for WIOA Youth funds, has identified the criterion as follows:

Out-of-School Youth: "requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment" is defined as having been unemployed for six months out of the last two years.

In-School Youth: A youth determined to be at risk of dropping out of school as defined by the Jobs for America's Graduates program model definitions:

- One or more years behind modal grade for one's age group, with particular emphasis on those two or more years behind modal grade.
- Below average academic test scores relative to students in his/her class with particular emphasis on those in the bottom 25% of the test score distribution.
- Above average number of absences during the past school year in comparison to other students in the school.
- Placed on probation, suspended from school or expelled from school one or more times during the past two years.
- Member of an economically disadvantaged family. Criteria for determining one's economic status is that used in local WIOA programs.
- Lives with only one or neither of his/her natural parents.
- Mother has not graduated from high school.
- Closest friends have limited educational expectations, i.e. they do not expect to graduate from high school or have already dropped out of school.
- Substance abuse.

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

(1) Any comments from the public comment period that represent disagreement with the Plan. (WIOA section 108(d)(3).)

The State Plan was posted at www.nhworks.org for public review and written comments. Public hearings were held to gather comments on the plan. The public hearings were held on the following dates: July 31, 2023 in Winham, NH and Rochester, NH; August 1, 2023 in Littleton, NH and Lebanon, NH; August 2, 202 in North Conway, NH; August 3, 2023 in Concord, NH which included an open forum for state partners, and Keene, NH. To date no comments have been received. Comments received in the future will be posted Appendix 4.

(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).)

The State entity known as the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs (Office of Workforce Opportunity) is responsible for the disbursal of WIOA grant funds in the State of New Hampshire in accordance with the funding allocation approved by the SWIB.

(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).)

New Hampshire accepts proposals from any applicant that feels that they can meet the Request for Proposal and Contractual requirements. The Office of Workforce Opportunity at the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA) solicits through a Request for Proposal (RFP) on behalf of the SWIB. The purpose of the RFP is to identify appropriate service provider(s) to provide employment and training services throughout the state. Currently, there are two Youth providers in New Hampshire – My Turn and Jobs for America's Graduates New Hampshire. The majority of the WIOA Youth programs serve out-of-school youth, in addition

to two in-school programs. The youth providers are successful in expanding the reach of the program through partnerships, particularly with Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and TANF.

Youth with disabilities are able to access all WIOA Title I Youth Services (i.e. assessment, 14 essential elements, training, and/or placement services.)

The NH Works partner agencies refer to policy 38.14, that requires accommodations and reasonable modifications for individuals with disabilities and leverage referrals with Vocational Rehabilitation when providing services for youth with disabilities. For the purposes of this policy, reasonable accommodation means any change or adjustment to a training or work environment that permits qualified applicants, employees, or participants with disabilities (including youth with disabilities) to participate in the application process, to perform the essential functions of the job, or to enjoy the benefits or privileges of employment equal to those enjoyed by others unless it can be shown that such accommodations would impose an undue hardship on program operations.

Examples of accommodation for youth with disabilities include, but are not limited to:

- Acquiring or modifying devices
- Job restructuring
- Part time or modified work schedules
- Providing readers or qualified interpreters
- Making the workplace or program facility accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities

Decisions regarding reasonable accommodation for individuals (youth) with disabilities will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Individuals who are not satisfied with accommodations provided may file a grievance.

(4) A description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.

The one stop partners are:

Required Partners

- Department of Business & Economic Affairs (OWO) Adult (Title I) Dislocated Worker (Title I) Youth (Title I)
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (Title V Older Americans Act) New Hampshire Employment Security
- Wagner-Peyser (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by Title III)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Worker Program (Chapter 2, Title II Trade Act) Jobs for Veterans State Grants (Title 38, Chapter 41)
- Unemployment Insurance Department of Education
- Adult Basic Education and Family Literacy (WIOA Title II)
- Vocational Rehabilitation (Title I Rehabilitation, as amended by Title IV) Resource contributions include:

Department of Business and Economic Affairs – OWO- Currently, OWO has an agreement with NHES for the direct delivery of services for WIOA Dislocated Worker. NHES contracts with Southern NH Services, Inc. representing the Community Action Programs Association of five Community Action Programs (CAPS) covering different areas, as the primary service provider for WIOA Adult employment and training services). This includes training and education programs and access to energy assistance, health, food, and nutrition assistance, Hispanic/Latino community services, housing and homeless programs, TANF work programs, and other various supportive and volunteer services available through the CAPS. A Request for Proposals for the solicitation of a statewide service provider for WIOA Adult funds was conducted in August 2020 and subsequently awarded in December 2020.
WIOA employment and training services to economically disadvantaged youth that possess barriers to employment are provided by NH Jobs for America's Graduates (NH JAG) and MY TURN. This includes both in- school and out-of-school youth. Services focus on workforce development and target the training areas needed such as: career awareness, work-ready skills, and increased academic skills that result in academic and/or employment credentials/outcomes. Within the NH Works system, referrals and release forms allow agencies to share information and best serve the youth population based on each individual's unique needs and barriers.

New Hampshire Department of Education (DOE) - The NH DOE administers core and non-core WIOA services, including Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs.

The Bureau of Adult Education provides funding for programs serving 7,000 adults yearly who are improving their basic educational skills leading to a high school credential. The Bureau also administers the statewide HiSET (High School Equivalency Test) which results in approximately 1,800 adults each year receiving their certificate. ABE programs serve as the foundation and basic building blocks of all workforce development services, as the importance of individuals to have foundational skills in math and reading continue to grow. This holds true particularly when looking past entry-level jobs for job seeker customers and closing the gap with high-demand skills and occupations.

ABE staff participates in workforce agency partner meetings and NH Works counselors work with students on-site in ABE classes, called "What's Next", to introduce career inventories, career pathways, and promote resources available through NH Works. Adult students also work with an Adult Career Pathways Coordinator, present in the classroom, who meets with students to discuss goals, challenges, and recalibrate employment expectations. This coordinator also builds bridges with local community colleges, CTE centers, and certificate programs to further facilitate adult students to continue into post-secondary education after completing ABE coursework. ABE staff also receive referrals from workforce partner agencies for customers who do not have a high school diploma or are basic skills deficient.

The Bureau also provides refugee service programs. With approximately 500 local employers in refugee resettlement areas, ABE staff work closely with employers and develops programs in partnership to provide employees with on-site English literacy training.

The Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) provides assistance to eligible persons with disabilities throughout the state to gain and retain employment outcomes through the provision of direct vocational rehabilitation services, as funded under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. VR is a joint State/Federal program that seeks to empower people to make informed choices, build viable careers, and live more independently in the community. To that end, VR supports the following programs and priorities:

- Disability Determination Services
- Independent Living
- Rehabilitation Services
- Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Transition

VR operates under the awareness that collaboration with other agencies, community groups, and employers is what makes their services most meaningful for their customers. There has been continued outreach to the business community on the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities. VR staff also work to ensure other public workforce system resources are fully accessible, and closely align the personal interests of clients with the current job market, using the labor market information that is available. Currently there are strong relationships with local employers, regional workforce coalitions, community organizations such as Goodwill, and co-enrollment for customers such as On-the-Job-Training programs. Students are able to gain real world work experience through the Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO) program. The NH Department of Education supports and encourages local school districts to adopt policies that encourage 'extended learning'. Extended learning refers to the primary acquisition of knowledge and skills through instruction or study outside of the traditional classroom methodology, including, but not limited, to:

- Apprenticeships
- Community service
- Independent study
- Online courses
- Internships
- Performing groups
- Private instruction

Several vendors provide direct services for those with disabilities throughout the state. A close collaboration between VR, the state legislature, families, the governor’s commission, Developmental Disability Council, and other stakeholders resulted in the passing of State Bill 47 to eliminate subminimum wage for individuals with disabilities in New Hampshire – a great success in closing the unemployment gap for this demographic.

On the national level, there is a trend that individuals with disabilities become isolated after leaving the secondary education system and lose access to many of the resources that are available, resulting in high unemployment for this segment of the population. VR staff are committed to closing this gap for New Hampshire residents and leverage many national resources in addition to the local and state level workforce services. A data system has been

developed specifically for individuals with disabilities, called the Talent Acquisition Portal. Project Search, a national partnership for people with significant developmental disabilities, teaches work behavior, job skills, soft skills, communication, and other fundamental tools for success. Pepnet2 is a national partnership dedicated to increasing education and career choices for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

The Bureau of Career Development supports Career and Technical Education (CTE), including career pathway development that lead to further education and employment opportunities for students. Activities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing direction for the system of 30 secondary regional career and technical centers and sub centers
- Supporting career clusters/pathways
- Supporting facility development and renovation at the secondary regional centers
- Managing the use of federal CTE funds for program improvement at secondary and postsecondary institutions and correctional facilities
- Works closely with the NH Department of Education's Division of Higher Education that regulates/licenses private, postsecondary (i.e., post high school) career (i.e., job related schools. These schools are non-degree granting.
- Connecting secondary and postsecondary institutions (Tech Prep/School to Work)
- Supporting introductory offerings beginning at the middle school level leading to career and technical education
- Services of the Office of Civil Rights Compliance and Equity
- Disbursement of state tuition and transportation funds for CTE students

CTE centers use the National Career Cluster framework and work-based-learning is not just promoted, but integral to students' education. School administration, instructors, and staff members support internships, job shadows, industry tours, apprenticeships, and other work experiences for students. Some CTE centers have staff dedicated solely to developing business connections in the community to enhance these opportunities for students. There is close collaboration with high school guidance counselors, providing college information and tours, soft skills training and National Career Readiness Certificate preparation, portfolio development, mock interview opportunities, and more for students. By integrating career exposure to academic education, students are more prepared for both college and the workforce.

CTE programs are grounded in relevant industries and business needs, with regional advisory boards and individual program-specific local boards led by business representatives driving the curriculum and learning outcomes for students. The state legislature is also working to have career and college planning as required coursework in K-12 education, which would require students to create and annually update an individual plan.

In addition to the provision of programmatic content, skills, and knowledge CTE instructors integrate career and college readiness throughout their curriculum. CTE centers bring the real world of work into the classroom through Career & Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs), guest experts, simulated workplace experiences, and virtual job shadows. Additionally, partnerships between industry and CTE provide opportunities for students to gain real world

experience through internships, job shadows, industry tours, cooperative programs, and/or part-time employment opportunities. These activities help facilitate the development of student's soft skills as well as career specific requirements. The development of teacher externships provides CTE instructors with industry current skills due to participation as active learners within the facilities of their local industry partners. These skills then return to the CTE center and benefit students throughout the instructors' programs. Articulation agreements (AA) and dual enrollment (DE) opportunities provide CTE students with opportunities to gain college credits while enrolled in CTE programs. The number of such agreements between CTE centers and postsecondary are continually increasing and covering a broader range of career areas. The early college access is offered at low and/or no cost and is a benefit that may greatly reduce the financial burden incurred by CTE students and their parents/ guardians as they pursue postsecondary education.

Apprenticeships- Instruction for apprenticeships related to secondary programs is administered by the NH Department of Education. Apprenticeship program administration is done through the United States Department of Labor. Apprenticeship programs are primarily used on the demand-side, working with employers who have identified a need. Currently, about 300 employers offer apprenticeships across the state. Within the workforce system for jobseekers, there has been growing representation and promotion of this program as another opportunity for career training. With the awarding of the Department of Labor Apprenticeship NH expansion grant in November of 2016, the Community College System has been working towards developing and extending apprenticeships across the state in three targeted sectors of Advanced Manufacturing, Health Care and Information Technology through instruction provided by their seven colleges.

Community College System of New Hampshire - The Community College System of New Hampshire is deeply integrated into the workforce system, working closely with the NH DOE Bureau of Career Development services, and providing post-secondary training programs fulfilling WIOA, CTE Perkins, and employer-directed skill training needs. There are seven campuses across the state, plus satellite locations and programs offered for local employers. Programs are designed to prepare students for today's job market and/or successful transfer to higher-level degrees at four-year colleges.

The Community College System has invested in supporting programs that are driven by local industry needs. Recently there has been an increased focus on identifying employment trends in the most in-demand sectors and working directly with employers to build programs around specific skills that are seeing shortages. For example, there has been a strong regional focus on advanced manufacturing in direct response to employer needs. The focus has been on encouraging short-term training, on-line training, and customized training for companies while also eliminating duplication. In addition, CCSNH is working to further develop short term training apprenticeships and connections as mentioned above.

The Community College System of New Hampshire's WorkReadyNH is one initiative that was developed through both state funding from the UI Trust Fund and administered by NHES and previous funding supported by a U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration TAACCCT Grant. The WorkReadyNH program is offered at every community college location across the state. The WorkReadyNH program was initially developed as a

partnership between the Community College System of NH, the Office of the Governor, the NH BEA, NH Employment Security, and NH Works. Employers have identified essential skills for workplace success, instruction is provided to job seekers and career builders at no-cost and results in a nationally recognized credential.

Community College System staff also serve on workforce partner agency committees (e.g., SWIB, NH Works Consortium, Interagency Directors Group, etc.) and have established strong relationships at both the local and state level.

Department of Health and Human Services -The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NH DHHS) administers a variety of programs many of which, though not partners in this plan the agency as a whole is a required one-stop partner, and as such are an integral part of the workforce system and the collaboration that takes place between agencies.

The Financial Assistance to Needy Families Program (TANF) provides cash assistance to families with dependent children through the following programs of assistance which include, New Hampshire Employment Program (NHEP); Family Assistance Program (FAP); Interim Disabled Parent (IDP) program; or Families With Older Children (FWOC):

- The New Hampshire Employment Program (NHEP) is the mandatory work program that provides parents with job preparation, work and support services to enable them to permanently attach to gainful employment while providing financial assistance that allows children to be cared for in their own homes.
- The Families With Older Children (FWOC) program provides assistance to families that include a child who is over age 18, and under age 20, but still a full-time student in high school or the equivalent. These children meet the definition of a dependent child under State of New Hampshire law, but not under federal regulations. The FWOC program has a mandatory work requirement for the able-bodied parent.
- The Interim Disabled Parent (IDP) program provides assistance to families in which a parent is temporarily unable to participate in work programs due to their own medical condition. The IDP program has a mandatory work requirement only for the able-bodied adults in the household, and provides the same employment and training supports as the mandatory work program for able-bodied adult.
- The Family Assistance Program (FAP) provides financial assistance for families in which the children are deprived of the care of both parents due to continued absence or disability. The children may be cared for by the disabled parent (or parents) or by a caretaker relative. The relative is the designated guardian for a child/children deprived of the support of both parents. The relative caretaker may or may not be included in the case. There is no mandatory work requirement for the Family Assistance Program. In a relative caregiver case, if the relative chooses to be included in the assistance group for financial assistance, the relative would be mandatory for the work program, and case would be considered an NHEP case.

All TANF programs have the same cash eligibility requirements, and the same benefit limits. To qualify, the dependent children must lack parental support or care due to death, continued absence or because at least one parent in a two-parent home is disabled. TANF cash assistance

is available for a maximum of 60 months. There is no limit on receipt of assistance for the children in families headed by a relative who does not receive TANF assistance for him/herself.

Parents of families eligible for TANF cash assistance are also eligible for Medicaid; children of TANF eligible families are eligible for Children's Medicaid (CM). Employment and Training Programs and Support Services assist adults receiving cash benefits through the TANF program. Employment and training services are provided by DFA and other inter-agency staff located in your local District Office.

Child Care Assistance assists parents engaged in work, training or educational activities. Payments to child care providers are coordinated by DFA in cooperation with the Child Development Bureau. Emergency Assistance assists families with dependent children who may qualify for TANF in obtaining and keeping safe and healthy permanent housing.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides eligible individuals and households with benefits to buy food items at grocery stores, and other participating food retailers. It also gives recipients a chance to learn more about purchasing and preparing nutritious meals.

Eligibility and benefits is calculated based on household size, income, expenses and resources. Individuals may qualify even if they own their home, have no home or live with someone else. They can have a job and do not have to have children as long as their household meets eligibility guidelines.

New Hampshire's Food Stamp Employment & Training (FSET) program is designed to assist Food Stamp recipients in obtaining and maintaining employment.

New Hampshire operates a voluntary FSET program for all interested Food Stamp recipients. Failure to meet program requirements does not result in clients being sanctioned, or in any reduction or loss of Food Stamp benefits.

The State's strategy for assisting those in the FSET program is to provide participants with job search assistance which includes:

- Assessment, case management, resume review and referral to community agencies providing job search assistance such as the NH Works American Job Centers,
- The provision of mileage reimbursement for transportation expenses incurred while seeking employment,
- Referral to education and training programs such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program, and
- Referral to job search training assistance programs, such as the WorkReadyNH program, offered within the NH Community College system.

(5) The competitive process used to award the subgrants and contracts for title I activities.

The State utilizes a competitive process for awarding grants and contracts unless a sole source process is warranted consistent with OMB guidelines. The competitive process for adult, dislocated worker, youth, and SCSEP are handled through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The State Workforce Board, through the Office of Workforce Opportunity oversees the RFP process. The State maintains an RFP mailing list, and public announcements are

posted on the OWO's website, legal notices in newspapers and with other media, as appropriate. The RFP utilized for the SCSEP program is included as an example in Appendix 5.

(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.

Customers will learn of the demand occupations or skills for which an Individual Training Account (ITA) may be issued from the *Demand Occupations List of Training Vendorsat* www.nscite.org and can access this website from their own computer or at the NH Works Center. This site makes it possible for customers to make an informed choice about the training programs available for them to compare. Participants may be able to use their ITA to acquire services from any eligible training provider on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Upon identification of appropriate training vendors the participant will visit provider(s) for the purpose of obtaining first-hand knowledge about school environment, program specific details, cost of tuition, books, fees, start/end date of program and any other needs required for a successful training experience If the geographic area in which the customer is looking for a training vendor does not have multiple vendors, only one vendor may be investigated.

(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 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) promotes coordination between the State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) and the programs funded under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), collectively known as Adult Education programs. Adult Education programs provide critical services / activities to support adult learners to improve access to education and training opportunities, as well as to employment.

To ensure alignment with the State's workforce plan, per Section 107(d)(11)(B)(i), the Board is required to review the applications submitted by providers who are interested in operating an Adult Education program. The Board is responsible for evaluating the extent to which the eligible applicant's grant activities are aligned with the education and training activities identified in the State Plan. The Board is not scoring or approving the applications but rather reviewing the applications to determine whether the application is consistent with the WIOA State Combined Workforce Plan.

To assist the Board in carrying out this function an assessment of alignment is built into the applicant review process. Reviewers score each applicant for effectiveness, including alignment with the plan, using the rating system outlined below. Through this process the board is able to review local adult education applications to ensure services are aligned.

Program Specific Alignment with NH Combined State Workforce Plan (Max 75 points) For each program, the organization was required to address the following questions:

1. Which Adult Education and Literacy Activities will be offered?

2. Is the curriculum aligned with College & Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education and how are instructors trained in curricula development?
3. How will the applicant meet the requirement of providing instruction delivered by well- trained instructors?
4. How will the applicant assess the quality of its program including the process of reviewing and analyzing data for the purposes of informing program decisions and improving program performance?
5. How will the applicant contribute to meeting the goals and strategies of the State Workforce Plan?

(8) Copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the one-stop delivery system, including cooperative agreements with entities administering Rehabilitation Act programs and services.

The following Memoranda of Understanding documents are posted on the NHWorks Website:

MOU	Term or Date of First Signature	Expiration Date
Job Corps MOU		
NH Works Consortium MOU - Program	July 1, 2021	June 30, 2025
NH Works Consortium MOU - Shared Costs		
RESEA MOU	September 25, 2021	September 25, 2024
Trade Act MOU	September 25, 2021	September 25, 2024
NH Works Comprehensive Certification		
Veterans MOU	October 1, 2021	October 1, 2024
Rapid Response MOU		

Waiver Requests (optional). States wanting to request waivers as part of their title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

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

(2) Describes the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers;

(3) Describes the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted;

(4) Describes how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:

(A) supporting employer engagement;

(B) connecting education and training strategies;

(C) supporting work-based learning;

(D) improving job and career results, and

(E) other guidance issued by the Department.

(5) Describes the individuals affected by the waiver, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment; and

(6) Describes the processes used to:

(F) Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;

(G) Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;

(H) Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;

(I) Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver.

(J) Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report.

(7) The most recent data available regarding the results and outcomes observed through implementation of the existing waiver, in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:	
1.	The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient;
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;
3.	The State has 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;
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);
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;
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;
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);
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;
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;

10.	The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.
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);

WAGNER-PEYSER ACT PROGRAM (Employment Service)

(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.

NH provides, with state merit staff, ongoing training on both soft skills and hard skills for both the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program (NHUIS) and the Employment Security (ES) programs – Job Match System (JMS), federally mandated and grant programs – that work in parallel. Training is provided through informational sessions to educate staff on a variety of topics to include but not limited to Assessments, Skill Building, Interviewing Techniques, Job Search, Resume Writing, Customer Service, Organizational Skills and Interpreting our UI and ES rules and laws.

(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.

NH provides ongoing training on both soft skills and hard skills for both the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program (NHUIS) and the Employment Security (ES) programs – Job Match System (JMS), federally mandated and grant programs – that work in parallel. Training is provided through informational sessions to educate staff on a variety of topics to include but not limited to Assessments, Skill Building, Interviewing Techniques, Job Search, Resume Writing, Customer Service, Organizational Skills and Interpreting our UI and ES rules and laws.

NH Professional Development is provided through a variety of methods. Depending on the audience that needs to be reached, the timeframe needed to provide service and the level of instruction needed, NH uses a variety of ways to get the information to the staff through Video Conferencing, Group Workshops, and One-on-One sessions both in-person and virtually.

(3) Describe strategies developed to support training and awareness across core programs and the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and the training provided for Employment Service and WIOA staff on identification of UI eligibility issues and referral to UI staff for adjudication.

The ES and UI trainers work in collaboration to make sure ES and UI staff have the level of knowledge needed to impart the information on core programs. Strategies include Video or in-person Conferences and virtual or in-person training sessions on overviews or refreshers by both trainers. They also include each other in group training and inform each other when one-on-one training with staff has been done.

Additional WIOA staff is also invited to the Video or in-person Conferences, virtual or in-person trainings and group trainings to keep them abreast of the programs.

The ES trainer also provides specific training on JMS and O*Net to the WIOA partner staff.

(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-assisted services are available at all American Job Centers (AJC). Customers who cannot use self-service or who face barriers to employment will receive one-on-one assistance. This more intensive level of Page 179 service is generally limited to targeted groups, Unemployment Insurance claimants, claimants selected for the Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program, veterans, migrant and seasonal farm workers, and individuals with disabilities. All UI claimants receive reemployment services during the Eligibility Review Interview (ERI) process. Any claimants that request additional assistance or for whom further services would be appropriate, may receive assistance in filing an unemployment compensation claim and will have access to staff help and/or be referred to an employment representative for assessment, counseling, testing, etc.

(c) **Describe the State's strategy for providing reemployment assistance to UI claimants and other unemployed individuals**.

Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program

The focus of the RESEA Program in New Hampshire is two-fold – to assess the UI beneficiary's current eligibility for UI and to ensure that the individual is aware of and taking advantage of the core and intensive re-employment services available in the American Job Center. The RESEA Program is exclusively administered by the American Job Centers, either in-person or virtually. UI beneficiaries selected for the RESEA Program are required to meet with an RESEA Staff person at the American Job Center nearest them or virtually utilizing virtual platforms. All selected RESEA claimants are required to attend an in-person orientation and to meet with an RESEA staff person for one initial RESEA visit and two subsequent RESEA visits for the duration of a selected RESEA claimant's benefit year. As with all ETA Programs that are administered through the local American Job Centers, referrals to training and supportive services are made seamlessly at the American Job Center.

The profiling model is used to identify those claimants who do not have a return-to-work date and who are not customarily hired through the union hall. The process selects claimants with higher profiling scores to participate in the RESEA Program. These individuals have a higher likelihood of exhausting their UI benefits and being long-term unemployed. Currently, due to the low unemployment rate, New Hampshire is selecting all UI claimants that are in pay status and are required to search for work. The functionality of selecting those with higher profiling scores is still available for when the unemployment rate increases.

New Hampshire makes extensive use of the Worker Profiling and Reemployment Service (WPRS) model for early identification of claimants who are likely to face long-term unemployment. NHES administers a statistical model, to identify qualified UI claimants who will enter the UI Profile Pool. Answers to certain questions during the initial

claim process and their resulting score are used to identify potential claimants. On a weekly basis, Employment Service staff in the NH Works Centers specify a number of claimants to be randomly extracted from the pool in their respective service area. A weekly report is produced listing the claimants ranked by their profiling score and who received a first payment in the previous week. Claimants with the highest score in the pool are selected to attend an orientation and receive one-on-one assessment and reemployment services. A letter is sent to each claimant selected for RESEA services notifying them of their selection, program requirements and services, and a date to report to an orientation at the One-Stop Center. Any claimants not selected by the fifth week of their claim series are automatically dropped from the list of possible RESEA selections. At the RESEA Orientation, claimants are advised that, they must self-schedule for RESEA 1-on-1 meetings online. A notice also appears on the claims home page.

The RESEA staff person can maintain a case management level of 72 participants for a full time RESEA staff person and a percentage of that number for a part time RESEA staff person based on the number of hours they work.

The group orientation session is held in-person at an AJC and averages about one hour. The orientation consists of a Power Point presentation explaining the level of work search efforts required each week while filing for UI, and the quality of work search documentation that must be provided as proof of these efforts. An overview of the reemployment services, (self-service, core, and intensive), available in the one stop is provided at the orientation session. In addition to the Presenter, the WIOA Counselor and the Veteran's Representative participate in the RESEA orientation session to ensure details of the WIOA and Veteran's Programs are fully explained to participants. A review of the labor market information available at the local level is provided. A portion of the UI initial claims process is the gathering and transferring of information to create a work registration in our Job Match System. At the orientation session, confirmation that the individual has a complete registration, including the demographic information, a resume, and the activation of the virtual recruiter, in the Job Matching System occurs. If the RESEA claimant has yet to complete these items in a more professional manner, the individual is directed to do so in the self-service center or from home prior to their first RESEA one-on-one meeting.

At the RESEA Orientation, the RESEA claimant is advised to self-schedule for an in-person visit or virtual appointment with the RESEA staff person on an average every three weeks. Since a first payment is required for selection, the first meeting occurs after the claimant has filed for three to four weeks of benefits. Each full-time Interviewer schedules between 4-6 appointments each day. If a selected claimant has not self-scheduled for a one-on-one interview, the RESEA Interviewer will contact the claimant and send the appropriate letter scheduling the claimant(s) selected for the one-on- one interview.

At the first meeting, the RESEA staff person and the claimant develop an Employment Plan that identifies the reemployment goals and the action items that must be completed by the claimant and/or the RESEA staff person to meet these goals. At the meeting, the claimant's work search efforts for the prior weeks claimed are reviewed and critiqued. The RESEA person is required to document in NHUIS any advice or instructions they provided to the claimant relative to number of work search contacts to be made weekly, specific improvements the individual must make in their work search efforts for the next three weeks. A review of available job openings, and if appropriate, training needs are reviewed at the first meeting. A referral to the Employment Counselor Specialists or Career Navigators is made at the first (or subsequent) meetings when appropriate. This first one-on-one meeting with the claimant is scheduled for eighty (100) minutes including time needed for pre-meeting preparation.

All RESEA participants are required to self-schedule to return in three or four weeks for their subsequent meetings. 1st subsequent is slotted for 70 minutes including pre and post paperwork. 2nd and final subsequent is slotted for 40 minutes including pre and post paperwork. In addition to a review of the work search for the previous three weeks, the RESEA staff person reviews labor market information and the individual employment plan.

Any claimant that has failed to improve on their work search efforts, after being so advised, is referred to an adjudicator to assess the claimant's continued eligibility for benefits. If disqualified for failure to conduct a reasonable work search, the claimant will re-qualify for benefits once they have resumed and provided documentation of a reasonable work search.

RESEA Staff have direct access to the NHUIS to enter eligibility issues. Issues they typically enter are associated with inadequate work search efforts and failure to attend RESEA meetings. The ES Staff enters issues related to refusals of suitable work or job referrals. Once the issue is entered into the NHUIS, it is assigned to the respective adjudication center handling that labor market area. Once designated to a business unit, the issue is assigned to an adjudicator for review and resolution.

Claimants self-schedule the initial and both subsequent RESEA one-on-one meeting through NHUIS. Staff have the ability to schedule claimants having difficulty with the self-schedule.

Failure to report to the scheduled appointment results in the creation of an eligibility issue for an UI adjudicator to review. UI adjudicators determine whether good cause existed for the missed appointment. If good cause exists, the UI adjudicator will work with the RESEA Staff Person to schedule a new appointment in NHUIS. If good cause did not exist for missing the scheduled appointment, the UI adjudicator will deny benefits until the claimant has met with the RESEA Staff Person. Ability and availability for work are also reviewed by the adjudicator. The UI adjudicator will work with the RESEA Staff Person to schedule a new appointment in NHUIS. All missed appointments will be rescheduled at the earliest available opening and normally within the next week.

The RESEA claimant self-schedules for both subsequent meetings, in-person or virtual, with the RESEA Staff Person within three weeks. There may be circumstances where it is deemed that a claimant will have greater outcomes by defaulting on all meetings to in-person for self-scheduling. This is determined on a case-by-case basis by the AJC management. In addition to a review of the work search for the previous three weeks, the RESEA Staff Person reviews labor market information, the Individual Reemployment Plan and provides reemployment services identified in the Individual Reemployment Plan.

<u>Granite State Jobs Act of 2019</u>

In September 2019, the Granite State Jobs Act of 2019 was introduced through legislation. This Act continues the Job Training fund, now known as WorkInvestNH, for training incumbent workers and the WorkReady Program providing WorkKeys and soft skills training. The Act also provided funding to establish and operate the WorkNowNH Program and a Reentry Program.

The WorkInvestNH Program allows businesses that are located in NH or intending to locate in the State and pay quarterly taxes into the NH Unemployment Trust Fund, an opportunity to upgrade their workers' skills. Employers can provide training to their incumbent staff located in NH. Funds may be used for structured training, onsite, classroom or training at a vendor's facility, or online training in basic skills, technical skills, quality improvement,

safety, management and supervision, English as a second language or other training that enhances the state's workforce development.

Training funds are distributed on a cost-reimbursement basis after each training course is approved, completed, and paid for. The employer submits a copy of the invoice, proof of payment for the training and an evaluation of their training. Upon receipt of all documents, the employer is reimbursed fifty percent of the cost of the training.

	Number of approved contracts	*Total amount of contracts*	*Total amount reimbursed to date*
July 2019 – June 2020	*34*	*$498,199.00*	*$177,616.85*
July 2020 – June 2021	*33*	*$588,636.37*	*$224,557.18*
July 2021 – June 2022	*26*	*$454,241.22*	*$47,334.00*
July 2022 – June 2023	*90*	*$1,467,263.82*	*$504,211.22*

The WorkNowNH Program provides intensive case management services to individuals receiving either Expanded Medicaid or Traditional Medicaid. The program was developed to assist participants to obtain skills, remove barriers to employment and either enter the workforce or obtain better employment, while providing employers with needed employees to fill job openings.

Participants will receive intensive case management services in the AJC or these services will be provided virtually. Services will be determined based on assessments conducted at the time of enrollment in the program. Case management will include job search and job readiness assistance, referrals to training, education and apprenticeship programs, and referrals to services necessary to be job ready. Those that are job ready, will be referred to job openings or on-the-job training opportunities. Those not job ready, will be referred to local community providers for barrier mitigation. They will continue to be case managed by WorkNowNH staff and when determined the participant is job ready, referred to job openings and on-the-job opportunities.

Several support services are available to assist participants including training / tuition payments, assistance with payment of books, fees and supplies, travel reimbursement, and childcare registration fees. Also available are reimbursement payments to employers hiring through an on-the-job training opportunity.

The Reentry Program provides services behind the wall to participants that are soon-to-be released from state, county, and federal facilities. Services include workshops on AJC partners and services, resume assistance, interviewing skills, and job search skills. With support of local employers, mock interviews will be conducted as well as recruiting events and small job fairs within the correctional facility. These events will allow participants to practice what they have learned in the workshops and ensure they are job ready upon release. These services will also be provided virtually when applicable.

Services will continue after release, as most will be eligible for expanded Medicaid and therefore eligible for the WorkNowNH Program. Participants will be referred to the nearest AJC and if necessary, personally introduced to the staff person that will be their contact in that AJC, either in person or through a virtual platform.

These programs are interwoven with several existing programs, including The Return-to-Work Program, the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, and the Federal Bonding Program. These programs provide support and incentives for employers to hire from these underserved populations.

(d) **Describe how the State will use Wagner-Peyser Act funds to support UI claimants, and the communication between the Employment Service and UI, as appropriate including the following**:

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

As described above in the Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program description, all UI claimants are selected for the program and are required to meet Page 183 with a RESEA staff person and attend an orientation and three follow up meetings to be introduced to and assisted with the services available at the American Job Center. One of these services is the labor exchange program offered in NH.

The initial claims process for UI claimants gathers the necessary information and transfers it to create a registered profile in the New Hampshire Job Match System. Staff confirm this registration with claimants and ensure that all information is correct, and the profile is completely filled out to make it as effective as possible.

(2) Registration of UI claimants with the State's employment service if required by State law;

All UI claimants are registered within the State's Job Match System during the process of applying for claims and attending Benefits Rights and Eligibility Review Interviews.

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

Four weeks after a UI claimant's initial orientation, they must attend the first in a series of workshops related to job search, applications, interviewing, identifying skills, and other resources that are available for job finding. These workshops are described further above under the BRI/ERI Workshop Program. Claimants not attending these mandatory workshops are reported to UI staff for potential issues. Those in need of one-on-one assistance may have these workshops/interviews individually to make sure they are meeting the requirements of the law for receiving benefits and are receiving the assistance needed for their job search.

(4) Provision of referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources.

In reviewing with claimants their interests, skills, and opportunities, staff members can assess training may be needed for reemployment. Those claimants for whom training services would be beneficial are referred to an Employment Counselor Specialist (ECS) for possible WIOA funded training as RESEA staff are made aware. Through consistent communication channels, these referrals are made seamlessly at the American Job Centers.

BRI/ERI Workshop Program

NHES has developed a series of mandatory one-hour workshops for individuals filing for unemployment benefits. The first workshop, entitled Benefits Rights Interview (BRI), is scheduled for the first weeks following the filing of an initial claim for benefits. All UI claimants are scheduled for this group workshop which is designed to provide an overview of the Rights and Obligations under the NH Unemployment Law

for a claimant and the reemployment services available through the NH Works Center. Claimants not attending the workshop are reported to the UI staff for potential UI issues.

The remaining workshops are Eligibility Review Interview (ERI) workshops designed to assist claimants in their efforts to become reemployed. The first workshop, ERI1 , is attended two to three weeks after attending the BRI. The focus of this workshop is how to search for work and properly complete application requirements. The second workshop, ERI2 entitled Interviewing Workshop, is attended four weeks later. This workshop focuses on interviewing tips. The last workshop, ERI3 is entitled Re- Energizing Your Job Search and is scheduled four weeks later. This workshop focuses on a review of ERI1 and ERI2, transferable skills and other sources of assistance. Claimants not attending any of these workshops are reported to the UI staff for potential UI issues.

During these workshops, claimants in need of one-on-one assistance are also scheduled for individual ERIs. The focus of these interviews is to ensure that claimants continue to meet the requirements of the law and to assist with their reemployment efforts. The frequency of these reviews for a claimant is dependent upon the job attachment, job classification, training needs, labor market availability, or any other criteria that is pertinent for that individual. When these interviews are conducted by staff, all the appropriate core reemployment service activities are discussed and explored, whether it is job search assistance, counseling, testing, job development or workshops. Any claimant for whom intensive services would be appropriate is referred to an employment counselor for assessment, counseling, testing, etc. In this process, profiled and non- profiled UI claimants are among those customers eligible for intensive services as time and funding allows. Claimants who would benefit from supportive services are referred to the appropriate entity. Claimants not attending any of these one-on-one sessions are reported to the UI staff for potential UI issues. Claimants may use the resources in the resource center in each NH Works office in conjunction with these one-on-one services. Each claimant is informed of all resources available at each encounter with an ES staff person.

All staff assigned to the BRI/ERI program have received training on potential UI issues and have access to the automated UI system to enter potentially disqualifying issues. UI staff members then act on these issues.

(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.

(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.

(2) Provide an assessment of the agricultural activity in the State: 1) identify 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) Identify any economic, natural, or other factors that are affecting agriculture in the State or any projected factors that will affect agriculture in the State.

(3) Provide an assessment of the unique needs of farmworkers by 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.

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

(1) Contacting farmworkers who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the employment service offices.

(2) Providing technical assistance to outreach staff. Technical assistance must include trainings, conferences, additional resources, and increased collaboration with other organizations on topics such as one-stop center services (i.e. availability of referrals to training, supportive services, and career services, as well as specific employment opportunities), the Employment Service and Employment-Related Law Complaint System ("Complaint System" described at 20 CFR 658 Subpart E), information on the other organizations serving MSFWs in the area, and a basic summary of farmworker rights, including their rights with respect to the terms and conditions of employment. (3) Increasing outreach staff training and awareness across core programs including the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and the training on identification of UI eligibility issues.

(4) Providing outreach staff professional development activities to ensure they are able to provide high quality services to both jobseekers and employers.

(5) Coordinating outreach efforts with NFJP grantees as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups.

(5) Services provided to farmworkers and agricultural employers through the one-stop delivery system. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

(A) Providing the full range of employment and training services to the agricultural community, both farmworkers and agricultural employers, through the one-stop delivery system. This includes:

(i) How career and training services required under WIOA Title I will be provided to MSFWs through the one-stop centers; and

(ii) How the State serves agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such services.

(B) Marketing the Complaint System to farmworkers and other farmworker advocacy groups.

(C) Marketing the Agricultural Recruitment System for U.S. Workers (ARS) to agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such publicity.

(6) Other Requirements.

(A) *Collaboration*. Describe any collaborative agreements the State Workforce Agency (SWA) has with other MSFW service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. Describe how the SWA intends to build upon/increase collaboration with existing partners and establish new partners over the next four years (including any approximate timelines for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements).

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

i. The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

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

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

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

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:	
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));
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;
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

4.	SWA officials: 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services; 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued; 3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued; 4) Approve corrective action plans; 5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days; 6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and 7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing.
5.	The SWA has established and maintains a self-appraisal system for ES operations to determine success in reaching goals and to correct deficiencies in performance (20 CFR 658.601).

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to adult education and literacy programs and activities under title II of WIOA, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

(a) **Aligning of Content Standards**. *Describe how the eligible agency has aligned its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).*

As of July 1, 2020, all local adult education programs have aligned content standards with the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for Adult Education. Initially, more than three hundred adult educators were trained on CCR, based on the instructional modules provided by the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education. Ongoing training has been provided annually in each region of the state since 2018. In 2023, the CCR Training was converted into an asynchronous online course on Canvas and integrated into the onboarding process for all new adult education practitioners.

In 2022-2023, two cohorts participated in the Standards in Action Curriculum Review Project to better ensure that instruction is aligned to the content standards. As a part of the sustainability plan, the cohorts worked together to development of "flip book" guide for instructors. This was released and training provided on its use during the 2023 Adult Education conference. The cohorts are working on a replication of the training to be available in the NH Adult Ed Canvas instance as a hybrid course that includes independent work on the training protocols and pairing with a cohort member for review and discussion.

The Bureau of Adult Education will continue to support instructors with alignment of content standards for adult education by providing in-depth professional development and technical assistance through the Professional Development and Mentor teams.

(b) **Local Activities**. *Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of these local activities.*

Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA)
Adult education;

Literacy;

Workplace adult education and literacy activities;

Family literacy activities;

English language acquisition activities;

Integrated English literacy and civics education;

Workforce preparation activities; or

Integrated education and training that—

1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

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

I. In 2023, the Bureau of Adult Education issued a Requests for Proposals (RFP) for three-year contracts. The state is divided into twelve (12) regions, aligned with the catchment areas established by the NH Works offices and the local Department of Health & Human Services office. All WIOA Adult Education programs were required to include one or more of the following activities, funded by a combination of federal WIOA Title II and state funds:

- Adult Education & Literacy Activities
    - A minimum of one center in each region is required.
    - Awarded to eighteen (18) programs including one program operating both a comprehensive adult education center and a statewide online English as a Second Language program.
    - Based in ten (10) school districts, six (6) non-profit organizations, one (1) faith-based organization and one (1) correctional institution
    - All programs are required to offer comprehensive adult education services including Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, high school equivalency preparation, postsecondary transition, and outreach services through volunteer tutors for participants unable to attend classes at center sites.
- Integrated Education and Training
    - Awarded to four (4) programs, all are based in school districts
    - All programs are required to offer workforce training that aligns with the needs of local employers and leads to the attainment of stackable and portable credentials or a recognized postsecondary credential as a part of a career pathway. Programs are encouraged to develop articulation agreements with postsecondary institutions aligned with the identified career pathway and assist with transition into postsecondary education or training upon completion of adult education services.
    - Programs are required to use an integrated program design that combines adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation.
    - Awarded programs include training for careers identified in the sector partnership initiatives under the NH State Workforce Plan including hospitality, health care and advanced manufacturing.

- Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education
    - Awarded to three (3) programs
    - Based in one (1) school district and two (2) non-profit organizations
    - All programs are required to offer workforce training that aligns with the needs of local employers and leads to the attainment of stackable and portable credentials or a recognized postsecondary credential as a part of a career pathway. Two of the programs have articulation agreements with postsecondary institutions and use a co-enrollment model as an integral part of the program design.
    - Programs are required to use an integrated program design that combines English language acquisition skills concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities, workforce training for a specific occupation and civics education.
    - Awarded programs include training for career identified on the State Workforce Board's list of in-demand occupations including licensed nursing assistant (2) and child care associate.

Applicants were given the option to apply for a regionally based comprehensive adult education center offering in-person, hybrid or hyflex instruction as well as the option to apply for a statewide program offering online instruction only. During the pandemic, the Bureau of Adult Education, in collaboration with the NH Department of Education's Bureau of Instructional Support, used ESSER III Funds to pilot a statewide online ESL program to target the parents of English language learners in the K-12 system and other English language learners unable to attend in-person classes at a physical adult education center. The purpose of this pilot was to determine whether a statewide online program would be an effective solution for ESL students with barriers to attendance such as conflicting work schedules and transportation especially as NH's refugees were being resettled outside of the more populated areas of the state due to NH's housing shortage. The success of the pilot led to the inclusion of this option in the RFP in 2023.

There is at least one comprehensive adult education center in each of the twelve regions in New Hampshire. Regions with high populations or large geographic catchment areas, have multiple centers. Depending on the size of the center and enrollment, multi-level classes are offered during the day and at night. All programs are required to provide distance learning opportunities for participants to extend their skill building activities as well as counseling services to assist participants with the transition into postsecondary education/training and/or employment. For participants who are unable to attend classes, regional Coordinators of Volunteers facilitate matches with local volunteer tutors to provide instruction that meets the participants' needs.

During the competitive award process, all applicants were required to demonstrate effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities to be determined an eligible provider. As outlined in the Request for Proposals (RFP), under Section 4.1 Minimum Requirements for Applicants, an eligible provider must demonstrate past effectiveness by providing performance data on its record of improving the skills of eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy, in the content domains of reading, writing, mathematics and English language acquisition, and other subject areas relevant to the services contained in the RFP. An eligible provider must also provide information regarding its outcomes for participants related to employment, attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and transition to postsecondary education and training. Applicants were provided two options for demonstrating effectiveness:

- An eligible provider that has been funded under Title II of WIOA must provide performance data required under Section 116 to demonstrate past effectiveness.

- An eligible provide that has not previously been funded under Title II of WIOA must provide performance data to demonstrate its past effectiveness in serving basic skills deficient eligible individuals, including evidence of its success in achieving outcomes in employment, secondary school credential attainment and transition to postsecondary education and training.

Additionally, all applicants were required to address the thirteen considerations under Title II Section 231 (e) in their applications including the requirements to integrate workforce preparation activities at all levels of instruction; align curricula to the College & Career Readiness Standards; incorporate the essential components of reading; use contextualized instruction and provide options for distance learning.

The RFP also included the requirement for the State Workforce Board Review detailed in Section 6 - Evaluation of Proposals. In addition to a review by the Evaluation Team, all proposals were submitted to the State Workforce Board for review for consistency with the State Workforce Plan and for an opportunity to make recommendations to the Bureau of Adult Education to promote alignment with the plan as described in WIOA 463.21. The Bureau considered the results of the review in determining the extent to which the proposal addressed the requirements of the RFP.

The Bureau of Adult Education also issued a Requests for Proposals for the Adult Diploma Program, funded by state funds. Adult Diploma Programs allow adults to complete a high school curriculum that leads to an Adult High School Diploma issued by a local school board. All of these programs provide classes during the afternoons or evenings.

This adult education system provides instruction to adults ranging from basic literacy services through high school completion and the transition into careers and college.

The Bureau of Adult Education will conduct its next competition in the Spring of 2026 for the next three-year cycle.

(c) **Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals**. *Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund eligible providers to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following correctional educational programs identified in section 225 of WIOA:*

- Adult education and literacy activities;
- Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- Secondary school credit;
- Integrated education and training;
- Career pathways;
- Concurrent enrollment;
- Peer tutoring; and
- Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

Through the competitive bidding process in 2023, the Bureau of Adult Education awarded one contract for educational services to persons in corrections or other institutions that meet the funding requirements under Section 225. The application process used the same Request for Proposals as described in detail under Adult Education & Literacy Activities with some additional questions in Section 3.5, which included a requirement that the applicant to identify how priority will be given to individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five (5) years. All applicants were required to submit data demonstrating effectiveness in order to determine an eligible provider and for the application to be considered. All eligible applicant proposals were also reviewed by the State Workforce Board as described in the previous section.

Funding for Correctional Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals programs is a combination of federal WIOA Title II funds and state funds.

Additionally, there are three school districts that provide adult education and literacy activities at local county correctional facilities through their comprehensive adult education center. These are funded with Title II and state funds under Section 231.

(c) **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program**. *Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund eligible providers to establish or operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) programs under section 243 of WIOA. Describe how adult English language learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, are served in IELCE programs.*

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be offered in combination with integrated education and training activities found in 34 CFR section 463.36.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

Funds for the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program were awarded through a separate competitive bidding process using a Request for Proposals that provided three options for proposals:

1. For an Integrated Education & Training program only

2. For an Integrated English Literacy & Civics Education program only

3. For an Integrated Education & Training program in combination with an Integrated English Literacy & Civics program

The IELCE options (2 and 3 from above) in the RFP included all of the items described above for the Adult Education & Literacy Activity proposal with additional questions including how the applicant would combine adult education & literacy activities, civics education and integrated education and training.

All applicants were required to submit data demonstrating the effectiveness of being determined as an eligible provider and for the application to be considered. All eligible applicant proposals were also reviewed by the State Workforce Board as described in the previous section.

Three IELCE programs were awarded funding for the following:

- Keene – Under the combined model, IELCE participants have access to the on-site IET for healthcare leading to state licensure as a nursing assistant. This training is offered in collaboration with the local WIOA Youth program and a local health care facility.
- Manchester – Under IELCE, participants have access to IET for healthcare leading to state licensure as a nursing assistant. The occupational skills training is offered by the Manchester Community College through co-enrollment and the clinical practice is conducted at either Catholic Medical Center or Elliott Hospital. Both clinical sites have hired previous graduates of this program.
- Nashua – Under IELCE, participants have access to IET for childcare leading to a national recognized postsecondary credential as a Child Care Associate. The occupational skills training is offered by the Nashua Community College through co-enrollment and work-based learning is coordinated by ApprenticeshipNH at the on-side childcare center.

New Hampshire state staff and local providers have a long history of participation in national leadership activities to design and strengthen both the IET and IELCE programs including the Building Opportunities Project and serving on the Work Group for the IELCE Self-Assessment. In the fall of 2021, New Hampshire state staff and local providers participated in the IET Design Camp. This training was replicated at the state level for providers in 2022-2023 with targeted technical assistance to continue the growth and strengthen the IET programs in New Hampshire. Because the IET is a required component of the IELCE program design, programs offering IELCE were encouraged to participate. NH has been chosen to participate in the IET Advance project in the spring of 2024 and will apply for participation in the National IET Coaching Cadre when it becomes available.

Funds for this program are used for the adult education and literacy activities, the workforce preparation activities, and the civics education component. Multiple sources of funding are used for the occupational skills training component. These include WIOA Title I fund, Vocational Rehabilitation funds, a grant under the Governor's Discretionary Funds under the Vibrant, Inclusive and Prosperous (VIP) Workforce Program as well as private and local funds.

Local employers, sector-partnership liaisons, business groups, the community college system, ApprenticeshipNH and core WIOA partners were involved in the program design to ensure the integration with the local workforce development system.

Projects funded under this title focus on the following goals:

- Educational services for English Language Learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables them to achieve competency in the English

language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers and citizens in the United States. These services shall include instruction in literacy and English acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation.

- Workforce training that will enable students to begin or continue careers in their chosen fields, including preparation for post-secondary education. A high priority will be to provide English skills so that individuals with degrees and credentials in their native countries will qualify for employment in the fields for which they have been trained. The desired outcome from the workforce training under this title will be unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency, as identified in the State Plan.
- All students in the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Programs, as well as students from all other Title II funded programs may be (1) co-enrolled in other workforce development system programs or (2) receive services concurrently from several partners.

The IET component has been the most challenging element of the IELCE program design, therefore, over the next four years, New Hampshire will increase capacity for integrated education and training through targeted technical assistance from the Advance IET project; employer engagement through the Interagency Business Team; collaborations with the New Hampshire Employment Program (TANF), WIOA Adult and Youth, the Bureau of Career Development, and the Community College System of New Hampshire.

(d) **State Leadership**. *Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out the required State Leadership activities under section 223 of WIOA.*

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

WIOA Title II State Leadership funds are used to support state office staff and activities. Additionally, state funds are used to provide a Statewide Professional Development Contract to meet the required and permissible activities under Section 223.

Alignment with adult education & literacy activities with other core programs to implement the strategies of the State Plan

The Bureau of Adult Education aligns adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop partners through active participation in state leadership, professional development, and local provider collaborations in order to implement the strategies identified in the NH State Workforce Plan. This includes active participation and representation on the NH Works Consortium, the Interagency Business Team, the Professional Development Team and at regional quarterly WIOA Partner meetings.

The Bureau will continue to participate with other core WIOA partners in building a career pathway model that includes the services offered by each partner and identifies specific entry points for adult education students. A Bureau staff member regularly attends meetings of professional organizations representing the former sector-partnership initiatives such as the NH Hotel & Lodging Association and iBuildNH, The State Director is a contributing member of the Rural Health Care Advisory Committee. At the local level, adult education program directors support the goal of a comprehensive workforce system aligning adult education to workforce, economic development, and other educational investments.

Collaborations with the Bureau of Career Development and the Community College System of New Hampshire as well as expansion of the Integrated Education & Training programming will increase access to adult education students to a wider variety of career pathways.

Establishment and operation of a high-quality professional development program

Professional development (PD) is provided predominantly with state funds through a Statewide Professional Development contract. Primary responsibility for all professional development activities is collaboration between the Bureau administrator and the contractor. The PD system uses a variety of high quality efforts which have been developed over the years in New Hampshire including a train the trainer model; multiple delivery and communication modes; projects that require practice and application and the dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to such programs; the maintenance of a strong Mentor Team of experienced educators in specific content areas; the continuation of the Disabilities Committee to ensure that local programs are successful in working with individuals with disabilities; and the Coordinators of Volunteers to guide the recruitment and training of a corps of volunteer tutors to provide services for those unable to attend structured classes due to work schedules or other barriers such as transportation. NH has successfully implemented multiple federal instructional initiatives including annual STAR certification training, Teaching the Skills that Matter and the Standards in Action's Curriculum Review.

In the next four years, the Bureau plans to use the Universal Design for Learning framework, the DRAW initiative and Enhancing Access for Refugees and New Americans to improve adult education services across the state.

Provision of technical assistance

In addition to the professional development services provided by the contractor, the Bureau staff also provides extensive technical assistance to eligible providers.

- The PD contractor develops and disseminates instructional practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available and appropriate in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs and distance learning. The Bureau staff develops and disseminates programmatic practices based on research including promising practices and models from other states.
- The Bureau staff provides technical assistance on the role of eligible providers as one-stop partner to program directors. Directors are required to complete the NH Works New Hire Training, annual EO training and training on working with individuals with disabilities. An adult education representative is required to attend the quarterly local WIOA partner meetings in order to support a comprehensive workforce system, provide access to services across the system and promote co-enrollment. The Bureau has developed referral flow charts for various WIOA core partners to encourage access to employment, education and training services.
- Technical assistance for instructional practices and assistance in the use of technology is provided through the Statewide PD contract. All local programs are required to have distance learning policy, orientation and are required to have a designated, trained staff person to facilitate distance learning for extended learning; to assist individuals who need to stop-out temporarily; individuals waiting to start; and those in rural locations. The PD contractor provides training on the statewide Canvas instance used for professional development activities and learner instruction and support for publishing course catalogs on the statewide public-facing adult education website. The Bureau Administrator provides technical assistance related to the use of technologies to improve system

efficiencies including the provision of statewide online learning software licenses to expand learning opportunities and provide activities for learners on center waiting lists as well as an online registration portal to facilitate the intake process.

Monitoring and evaluation of programs

The Bureau staff is responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities through quarterly data reports, semiannual individual desk audits and analysis of measurable skill gain and performance indicators. An annual risk assessment identifies programs that may be at risk of not making continuous improvement, not contributing to the statewide performance measures or non-compliance with program requirements. The monitoring process combined with the annual program improvement plan submission assist with identifying areas needing improvement at the state and local level. This information is used to inform additional technical assistance or professional development.

Permissible Activities

NH State Leadership and state funds are used to support several permissible activities under Section 223.

- NH is an active member of the New England Literacy Resource Center with four representatives on the advisory board (State Director, Professional Development Contract and two local program directors).
- The PD contractor in collaboration with the Bureau staff developed and implemented a technology application, statewide Canvas instance, to support the use of instructional technology. Canvas is used for the professional development system as a communication tool, a learning management system and a resource repository. Role specific staff have their own groups including all adult education practitioners, program directors, intake & assessment specialists, data entry specialists, counselors, coordinators of volunteers. All meetings and trainings are recorded and posted in the appropriate groups to allow for staff flexibility if they are unable to attend activities. Online, asynchronous courses are provided to increase accessibility for practitioners. Topics include Canvas training, Introduction to the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education, Career Navigator training, I-DEA training and New Staff Development. Training for software offered through statewide licenses including Aztec, Essential Education, Edmentum, Burlington English and North Star Digital Literacy is also posted. Canvas is also used by instructors to provide adult education and literacy activities.
- NH offers an Earn & Learn grant process to promote the development and dissemination of curricula by adult education practitioners.
- An initial cohort was developed to support the development of content and models for integrated education and training during the IET Design Boot Camp. A second cohort was trained through replication of the first. A third cohort will participate in Advance IET in 2024 and it will be replicated at the state level in 2025.
- Please see previous section for a description of activities related to identifying curriculum frameworks and aligning rigorous content standards.
- A NH team participated in the 2023 National Reporting System regional training and the targeted technical assistance project to develop strategies for improving teacher retention.

(e) **Assessing Quality**. *Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II. Describe how the eligible agency will take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA. Describe how the eligible agency will use evaluations, data analysis, program monitoring, or other methods to improve the quality of adult education activities in the State.*

Under Required State Leadership Activities above, the Bureau of Adult Education will utilize the results of local programs on the core performance levels required for WIOA partners and the additional measurable skill gain performance established by the Office of Career Technical and Adult Education to assess the quality of local program performance.

Program evaluation is conducted in multiple ways each program year including local provider quarterly reports, the risk assessment process described above, desk monitoring and on-site monitoring activities and the annual program improvement process. Data collected through the quarterly reports is checked for quality and accuracy against statewide reports and validated during on-site monitoring or individually as needed. Data analysis activities are included in each quarterly Program Directors meeting and the Data Entry Specialist meetings. Anomalies are identified and examined to determine the cause. Causes are addressed through individualized technical assistance, changes to the data policy or recommended revisions to the data system.

Professional development activities, described in detail above, include activities to improve instruction as well as training on data collection, validation and using data to improve program quality. The Bureau staff and the PD Contractor identify common areas needing improvement and provide targeted training across the state on an annual basis. The needs are identified through multiple methods including but not limited to practitioner surveys; feedback from program directors and mentors; program improvement plans; statewide and local data analysis activities including National Reporting System trainings, LINCS webinars. COABE, NELRC and OCTAE meetings; and requests from the NH Adult Education Directors Alliance.

For example, NH provided intensive Counselor training over the program year 2022-2023 on understanding and developing strategies for the measurable skill gain entering postsecondary education after exit but before the end of the program year. Graphic explanations, data review, brainstorming sessions were used to identify best practices. Additional support for transitioning participants into postsecondary education opportunities was provided through guest speakers and shared resources. As a result, the number of individuals reported on Table 4A as earning an MSG by transitioning into postsecondary education/training increased from 24 participants to 45 participants between PY21 and PY22.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

States must provide written and signed certifications that:	
1.	The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;
	Yes
2.	The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;
	Yes
3.	The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;
	Yes

4.	All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;
	Yes
5.	A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;
	Yes
6.	The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;
	Yes
7.	The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and
	Yes
8.	The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;
The State Plan must include assurances that:	
1.	The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding 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;
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.
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).

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

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

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of

any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

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

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

Please scan and return the forms to wioa@ed.gov at the same time you submit your State Plan via the portal.

1. SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs
(http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)

2. Grants.gov - Certification Regarding Lobbying
(http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)

3. SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (required, only if applicable)
(http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)

APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION	Enter information in this column
Applicant's Organization	NH Department of Education, Bureau of Adult Education
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	Enter information in this column
First Name	Sarah
Last Name	Wheeler
Title	Administrator

Email	Sarah.L.Wheeler@doe.nh.gov

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)

Instructions: In the text box below, describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs provide the information to meet the requirements of Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), consistent with the following instructions. Click here to enter text.

OMB Control No. 1894-0005 (Exp. 04/30/2020)

At the State level, the majority of State Leadership funds are used to support state office staff. If State Leadership funds are used to provide professional development activities, the Bureau of Adult Education will continue to ensure equitable access to meetings, trainings and resources through multiple ways including, but not limited to: physical accessibility; availability of formats and times; different delivery methods including online, in-person and recordings with transcripts.

All applicants for funding from the Bureau of Adult Education are required to submit a GEPA attestation as an attachment to their response to the state competition for WIOA Adult Education funding.

Additionally, each applicant is required to address how it will recruit and engage individuals with barriers to equitable participation in multiple sections of the application. All contracts with local providers incorporate the original proposal as well as program assurances that require compliance with the GEPA. The Bureau of Adult Education, in coordination with the NH Department of Education, Bureau of Federal Compliance, will monitor the implementation of GEPA as an integral part of the monitoring process.

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

Review the linked document. Where "applicant" is mentioned, that refers to the State eligible agency and "application" refers to the state plan. This element does not apply to local providers for state plan purposes. State eligible agencies are required to maintain local GEPA responses separately from the state plan. The State eligible agency must provide a response to GEPA regarding use of AEFLA State Administration and State Leadership funds in the State Plan.

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about the following provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

(1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.

(2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.

(3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

(4) An applicant that proposes a project to increase school safety might describe the special efforts it will take to address concern of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, and efforts to reach out to and involve the families of LGBT students.

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Public Law 103-382. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0005.

1. SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)
2. Grants.gov - Certification Regarding Lobbying (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)
3. SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (required, only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Program-Specific Requirements for State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA.

(a) State Rehabilitation Council. All VR agencies, except for those that have an independent consumer-controlled commission, must have a State Rehabilitation Council (Council or SRC) that meets the criteria in section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable, has (select A or B):

[check box] (A) is an independent State commission.

[**X**] (B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council.

In accordance with Assurance 3(b), please provide information on the current composition of the Council by representative type, including the term number of the representative, as applicable, and any vacancies, as well as the beginning dates of each representative's term.

Council Representative	**Current Term Number/ Vacant**	**Beginning Date of Term Mo./Yr.**
Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)	x	Ongoing
Parent Training and Information Center	1	7/2022
Client Assistance Program	x	Ongoing
Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor (Ex Officio if Employed by the VR Agency)	1	12/2021
Community Rehabilitation Program Service Provider	2	12/2021
Business, Industry, and Labor	1	7/2021
Business, Industry, and Labor	2	8/2023
Business, Industry, and Labor	Vacant	---
Business, Industry, and Labor	Vacant	---
Disability Advocacy Groups	2	4/2023
Current or Former Applicants for, or Recipients of, VR services	Vacant	---
Section 121 Project Directors in the State (as applicable)	N/A*	---
State Educational Agency Responsible for Students with Disabilities Eligible to Receive Services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	1	4/2021
State Workforce Development Board	1	4/2021
VR Agency Director (Ex Officio)	Vacant	---

* The State of NH does not have an American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS) program (aka Section 121 Program). NH does not have state or federally recognized tribe.

If the SRC is not meeting the composition requirements in section 105(b) of the Rehabilitation Act and/or is not meeting quarterly as required in section 105(f) of the Rehabilitation Act, provide the steps that the VR agency is taking to ensure it meets those requirements.

Over the past years the SRC has experienced challenges in scheduling and membership. The Council started the past year (calendar year 2023) with vacancies in the chair and vice chair roles. These positions remained vacant until they were able to be filled late spring/early summer, The SRC has experienced and continues to have a number of vacant positions on the council.

The agency director position is currently vacant as previous director the resigned in October 2023. Efforts are underway to hire for this position. The SRC membership subcommittee is not currently fully staffed. Once this is resolved, increased recruitment efforts can resume to address current and upcoming vacancies. Having the director's seat filled will also help in all category recruitments.

The Council regularly meets the annual quarterly meeting requirement.

In accordance with the requirements in section 101(a)(21)(A)(ii)(III) of the Rehabilitation Act, include a summary of the Council's input (including how it was obtained) into the State Plan and any State Plan revisions, including recommendations from the Council's annual reports, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction and other Council reports.

No formal Council recommendations were made during the past year.

In previous years the SRC has been involved with the comprehensive statewide needs assessment and customer satisfaction survey projects. In summer of 2023, the agency engaged in a strategic planning process to develop a 4-year strategic plan (2024 – 2027). The agency worked with Berry Dunn on this project. SRC members reviewed and provided input into the early plan development. Their ideas were included in the further finalization of the plan.

Throughout the year the agency kept the Council apprised of the difficulty recruiting new counselors. One Council member recommended that the agency include outreach to Assumption and other educational institutions as they advertise vacancies.

The Client Assistance Program (CAP) regularly provides information regarding the issues escalating to CAP involvement. It was noted that most of the questions and issues raised were due to expectations held by the participant. They recommended that the agency work to be clear and concise in meetings with participants about what the agency can and cannot do during the process.

[Waiting to hear if there are any additional comments from SRC members as we send this draft through SRC and public comment review]

Provide the VR agency's response to the Council's input and recommendations, including an explanation for the rejection of any input and recommendations.
[to be further developed as any additional information is provided for the above]

No input or recommendation received by the NH SRC was rejected.

(b) Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA). Section 101(a)(15), (17), and (23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to provide an assessment of:

(1) The VR services needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, including:

(A) Individuals with the most significant disabilities and their need for Supported Employment;
The agency last completed a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) in 2022 with the assistance of the Institute of Community Inclusion. Data resources included input from VR agency and community rehabilitation provider staff; key information with lived experience of disability; workforce partners; and business partners.

The assessment identified an increase in NH's disability population along with continuing economic inequality for NH residents with disabilities. This points to the likelihood for continued and increasing demand for VR services in the future.

The needs assessment gathered many comments about the life changing value of getting a paid job with the support of the agency. Suggestions made on how to improve services overall included: timeliness of services; improving communication with counseling and frontline staff; support for resolving transportation, childcare and complex health care needs; and more understanding of how to address financial pressures. Key findings and recommendations centered around three main areas: awareness, accessibility, and quality of services.

The needs assessment can be viewed online at:
https://www.education.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt326/files/inline-documents/sonh/comprehensive-statewide-needs-assessment-2022-a.pdf

(B) Individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program;
Throughout the assessment there was identified a lack of awareness of the availability of VR services within the state. This is particularly true for populations that have been identified as unserved/underserved. Potential action steps to improve awareness in these communities included consideration of intentional marketing and awareness strategies either embedded in the current branding initiative or in partnership with other public systems for specific population.

(C) Individuals with disabilities served through other components of the workforce development system; and
Workforce partners were specifically included among those providing input in the assessment. Their perspectives considered in the review, discussions, and recommendations. Potential strategies identified included creating or accessing cross agency referral mechanisms and identifying gaps or barriers to rapid coordination.

(D) Youth with disabilities, including students with disabilities and their need for pre-employment transition services. 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 IDEA.

The assessment highlighted the increase in prevalence of disability in the transition age youth population within the state of NH. Also shown in the results is an increase in youth as a percentage of participants served by the agency. The assessment underlined the continuing need for transition services for youth and students with disabilities for pre-employment services to understand both their interests and employers' needs and expectations.

(2) Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State.

Within the assessment it was identified that community rehabilitation program capacity was a universal concern across respondents. It was noted that as there is already a concern for capacity, as applicants increase it will likely put additional strain on service delivery. This was identified as an area that needs additional work and demonstrated a need to establish, develop and improve community rehabilitation program services to meet the needs of VRNH current and future participants.

(c) Goals, Priorities, and Strategies. Section 101(a)(15) and (23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to describe the goals and priorities of the State in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs. The goals and priorities are based on (1) the most recent CSNA, including any updates; (2) the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and (3) other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the SRC and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107 of the Rehabilitation Act. VR agencies must—

(1) Describe how the SRC and the VR agency jointly developed and agreed to the goals and priorities and any revisions; and

The State goals and priorities were jointly developed with VRNH and agreed to by the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) as part of the strategic planning and state plan development process. Each year the SRC reviews goals and priorities and status of activities as part of the state planning process.

(2) Identify measurable goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs and the basis for selecting the goals and priorities (e.g., CSNA, performance accountability measures, SRC recommendations, monitoring, other information). As required in section 101(a)(15)(D), (18), and (23), describe under each goal or priority, the strategies or methods used to achieve the goal or priority, including as applicable, description of strategies or methods that—

(A) Support innovation and expansion activities;
(B) Overcome barriers to accessing VR and supported employment services;
(C) 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, post secondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services); and
(D) Improve the performance of the VR and Supported Employment programs in assisting individuals with disabilities to achieve quality employment outcomes.

[text box: List and number each goal/priority, noting the basis, and under each goal/priority, list and number the strategies to achieve the goal/priority]

In the summer of 2023, the agency conducted a comprehensive strategic planning process to help define the future of the agency's work in 1) assisting individuals with disabilities to obtain and maintain competitive, integrated employment, and 2) assisting business partners with services to meet their workforce needs. The planning team engaged members of the State Rehabilitation council to review draft work and to gain their input.

The agency leveraged the following resources as source documentation for the strategic plan: 2022 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA); 2020 and 2021 Customer Satisfaction Survey results; VRNH Transition Services Strategic Plan; Transitions Services Strategic Plan Status Report; 2022 VRNH Leadership and All Staff Pulse Survey results; Transition Communication Plan; Total Quality Assurance Plan – Draft; Workforce Assessment Observations; Governance Communications Plan; the current WIOA Combined State Plan and the 2023 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Survey results of agency staff, customers and business partners.

Through the strategic planning efforts, the agency identified four strategic priority areas around a balanced scorecard model: 1) Financial Governance; 2) Customer Focus; 3) Staff Learning and Growth, and 4) Internal Processes. Utilizing these, the agency plans to improve various internal business functions toward impacting resulting outcomes. The overall intention of setting these priorities is to move VR New Hampshire to be an agile organization able to adapt more quickly to changes – internally and externally. This will allow the agency to respond more rapidly and flexibly to participant needs. Through this plan the agency strives to lead change in a productive, cost-effective way without compromising quality.

Priority: Financial Governance

Goal 1: Utilize comprehensive financial monitoring tools and reports to make financial decisions.

This goal is designed to improve agency access to comprehensive and accurate financial information to enable to agency to make budgeting and expenditure decisions more readily.

Strategy: Modernize Budget-to-Actual and Variance Dashboard/Reporting Tools that encompass personnel, indirect, programmatic, client services, and contract budgets.

Goal 2: Enhance forecasting and long-term budgeting.

This goal is designed to improve efficiency of forecasting to ensure continued effective management of grant funds.

Strategy: Modernize long-term budgeting and forecasting tools/reports.

Goal 3: Leverage financial resources to develop strategic partnerships.

This goal is designed to promote enhanced cross-agency collaboration and support for co-enrolled participants.

Strategy: Assess existing agreements and outreach to potential partner organizations to discuss mutual employment services/needs and develop/execute shared funding agreements.

Priority: Customer Focus

Goal 1: Enrich customer engagement.

This goal is designed to enhance and expand agency services and capacity as well as to improve participant access to services.

Strategy 1: Field Services will develop and sustain cultural norms and standards regarding communication and customer-centric service.

Strategy 2: Create and execute a marketing plan to help inform, educate, and engage constituents about VRNH services, responsibilities, and results.

Strategy 3: Demonstrate to workforce system entities the value of collaborative efforts and expand mutually beneficial partnerships.

Strategy 4: Support staff and service delivery by clarifying job role expectations, strengthening communication, and leveraging recognition.

Goal 2: Maximize workforce partnerships.

This goal is designed to increase employment outcomes and to support employer workforce needs.

Strategy: Identify solutions to increase the number of individuals with disabilities who leverage co-enrollment services across multiple workforce programs to maximize personal support.

Goal 3: Modernize services for individuals with disabilities.

This goal is designed to modernize services and service delivery to individuals with disabilities.

Strategy : Contract to develop and implement a formal workforce expectations computer literacy skills training and evaluation program.

Goal 4: Increase successful employment outcomes.

This goal directly supports quality workforce placements for individuals with disabilities.

Strategy 1: Increase competitive, integrated employment opportunities and successful outcomes for adults and youth with disabilities.

Strategy 2: Strengthen supported employment programming by continuing to prioritize quality competitive, integrated employment outcomes.

Priority: Staff Learning and Growth

Goal 1: Foster a culture of engagement and understanding.

This goal is designed to strengthen agency staff satisfaction, performance and retention.

Strategy 1: Operationalize its service promise and values comprehensively through its people, places, processes, products, and price.

Strategy 2: Further revise, implement, and monitor a communication strategy that helps to assure clear, consistent, and specific messaging about best practice operational approaches that VRNH will conduct.

Strategy 3: Establish and implement a Staff Recognition Program.

Goal 2: Ensure adequate staffing resource availability to assist with accomplishing VRNH's mission.

This goal is designed to support and maintain the continuity and quality of agency programs and services as well as to enable for future expansion of services to meet current and predicted future needs.

Strategy 1: Develop and implement a recruitment plan to build short- and long-term staffing.

Strategy 2: Develop and implement a retention plan to increase short- and long-term staffing.

Strategy 3: Develop and implement a succession plan to build leadership and ongoing staff development as measured by career path success and increased retention.

Goal 3: Operationalize the 2024 training plan.

This goal is designed to 1) promote staff competency and confidence as they perform their job roles, 2) support staff succession planning and retention, and 3) ensure quality interactions with agency customers.

Strategy 1: Create and maintain a centralized resource repository for VRNH staff to access that contains work process and program documentation.

Strategy 2: Modernize the 2023 training plan to create the 2024 training plan focused on customer experience, updates to VRNH's operations, and an understanding of the workforce system post pandemic.

Priority: Internal Processes

Goal 1: Strengthen workforce agility.

This goal is designed to help the agency ensure resource availability and optimization.

Strategy 1: Execute the 2022 Workforce Assessment recommendations.

Strategy 2: Develop a staff vacancy/contingency plan to help ensure adequate staffing during times of vacancy.

Goal 2: Enhance program process quality.

This goal is designed to ensure we are meeting measurable performance expectations.

Strategy 1: Implement process improvements for operating procedures that do not meet federal reporting requirements.

Goal 3: Enhance support services and access.

This goal is designed to increase access to additional services to support agency programs.

Strategy 1: Increase access to and the availability of transportation options for customers to and from service appointments and work requirements.

Strategy 2: Develop and execute a plan to increase assistive technology services available to participants.

Strategy 3: Strengthen VRNH's presence and services in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHOH) community.

Goal 4: Operationalize an internal governance plan.

This goal is designed to enhance operational performance and to operationalize risk management activities.

Strategy 1: Establish and promote workforce process standardization across VRNH.

Strategy 2: Operationalize the VRNH risk management strategy presented to VRNH by The Stephen Group.

Strategy 3: Finalize and operationalize an internal controls plan.

(d) Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals. For the most recently completed program year, provide an evaluation and report of progress for the goals or priorities, including progress on the strategies under each goal or priority, applicable to that program year. Sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to describe—

(1) Progress in achieving the goals and priorities identified for the VR and Supported Employment Programs; The agency reviewed our goals and priorities for the year ending PY 2022

Goal and Priority Area 1 : Quality competitive integrated employment outcomes for persons with disabilities in New Hampshire

Objective: Increase competitive integrated employment opportunities and outcomes for adults and youth with disabilities

- Target: Increase in number participants who achieve a successful rehabilitation outcome
    - The agency saw an increase in successful rehabilitation from PY 2020 in PY2021, however there was a decline in successful rehabilitations from PY 2021 to PY 2022.
    - Count:
        - PY 2020 321 rehabilitations
        - PY 2021 331 rehabilitations (10)
        - PY 2022 258 rehabilitations (-73)
- Target: Increase in number of participants who are students and youth with disabilities achieving an employment outcome (24 and Under)
    - Specific to youth, the agency saw an increase in successful rehabilitation from PY 2020 in PY2021, however there was a decline in successful rehabilitations from PY 2021 to PY 2022.
    - Count:
        - PY 2020 87 rehabilitations
        - PY 2021 98 rehabilitations (11)
        - PY 2022 89 rehabilitations (-9)

Objective: Strengthen supported employment programing

- Target: Increase the number of participants who need supported employment as part of their employment achieving an employment outcome. Supported Employment Served
    - The agency saw a decrease in participants who need supported employment from PY 2020 in PY2021, and another decrease from PY 2021 to PY 2022.
    - Count of participants with supported employment individualized employment plans:
        - PY 2020 769 participants
        - PY 2021 700 participants (-69)
        - PY 2022 638 participants (-62)

- Target: "Total Supported Employment Rehabs Top looks at SEP Plans, Lower looks at coded SEP"
    - The agency saw an increase in successful supported employment rehabilitations from PY 2020 in PY2021, however there was a decline in successful rehabilitations from PY 2021 to PY 2022.
    - Count:
        - PY 2020 64 SEP rehabilitations
        - PY 2021 77 SEP rehabilitations (13)
        - PY 2022 50 SEP rehabilitations (-27)
- Target: Development of memorandum of understanding with the NH Department of Health and Human Services, Divisions of Behavioral Health and Long Term Supports and Services
    - Outstanding

Objective: Develop training programs directly with business

- Target: Increase number of business contacts
    - The agency saw an increase in business contacts from PY 2020 in PY2021, and another increase from PY 2021 to PY 2022.
    - Count:
        - PY 2020 81 business contacts
        - PY 2021 246 business contacts (165)
        - PY 2022 342 rehabilitations (96)
- Target: Increase number of businesses who receive training from the Business Engagement Unit
    - The agency saw an increase in business training provided from PY 2020 in PY2021, and another increase from PY 2021 to PY 2022.
    - Count:
        - PY 2020 4 business training provided.
        - PY 2021 35 business training provided (31)
        - PY 2022 72 business training provided (37)

Goal and Priority Area 2: Effective and efficient use of resources

Objective: Monitor fiscal management and strategies to ensure effective and efficient use of resources

- Target: Engage consultant to assist in assuring financial management and strategies are set to ensure effective and efficient use of resources once identified and implemented monitoring plan implemented
    - The agency engaged The Stephen Group to assist in review and development of strategies to impact our financial and governance strategies. From this the agency identified need for a Financial Administrator position, which was filled Fall 2023. In addition, work has been continuing to update financial processes.

Objective: Enhance/Strengthen relationship with CRP services and community to continuously improve employment outcomes

- Target: Develop and implement a vendor management system
    - The agency has tried several strategies to update how vendor management is directed within the agency, including seeking outside vendors to assist, and to date has not been successful in

gathering outside resources to assist in making our vendor management more robust. Current efforts include exploring whether internal staffing resources can be added to address vendor management.

- Target: Provide Training for CRP staff
    - The Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators - ACRE-approved training is offered by educators who are current ACRE organizational members. VRNH participates in this program by providing one trainer to ensure our Community Rehabilitation Program providers are educated and trained on business engagement strategies that align with the VRNH dual customer approach. The training was offered three times in 2023 but only one program was ultimately held due to lack of enrollment.

Goal and Priority Area 3: Focus on Career Pathways within NH Sectors

Objective: Support and continue to explore opportunities for sector-based and alternative education, employment, and training programs

- Target: "Increase the number of participants who successfully exit the program who have obtained a credential. Data is post-secondary credential while enrolled."
    - The agency saw an increase in participants exiting the program who obtained a post-secondary credential from PY 2020 in PY2021, and another increase from PY 2021 to PY 2022.
    - Count:
        - PY 2020 26 participants
        - PY 2021 36 participants (10)
        - PY 2022 40 participants (4)
- Target: "Credential Attainment (PY2022) Exits 1/1/21 - 12/31/21"
    - There was no negotiated rate for credential attainment in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The agency met and exceeded the negotiated performance for credential attainment for PY 2022. The PY 2022 negotiated level was set at 39%.
    - Count:
        - PY 2020 38.6%
        - PY 2021 44.3%
        - PY 2022 48.9%
- Target: "Measurable Skills Gain Rate
    - There was no negotiated rate for measurable skill gains attainment in PY 2020. The agency met and exceeded the negotiated performance for credential attainment for PY 2021. The PY 2021 negotiated level was set at 24%. The agency did not meet the negotiated performance level for PY 2022 which was set at 61%.
    - Count:
        - PY 2020 61.3%
        - PY 2021 59.9%
        - PY 2022 58.1%

Objective: Educate staff to provide career pathway information and opportunities to participants

- Target: At least two training opportunities to staff are made available in each of the following topic areas: Vocational assessment and use of assessment tools in career planning; Career pathways or Sector opportunities; and Labor market information
    - During PY 2022, the agency provided vocational assessment and labor market information training to all new counseling staff.
    - Specific trainings were held on assessment tools including CareerScope, AWATO and Pathful.
    - The agency contracted with the Institute for Community Inclusion to complete a year -long training series for all counseling staff of comprehensive assessment. The training is provided through multiple formats including asynchronous through a Canvas platform, virtual community of practice meetings, and three in person learning collaboratives. Throughout these sessions resources needed to complete a comprehensive assessment including various assessment tools and the use of labor market information will be provided and explored.

Goal and Priority Area 4: Promote an environment that supports the participant-counselor relationship.

Objective: Support the development and retention of qualified rehabilitation staff through a comprehensive system of personnel development

- Target: Develop a strategic training program that supports the development and retention of staff, including qualified rehabilitation counselors
        - In December of 2022 the agency hired a Training Coordinator to assist in-service training efforts. A plan was developed to outline agency training to adopt a more strategic approach. During PY 2022 not all activities planned were able to be accomplished due to the number of new staff hires and training resources being dedicated to onboarding efforts.

Objective: Explore strategies to maximize participant engagement throughout the VR process

- Target: Design and implement strategies to maximize participant engagement
    - The agency has highlighted participant engagement and supported training and participation in communities of practice that support investigating strategies for engagement and rapid engagement.
    - The agency provided Motivational Interviewing training to counseling and supervisory staff.

Objective: Maintaining contact with participant continuously to enhance trust in the VR program

- Target: Explore methods to improve maintaining contact with participants
    - The agency engaged a consulting group to help the agency review, design and implement processes, procedures, internal controls and a comprehensive internal control and quality assurance system. Effectively engaging participants and strategic staff development planning were included this work.

Goal and Priority Area 5: Develop and implement marketing and outreach materials.

Objective: Develop tools that are easily understandable for participants and partners. Target populations defined as transition aged; business and employers; and adult participants.

- Target: Website updated to improve ease of navigation and updated materials
    - The website was updated with VR new logo and tagline along with the updated resources in previous PY. The agency continues to look for additional ways to improve navigation.
- Fact sheets addressing each of the targeted populations are created, published and disseminated.
    - This was completed for each of the targeted populations in previous years and the materials were used during PY2022 in outreach and marketing efforts.
- Rack cards addressing each of the targeted populations are created, published and disseminated.
    - This was completed for each of the targeted populations in previous years and the materials were used during PY2022 in outreach and marketing efforts.
- VR Facebook page created and updated to remain current.
    - Facebook page was maintained throughout PY 2022

Work also included the development and production of three (3) audience-focused videos, five (5) program-focused videos, and one (1) 30-second promotional video for use on the New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation (VRNH) website and/or distribution as a public service announcement (PSA).

(2) Performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA for the most recently completed program year, reflecting actual and negotiated levels of performance. Explain any discrepancies in the actual and negotiated levels; and

Dates / Program Year	**PY2022 (7/1/2022-6/30/2023)**		**PY2021 (7/1/2021-6/30/2022)**	
	Actual Performance Level	**Negotiated**	**Actual Performance Level**	**Negotiated**
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	61.8%	51.3%	56.9%	N/A
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	$4,199	$4,101	$5,100.13	N/A
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	60.3%	53.6%	53.5%	N/A
Measurable Skill Gains*	58.1%	61.4%	59.9%	24.0%
Credential Attainment	48.9%	39.0%	44.3%	N/A

* The Departments have determined that the available baseline data are not sufficient to produce reliable estimates using the required statistical adjustment model for the remaining performance indicators. Therefore, the Departments have determined it is necessary to delay assessment of:

• Measurable Skill Gains Rate for the WIOA titles I and IV core programs;

(3) The use of funds reserved for innovation and expansion activities (sections 101(a)(18) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act) (e.g., SRC, SILC).

Funds reserved for innovation and expenditure were spent in support of the State Rehabilitation Council and Statewide Independent Living Councils resource plans. A total of $42,749 was spent in support of the Councils.

(e) Supported Employment Services, Distribution of Title VI Funds, and Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services.

(1) Acceptance of title VI funds:
   (A) [**X]** VR agency requests to receive title VI funds.
   (B) [check box] VR agency does NOT elect to receive title VI funds and understands that supported employment services must still be provided under title I.

(2) If the VR agency has elected to receive title VI funds, Section 606(b)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act requires VR agencies to include specific goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of title VI funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services. Describe the use of title VI funds and how they will be used in meeting the goals and priorities of the Supported Employment program.

In the coming years the agency seeks to expand our supported employment resources though our partnerships with Area Agency's and Mental Health centers. VRNH will work to keep communications open and develop MOU with the NH Department of Health and Human Services to expand on services once employed.

The agency works collaboratively with both the area agency system as well as the mental health system to utilize supported employment funds once job placement has occurred in alignment with a participant's individual plan for employment job goal. The funds will be deployed statewide, as needed, for individuals with disabilities eligible for VI-B funding until exhausted, then supplemented with Title I funds as appropriate.

The majority of these participants are expected to be individuals with developmental disabilities and/or mental illness as these are the disabilities for which funding is available for long-term supports after vocational rehabilitation services are completed. The Agency will continue to seek alternative sources for long-term supports, including the use of natural supports, as appropriate, to the individual.

The agency intends to use the Title VI funds in PY 24, to provide allowable services to individuals and students with the most significant disabilities once job placement has occurred. Working closely with the mental health and area agencies will allow for more strategies in achieving employment for the individuals needing Supported Employment services. Extended services will be provided as needed.

(3) Supported employment services may be provided with title 1 or title VI funds following placement of individuals with the most significant disabilities in employment. In accordance with section 101(a)(22) and section 606(b)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act, describe 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; and the timing of transition to extended services.

If a participant is in need of long-term supports and Medicaid services have not engaged (after age 21), our agency has traditionally worked with Community Rehabilitation Programs to provide the necessary supports to maintain employment. These extended services would be provided for a period not to exceed four years or until the youth reaches the age of 25, whichever occurs first. Traditionally extended services (supports) are provided by the Medicaid agency; however, VR will ensure, through the MOU that VR can assist with extended services when necessary and appropriate when other funding is not available. This is anticipated to be included in the competed agreement with the agencies for developmental services and mental health services in 2024.

The provision of supported employment services for individuals with the most significant disabilities is an area of priority for VRNH as it provides opportunities for employment for individuals for whom competitive, integrated employment has not historically occurred, or for whom competitive integrated employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability.

Quality of Supported Employment Services: The quality in the provision of VR services is evaluated to ensure it complies with the criteria and requirements of supported employment:

- Work is performed in an integrated setting that provides interactions with individuals who do not have disabilities, other than caregivers or program staff.
- The individual is receiving wages commensurate with non-disabled workers doing the same work.
- The ongoing support needs and source have been identified.
- Supported employment services provided to individuals are for the maximum number of hours possible, based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual.
- The individual and the employer are satisfied with the placement.

Scope of Supported Employment Services: Supported employment services provided are the ongoing support services, including customized employment, and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, in supported employment.

Extent of Supported Employment Services: Number of individuals who will receive services provided with funds under part B of Title VI of the Act: It is anticipated that VRNH will serve over 1,000 persons in supported employment during federal program years 2024-2027.

Goals are set to close 350 persons in successful supported employment during program years 2024-2027, approximately 85 each year.

In PY 2022 the agency served 638 individuals requiring supported employment services with 50 of these individuals achieving an employment outcome. Of those identified as supported employment, 382 of those served in PY 2022 were Youth with Disabilities (24 and under). Thirty-nine (39) of these youth achieved a successful employment outcome.

The majority of these participants were, as expected, individuals with developmental disabilities and/or mental illness as these are the disabilities for which funding is available for long-term supports after vocational rehabilitation services are completed. These funding sources have had various challenges to their resources over the last several years. The Agency does, and will continue to, seek alternative sources for long-term support, including the use of natural supports, and benefits planning as appropriate, to the individual.

For individuals who require supported employment supports, the transition to extended services follows the timeframe established in the Individualized Plan for Employment and is no later than 24 months after placement in supported employment unless, under special circumstances, a longer period is necessary for the individual to be stabilized in the job. Prior to the transition the counselor must assure that the extended services are available and can be provided without a hiatus in services.

Supported Employment for youth with the most significant disabilities is provided as needed and includes job support and other services. Long-term support is provided in collaboration with partners including area agencies and mental health centers as well as employing natural supports where possible. Exploration and expansion of services to youth will be identified in development of MOUs with the Bureau of Mental Health Services and Bureau of Developmental Services.

VRNH staff are also working on expanding programs to assist in enhancing the provision of supported employment services, including customized employment. This will include additional training and support to counselors in the area of supported employment and customized employment.

Use of VR Funds

For all the above program collaborations, if VR funds are used, Title I funds are used for pre-placement activities and Title VI or Title I funds for post placement supported employment services.

Timing of transition

For individuals who require supported employment supports, the transition to extended services follows the timeframe established in the Individualized Plan for Employment and is no later than 24 months after placement in supported employment, unless under special circumstances a longer period is necessary for the individual to be stabilized in the job. Prior to the transition the counselor must assure that the extended services are available and can be provided without a hiatus in services.

(4) Sections 101(a)(22) and 606(b)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act require the VR agency to describe efforts to identify and arrange, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services. The description must include extended services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including the provision of extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities in accordance with 34 CFR 363.4(a) and 34 CFR
361.5(c)(19)(v).

The Agency will work with the Bureaus of Developmental Services and Mental Health Services toward finding opportunities to extend services and expand supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities, included within these efforts is the Memorandum of Understanding that is currently in development. Most of the participants are expected to be individuals with developmental disabilities and/or mental illness as these are the disabilities for which funding is available for long-term supports after vocational rehabilitation services are completed. The Agency will continue to seek alternative sources for long-term support, including the use of natural support, as appropriate, to the individual.

The Agency has developed relationships with both the Bureau of Developmental Services and the Bureau of Mental Health Services within the Department of Health and Human Services in the State of NH. These relationships are designed to enhance the collaboration of rehabilitation, case management, and vocational service provider personnel with eligible individuals and their families regarding the implementation and continuation of individualized supported employment.

We expect a finalized MOU with all the Medicaid agencies in early 2024. Our focus of the MOU has five main criteria:

1) simplifying the VR process and flow of services for participants and partners,
2) sharing aggregate priority data elements,

3) strengthening transition plans for securing long-term Medicaid waiver services,
4) sharing of resources, and
5) streamlining paperwork and improving efficiency.

Workgroups from the BDS Employment Leadership Committee have been integral in working on these areas to assist in a transparent MOU process.

Individuals with the most significant disabilities to be served under this partnership will likely have developmental disabilities, acquired brain disorders, and/or mental health diagnoses, since these are the groups for which funding is available for long-term support after Vocational Rehabilitation services are completed. In addition, the Agency will seek additional avenues to expand the availability of supported employment services, including long term support services provided through natural community-based supports by families, employers, life insurance carriers, and community organizations, for individuals with acquired brain injuries, significant physical disabilities, and other disabling conditions.

The Agency will continue to collaborate with the two agencies regarding any necessary system changes that will encourage and facilitate natural supports.

Additional collaborative efforts include contracts with local area agency and mental health centers to provide funding for them to bring on an individual to become a certified work incentive counselor. This will inform and educate customers and families on the impact of work on their benefits and will move more individuals to employment leading to increased self-sufficiency.

(f) Annual Estimates. Sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act require all VR agencies to annually conduct a full assessment of their resources and ability to serve all eligible individuals before the start of the Federal fiscal year. In accordance with 34 CFR § 361.29(b), annual estimates must include the following projections:

(1) Estimates for next Federal fiscal year—

(A) VR Program; and
7/1/2024-6/30/2025 Used FFY2023 (10/1/2022-9/30/2023) Increasing 10% due to SS / counselor retention changes.

*Costs do not include any contracts; just fee for service in AWARE (IMPACCT, Etc. Excluded)
Using expected plans served / open cases at a point and a mix of median & average costs for budget projections (for me in the future)

Priority Category (if applicable)	No. of Individuals Eligible for Services	No. of Eligible Individuals Expected to Receive Services under VR Program	Costs of Services using Title I Funds	No. of Eligible Individuals Not Receiving Services (if applicable)
LSD	117	117	96 Plans	$183,892
SD	1,679	1,679	1,287 Plans	$2,126,296

MSD	2,215	2,215	1,771 Plans	$2,838,613

$5,148,801

(B) Supported Employment Program.

Priority Category (if applicable)	No. of Individuals Eligible for Services	No. of Eligible Individuals Expected to Receive Services under Supported Employment Program	Costs of Services using Title I and Title VI Funds	No. of Eligible Individuals Not Receiving Services (if applicable)
MSD	214	214	$300,000	0

(g) Order of Selection.

[**X**] The VR agency is **not** implementing an order of selection and all eligible individuals will be served.

[check box] The VR agency is implementing an order of selection with one or more categories closed.

* VR agencies may maintain an order of selection policy and priority of eligible individuals without implementing or continuing to implement an order of selection.

Pursuant to section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act, this description must be amended when the VR agency determines, based on the annual estimates described in description (f), that VR services cannot be provided to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for and are determined eligible for services.

(1) For VR agencies that have defined priority categories describe—

(A) The justification for the order;

The agency is not maintaining an order of selection. The agency currently has all categories open and as a result there were zero (0) individuals who did not receive services as they were on a wait list, nor were any cases closed directly from a wait list since Jan 2020.

(B) The order (priority categories) to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services ensuring that individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities; and

At this time the Agency has all categories open and is serving all eligible individuals. It is anticipated that VRNH will continue to have resources available to serve all eligible individuals throughout the next two years. The Agency will continually monitor and assess costs and numbers of individual served to determine if there are continued adequate resources available.

While VRNH is not in an order, the agency does maintain policies and procedures in the event the need to implement an order of selection arises.

Priority Categories & Order of Selection: As part of every customer's eligibility determination process, a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) will evaluate:

1) disability-related functional limitations;
2) anticipated number of needed services; and
3) anticipated duration of services.

The VRC uses these criteria to assign eligible customers to one of three priority categories. Priority categories ensure that VRNH services are prioritized for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

Priority Category 1: Individuals with a most significant disability (MSD) An eligible customer is assigned to Priority Category 1 if:

- The customer experiences serious functional limitations in three or more of the following areas in terms of an employment outcome: mobility, motor skills, communications, self-care, cognition and learning (self-direction), interpersonal, work tolerance, and work skills;
- The customer requires three or more primary vocational rehabilitation services;
- The customer requires multiple services over an extended period of time, defined as a period of six or more months; and
- The customer has one or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental retardation, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculo-skeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), spinal cord conditions (including paraplegia and quadriplegia), sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another disability or combination of disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitation.

Priority Category 2: Individuals with a significant disability (SD) An eligible customer is assigned to Priority Category 2 if:

- The customer experiences serious functional limitations in one or more of the following areas in terms of an employment outcome: mobility, communications, self-care, cognition and learning (self-direction), interpersonal, work tolerance, and work skills;
- The customer requires two or more primary vocational rehabilitation services;
- The customer requires multiple VR services over an extended period of time; and
- The customer has one or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental retardation, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculo-skeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), spinal cord conditions (including paraplegia and quadriplegia), sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another disability or combination of disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitation.

Priority Category 3: Individuals with Less Significant Disabilities (LSD) An eligible customer is assigned to Priority Category 3 if:

- The customer is determined eligible for services but does not meet the criteria for Priority Category 1 or Priority Category 2.

Priority categories will be assigned consistently, objectively, and with customer rights to review and due process. Consistent with federal regulations, VRNH will not consider duration of residency in New Hampshire, type of disability, age, sex, race, color, national origin, type of expected employment outcome, source of referral, particular service needs or anticipated service costs, individual or family income level, employment history, or education history when assigning a priority of service category.

Selecting Eligible Customers for Services per federal regulations, VRNH will provide the full range of uninterrupted VR services to all existing customers with Individualized Plans for Employment, regardless of the priority category to which they are assigned, when the Order of Selection is implemented subject to available funding. Under an Order of Selection, when sufficient resources are not available to serve all new eligible customers, new customers may be placed on a wait list for services. This wait list will be statewide and based upon customers' priority categories and application dates.

Should sufficient resources be available to provide the full range of VR services to both existing and new customers, VRNH will serve eligible individuals assigned to Priority Category 1 first. This ensures that services are prioritized for individuals with the most significant disabilities. Customers in Priority Category 1 who have been placed on a wait list will be released based on the date they applied, with the oldest application dates being released first.

If resources are available after all existing customers and all new Priority Category 1 customers are assured the full range of VR services, VRNH will serve eligible individuals assigned to Priority Category 2. Customers in Priority Category 2 who have been placed on a wait list will be released based on the date they applied, with the oldest application dates being released first.

If additional resources are available after all existing customers, new Priority Category 1 customers, and new Priority Category 2 customers are assured of the full range of VR services, VRNH will serve eligible individuals assigned to Priority Category 3. Customers in Priority Category 3 who have been placed on a wait list will be released based on the date they applied, with the oldest application dates being released first.

Students with disabilities can continue to receive ongoing Pre-Employment Transition Services while placed on an Order of Selection wait list (closed Order of Selection priority category), as long as they have participated in a Pre-employment Transition Service before being determined eligible for VR services and assigned to a closed Order of Selection priority category.

Federal regulations allow for the continuation of pre-employment transition services only for those students who received such services prior to an eligibility determination and the assignment to a closed Order of Selection priority category (34 CFR §361.36(e)(3)(i)).

Therefore, students, families, advocates, and educators are advised to carefully consider the need to begin Pre-Employment Transition Services as early as possible in the transition process, and prior to eligibility determination.

Potentially eligible students with disabilities (i.e., students who may or may not have applied for VR services (non- applicants and applicants), and only receive Pre-Employment Transition Services) will not be affected by the Order of Selection and will continue to receive Pre- Employment Transition Services.

Any individual, including a student, in need of an individualized VR service (34 CFR §361.48(b)) will need to apply and be determined eligible for VR services, in order to receive such services under an approved individualized plan for employment (IPE).

(C) The VR agency's goals for serving individuals in each priority category, including how the agency will assist eligible individuals assigned to closed priority categories with information and referral, the method in which the VR agency will manage waiting lists, and the projected timelines for opening priority categories. NOTE: Priority categories are considered open when all individuals in the priority category may be served.

VRNH does not maintain order of selection. All priority categories are open, and the agency has determined that resources are available to serve all eligible individuals.

(2) Has the VR agency elected to serve eligible individuals outside of the order of selection who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment?
[**X**] Yes
[check box] No

(h) Waiver of State wideness. The State plan shall be in effect in all political subdivisions of the State, however, the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (Commissioner) may waive compliance with this requirement in accordance with section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and the implementing regulations in 34 CFR 361.26. If the VR agency is requesting a waiver of state wideness or has a previously approved waiver of state wideness, describe the types of services and the local entities providing such services under the waiver of state wideness and how the agency has complied with the requirements in 34 CFR 361.26. If the VR agency is not requesting or does not have an approved waiver of state wideness, please indicate "not applicable."

Not Applicable. The agency has not requested a waiver of statewideness.

(i) Comprehensive System of Personnel Development. In accordance with the requirements in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act, the VR agency must develop and maintain annually a description (consistent with the purposes of the Rehabilitation Act) of the VR agency's comprehensive system of personnel development, which shall include a description of the procedures and activities the VR agency will undertake to ensure it has an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals that provides the following:

(1) Analysis of current personnel and projected personnel needs including—

(A) The number and type of personnel that are employed by the VR agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, including ratios of qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors to clients;

(B) The number of personnel currently needed by the VR agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

(C) Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the VR 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.

Personnel Category	No. of Personnel Employed	No. of Personnel Currently Needed	Projected No. of Personnel Needed in 5 Years
Administrative Staff	19	4	23
Counselor Staff	35	10	45
Other Staff	3	1	4
Supervisory Staff	7	0	7
Support staff	10	9	10
Total	74	24	98

(D) Ratio of qualified VR counselors to clients:

At this time the Agency-wide caseload is 2,801 customers. The Agency currently has 29 caseload carrying counselor positions. The ratio of Rehabilitation Counselor to customers served is 103 customers to each Counselor. This information is reviewed quarterly by the Agency and the Policy committee of the State Rehabilitation Council. The Agency regularly reviews staffing patterns and caseload size to determine coverage needs. At this time, the current staffing levels are adequate to meet the needs of the Agency's customers, however, staff turnover has interfered with stable staffing and coverage over the past years. In addition, the Agency seeks to provide outreach and services to an existing population of students with disabilities transitioning from school to post-secondary activities. These trends will be monitored to see if any staffing changes are required to meet these needs. In addition, the Agency has five non-caseload carrying Counselor positions that provide pre-employment transition services to eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities.

Staff projections for the next two years: Evaluating the past and current numbers of individuals served by the Agency reveals a reduction in caseload sizes over the past few years. One of the factors that has been attributed to this is the low unemployment rate in the state. It is also noted that since the Agency entered an order of selection, referrals have continued to be low. As all categories opened, there does appear to be an increase in referrals to the Agency. This trend will be monitored to assure that the Agency has adequate staff and resources to service customers. Another factor the Agency has identified is the COVID pandemic has impacted referrals and participant activity within caseloads.

The Agency is targeting outreach activities to attempt to increase individuals involved in services. It is predicted that with these increased efforts the caseloads will grow over the next two years. Based on the numbers of individuals served by the program, the current staffing pattern is projected to be adequate in serving the individuals who apply for vocational rehabilitation services in NH over the next two-year period.

Prior to the Agency entering an Order of Selection in 2018, NH had traditionally seen a fairly low turnover of counseling staff 5% that had risen over the (primarily due to aging staff retiring) to the 9%. However, upon entering the order VRNH has not reached a period of stable staffing. Hiring and retaining staff appears also to have been impacted by the employment environment following the COVID pandemic and national health emergency.

While the Agency has anticipated a more stable staffing trend, this did not occur during PY 2022.

Personnel Transactions for PY 2022:

- Administrative:
  - 1 Part-Time Administrative staff have been hired.
  - 1 Full-Time Counselor was promoted to an administrative position for staff training.
  - 1 Full-Time Administrator resigned.
  - 1 Supervisory staff member transferred into an administrative position for Quality Assurance.
- Counselor:
  - 10 Full-Time Counselors and 5 Part-Time/Seasonal Counselors were hired.
  - 1 Full-Time Counselor was promoted to an RCIII.
  - 9 Full-Time and 1 Part-Time Counselor resigned.
  - 1 Part-Time Employment Specialist resigned.
  - 1 Full-Time Counselor retired.
  - 1 Full-Time Counselor transferred from one office to another, and 1 Full-Time Counselor transferred from an RCI/II to an STS Counselor position.
- Other Staff:
  - 1 Other Staff retired, and 1 replacement was hired (Dee and Beth K.).
- Supervisor:
  - 2 internal Full-Time Counselors were promoted to Supervisor positions (Kelley RCIII, and Priyanka RCI)
- Support Staff:
  - 1 Full-Time and 1 Part-Time Support Staff members were hired.
  - 1 Full-Time Support Staff was promoted to another Support Staff position. (Mary W. Secretary to an RT)
  - 3 Full-Time Support Staff resigned.

(E) Projected number of individuals to be served in 5 years:

VRNH has seen an increase in referrals over the past year, but the increase has been modest.

The Agency anticipates that over the next 5 years to serve an estimated 4,000 individuals each year.

The Agency will continue to monitor and review staffing to assure that we are able to serve eligible individuals in the program effectively with adequate resources including staff.

(2) Data and information on personnel preparation and development, recruitment and retention, and staff development, including the following:

(A) A list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program; the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and 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.

Institute of Higher Education	Type of Program	No. of Students Enrolled	No. of Prior Year Graduates
None in the state			
University of Mass Boston	Graduate Program (MS, Certificate) in Rehabilitation Counseling	47	7

(B) The VR agency's plan for recruitment, preparation and retention of qualified personnel, which addresses the current and projected needs for qualified personnel; and the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the VR agency and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

There are no educational institutions in NH that offer graduate studies in rehabilitation counseling.

While there are no educational institutions in New Hampshire that offer graduate studies in rehabilitation counseling, there are several colleges and universities in the region that offer a Master's degree in rehabilitation counseling, including: Assumption College, University of Massachusetts, Springfield College and University of Southern Maine.

In addition to regional programs, Agency staff has been able to take advantage of distance learning opportunities from institutions in other states to attain their Master's degrees. The Agency currently has staff who have received Master's degrees from George Washington University, University of Southern Maine, University of Kentucky, and the University of Massachusetts -Boston.

All rehabilitation counseling graduates from the colleges listed will be eligible for Certification as a Rehabilitation Counselor through the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC). Although not a requirement for a VR Counselor in NH, ten counseling staff currently are certified rehabilitation counselors (CRC).

Data received through the annual assessment of training needs is used for the development and implementation of the Agency's in-service training plan and staff development activities. The results are also shared with supervisors and administrators and utilized in the updating and implementation of professional growth plans. The identified training needs are utilized in the planning and development of training.

Staff also are encouraged to participate in professional development training. New Regional Office Supervisors and other staff have taken the opportunity to participate in the State's Certified Public Supervisor (CPS) and Public Manager Programs (CPM).

Further activities toward recruitment and retention of qualified personnel, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities, are identified within the Personnel Standards and Staff Development sections below.

In addition to the communication and recruitment efforts with the colleges and universities in the region, VRNH uses the Recruitment Center for State Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors Rehabilitation Counseling Professionals group in Facebook in recruitment efforts.

(C) Description of staff development policies, procedures, and activities that ensure all personnel employed by the VR agency receive appropriate and adequate training and continuing education for professionals and paraprofessionals:

i. 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
ii. Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to VR agency professionals and paraprofessionals and for providing training regarding the amendments to the Rehabilitation Act made by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

The Agency continues to provide staff with appropriate and adequate training. The Agency recognizes the importance of having qualified, professional vocational rehabilitation staff to assist persons with disabilities to locate, train for, engage in, and maintain employment. In- service training is designed to assure that Agency staff have the knowledge, skills, and resources to assist persons with significant disabilities to achieve their employment goals.

Agency training includes a comprehensive orientation for new staff, ongoing training opportunities for existing staff at all levels of the organization, and a system to evaluate the effectiveness of the training efforts. Training needs will be met through attending classes, workshops, and seminars in the state. Support staff, as well as counselors and management staff, are encouraged to attend training.

In-service training addresses retention of qualified staff, development of new skills for new staff, leadership development, and capacity building and includes basic and ongoing training. It is based on the Agency assisting staff to meet the identified counselor competencies: staff needs assessment; state plan forums public feedback; and ongoing monitoring. The Agency remains committed to training for all levels of staff and continues to work with other workforce partners to bring relevant training to staff as well as topics relevant to vocational rehabilitation and placement of persons with disability including trainings that address these subjects such as: developing job opportunities; utilizing assistive technology and modification; maximizing comprehensive assessment; counseling skills; utilization of community resources; working effectively with community rehabilitation programs; disability topics; and case practice.

The Agency seeks to gather and use information obtained through research and collaboration with other agencies to enhance and further develop the skills and capacities of rehabilitation staff.
Job-related workshops and seminars will be sponsored in cooperation with other state agencies with whom the Agency has cooperative working agreements, and by state, regional, and national trainers. These activities will coincide with the ongoing development and upgrading of professional growth plans.

Acquisition and Dissemination:

The Agency regularly reviews and shares with staff research and training opportunities and materials from a variety of sources including, but not limited to: Explore VR; NTACT; and the NCTRM. This information is disseminated via email, workshops, and other staff training to all VRNH staff.
The Agency is currently receiving technical assistance in the area of Transition through a TA agreement with NTACT.

VRNH staff participate in a number of communities of practice that provide opportunities to learn from and gather materials from others as well as share work.

(3) Description of VR agency policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) to ensure that VR agency professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including—
   (A) Standards that are consistent with any national or State-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing VR services; and
   (B) The establishment and maintenance of education and experience requirements, in accordance with section 101(a)(7)(B)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

VRNH recognizes that the requirements of the CSPD provide an opportunity to increase the knowledge, skills, and abilities of rehabilitation counselors, thereby enhancing the provision of services and the quality of employment outcomes. In accordance with 34 CFR 361.18 (c)(2)(i), VRNH has established the following personnel standard:

I. Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling; or
II. Master's in Counseling* and 4 core courses
    a. One course on Assessment
    b. One course on Occupational Information or Job Placement
    c. One course on Medical or Psychosocial and Cultural Aspects of Disabilities
    d. One course on Community Resources or Delivery of Rehabilitation Services
III. The Master's degree must be in the field of counseling. Examples of degrees that may be considered as a Master's in counseling or as counseling-related may include, but are not necessarily limited to, degrees in rehabilitation, special education, social work, and psychology. If your degree is in a counseling discipline other than rehabilitation counseling, a course on the Theories and Techniques of Counseling, as defined by CRCC, must be part of the degree requirements. Other required courses may be taken as part of or in addition to the original master's degree.

Or

IV. Master's, Specialist or Doctoral degree in one of 13 qualifying majors (listed below) granted by a college or university accredited by CHEA - PLUS a post-graduate advanced certificate or degree that includes a minimum of 18 semester hours, or 27 quarter hours granted by a college or university that also offers a CORE-accredited master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling.

- Six graduate courses (one each on Theories and Techniques of Counseling; Foundations of Rehabilitation Counseling; Assessment; Occupational Information or Job Placement; Medical or Psychosocial and Cultural Aspects of Disabilities; and Community Resources or Delivery of Rehabilitation Services.)
- Acceptable Master's, Specialist, or Doctoral Degree Majors:
- Behavioral Health
- Psychology
- Behavioral Science
- Psychometrics
- Disability Studies
- Rehabilitation
- Human Relations
- Social Work
- Human Services
- Special Education
- Marriage and Family Therapy
- Vocational Assessment/Evaluation
- Occupational Therapy

Priority will be given to a master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling both in new hires and in support of training to assist staff to achieve the standard.

Outreach efforts will be targeted toward individuals who meet the personnel standards and who are from minority backgrounds or are individuals with disabilities. Recruitment efforts will be coordinated with disability groups and associations serving minority populations, through contacts and sharing of job opportunities available within the Agency.

While it is the intent of VRNH to hire and retain employees who meet the standard, in some instances we are unable to hire professional staff who meet these standards. Factors which impact on the hiring of staff in NH who meet the personnel standard include a limited pool of qualified candidates and geographical considerations that result from the rural nature of the state. VRNH has worked to address this issue in a number of ways including working with the NH Division of Personnel to develop the capacity to hire staff at a bachelor's degree level who are immediately placed in a training plan to achieve the requirements of the standard. This plan provides for the training necessary to obtain their master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or a Counseling master's that meets the criteria of the standard and outlines the support the Agency will provide to achieve this. In addition, the Agency continues to seek programs and coursework, including those that utilize long distance technology that will assist Counselors to achieve the standard.

To ameliorate the impact of these factors, VRNH conducts outreach activities to reach potential candidates. VRNH has identified colleges and universities in New England that provide master's level training in rehabilitation counseling and will continue to work with these institutions toward the recruitment of qualified candidates. The Training Officer continues to seek alternative educational opportunities for staff through emerging long distance learning opportunities, including RSA-funded training opportunities.

VRNH supports retraining of new and existing employees through the following plan and policies: All staff will be encouraged to continue to update and maintain their skills by completing 100 hours of in-service training every five years. The Training Officer will maintain current records of the training offered and credit hours earned.

The Training Coordinator maintains records that track progress in meeting the personnel standard for all rehabilitation counseling staff. These records will include education level, completion of core courses, continuing education credits obtained, and individual growth plans that outline how individual employees will meet the personnel standard within seven years. Records will be updated regularly and analyzed yearly to assess progress.

VRNH maintains records that identify the degree to which new hires meet the personnel standard. These records will be analyzed on a yearly basis to assess the success of the Agency in obtaining qualified personnel and to identify factors that impede the hiring of staff who meet the standard.

At this time, 16 Rehabilitation Counseling staff meet the personnel standard while 23 do not meet the personnel standard and are either in a plan to achieve that standard or have been newly hired and are developing a plan to achieve the standard. There are currently four Rehabilitation Counselor vacancies.

(4) Method(s) the VR agency uses to ensure that personnel are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

VRNH has developed strategies to meet (through staff and/or by obtaining the services of others) the individual communication needs of applicants and recipients of services through appropriate modes of communication or in native languages.

The Agency has taken actions to establish and maintain minimum standards to ensure the availability of personnel within the designated state unit who, to the maximum extent feasible, are trained to communicate in the native language or mode of communication of the participant.

The Agency utilizes interpreters to communicate in the native language of applicants and eligible individuals and is developing procedures to assist counselors to obtain qualified interpreters, including the identification of resources within the state for interpreters, cultural information, and translation services.

The Agency includes on its staff, or arranges to have available to staff, those individuals able to communicate with applicants and eligible individuals who utilize manual communication, and/or tactile, oral, and non-verbal communication devices. The Agency maintains a list of state/national certified interpreters for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. The Agency has the ability to, and will provide large print documents, recorded information, computer disk formats, and assistive listening devices, as appropriate, to the individual.

(5) As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

As part of the intra-agency agreement and work with the Bureau of Special Education Support

- VRNH is offers professional development opportunities to special educators and related service professionals regarding the benefits and positive impacts that vocational rehabilitation services can have on individuals with disabilities. Intended outcomes of these events include providing local level special educators and service providers with a greater understanding of vocational rehabilitation services, increased referrals to the agency and further opportunities to enhance communication

between the agency, schools and service providers in an effort to strengthen transition outcomes for students with disabilities.

- VRNH staff will participate in training provided by the Bureau of Special Education Support of school staff as it relates to Indicator 13 to demonstrate how vocational rehabilitation services can help to support the transition goals and services within a student's transition plan of their IEP

COOPERATION, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION (Section 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act)

(j) Coordination with Education Officials. In accordance with the requirements in section 101(a)(11)(D) of the Rehabilitation Act—

(1) Describe plans, policies, and procedures for coordination between the designated State agency and education officials responsible for the public education of students with disabilities, that are designed to facilitate the transition of the students with disabilities from the receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services, including pre-employment transition services.

Organized within the New Hampshire Department of Education, VRNH participates in the State's transition initiatives. In August 2022, VRNH developed a transition service strategic plan with key stakeholders. This plan identified various strategies to advance student with disabilities employment and education outcomes statewide. A Transition Service Advisory Committee was established comprised of various stakeholders with the goal to ensure students and youth with disabilities are positioned to successfully transition from school to post-secondary options in NH. The purpose of the Advisory group is to: Leverage VRNH 's community partner relationships which support the successful transitions to the world of work for students and youth with disabilities. This will be achieved by fostering cooperation, collaboration, and the development of best practices among cross stakeholders to improve and strengthen transition and pre -employment transition services (Pre-ETS) outcomes for students with disabilities. (Refer to Transition Service Strategic Plan 2022-2026; Transition Advisory Committee Charter 2/2023).

The VRNH School Transition Services Strategic Plan was established in collaboration with a team comprised of internal and external key stakeholders. VRNH conducted several planning sessions facilitated by NTACT representatives. VRNH leadership and staff reviewed the following performance measures and customer service survey results (i.e., survey results; federally mandated metrics; VRNH staff survey needs analysis) to establish a strategic direction and focus for the upcoming years. The Strategic Plan will provide a roadmap for VRNH leaders and staff to follow.

Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priority #1: Build Awareness And Effective Communication to brand VRNH services which defines the value proposition to students, families, schools, and community partners.

Strategic Priority #2: Advance Partnerships And Collaboration. Bring together the skills and resources of identified stakeholders and build alliance to improve student transition service outcomes to advance innovative service delivery practices.

Strategic Priority #3: Invest In Our Staff, Pre-Ets Vendors, And Community Partners. Develop a system of professional development using evidence-based strategies.

Strategic Priority #4: Focus On Student Outcomes And Create Service Value. Focus on statewide innovative and evidence-based services which are student and youth driven and result oriented by aligning operations which are malleable and seize opportunities in response to the ever changing social and economic climate.

Strategic Priority #5: Sound Fiscal Management. Implement sound fiscal management that aligns with federal and state regulations for accurate, consistent reporting for timely decision making on programmatic operations.

Strategic Priority # 6: Exceptional Customer Service And Continuous Quality Improvement. Establish and maintain a systematic and proactive continuous quality improvement process that promotes quality service delivery outcomes, and customer and stakeholder satisfaction.

VRNH counselors across the state are involved in the local and regional partnerships which were developed to implement the activities of grants available. Counselors advocate for the inclusion of students with disabilities and special education staff in the systemic changes occurring in the schools.

VRNH understands the need for services to be identified and in place prior to a student leaving the school setting in order to assist the student with a smooth transition to post-school activities which may include postsecondary education, training, employment, and related vocational rehabilitation services which will lead to competitive integrated employment. To assure this planning, the Agency provides for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment while the student is in school and within 90 days of eligibility determination.

The Agency continues to participate in an interagency agreement with the state educational agency with respect to transition planning. The updated agreement was fully executed in August 2023. (Refer to detailed description below: Intra-agency Agreement with NHSES).

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) have re-shaped transition and the collaboration with schools. The agency provides Pre-ETS in three main methods which may be provided individually or in group settings within the community:

1. Workshops provided by VRNH Student Transition Specialists (STS),
2. Contracted pre-ETS services provided by IMPACCT Academy(s); VABIR, and Big Brother Big Sister Mentoring program, and
3. Pre-ETS services provided to individual students by VR Counselors or by a Community Rehabilitation Program.

Over the last year, VRNH notes the following program improvements:

- stronger partnership between Pre-ETS (IMPACCT and Community Rehabilitation Provider) program staff and vocational rehabilitation counselors
- enhanced efforts to engage potentially eligible students in individualized vocational rehabilitation services.

- stronger partnership with NHSES through the development of joint activities outlined in the Intra - agency agreement.
- educating schools on how the STS workshops can be written into a student's transition plan within their Individualized Education Program and meet requirements for Indicator 13
- exploration of certain STS workshops being offered to students for course credit through an Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO)
- co- hosting joint collaborative college and career events with NH community college system for students and engaging local employers.
- conducted a number of cross agency professional development and outreach opportunities for families.
- refined transition and pre its policy and procedures
- Increased options for service provision utilizing Community Rehabilitation Programs to ensure delivery of 5 Pre-ETS services. Expanded the accessibility and availability for statewide pre- ETS services.

Within the Department's Dropout Plan, VRNH works with its partners via the Earn and Learn Opportunities Program and Second Start Alternative school summer program to help identify and assist youth with disabilities who may be at high risk of or who have already dropped out of school to remain in or return to school and continue with the transition process. This transition process might lead them to a post-secondary training institution or other training opportunity.

VRNH continues to be an active leader in the state Community of Practice on Transition (CoP). Using its strategy, it is intended to promote and to influence transition practice and policy on multiple levels, using more of a grassroots type of approach. The CoP sponsors an annual Transition Summit, and is currently focusing its efforts on, continuing to promote the use of successful transition practices and resources from a state and national perspective. As a result, the CoP now offers a six-month professional development series aimed at educating professionals, educators, and families on a variety of services, programs and practices that can enhance and support stronger transition outcomes for students with disabilities.

The Agency continues to be involved in the provision of sector-based employment opportunities through Project SEARCH. This program focuses on the healthcare industry. In 2023, Project Search National conducted fidelity reviews of all the 5 project search sites to increase the quality of employment opportunities offered and financial sustainability . VRNH is currently working in collaboration with the project site advisory committee and staff to implement recommended strategies. .

VRNH employes a full time Transition Service Administrator and Transition coordinator and has five full-time Student Transition Specialists to work statewide to improve services to students and youth with disabilities. In addition, the agency's 29 VR Counselors work with students in their regions. The Administrator and Coordinator strives to ensure that changes implemented by WIOA are achieved. The activities these positions cover include:

- working with VRNH counselors to improve access and services provided to students and youth with disabilities.
- working with VRNH counselors to develop best practices and examples of best practices to students and youth with disabilities.
- providing training on activities occurring across the state as a result of implementation of WIOA

- coordinating efforts with VRNH counselors, school district staff, school- to-work staff, and other constituents, to ensure the inclusion of students and youth with disabilities in the systemic changes occurring in the schools as a result of the IDEA 2008 and the Rehabilitation Act.
- active participation on the State Advisory Committee on the Education of Children with Disabilities
- providing advocacy for students and youth with disabilities to a variety of constituents.
- improving connections between VRNH and other transition service agencies.
- providing information and guidance regarding Labor Laws as they relate to job shadow, internships, and work experience for students and youth with disabilities.
- marketing to school staff, students and families, adult service agencies, etc. through the communication plan and engagement action plan in a variety of areas, e.g., employment issues as a result of disability, transition of students with disabilities, availability of adult services, best practices in transition of youth with disabilities, accessing adult services, employer perspectives.
- developing relationships with other agencies providing services to students and youth with disabilities to maximize services offered.
- providing technical assistance on grants as they are developed with multiple agencies and programs to ensure the inclusion of all students and youth with disabilities; and
- providing continued support of transition service programs for students and youth such as the Earn and Learn Opportunities program, VABIR, Major Choice, Big Brother Big Sister mentoring program, IMPACCT, Bridges/UNH4U, MY TURN, and Project SEARCH.

VRNH staff actively facilitate meetings with school staff, VRNH counselors, and school-to-work staff to plan the inclusion of students with disabilities in the systemic changes occurring within the state. The Agency will continue to expand and solidify its interagency approach to ensuring a successful transition from school to employment or post-secondary training opportunities for students with disabilities throughout the State. On both the statewide and local level, VR Agency staff continues to participate in planning, program development, and funding of transition from school to work or post-secondary education initiatives with other agencies and school districts. The Agency continues to work closely with local school districts to develop, implement and expand programs designed to facilitate the transition process, such as provision of Pre- Employment Transition Services to those who are eligible and those who are potentially eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. As an Agency, we have allowed latitude from region to region in regard to how transition caseloads are covered. In some regional offices all counselors have mixed caseloads (i.e., adults and transition-age students), while others have only a certain number of counselors assigned to carry a full caseload of transition. This allows regional offices and the Agency overall to better respond to the needs of students with disabilities who are transitioning to the workforce or postsecondary education, work on strengthening existing school district relationships, and develop new school district relationships. All Student Transition Specialist and counselors are assigned as the liaison for schools statewide.

In an effort to develop, strengthen and foster relationships with schools, the agency continues to collaborate with NHSES to provide online professional development opportunities to the schools, families and community partners. These opportunities will offer professional development hours for participants and will be offered throughout the school year. Such opportunities include but are not limited to educating LEAs on the intra-agency agreement between VRNH and NHSES. In addition, VRNH partners with the Parent Information Center to provide ongoing education about VRNH services. Education is provided to families through various strategies, such as VRNH attending the local school's family orientations. .

Students served by the Agency represent all disability groups and not just those in special education programs. Counselors are frequently present in schools receiving referrals from teachers, guidance counselors, and

administrators. Serving this population will remain a focus activity of the Agency. The Agency plans to include statewide training and technical assistance intervention for schools and families for developing natural supports, which is a school and work-based learning model including job training, monitoring, and general workplace competencies in its continued innovation and expansion activities.

The Agency continues to collaborate with the Agency of Developmental Services to support area agencies in the provision of the sector-based training fund. The State Rule governs how individuals with developmental disabilities will achieve long-term support funding. The rule will ensure that if someone is in an employment setting, they will have the long-term support to maintain that job. It also supports that students still in high school can achieve long-term support while still in school and prior to graduation. The rule also helps families understand that employment should be the first option when looking at goals after high school graduation.

(2) Describe the current status and scope of the formal interagency agreement between the VR agency and the State educational agency. Consistent with the requirements of the formal interagency agreement pursuant to 34 CFR 361.22(b), provide, at a minimum, the following information about the agreement:

(A) Consultation and technical assistance, which may be provided using alternative means for meeting participation (such as video conferences and conference calls), to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including pre-employment transition services and other vocational rehabilitation services;
(B) Transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency personnel for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs (IEPs) under section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
(C) The roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services and pre-employment transition services;
(D) Procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services and pre-employment transition services. Outreach to these students should occur as early as possible during the transition planning process and must include, at a minimum, a description of the purpose of the vocational rehabilitation program, eligibility requirements, application procedures, and scope of services that may be provided to eligible individuals;
(E) Coordination necessary to satisfy documentation requirements set forth in 34 CFR part 397 regarding students and youth with disabilities who are seeking subminimum wage employment; and
(F) Assurance that, in accordance with 34 CFR 397.31, neither the SEA 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 youth with a disability is engaged in work compensated at a subminimum wage.

The Agency continues to participate in an intra -agency agreement with the state educational agency with respect to transition planning- NH Special Education Support (NHSES.) The updated agreement was fully executed in August 2023. The intra-agency agreement includes information regarding roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, provisions for determining state lead agencies, and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services. In addition, the agreement outlines the provision of coordinated training opportunities between agencies to field staff, in order to enhance

knowledge and understanding of how transition services are provided to students with disabilities through the vocational rehabilitation and special education processes. Additional outcomes of the coordinated trainings are intended to build and strengthen relationships between schools and vocational rehabilitation counselors. The Intra-agency agreement is posted on VRNH's website. In addition, the content of the agreement is being shared with the local educational agencies through various training forums.

Secondary Transition Intra-Agency Agreement New Hampshire Education Department, Agency of Special Education Support (NHSES) and New Hampshire Education Department, Agency of Vocational Rehabilitation (VRNH)

A. **Consultation and technical assistance -**

- Consultation and technical assistance are provided by the administrative, supervisory, and direct service delivery regional offices of VRNH and will occur formally and informally throughout the school year.
- VRNH will provide consultative and technical assistance services to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including pre-employment transition services and other vocational rehabilitation services. The consultation and technical assistance provided to educational agencies by VRNH may be provided through alternative means, such as conference calls, video conferences as well as shared in-person training opportunities.
- Referrals to VRNH can be made by students, parents or legal guardians, educators, or other service providers.
- For potentially eligible students with disabilities requesting pre-employment transition services, VRNH will verify that the student meets the definition of a student with a disability and approve the pre-employment transition services needed by the student. Pre-employment transition services may begin once a student requests or is recommended for one or more pre-employment transition services.
- VRNH will accept VR applications for students who choose to apply for VR services and determine Vocational Rehabilitation program eligibility. Eligibility is based upon pertinent medical and/or psychological documentation, education information and related factors that may create a barrier to employment and the need for rehabilitation services. Such information will be obtained, with proper written consent from adult students or students' parents or legal guardians, from the school and other appropriate entities.

B. **Transition planning-** by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency personnel for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs (IEPs) under section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

- Beginning no later than the IEP before the student turns 16 years old (earlier if appropriate), the IEP for each student must include a statement of the needed transition services, including, if appropriate, a statement of each LEAs and each participating agency's responsibilities and/or linkages. To this end, the LEA shall invite a representative of any agency that is likely to be responsible for providing and/or paying for transition services and, use a variety of strategies to ensure that appropriate linkages are

made before the student leaves school. For eligible students, the IEP will be developed to coordinate with plans developed through other agencies, such as VRNH.

- In conjunction with the IEP which addresses transition, an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) will be developed for all individuals determined eligible by VRNH which will document their vocational goal and the course of action designed to enable the student to achieve the stated goal, as well as timelines. The development of the IPE requires active participation from the student and may involve participation and support from the parent and/or guardian. Participation from appropriate school personnel may also be encouraged in the development of this plan.
- The IPE must be developed, agreed to, and signed by the student, or the student's representative, and the VR counselor, as early as possible in the transition process, but no later than the time the eligible student leaves the school setting. In addition, the IPE will be completed within 90 days from eligibility determination. Section 101(a)(11)(D) of the Rehabilitation Act. The same applies for those able to be served if an Order of Selection is in effect. Section 101 (a)(9)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.22(a).
- VRNH and NHSES will work together to assure that each LEA will have IEPs and supporting planning documents that specify an array of curricular options and experiences designed to assist students to make smooth transitions from school to post-school activities. Services are based on the individual needs of the student and the desired post-school outcomes.
- VRNH will coordinate planning, assessment, training, and pre-employment transition or other transition services necessary for students to achieve his or her chosen employment outcome in coordination with the local LEA.
- VRNH's pre-employment transition services include the following activities: Instruction in self-advocacy and peer mentoring; Work based learning experiences; Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education; Workplace readiness training; and Job.
- exploration counseling.
- VRNH's pre-employment services can be delivered in a variety of ways to best meet the need of the individual. These may include but are not limited to: VRNH providing said services either individually or in groups in schools or community and or VR's qualified contracted vendor to deliver pre-employment transition services one on one or in groups.
- Vocational Rehabilitation services will be provided as outlined in the IPE.
- VRNH's collaboration with and assistance to the local school district teachers in transition planning for students with disabilities, to facilitate development and completion of their IEPs as required under section 614(d) of IDEA. VRNH will inform the local school district teachers of community events, such as job fairs, transition fairs, and career days to introduce and expose students with disabilities to possible career goals and objectives.
- Introduction and guidance of students with disabilities to post-school alternatives which includes but is not limited to employment, post-secondary education, vocational training, and adult education, by local school district personnel and VRNH staff. Planning also includes coordination of social experiences for students with disabilities in work-based settings to improve competitive integrated employment outcomes.

C. **The Roles and Responsibilities**- including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services and pre-employment transition services.

D. **Shared Responsibilities:** Agency of Vocational Rehabilitation, New Hampshire (VRNH) and the New Hampshire Agency of Special Education Supports (NHSES) mutually agree to the following:

1. Facilitate intra-agency planning for implementation of educational programs and transition services for LEA students with disabilities from high school to post-high school services.
2. NHSES and VRNH will actively participate in the New Hampshire Transition Community of Practice which focus on collaboration with other parties interested in sharing transition resources and information. This includes an annual Transition Summit featuring high quality professional development in supporting youth with disabilities and their families with the transition to post-secondary education, employment, and independent living.
3. Provide and review shared key data to assist with decision making to advance the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of coordinated transition services for students with disabilities, including pre-employment services.
4. Collaborative efforts will be made to provide common trainings and professional development opportunities to all interested parties as it relates to secondary transition.
5. Meet regularly to address systems, policy, practice, and funding issues that facilitate or negatively impact the transition of youth with disabilities from school to work or post- secondary education.
6. Work jointly on the development of transition program design and service delivery strategies between VRNH and LEAs.
7. Post this agreement on their respective websites.
8. Mutually develop and distribute notices, memorandums, and other information regarding transition to key stakeholders.
9. Provide a copy of this Agreement to the following key stakeholders: all LEA superintendents; all Directors of Special Education; the Agency of Intellectual Disabilities Services; the State Developmental Disabilities Council; all VRNH administrative staff; and other entities as identified.

VRNH Responsibilities: The responsibilities of VRNH are as follows:

1. VR staff will attend and participate in IEP meetings, either in-person or via alternative means, when invited, with appropriate consent.
2. Accept referral of students with disabilities during the transition planning process and provide pre-employment transition services and VR transition services.
3. Provide consultation to LEA staff on transition planning to prepare a student to move from school to work or post-secondary education in accordance with the student's unique needs as determined through the IEP process and provision of pre-employment transition services and VR transition services.
4. Assess, plan, develop and provide individualized vocational rehabilitation (VR) transition services for individuals with disabilities who have been referred and determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice, so that such individuals may prepare for and engage in competitive, integrated employment.
5. Development and approval of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for eligible individuals, which is consistent with, and which takes into consideration the student’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP), within 90 days of VR eligibility determination, unless an extension is approved. This will be completed as early as possible during the transition planning process and not later than the time a student with a disability is determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the

school setting or, if VRNH is operating under an order of selection before each eligible student with a disability is able to be served under the order leaves the school setting.

6. Purchase assistive technology (AT) for those eligible students with disabilities in accordance with their IPE. In assessing the appropriateness of purchase, VRNH on a case-by-case basis will consider the following factors: (a) vocational relevance of AT; (b) impediments to implementation of IPE without AT; (c) customization of AT; (d) remaining useful life of AT; (e) adequacy of AT in meeting client's prospective needs; (f) replacement cost of AT from alternate sources; and (g) availability and benefits of purchasing different or alternative AT.
7. Provide consultation to assist in the identification of eligible and potentially eligible students
8. with disabilities and determination of their needs for pre-employment transition services.
9. Provide or arrange for the provision of individualized VR services required by the IPE goal, when the student has been determined eligible for VR and the services are specific to his/her employment outcome and are not services customarily provided to the student by the LEA under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
10. Provide information and informed choice to parents and/or guardian(s), student/clients regarding VR eligibility, vocational assessment for employment and post-secondary planning and Client Assistance Program (CAP).
11. Provide contact information for VRNH staff and flow charts setting forth the VR process to LEAs to improve communication around referrals and the provision of services.
12. Share information to NHSES and LEA's regarding policies, procedures, guidelines, programs, and services for the purpose of improving the access to, and availability of pre-employment transition services and transition services.
13. Provide brochures and materials about the VR process and services to the school districts for distribution to the students, parents, legal guardians, teachers, and others.

NHSES Responsibilities: The responsibilities of NHSES are as follows:

1. Work in partnership with VRNH to provide technical assistance, training and reference materials regarding WIOA to school districts and other stakeholders identified by the NHSES, including parents, families, guardians, and students relating to the provision of pre-employment transition services and other transition services.
2. NHSES will disseminate this contract to all appropriate NHSES staff who work with or make decisions about Special Education Services and ensure knowledge of joint responsibilities.
3. Promote and support the invitation of VRNH staff, with prior consent from adult students or parents or legal guardians, to attend and participate in IEP meetings for students who have been referred to VRNH for rehabilitation services, or earlier if appropriate.
4. Invite VRNH in NHSES Secondary Transition or Indicator 13 trainings to help facilitate a relationship between LEAs and VRNH. This includes disseminating VRNH materials and providing opportunity for VRNH to explain materials and answer LEA questions.
5. Assist in the facilitations of joint trainings between VRNH and appropriate school district personnel on new State or Federal requirements or initiatives that impact the provision of services by both entities.
6. Share VRNH upcoming trainings or materials with our LEA contacts to increase awareness and build relationships.
7. NHSES monitors each LEA annually for Indicator 13 to ensure compliance with the secondary transition requirements of IDEA for students with disabilities ages 16 and older.

8. Share the following data with VRNH: number of students with disabilities per LEA aged 14 and up; statewide census by disability; as available, the statewide census for students with disabilities who have 504 plans and other data as jointly determined.
9. Support LEAs in their efforts to write IEPs using an outcome-oriented focus and to coordinate transition activities for each IEP eligible student, beginning no later than the IEP before the student turns 16 years old (earlier if appropriate), and to address future student needs in the areas of post-secondary education, vocational training, employment and adult living and communication participation, including assistive technology.

Agency Financial Responsibilities:

LEAs are responsible for providing and paying for any transition service that is considered special education or related services necessary for ensuring a free appropriate public education (FAPE) as required under IDEA. Nothing under title I of the Rehabilitation Act shall be construed as reducing a LEA's obligation to provide the above-described services under IDEA (see section 101(c) of the Rehabilitation Act and §361.22(c) of the VR regulations).

Section 113 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended by WIOA, requires VR to provide or arrange for the provision of pre-employment transition services in collaboration with local education agencies. Decisions as to who will be responsible for providing services that are both special education services are with the LEA's and vocational rehabilitation services at the state level, as part of this collaborative process.

1. The IEP team, and the VRNH, staff will utilize the transition planning process to determine services necessary for the student to reach his or her identified post-school outcome and outcome for employment as written in the IEP and IPE and will negotiate and identify, if any, programmatic and financial responsibility of each agency (VRNH or LEA).

Specific criteria are used to determine which agency (VRNH or LEA) has primary responsibility for providing and paying for transition related services for students with disabilities. These criteria are:

a. Purpose of the service. Determine if the service is associated with an employment outcome or educational attainment.
b. Customary service. Which agency "customarily" provides the service to students?
c. Eligibility for services. Is the student with a disability eligible for special education or related services under IDEA? Does the student have a 504 plan and/or are they an individual with a disability, for the purposes of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act?

2. LEAs will purchase any assistive technology/equipment determined through the IEP process to be necessary for the education program of individual students who are enrolled in the district.

3. If a student with a disability, including potentially eligible students, require an auxiliary aid or service, e.g., deaf interpreter, reader services, or accessible informational materials, to access or participate in pre-employment transition services, VRNH may pay for the service, if not customarily provided by another entity, including local educational agencies. Auxiliary aides and services are those services necessary to ensure equal access to pre-employment transition services, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as revised by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

4. If a student with a disability requires additional VRNH services (e.g., clothing, transportation, or assistive technology, etc.) to participate in pre-employment transition services he or she will need to apply for VRNH services and be determined eligible and receive services in accordance with an approved IPE.

5. VRNH funding for assessment for eligibility and vocational needs, counseling and referral services, job placement services, rehabilitation technology and auxiliary aids and services are exempt from comparable benefit and the financial needs test.

E. **Procedures for outreach to and identification** of students with disabilities who need transition services and pre-employment transition services.

- VRNH has an established communication and engagement action plan (established 2/2023). VRNH initiates outreach and work with LEAs to identify potential students with disabilities who need pre-employment transition services and VR transition services. This involves informing the student, or when appropriate their parent or legal guardian, as early as possible about the vocational rehabilitation program, its purpose, eligibility criteria, application procedures and the scope of available VR services, to include pre-employment transition services.

F. **Coordination and Documentation Requirements under Section 511 for Students Seeking Subminimum Wage-**

Under Section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act, 14(c) businesses referred to as “employers” are.

prohibited from hiring any individual with a disability who is 24 years of age or younger at subminimum wage. Per NH SB 47 (2015), New Hampshire law prohibits businesses from paying sub-minimum wage.

D. **Assurance that, in accordance with 34 CFR 397.31, neither the SEA 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 youth with a disability is engaged in work compensated at a subminimum wage-**

Per 34 CFR 397.31 neither the New Hampshire State Department of Education nor a local education agency will enter into an arrangement with an entity holding a special wage certificate under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act for the purpose of operating a program under which a youth with a disability is engaged in work at subminimum wage.

(k) Coordination with Employers. In accordance with the requirements in section 101(a)(11)(E) of the Rehabilitation Act, describe how the VR agency will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of VR services; and transition services for youth and students with disabilities, including pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities.

Vocational Rehabilitation New Hampshire has had a long history of serving dual customers: individuals with disabilities and business partners. In the last ten years the agency has enhanced this principle and has worked on various levels in the organization to accomplish success for both customers.

Community Rehabilitation Program:

The Vocational Rehabilitation New Hampshire Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) has a comprehensive menu of services, fee structure, and process. The CRP Committee continues to meet to evaluate the CRP Program process and expand services to match the needs of business and participants.

The CRP committee plans to work on the progressive model fee structure and authorization process in early 2024, to ensure more streamlined services for the agency.

The CRP Committee has continued to work over the past year on drafting policies, procedures and qualifications for the CRP vendors that work with the agency. This draft of recommendations has been submitted for consideration and the implementation process is expected to begin in 2024.

Employment Leadership Awards:

The Agency has been coordinating, along with partners, the Employment Leadership Awards in NH for thirteen years. This event began with Medicaid Infrastructure Grant funding and has evolved over the last fourteen years to examine and recognize business partners that hire, train, retain and promote talent with disabilities in their organizations. In October of 2024 we will hold our 15th Annual Employment Leadership Awards. The hiring of individuals with disabilities into these companies has been shown to enrich work culture and assist business partners in lowering turnover rates and improving organizational success. We had our largest attendance.

The VRNH business engagement team has taken over the leadership of this award program as of January 2023. This role allows for more engagement with our community rehabilitation partners, business partners, and strengthens our relationship with Business NH Magazine.

In 2022 VRNH's contribution to the Employment Leadership Award expanded to include Drum Media (videographers) who capture highlight videos of the winning businesses that can be utilized as marketing materials to encourage employing individuals with disabilities.

National Technical Assistance Partnerships:

In 2021 VRNH applied for and was chosen to work on a two-year project with the Institute of Community Inclusion out of the University of Massachusetts-Boston to create and implement the employment strategy of "Progressive Employment". This made New Hampshire one of only eight states nationally providing this service for participants and businesses. The Agency has a strong relationship with the Institute on Community Inclusion out of the University of Massachusetts-Boston. In this relationship they provided us with intensive technical assistance to enhance internal agency capacity for business engagement strategies. Progressive Employment was successfully piloted in three VRNH offices in July of 2022. The program continues to promote successful outcomes for VRNH participants in work-based learning activities and is expanding our menu of services to businesses. This model greatly expands the opportunity for paid work experiences within business settings for VRNH participants. The goal of this initiative is to expand to the remaining VRNH offices by 2025.

The Business Engagement Affinity Group (BRAG): The VRNH team were asked to join this group being led by ICI. The BRAG is a national business engagement meeting in which strategies are shared for best practices in working with business partners.

The Scale-Up Progressive Employment TA grant was approved for an additional five years in September of 2023. VRNH will remain on the technical assistance grant to receive guidance with the expansion of services in New Hampshire, as well as to serve as a mentoring state to future iterations of implementation.

Services to Business:

The Business Engagement Unit currently has a menu of business services and is working to create plans to increase business engagement in each regional office.

VRNH currently has four internal trainers of the Windmills program. The Windmills disability awareness training program equips business leaders with the knowledge, skills, and tools to create an inclusive workplace where all employees can thrive. This program includes 12 employer- focused modules/trainings on disability views to the VRNH menu of services for business partners to choose. This training was made available virtually in 2021 and expansion of more in person training is a priority for 2024. In 2023 WRNH offered five virtual Windmills trainings and one in person training. Business Engagement staff also provide training to businesses on Disability Etiquette and the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and assist businesses with recruitment of individuals with disabilities in the Vocational Rehabilitation program.

Internship Programs:

Over the past four years the agency has created a robust internship program with CVS Health. We currently run an 8-week work from home internship, abilities in abundance externship and a high school exploration program. The work from home internship has completed three iterations with great success. In 2024 we plan to add another 8-week work from home opportunity so that we can double the amount of VR participants taking advantage of this skill building experience. This work from home program is a first of its kind in the nation for CVS Health and offers VRNH participants an opportunity to build their skills in a professional work from home job.

VRNH has also partnered with Win Waste Innovations the past two years for an internship program in their HR department. The program will expand in 2024 to other areas of this company.

The VRNH business team plans to heavily promote these internship opportunities to other businesses in 2024.

The agency currently has one full time Employment Specialist to cover the Claremont and Lebanon area for job development and business service needs. The agency is actively recruiting for two additional part time positions in Keene and Nashua.

In 2023 the agency contracted with VABIR; a Vermont based community rehabilitation provider to provide services for the Berlin Regional Office. This will greatly expand the business outreach for our north country as well as increase services available for VRNH participants.

State Agency Partnership:

The agency works closely with our national and state partners to support the workforce development activities within New Hampshire. Our business engagement team partners with NH Employment Security for regional and virtual job fairs and partner meetings. Our business relations consultant serves as the agency representative on the NH Rapid Response team as well as the inter-agency business team. The business engagement team is on the advisory committee for the community college apprenticeship program and hopes to work with that program throughout 2024 to help make apprenticeships more accessible to people with disabilities.

The business engagement team collaborates with Department of Health and Human Servies and attends a regularly scheduled meeting to discuss the employment needs of people with developmental disabilities.

The VRNH business engagement team worked with NHTI in 2022 to offer a student transition job fair, in which our business partners attended. There are plans in place for a second student event in 2024.

Workforce Coalition:

VRNH Business Engagement Unit supports a monthly statewide workforce coalition. This coalition meets the first Wednesday of the month. Members include representation from CRP providers, area agencies, mental health, community colleges, nonprofits, apprenticeship, housing, etc. This coalition provides training, resources, and support for those in the field of workforce development. NH businesses are often invited to speak about their job opportunities and to learn about resources for their workforce. The coalition is dedicated to having a single source of contact for all our business partners, which minimizes the confusion and frustration of working with several different agencies at once.

ACRE Training:

The Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators - ACRE-approved training is offered by educators who are current ACRE organizational members. VRNH participates in this program by providing one trainer to ensure our Community Rehabilitation Program providers are educated and trained on business engagement strategies that align with the VRNH dual customer approach.

The training was offered three times in 2023 but only one program was ultimately held due to lack of enrollment. The future of this training program is uncertain for 2024 as enrollment has decreased and there is a lack of available credentialed facilitators in New Hampshire currently.

The National Employment Team:

VRNH is a part of the National Employment Team. This program is employed by the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation. The VRNH Business Relations Consultant is the New Hampshire NET contact. The NET gives VRNH the ability to assist New Hampshire businesses on a national level.

Employer Engagement Training 2024

The VRNH business engagement team will be attending the winter 2024 train the trainer of the IGREET employer engagement (RSA) training. This will allow our internal BE team to train VR Counselors, CRPs, and other field staff on employer engagement.

(I) Interagency Cooperation with Other Agencies. In accordance with the requirements in section 101(a)(11)(C) and (K), describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are **not** carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system to develop opportunities for community-based employment in integrated settings, to the greatest extent practicable for the following:

(1) State programs (designate lead agency(ies) and implementing entity(ies)) carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;

The Institute on Disability is the lead agency for New Hampshire's statewide Assistive Technology Act Program: Assistive Technology in New Hampshire, or ATinNH. The program has two major activity areas:

1) Training, Education, and Outreach: AT Trainings, Classes, and Workshops and AT Policy and

2) Assistive Technology Services: Equipment Demonstrations, Loans and Refurbishing/Reuse. These services are offered through agreements with many partners including: Governor's Commission on Disability, Crotched Mountain Refurbished Equipment Marketplace, COA - Chapin Senior Center, Grafton County Senior Citizens Council Inc., Future in Sight, Hearing, Speech, & Vision Specialist at the Office of Health Equity, Northeast Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, Northeast Passage and ServiceLink - Aging and Disability Resource Centers located across the state with all offices having devices for demonstration purposes.

(2) Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture;
The USDA Rural Development office in New Hampshire does not administer any workforce development or economic development programs that would assist individuals with employment or small business startup assistance.

(3) Non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth;
VRNH has many relationships with Community Rehabilitation Programs that coordinate and collaborate to provide transition services to out-of-school youth. Connections to programs like Project SEARCH, apprenticeship and OJT are examples of these connected services for youth with disabilities. NHVR staff are also a part of national Community of Practice surrounding students and youth with disabilities.

(4) State use contracting programs;
N/A New Hampshire does not have a state use contracting program.

(5) State agency responsible for administering the State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.);

The agency plans to finalize and enact a Memorandum of Understanding with the NH Department of Health and Human Services during the calendar year 2024 including partners (mental health, developmental services, adult and elderly services) that can assist in providing services for mutual customers.

The agency continues to have ongoing coordination and collaboration with DHHS through projects including:

- New Hampshire (NH) has five Project SEARCH sites that have continued across the state since 2009 when the first was established. Locations include Nashua, Concord, Keene, Lebanon, and Portsmouth. The Lebanon Project Search site is shared with the Vermont VR program.
- The Regional Workforce Coalitions with all the partners collaborating and working together to assist our mutual customers in achieving employment success.

(6) State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities;

The State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities; and New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation has, in the past, developed and engaged in discussions to complete a Memorandum of Understanding with both the Agency of Developmental Services and the Agency of Mental Health Services. It is our goal to have a finalized MOU with Health and Human Services in 2024

The agency continues to partner with the Agency of Mental Health Services and the Agency of Developmental Services, within Health and Human Services HHS to ensure that employment needs are met with the relative populations. The agency has three staff (VR Director and two Program Specialists) that attend the Employment Leadership Committee. This committee has members of both HHS agencies attending and focuses on the employment of individuals in both populations.

Partnered with most? Area Agencies across the State to provide access to a Community Work Incentives Coordinator (CWIC) to provide work incentives planning and assistance to beneficiaries who receive Social Security Disability Benefits. The CWIC is responsible for counseling and educating beneficiaries about how employment will affect their current benefits so that individuals may make informed choices towards employment and self-sufficiency.

(7) State agency responsible for providing mental health services;
As identified above, the Agency has been working with the Agency of Mental Health Services toward developing a Memorandum of Understanding. The target is to finalize this work in 2024. The agency has had difficulty completing the agreement as the Department and the Agency of MH have experienced significant reorganization and staffing changes. This has slowed the progress on this agreement. The completed MOU will help to identify referral and service provision agreements as well as supported employment strategies and services to increase the successful competitive, integrated employment outcomes for the mutual customers of each system.

VRNH has partnered with most of the Mental health centers across the State to provide access to a Community Work Incentives Coordinator (CWIC) to provide work incentives planning and assistance to beneficiaries who receive Social Security Disability Benefits. The CWIC is responsible for counseling and educating beneficiaries about how employment will affect their current benefits so that individuals may make informed choices towards employment and self-sufficiency.

(8) Other Federal, State, and local agencies and programs outside the workforce development system; and
The Agency continually seeks to build and maintain relationships with other agencies and organizations that would impact on the employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities. In addition, since the passage of WIOA, the agency seeks new and innovative strategies for engaging with business partners to assist them in reaching their workforce needs.

Strategies/Agreements for Individuals with Disabilities:

- The Earn and Learn program with Granite State Independent Living continues with new students each semester and the local school district pays two-thirds the cost of the program. Students earn Extended Learning Opportunity Credits (ELO), high school credits) and have a work experience in addition to learning about all five of the Pre- Employment Transition Services while engaged in the Earn and Learn program.
- The IMPACCT program (Inspiring the Mastery of Post-Secondary Achievement in College, Careers and Training) has served 713 students since the fall of 2016. The program has three cohorts per year (fall, spring and summer) and provides all five Pre- ETS in a comprehensive 14-week program (5 weeks in the summer). Students have a work experience and earn high school credits. The program is growing this year with a new site being added in the Seacoast region of the state.

- The Agency continually seeks to work with community organizations with an interest in providing job placement and support services.

- The Agency continues to provide support (one trainer) to its partners to develop consistent standards and training for job developers through ACRE (Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators) training and APSE (Association of People Supporting Employment) certification.

- NHVR collaborates with Northeast Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (NDHHS) and other partners in the deaf community so that there is a team approach when job placement of a customer is made. We have an interpreter referral contract with NDHHS to ensure the proper coordination of interpreters for customers and staff of the agency. There is also a very individualized approach to providing Pre-Employment Transition Services to the deaf and hard of hearing population.

- NHVR collaborates with "Future in Sight," the program that assists individuals who are blind or visually impaired reach their vocational goals. Several areas of collaboration are currently occurring: transition services, older independent blind, and evaluation services for assistive technology. We developed Silver Retreats to introduce and train older individuals on how to utilize technology to the fullest to maintain independence.

- NHVR is working with the national technical assistance center in several areas: career pathways, and transition services.

- NHVR collaborates with the Brain Injury Association of NH (BIANH). This past year we have worked on a special initiative to impact on the discharge planning for students who acquire a brain injury so their return to school support and outcome is successful.

- The agency collaborates with the Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA). This agency provides staff that assist with rapid response/layoffs, new business entering the state of NH, and overall workforce development strategies.

- The VR agency and other partners have held the "Employment Leadership Awards" the last twelve years and have recognized over 65 employers that hire, train, and retain individuals with disabilities in their workforce and go above and beyond.
- The agency has begun to develop stronger relationships with the Business and Industry Association in NH as well as local Chambers of Commerce.

(9) Other private nonprofit organizations.
The agency has signed agreements with Community Rehabilitation Programs CRPs) to provide specific vocational rehabilitation services.

Only CRPs who meet the qualification standards and have a signed agreement with NHVR are eligible to provide these services The NHVR CRP Program Specialist is responsible for approving the agreements. Changes in key personnel and fees are reported to and negotiated with NHVR.

NH Vocational Rehabilitation works with Community Rehabilitation Program providers (CRPs) to provide pre-employment activities, job search, placement, and job analysis services. In addition, since the implementation of WIOA they have assisted us in providing both generalized and individualized Pre-Employment Transition Services to students with disabilities. The agency has completed guidance letters to staff on how to utilize these services with each vendor agency.

The current menu of services and fee-for-service payment structure does not differentiate between profit and nonprofit agencies and is standard for all CRPs. The agency has completed systemic changes for the type and provision of services, training/competency, and outcomes that are related to Community Rehabilitation Program providers. NHVR has collaborated with other partners to achieve a statewide accepted competency model that utilizes shared resources and will create consistency in how multiple systems utilize vendors that may provide services to participants in a variety of settings and in 2022 implementation of the “progressive employment model.”

The process to determine the need for new, improved or expanded programs will be accomplished through:

1. identified need in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment;
2. meetings of Vocational Rehabilitation administrators and consultants; and
3. consultation with of the State Rehabilitation Council

Through continuing statewide studies on the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities, including individuals with significant disabilities, the Agency gathers data and utilizes this to identify ways in which the overall effectiveness of community rehabilitation program services might be improved. The Agency is working on an effective tracking system that will allow us to analyze and make recommendations on services and efficiencies in the system.

The Agency will continue to seek ways to identify and meet the needs of individuals with disabilities in New Hampshire including, where appropriate, provision of services to groups of individuals with disabilities through the establishment, development, and improvement of collaboration with private vocational rehabilitation service providers including community rehabilitation programs.

In an effort to standardize services in the field, all CRP’s will be advised to attend ACRE training or similar training, prior to receiving referrals from VRNH, in order to meet the minimum requirements to work with people with disabilities. Additional professional development available to CRP’s is the Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) credential, which would demonstrate a sufficient level of knowledge and skill to provide integrated employment supports to a variety of people with disabilities. In addition, the CRP Program Specialist will review their resume, experience, and qualifications to ensure they have the knowledge, skills,

and abilities to work with our participants. Once a CRP is approved by the CRP Program Specialist, the CRP will be scheduled to attend mandatory training on VRNH's CRP Program and referral process.

Additional training will be offered by VR counselors and Rehabilitation Technicians to ensure the CRP understands VRNH's referral and invoice process.

VRNH's case management system, AWARE, has the capacity to evaluate vendor success rate and information that documents the number of referrals for individual services, referrals for job placement, wages, and successful placement outcomes.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:	
1.	The (enter the name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate,) is authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by title IV of WIOA,[2] and its State Plan supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act;
2.	In the event the designated State agency is not primarily concerned with vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, the designated State agency must include a designated State unit for the VR program (Section 101(a)(2)(B)(ii) 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 (enter the name of designated State agency or the designated State unit when the designated State agency has a designated State unit)[3] agrees to operate and is responsible for the administration of the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan[4], the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.13(b) and (c), and all applicable regulations[5], policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available to States under section 111(a) 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;
3.	As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated State agency or the designated State unit when the designated State agency has a designated State unit, agrees to operate and is responsible for the administration of the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan[6], the

[2] Public Law 113-128.

[3] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

[4] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[5] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations at 34 CFR part 361.

[6] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

States must provide written and signed certifications that:	
	Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations[7], policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;
4.	The designated State unit, or if not applicable, the designated State agency 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, and is responsible for the administration of the VR program in accordance with 34 CFR 361.13(b) and (c);
5.	The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement.
6.	All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law.
7.	The (enter title of State officer 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;
8.	The (enter title of State officer below) has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services;
9.	The agency that submits the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner, that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:

The State Plan must provide assurances that:	
1.	**Public Comment on Policies and Procedures:** The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[7]Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 4, as well as Supported Employment program regulations at 34 CFR part 363.

The State Plan must provide assurances that:	
2.	**Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement:** The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a Unified State plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 C.F.R. 76.140.
3.	**Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan:** The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to: (a) the establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act. (b) either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. (c) consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act. (d) the financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3). (e) as applicable, the local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. (f) as applicable, the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act. (g) state wideness and waivers of state wideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. (h) the requirements for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act. (i) all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act.

The State Plan must provide assurances that:	
	(j) the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act. (k) the compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act. (l) the reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities as set forth in section 101(a)(18)(A). (m) the submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.	**Administration of the Provision of VR Services:** The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will: (a) comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(E) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act. (b) impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act. (c) provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services or, if implementing an order of selection, in accordance with criteria established by the State for the order of selection as set out in section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act. (d) determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act. (e) comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act. (f) comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act. (g) provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act. (h) comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by sections 101(a)(14) and 511 of the Rehabilitation

The State Plan must provide assurances that:	
	Act. (i) meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs. (j) with respect to students with disabilities, the State: (i) has developed and will implement, (A) strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and (B) strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and (ii) has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15),101(a)(25), and 113). (iii) shall reserve not less than 15 percent of the allocated funds for the provision of pre-employment transition services; such funds shall not be used to pay for the administrative costs of providing pre-employment transition services.
5.	**Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement to the State plan:** (a) The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. (b) The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.
6.	**Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program (Title VI):** (a) The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(H) and (I) of the Rehabilitation Act.

The State Plan must provide assurances that:	
	(b) The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act.
7.	**Provision of Supported Employment Services**: (a) The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act. (b) The designated State agency assures that the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act , which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(7)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.

Appendix 1: Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

Include the state's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability indicators based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

	Title I – Adult Program			
	Program Year:		Program Year:	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)				
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)				
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate				
Measurable Skill Gains				

	Title I – Dislocated Worker Program			
	Program Year:		Program Year:	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)				
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)				
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate				
Measurable Skill Gains				

	Title I – Youth Program			
	Program Year:		Program Year:	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit) [8]				
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)[9]				
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate				
Measurable Skill Gains				

[8] For Title I Youth programs, employment, education or training.
[9] For Title I Youth programs, employment, education or training.

	Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program			
	Program Year:		Program Year:	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)				
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)				
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate				
Measurable Skill Gains				

	Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service Program			
	Program Year:		Program Year:	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)				
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)				
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

	Vocational Rehabilitation Program			
	Program Year: 2024		Program Year: 2025	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit) [22]	62%		65%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit) [22]	60%		62%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit [10]	$4,200		$4,500	
Credential Attainment Rate	58%		59%	
Measurable Skill Gains	49%		50%	

	All WIOA Core Programs			
	Program Year:		Program Year:	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers				

Additional Indicators of Performance
1.
2.
3.
4.

VII. Program-Specific Requirements for Combined State Plan Partner Programs

JOBS FOR VETERANS STATE GRANTS
(OMB Control Number: 1225-0086)

The Jobs for Veterans' State Grants (JVSG) are mandatory, formula-based staffing grants to States (including DC, PR, VI and Guam). The JVSG is funded annually in accordance with a funding formula defined in the statute (38 U.S.C. 4102A (c) (2) (B) and regulation and operates on a fiscal year (not program year) basis, however, performance metrics are collected and reported quarterly on a Program Year basis (as with the ETA-9002 Series). Currently, VETS JVSG operates on a multi-year grant approval cycle modified and funded annually.

In accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(b)(5) and § 4102A(c), the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training (ASVET) makes grant funds available for use in each State to support Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) staff. As a condition to receive funding, 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(c)(2) requires States to submit an application for a grant that contains a State Plan narrative, which includes:

(a) How the State intends to provide employment, training and job placement services to veterans and eligible persons under the JVSG;

Twelve New Hampshire Employment Security (NHES) offices have been designated American Job Centers called NHWORKS. This structure allows New Hampshire to have a DVOP specialist assigned to nine of our twelve American Job Centers to provide the delivery of individualized career services to targeted veterans. Many of the DVOP specialists report to more than one office to provide career services. For the other three American Job Centers, the DVOP staff can utilize virtual platforms to provide services to targeted veterans in addition to services being provided by other AJC staff members to ensure services are provided timely and effectively. In the local One-Stop Career Centers veterans receive priority of service from all partner staff. Priority is given to veterans for all new job listings posted on the NHWorks Job Match System by placing new job orders on a twenty-four hour veteran hold during which time the job order is only viewable by staff for the referral of veterans, and on-line the job order can only be viewed by registrants that are identified as veterans. The DVOP specialists, consolidated position and the LVER staff work in daily collaboration with one-stop delivery system partner staff to promote employment, training, placement and other opportunities for veterans. Intra-staff collaboration is also enforced via program updates shared among partners during regularly scheduled staff meetings. All staff members within the NH Works Offices have an understanding of the services and programs available to assist veterans and eligible persons as well as how to refer these individuals to the services and programs.

Upon contact with a NH Works Office, customers are asked to self-identify as a veteran or an eligible spouse of a veteran through a series of questions that are asked of them by the staff member at the front desk in each AJC. A Veterans and Other Eligible Intake Form is then utilized to identify a veteran or eligible person. During a review of this intake form, through an assessment process, by an AJC staff member with the individual, when veterans and other eligible are identified, they are informed of their priority of service status. If the individual is identified as an eligible veteran with a significant barrier to employment, between the ages of 18 and 24, Vietnam-era Veterans, or Eligible Transitioning Service members, Spouses and Caregivers, they are immediately referred to a DVOP specialist to provide individualized career services in the areas of employment, training and job placement.

In a situation where a DVOP is not available, then another AJC staff member will provide services until the DVOP is available and able to provide these services moving forward. The DVOP will provide individualized career services including assessments of skill levels and needs, development of an individual employment plan, career guidance and planning and referrals to other services and programs, including training opportunities such as apprenticeships, WIOA programs and on-the-job training opportunities. Veterans that are identified through this process as not possessing a significant barrier to employment are provided services by an AJC staff member utilizing a priority of service basis. Veterans meeting eligibility criteria for specific training programs receive priority placement into the program. Services to veterans include assessment, job search assistance and employment related workshops, job referrals, counseling, testing, job development, supportive services and training. Policies and procedures are in place to support services to veterans and/or eligible family members consistent with WIOA regulations. In that regard, a staff member is assigned as a veteran liaison both to ensure that all AJC staff have the information, they need to serve the veteran population and to ensure that all agencies that work with veterans statewide have comprehensive information on the services available through the WIOA program to disperse to veteran they serve. All services provided for eligible veterans and eligible persons, to include job and job training individualized career services, are measured through the results obtained and reported via the ETA 9173 for Wagner-Peyser and DVOP staff.

With a Business Services Team member assigned to cover all labor market areas of the State, the planned deployment of LVER staff is to supplement the outreach efforts being conducted by these staff. This will also provide for LVER staff being available to all AJCs to facilitate employment, training and placement services provided to veterans. The LVER staff attends outreach training provided to the Business Service Representatives as part of a deployment strategy by the state.

The education community is a partner in each of the American Job Centers. The NH Works collaborative effort includes the NH Department of Education (Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Vocational Education) and the NH Community College System. With the education community actively participating in the American Job Centers, veterans are provided easy access to job-driven training opportunities, and newly developed training programs. In addition, our education partners work with all partner agencies in the AJC in the planning and development of increased training opportunities to meet the needs of both the job seekers and the employer community. The DVOP specialists, LVERs and Wagner-Peyser staff have access to current demographic, labor market and educational information for New Hampshire and their local area on their desktop computers at our NHWorks website, as do all veterans accessing the website. Access is also available to both customers and staff on information regarding training and education offered to New Hampshire residents. This information is available within the NH Works Job Match System. The system indicates which educational programs are WIOA Eligible. One of the LVER's principal duties is to conduct outreach to employers, employer associations, and business groups to promote the advantages of hiring veterans, to assist veterans in gaining employment, and to develop relationships, jobs, training, or job training opportunities for veterans and eligible persons. To accomplish this, LVERs participate in appropriate activities such as: Planning and participating in job and career fairs; Conducting employer outreach; Conducting seminars for employers; In conjunction with employers, conducting job search workshops and establishing job search groups; Coordinating with unions, apprenticeship programs and businesses or business organizations to promote and secure employment and training programs for veterans; Promoting credentialing and licensing opportunities for veterans; and Coordinating and participating with other business outreach efforts. The LVER's second primary function is to facilitate employment, training and placement services provided to veterans within the NH Works system via capacity building to ensure easier access to the appropriate employment and training services for eligible job-seeking veterans and eligible persons. The LVER, as an integral member of the NHES Business Services Team, will work

with the staff to coordinate outreach activities to solicit job orders and promote the hiring of veterans. The LVER staff is responsible for maintaining contact with Federal Contractors and is also involved in the planning and participation in job fairs. All services provided for eligible veterans and eligible persons, to include training and subsequent placement services are measured through the results obtained and reported via the quarterly ETA 9173.

(b) The duties assigned to DVOP specialists and LVER staff by the State; specifically implementing DVOP and LVER duties or roles and responsibilities as outlined in 38 U.S.C. § 4103A and 4104. These duties must be consistent with current guidance;

The duties assigned to the DVOP specialists in New Hampshire are as specified in Veterans' Program Letter 03-14, Change 1 and 2 or most current guidance. DVOP specialists provide Individualized Career Services and facilitate placements to meet the employment needs of eligible veterans and eligible persons, prioritizing service to special disabled veterans, other disabled veterans, and other categories of veterans in accordance with priorities determined by the Secretary of Labor.

Individualized Career Services provided by DVOP specialists include:

• Comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs;

• Development of an individual employment plan;

• Career guidance and planning; and

• Short-term prevocational services.

DVOP specialists will provide services only to eligible veterans and eligible persons meeting the definition of an individual with an SBE as defined in VPL 03-14 or the most current VPL on the subject; veterans between the ages of 18 and 24, Vietnam-era Veterans, or Eligible Transitioning Service members, Spouses and Caregivers and to any other populations of veterans identified by the Secretary of Labor.

The DVOP specialists are fully integrated into the American Job Center system in New Hampshire. All partners in the AJC are fully aware of the veteran's program and the need to identify eligible veterans and eligible persons with an SBE for referral to the DVOP specialist for the provision of individualized career services.

The duties assigned to the LVER staff in New Hampshire are as specified in Veterans' Program Letter 03-14, Change 1 and 2 or most current guidance.

One of the LVER's principal duties is to conduct outreach to employers, employer associations, and business groups to promote the advantages of hiring veterans, to assist veterans in gaining employment, and to develop relationships, jobs, training, or job training opportunities for veterans and eligible persons. To accomplish this, LVERs will participate in appropriate activities such as:

• Planning and participating in job and career fairs;

• Conducting employer outreach;

• Conducting seminars for employers;

• In conjunction with employers, conducting job search workshops and establishing job search groups;

• Coordinating with unions, apprenticeship programs and businesses or business organizations to promote and secure employment and training programs for veterans;

• Promoting credentialing and licensing opportunities for veterans; and

• Coordinating and participating with other business outreach efforts.

The LVER's second primary function is to facilitate employment, training and placement services provided to veterans within the NHWORKS system via capacity building to ensure easier access to the appropriate employment and training services for eligible persons.

The LVER, as an integral member of the NHES Business Services Team, will work with the staff to coordinate outreach activities to solicit job orders and promote the hiring of veterans. The LVER staff is responsible for maintaining contact with Federal Contractors and is also involved in the planning and participation in job fairs. Until further guidance is disseminated by USDOL VETS, LVER outreach efforts and other LVER staff activities are monitored locally by NHES managers and the DVET to assure compliance with statutory duties as described in VPL 03- 14 job-seeking veterans and eligible persons.

(c) The manner in which DVOP specialists and LVER staff are integrated into the State's employment service delivery system or American Job Center;

The DVOP specialists and the LVER staff work in daily collaboration with other New Hampshire Employment Security (NHES) staff, WIOA Title I, State Vocational Rehabilitation, and other AJC partners to promote employment, training, placement and other opportunities for veterans.

Intra-staff collaboration is also enforced via program updates shared among partners during regularly scheduled staff meetings and NH Works Partners meetings.

The DVOP specialists throughout the State work with the VAVR&E program to assist qualified veterans seeking training. VAVR&E, in turn, refers veterans who are completing training programs to the DVOP specialists for job placement assistance. Through an agreement with the NH State Office of Veterans Services, representatives from their agency visit the NHES offices throughout the state to assist veterans with problems or questions regarding Federal or State benefits.

The State has four HVRP Grantees, Harbor Homes, Veterans, Inc., ClearPath New England and Bridge Club of Greater Lowell. The DVOP specialists in the Hillsborough County area do outreach on-site and participate in Stand Down activity by Harbor Homes. Representatives from The HVRP Grantees periodically visit Local Offices as an additional means of outreach to homeless veterans.

Many of the JVSG funded staff are members of Veterans' Service Organizations (VSOs) in their community or have established working relationships with these groups. NHES is a member of the State Apprenticeship Advisory Council and works closely with the Federal apprenticeship representatives.

DVOP staff will continue to conduct outreach to local Veterans' Service Organizations (VSOs), homeless shelters, VA Medical Centers and Vet Centers, food pantries, correctional institutions and halfway houses in their labor market area to reach out to veterans and inform them of the services available through the American Job Centers. Other outreach activities to increase the awareness of employment and training opportunities for veterans are job fairs, public service announcements via local radio stations, information posted on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter, and a veterans' page on the NHES website.

Efforts to promote the development of employment and training opportunities for veterans and eligible persons will include attendance at Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Club events, job fairs, positive

recruitment events and employer seminars in American Job Centers, employer contacts by LVER staff to Federal contractors and employer outreach by all American Job Center staff.

The education community is a partner in each of the American Job Centers. The NHWORKS collaborative effort includes the NH Department of Education (Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Vocational Education) and the NH Community College System. With the education community actively participating in the American Job Centers, veterans are provided easy access to job-driven training opportunities, and newly developed training programs. In addition, our education partners work with all partner agencies in the AJC in the planning and development of increased training opportunities to meet the needs of both the job seekers and the employer community.

The DVOP specialists, LVERs and Wagner-Peyser staff have access to current demographic, labor market and educational information for New Hampshire and their local area on their desktop computers at our NHworks website, as do all veterans accessing the website. Access is also available to NSCITE (NH Works Source for Consumer Information on Training and Education), a website containing information on training and education offered to New Hampshire residents. The system indicates which educational programs are WIOA Eligible.

DVOP specialists will provide services only to eligible veterans and eligible persons meeting the definition of an individual with an SBE as defined in VPL 03-14 or the most current VPL on the subject; veterans between the ages of 18 and 24, Vietnam-era Veterans, or Eligible Transitioning Service members, Spouses and Caregivers, as identified by the Secretary of Labor.

The DVOP specialists are fully integrated into the American Job Center system in New Hampshire. All partners in the AJC are fully aware of the veteran's program and the need to identify eligible veterans and eligible persons with an SBE for referral to the DVOP specialist for the provision of intensive services. Should a veteran require a referral to other services in the AJC, the partner agency is advised of the applicant's veteran status in order to ensure priority of service.

The LVER, as an integral member of the NHES Business Services Team, will work with the staff to coordinate outreach activities to solicit job orders and promote the hiring of veterans. The LVER staff is responsible for maintaining contact with Federal Contractors and is also involved in the planning and participation in job fairs. Until further guidance is disseminated by USDOL VETS, LVER outreach efforts and other LVER staff activities are monitored locally by NHES managers and the DVET to assure compliance with statutory duties as described in VPL 03-14.

One of the LVER's principal duties is to conduct outreach to employers, employer associations, and business groups to promote the advantages of hiring veterans, to assist veterans in gaining employment, and to develop relationships, jobs, training, or job training opportunities for veterans and eligible persons. The LVER's second primary function is to facilitate employment, training and placement services provided to veterans within the NHWORKS system via capacity building to ensure easier access to the appropriate employment and training services for eligible job-seeking veterans and eligible persons.

The NHES website also offers Career Exploration & Training tools for veteran job seekers. Among these tools is My Next Move for Veterans, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, and developed by the National Center for O*NET Development. One module allows the veteran to enter the name or code of his or her military classification. The system will suggest civilian careers with similar work. Once identified, the veteran can use New Hampshire Occupational Projections to review our projections.

Another module in My Next Move for Veterans allows a veteran to search for career options within industries. There are over 900 career options for a veteran to look at. Once a career option is selected, the veteran is able to review the knowledge, skills, and abilities typically required in the occupation, along with expected personality traits and technology that might be used in the occupation. The veteran is also able to review the job outlook in New Hampshire for the selected occupation.

(d) The Incentive Award program implemented using the 1% grant allocation set aside for this purpose, as applicable;

New Hampshire is prohibited from using these funds to provide performance and incentive awards due to restrictions in the Collective Bargaining Agreement and under New Hampshire state law and the statutory State Personnel system established under RSA 21-I:42 et seq.

(e) The populations of eligible veterans to be served, including any additional populations designated by the Secretary as eligible for services, and any additional populations specifically targeted by the State Workforce Agency for services from one-stop delivery system partners (e.g., Native American veterans; veterans in remote rural counties or parishes);

The primary function of DVOP specialists is providing intensive services to eligible veterans and eligible spouses who have significant barriers to employment, while prioritizing their services to those who are special disabled and other disabled veterans, placing maximum emphasis on assisting veterans who are economically or educationally disadvantaged, and other populations of veterans identified by the Secretary of Labor.

Those veterans identified or self-attesting to meeting one or more of the following criteria are considered having a significant barrier to employment and by nature of those barriers are also economically and educationally disadvantaged:

• special disabled or disabled veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 U.S.C. 4211(1) and (3); Special disabled and disabled veterans are those:

• Who are entitled to compensation (or those who would be entitled to compensation, yet are not receiving it due to the receipt of military retired pay) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs; or

• Who were discharged or released from active duty because of service-connected disability;

o A homeless person, as defined in Sections 103(a) and (b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a) and (b)), as amended

o A recently separated service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C. 4211(6), who has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks in the previous 12 months;

o An offender, as defined by WIOA Section 3 (38), who is currently incarcerated or who has been released from incarceration;

o A veteran lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate; o A low-income individual (as defined by WIOA Section 3 (36);

o A veteran between the ages of 18 and 24 years old who possess limited civilian work history;

o A Vietnam-era veteran. Vietnam-era veterans are those: For which any part of their active military, naval, or air service was during the Vietnam era (the period beginning February 28, 1961, and ending May 7, 1975, in

the case of a veteran who served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period, and the period beginning August 5, 1964, and ending May 7, 1975, in all other cases)

o Eligible Transitioning Service Members, Spouses and Caregivers. In annual appropriations bills since the consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014, Congress authorized JVSG grants to support services described in VPL 07-14 to:

- Transitioning members of the Armed Forces who have been identified as in need of individualized career services;
- Members of the Armed Forces who are wounded, ill, or injured and receiving treatment in Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs) or Warrior Transition Units (WTUs); and
- The spouses or other family caregivers of such wounded, ill, or injured members.

NHES also recognizes that the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 provided for the provision of services by DVOP specialists to transitioning members of the Armed Forces who have participated in the Transitional Assistance Program (TAP) and have been identified as in need of intensive services, to members of the Armed Forces who are wounded, ill, or injured and receiving treatment in military treatment facilities or warrior transition units, and to the spouses or other family caregivers of such wounded, ill, or injured members. We will serve these populations and any others identified by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with policy and guidance received.

DVOP staff will continue to conduct outreach to local Veterans' Service Organizations (VSOs), homeless shelters, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Centers and Vet Centers, food pantries, correctional institutions and halfway houses in their labor market area. The DVOP will try to assist these veterans by informing them of the services and resources available to them through the AJC.

The State has four HVRP Grantees, Harbor Homes, Veterans, Inc., ClearPath New England and Bridge Club of Greater Lowell and the DVOP specialists in the Hillsborough County area do outreach on-site and participate in Stand Down activity by Harbor Homes. Representatives from the HVRP grantees periodically visit Local Offices as an additional means of outreach to homeless veterans.

Through agreements with the VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VAVR&E) and the NH State Office of Veterans Services, and ongoing coordination with all partners in the American Job Center, Workforce Development Coalitions, and working relationships with Veterans' Service Organizations (VSOs) in the community, services and employment opportunities for veterans most in need of services are optimized.

The managers of each local American Job Center are responsible for monitoring activities of their staff to ensure compliance with the New Hampshire JVSG State Plan. Reports available through the Job Match System (JMS), are all used to track services to veterans and are monitored by each local NH Works manager and by the State Veterans' Program Coordinator. Each manager receives a copy of the State Plan and is aware of their obligation to carry out the provisions of the plan.

New Hampshire has no identified population of Native Americans living on tribal lands in the State so there is no planned outreach or approval needed to provide such service.

(f) How the State implements and monitors the administration of priority of service to covered persons;

As per VPL 01-22, The description of how the state implements and monitors Priority of Service to covered persons is included in the WIOA Common Elements Section 7.

(g) How the State provides or intends to provide and measure, through both the DVOP and American Job Center staff:

1. job and job training individualized career services,
2. As per VPL 01-22 , a response to this section is not required.employment placement services,

As per VPL 01-22, a response to this section is not required.

and (3) job-driven training and subsequent placement service program for eligible veterans and eligible persons;

As per VPL 01-22 a response to this section is not required.

(h) The hire date along with mandatory training completion dates for all DVOP specialists and LVER staff; and,

As per VPL 01-22 a response to this section is not required.

(i) Such additional information as the Secretary may require.

Performance Goals

Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit – 56%

Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit – 51%

Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit - $6,630

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

(OMB Control Number: 1205-0132)

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) program requires a State Quality Service Plan (SQSP) on a 2-year planning cycle that is a condition of receipt of administrative funding to administer the program. The SQSP is the State's UI performance management and planning process that allows for an exchange of information between Federal and State partners to enhance the UI program's ability to reflect their joint commitment to performance excellence and client-centered services. A formal two-year SQSP is submitted biennially. On the off years, States may be required to modify the SQSP with additional corrective action plans and narrative if they are failing any new performance measures, and they are required to provide updated budget documents, certifications, and assurances. ETA Handbook No. 336, 18th Edition provides detailed guidance for the preparation and submittal of the SQSP and supplemental guidance is provided in an annual UIPL, issued as UIPL 15-19 for the FY 2020 SQSP. The Social Security Act (SSA) sections 302 and 303 authorize the Secretary of Labor to provide funds to administer the UI program and govern the expenditure of those funds. States that choose the option to include UI in a WIOA Combined State Plan will be required to submit their SQSP through the Combined State Plan process. The SQSP must be prepared in accordance to the instructions in ET Handbook 336, 18th Edition and there are no changes to the established SQSP cycle if a State chose to submit their SQSP through the Combined State Plan process.

(a) Contents of a complete UI SQSP package: A complete UI SQSP package includes the following documents, as described in Chapter 1, ETA Handbook 336, 18th Edition:

(1) Transmittal Letter: A cover letter to the appropriate Regional Office (RO) transmitting all the required SQSP documents.

(2) Budget Worksheets/Forms: Budget worksheets/forms and plan for program administration based on projected allocations received from the Federal partner. These forms include Worksheet UI-1 and SF 424, SF 424A and SF 424B. The SF 424A is only required if the State vary the quarterly distribution of base claims activity staff years.

(3) The State Plan Narrative: The State Plan Narrative is a vital element of the SQSP that provides a vehicle for sharing with the Federal partner State-specific efforts that affect the administration of the UI Program. The State Plan Narrative allows the State to describe in a single narrative: a) State performance in comparison to the Government Performance Review Act goals; b) actions planned to correct deficiencies regarding UI programs, UI program reviews and reporting requirements; and c) results of customer satisfaction surveys (optional).

(4) Corrective Action Plans (CAPs): CAPs are expected as a part of the SQSP when State's annual performance does not meet the established criteria for core measures, Secretary's Standards, UI program, assurances, and other program deficiencies identified in the annual SQSP guidance provided by the Department. The CAP must list both specific milestones for key corrective actions or improvement activities, and the completion date for each milestone.

(5) UI Program Integrity Action Plan (UI IAP): The UI IAP outlines the strategies the State will undertake during the planning period regarding the prevention reduction and recovery of UI improper payments.

(6) Organizational Chart: The organization chart must conform to the requirement for delivery of

service through public employment offices, or such other designated providers as the Secretary may authorize; show the State's configuration from the Governor of the State down to the point of Employment Service and UI customer service delivery; and provide sufficient detail to show each organizational unit involved and the title of the unit manager.

(7) SQSP Signature Page. The State administrator must sign and date the SQSP Signature Page. By signing the Signature Page, the State administrator certifies that the State will comply with all the assurances and activities contained in the SQSP guidelines.

Though a State needs to submit the complete SQSP package on a 2-year cycle, there are certain documents contained in the SQSP package which are required to be submitted by States annually as part of the off-year submission. The documents which are required to be submitted annually are considered a modification to the complete SQSP submitted the previous year. Since funds for State UI operations are appropriated each year, each State is required to annually submit the transmittal letter, budget worksheets, organizational chart and the signature page. The modification may also include CAPs for new identified performance deficiencies, and any required modifications to existing CAPs.

Since the UI program is a required one-stop partner, States have the option of including UI in the Combined State Plan authorized by WIOA sec. 103.

(b) Requirements for States electing to include UI in the Combined State Plan: States that elect to include UI in the Combined State Plan must:

(1) Submit an SQSP in the following manner depending on their timing in the SQSP cycle:

(A) If a State is in the first year of their 2-year cycle, , the State is required to submit the most recently approved complete SQSP package. A complete SQSP package will include the Transmittal Letter, Budget Worksheets/Forms, State Plan Narrative, CAPs (including the milestones and the completion date for each milestone), the UI IAP, Organizational Chart, and the SQSP Signature Page. One of the key goals for the UI program is to ensure that claimants are able to successfully return to work. As such, the SQSP State Plan Narrative must provide a discussion of the plan coordination with other WIOA Combined Plan programs to ensure a coordinated effort and integrated service delivery.

(B) If a State is in the second year of the 2-year cycle, the State is required to submit the most recently approved complete SQSP package with a modification that must include the Transmittal Letter, Budget Worksheets/Forms, Organizational Chart, and the SQSP Signature page. The modification may also include CAPs for new identified performance deficiencies, and any required modifications to existing CAPs. The CAP must list both specific milestones for key corrective actions or improvement activities, and the completion date for each milestone.

(2) Submit the required off-year SQSP components as a modification to the Combined State Plan on the same cycle as the regular SQSP process which must be approved by September 30th each year.

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SCSEP)

(OMB Control No. 1205-0040)

A. Economic Projections and Impact

1. Discuss long-term projections for jobs in industries and occupations in the State that may provide employment opportunities for older workers. (20 CFR 641.302(d))(May alternatively be discussed in the economic analysis section of strategic plan.)

2. Discuss how the long-term job projections discussed in the economic analysis section of strategic plan relate to the types of unsubsidized jobs for which SCSEP participants will be trained and the types of skill training to be provided. (20 CFR 641.302(d))

   NH SCSEP will continue to provide training and placement based on participant's choice while also utilizing data from the NH's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Training and placement will primarily be in service industries, healthcare and social assistance where many of the current participants are placed. We believe that trainings and placements in fields such as office support, retail, warehouse, childcare, health care activity aides, and custodial/maintenance will continue to be areas where SCSEP participants will be placed.

3. Discuss current and projected employment opportunities in the State (such as by providing information available under §15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 491-2) by occupation), and the types of skills possessed by eligible individuals. (20 CFR641.325(c))

4. NH's Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau (NH Employment and Labor Statistics Career Resources) has developed a number of career resources to assist staff and participants with both current and projected employment opportunities in New Hampshire. Resources available include:
   - Apprenticeships
   - Career Exploration Web Sites
   - Career Planning Guide
   - Career Clusters
   - Career Exploration by Holland Interest Profile
   - Different Careers Different Training
   - Employment Projections, Job Outlook and Locator
   - Green Jobs
   - Job Notes
   - Licensed, Certified, and Registered Occupations
   - Occupational Employment & Wages (OES)
   - Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)
   - Top Career Prospects

In addition, through contract with the Office of Workforce Opportunity, a biennial demand occupation list has been developed to use as the basis for training that is provided. For an occupation to be on NH's demand list the wage must be $11 per hour average and have 106 or more openings projected per year. Eligible individuals for our program are provided a comprehensive assessment that includes an evaluation of their interests, abilities, skill levels, and barriers requiring resolution. An Individual Employment Plan with goals and timeline is developed and subsequently implemented. Training and unsubsidized placement is aimed at in demand occupations.

b. Service Delivery and Coordination

1. A description of actions to coordinate SCSEP with other programs. This may alternatively be discussed in the State strategies section of the strategic plan, but regardless of placement in document, must include:

   A. Planned actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees with WIOA title I programs, including plans for using the WIOA one-stop delivery system and its partners to serve individuals aged 55 and older. (20 CFR 641.302(g), 641.325(e))

   Strong coordination among organizations and agencies that focus on service to mature workers is a strength of the New Hampshire system. Currently, our state grantee is also our national grantee which simplifies the process. In addition, Operation ABLE has partnered with Community Action agencies who operate a number of programs targeted to the mature population. Program managers work hand-in- hand with the SCSEP staff to ensure eligible participants are aware of and have direct access to the services and programs they need to support their personal and employment related needs.

   When a change in the state grantee occurred, Operation ABLE worked with the prior grantee to utilize office space within their building. This has made the coordination of services easier for all involved. The SCSEP program staff are located in the same building with the other elder services programs administered by the Community Action Program. This allows for coordination of services and referrals to occur. The SCSEP program staff will continue the coordination of services with the other programs as well as with the other community action programs in the state.

   In addition, staff from both the national and state grantee programs attend quarterly NH Works partners meetings for the regional areas that they cover. These partner meetings include staff from Title I programs, Adult Education, DHHS, Vocational Rehabilitation, and other partners. These meetings help to build strong relationships which promote dual enrollments, ongoing referrals, training and employment opportunities, shared services including assessments, workshops, presentations and connections to needed services. Both the national and state grantee staff will continue to attend these meetings and promote the SCSEP program.

B. Planned actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees with the activities being carried out in the State under the other titles of the Older Americans Act (OAA). (20 CFR 641.302(h))

   Strong coordination among organizations and agencies that provide services to senior workers is a strength of Operation ABLE. The agency has been operating the National Grant in New Hampshire for a number of years. During this time, they have developed strong local partnerships with dozens of agencies that operate programs for older individuals.

Community Action Agencies are strong service coordination partners including CAPBM in Concord and Tri-County in Berlin, which both provide office space for ABLE SCSEP. The support of leadership in these organizations facilitates collaboration across their entire broad service areas and program array in which senior centers, community centers, affordable housing, and economic assistance programs such as the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), Electric Assistance Program (EAP), Fuel Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Weatherization, Transportation, ServiceLink, Meals on Wheels, the Senior Companion Program are targeted to the senior population. SCSEP participants are placed in many of these programs for training, and SCSEP staff refer participants to access these types of services as needed to support their unsubsidized employment success.

Operation ABLE works in close partnership with Housing Authorities in each county, and continues to strengthen relationships with the professional service coordinators that serve in them both locally and as a participant in regular meetings of the NH Association of Professional Service Coordinators. Cross referrals, local information sessions about SCSEP for residents and problem solving around barriers are examples of collaboration.

WorkReadyNH, a work-readiness certification program funded through the State Job Training Fund, provides both academic and soft skill certification. The program is offered using a hybrid model (virtual and onsite) at the Community College campuses throughout the state. The WorkReady program is free to attend and SCSEP staff refer participants that may benefit from this training.

C. Planned actions to coordinate SCSEP with other private and public entities and programs that provide services to older Americans, such as community and faith- based organizations, transportation programs, and programs for those with special needs or disabilities. (20 CFR 641.302(i))

The Service Link Resource Centers have provided extensive assistance to SCSEP participants, and Operation ABLE SCSEP Participants are often placed in training positions with these Centers. ServiceLink Resource Centers and the NH DHHS District Offices serve as New Hampshire's Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) that provide "no wrong door" to service access via Options Counseling and service coordination and referral. Services and supports align with SCSEP's purpose because they are intended to assist people to live as independently as possible in safety and with dignity. Operation ABLE's four SCSEP Area Program Managers sited in Berlin, Claremont, Concord and Manchester will continue to attend Area Committee on Aging meetings to gain additional insight on community resources specifically geared towards mature workers, taking advantage of increased networking opportunities that have resulted in the recruitment of several host agencies. Operation ABLE also works with faith-based organizations in each region of the state that serve as host agencies and referral networks for participants.

SCSEP program staff arranges to attend training sessions that Service Link and other organizations including Granite State Independent Living Program, NH Legal Services and Area Councils on Aging provide to learn about Social Security Benefits, Accessing Health and Medical Services, Legal Services, Medicare, Health Insurance Coverage and more. Trainings enable SCSEP staff to continue to expand its understanding of the array of services and opportunities available to SCSEP participants, and to strengthen cross-referral relationships with attendees from a variety of social services who are locally based in each county.

For example the Granite State Independent Living Center offers the Ticket to Work program that provides Social Security Work Incentives to people with disabilities, and serves as a hub of services and support to cross-disability and aging community members.

SCSEP staff attend regular staff meetings to share information and resources. The Information gained through the inclusion in these workshops have made the staff more knowledgeable on resources available to the participants.

The International Institute and Ascentria Care Alliance works closely with Operation ABLE to assist with enrolling and transitioning refugees into the workforce. Program staff have developed a long-standing relationship with Vocational Rehabilitation staff in each region of the state, which has increased two-way referrals and allowed for dual enrollments. Participants have been successfully placed into gainful unsubsidized employment. SCSEP staff will continue to work with these different agencies to coordinate and access services for individuals.

Operation ABLE has close relationships with Employment Specialists working in a variety of mental health-focused organizations that have provided guidance and training on how to work with individuals with mental illness such as the Greater Nashua Mental Health Center (NMHC) and Seacoast Mental Health Center. In addition, GNMHC also partners to provide interpretation for SCSEP participants whose primary language is Spanish.

The Office of Workforce Opportunity along with State and National grantees work with our local AARP office, providing resources to assist both clients and staff. The AARP Foundation Work Search Information Network provides advice, practical examples and support for SCSEP participants to manage successful job searches. The State and National grantee staff will continue to utilize this resource in the coordination of services for participants.

D. Planned actions to coordinate SCSEP with other labor market and job training initiatives. (20 CFR 641.302(j))

There is a strong working relationship with the Department of Business and Economic Affairs - Division of Economic Development staff in in our counties. They often provide job leads and we encourage them to inform employers of SCSEP. This relationship has enabled us to build relationships with local employers that otherwise may not have been established.

NH Works is another great resource for our participants to source employment opportunities and receive assistance via the resource centers. SCSEP participants are given an overview of the NH Works services available. Pre COVID, SCSEP participants were provided a tour of the center closest to where they live. They are introduced to appropriate NH Works staff to ensure they have a level of comfort to go into the office on a regular basis and conduct their job search. The Employer Service Representatives at NH Employment Security have provided job leads to SCSEP participants. SCSEP staff attend employer-related functions in our counties to gain additional knowledge about the needs, concerns, industry changes and employment opportunities. During the pandemic, remote services and staff turnover weakened SCSEP networking relationships in some office despite efforts to maintain regular remote contact. The return to in person services at these sites is a welcome change. Operation ABLE has done and is scheduling regular information sessions to refresh all channels of this communication and partnership.

The Return to Work program provides a structured, supervised training on site with an employer for up to 6 weeks and a maximum of 24 hours per week. The program offers a trainee a foot in the door and the opportunity to learn new skills. If the Return to Work placement is successful for the participant, the employer can decide to hire the trainee at any point in time during this program. This opportunity is beneficial for the employer and the potential employee.

E. Actions to ensure that SCSEP is an active partner in the one-stop delivery system and the steps the State will take to encourage and improve coordination with the one-stop delivery system. (20 CFR 641.335)

New Hampshire's One-Stop system, known as NH Works, is managed by the NH Works One-Stop Operator Consortium (NH Works Consortium). This committee serves as the One-Stop Operator as defined by Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA). The purpose of the committee is to establish the vision and goals for the one-stop delivery system, and to oversee the implementation of these goals on the local one-stop center level. The Consortium is also charged with designing and implementing continuous improvement tools and processes for the one-stop delivery system. The committee is chaired by the Vice-Chairman of the Workforce Innovation Board (State WIB). Membership is comprised from the following entities: Employment Security, Department of Education, Community College System of NH, Department of Business and Economic Affairs, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Labor, and the Community Action Program. The collaborative management structure of the NH Works system promotes ongoing communication among partner agencies, which leads to a high level of interagency referrals and/or the integration of services.

NH Works Consortium Partner Programs

Operating Agency	Programs
NH Department of Education	
	Perkins Funding
	Vocational Rehabilitation
	Adult Basic Education
NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs	
	Grant recipient for SCSEP; Administrative entity for State SCSEP program – contract with Operation ABLE
	Administrative entity for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker & Youth funds in NH – Title I services are subcontracted to various state and local agencies.
	Workforce board staff charged with leading the State's strategic planning for workforce issues and system policy making guidance
	Rapid Response Retention Services (contract for services through the Office of Workforce Opportunity)
	Business Resource Center for Economic Development
NH Employment Security	Wagner-Peyser
	Migrant and seasonal farm workers
	Unemployment Insurance
	Performance Accountability and Customer Information Agency (PACIA) Unit (contract for services through the Office of Workforce Opportunity)
	Foreign Labor Certification
	WOTC/WTW Tax Credits
	Labor Market Information Services
	Trade Assistance Program
	Veterans' Program
	Job Training Program
	Subcontracted to deliver Dislocated Worker program
NH Department of Health and Human Services	
Operating Agency	TANF/Food Stamps/Medicare/Medicaid Children Programs
	Youth and Family Services Service Link/Agency on Aging

	Juvenile Justice
Community College System of NH	Post-secondary education
	Eligible training provider for WIOA
	Carl Perkins funds
Department of Labor	Apprenticeship programs
	Labor laws/enforcement
Community Action Programs	
	Subcontracted to deliver WIOA Adult programs/ Senior Companion/Elderly Housing/Elderly Transportation
	Head Start/Weatherization and other community project programs DHHS TANF Work Program (contractor)

Specific SCSEP overall goals and strategies relating to coordination of activities with the state's one-stop system activities include the following:

- The Office of Workforce Opportunity is the administrative entity for the State SCSEP project, and as such ensures that all SCSEP activities are directly connected to the workforce system as a whole. With OWO being a part of the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs, a stronger relationship is developed with the Economic Development Outreach Workers to Businesses.
- SCSEP services provider – Operation ABLE works closely with each of the local NH Works Centers. SCSEP staff have the ability to use space at the NH Works offices to recruit SCSEP participants.
- Operation ABLE staff attend the local NH Works Center team meetings, which convene on a quarterly basis to share program information, referral updates and other topics specific to day-to-day relationship building on the local level.
- The SCSEP staff have participated in past NH Works conferences, often presenting workshops to NH Works staff on best practices for working with mature workers.
- WorkReadyNH, a work-readiness certification program funded through the State Job Training Fund (WorkInvestNH), provides both academic and soft skill certification. The program is free to attend.
- In the coming years, SCSEP staff will continue to expand and/or strengthen partnerships within the NH Works system to achieve greater success in the following areas:
    - Training – promote more dual enrollments with WIOA and other system partners to ensure SCSEP participants have access to occupational training that may be needed to supplement the training received through community service experience placements.
    - Job Placement Assistance – strengthen the communication and integration of services between SCSEP staff and NH Works employer services representative in an effort to better market older workers to the business community and enhance access to job placement opportunities.
    - Older Worker Week Promotion – continue to engage the NH Works Centers in the promotion and celebration of "Employ Older Workers Week". The goal is

to have each NH Works office participate in promotional activities by offering workshops on mature worker topics, displaying information including posters and other activities that highlight the important contributions of mature workers.

- Collaboration with other public and private entities and programs that provide services to older Americans, such as community-based organizations, transportation programs, and programs for those with special needs or disabilities.
- Continue to be an active part of the quarterly NH Works Partners meetings. Meetings focus on sharing cross-agency information and the development of new strategies for maximizing/braiding existing resources, as well as identifying new resources that may become, or currently are, available for mature workers.

F. Efforts to work with local economic development offices in rural locations.

Since the Office of Workforce Opportunity administers the SCSEP program and is part of the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA), a strong connection has been made. BEA has Business Resource Specialist (BRS) who work with businesses trying to fill open positions. BRS's are in a unique position to not only be able to provide job leads to the SCSEP program staff but to also promote the program. They are able to inform employers of the benefits of hiring a SCSEP participant. The BRS's cover different regions of the state so some of these include the rural areas of NH. The State of New Hampshire will continue to build on the partnership between SCSEP and BEA.

In addition to the work being done with BEA, the SCSEP National Grantee, who has many of the rural locations in NH, continues to work with local economic development offices in rural parts of the state. They currently attend the North Country Council meetings where they actively discuss and promote the SCSEP program. The North Country Council Regional Planning Commission and Economic Development District serves 50 communities and 25 unincorporated places in the northern third of NH. The Commission serves in an advisory role to local governments in order to promote coordinated planning, orderly growth, efficient land use, transportation access, and environmental protection.

The National Grantee is also a member of the Mount Washington Valley Work Coalition Group and has attended jobs fairs to highlight and promote the SCSEP program. They also partner with other interested and like-minded agencies who are working together to try and solve some of the economic issues that face the rural communities in NH. For example, transportation and internet access in rural communities continues to create many challenges for those residing there.

The State of NH will continue to build upon all of these partnerships and look towards creating additional partnerships in other rural areas of the state.

2. The State's long-term strategy for engaging employers to develop and promote opportunities for the placement of SCSEP participants in unsubsidized employment. (20 CFR 641.302(e)) (May alternatively be discussed in the State strategies section of strategic plan.)

The overall goal of SCSEP is to place participants in unsubsidized employment for the purpose of sustained self-sufficiency. We aim to achieve this goal through expanded engagement and partnerships

with employers, identifying employment opportunities with established career ladders, placing individuals in high growth industries and occupations as well as other industries and occupations that provide substantial employment opportunities for participants and retention activities once participants enter the workforce.

SCSEP staff will work with its network of employers to identify and cultivate appropriate employment opportunities for participants, taking into account the needs of mature workers. Staff will pair the job-ready participants' interests, employment goals and skills with the requirements of local employers specific to employment vacancies. Local industry growth and availability of positions that meet individual criteria in terms of physical requirements, access to transportation, and social needs will be a focus for unsubsidized placements. Staff will help clients develop their IEP to prepare them for opportunities in high-growth fields such as healthcare, transportation, hospitality and retail, and various customer-service opportunities.

These opportunities will primarily be shaped by the participants' IEP objectives and their expressed desires concerning their work environments. Staff will secure opportunities for participants to gain critical skills for in-demand industries through training with community service providers and other workforce partners.

SCSEP staff will work with employers, chambers of commerce, municipal leaders, industry professionals, training providers, and labor unions to discuss opportunities and outline career paths to assist in preparing participants to help meet the workforce demands of businesses in each region.

SCSEP Staff will link the pipeline of trained participants seeking unsubsidized employment opportunities to NH Works initiatives currently underway such as the following:

- NH Works Employment Service Representatives (ESR) – each of the twelve (12) NH Works offices located throughout the state employs an ESR (some may have several one- stop center responsibilities). The ESR is the business liaison for the local NH Works office and often is the first point of contact with local employers.
- Job Fairs – NH Employment security coordinates and posts all Job Fair events on their website. Job Fair flyers are posted throughout the NH Works offices and shared with the local office staff. SCSEP staff will remain informed via the website and the local offices, letting the SCSEP participants know about Job Fair and employer recruitment events so they can attend. SCSEP staff will also use these opportunities to recruit host agencies and promote awareness of the program.
- The BEA-Office of Workforce Opportunity is the principal convener of partners for the development of career ladders, sector/cluster development and regional innovation initiatives within NH. The BEA will ensure that SCSEP participants are identified in planning documents as a resource for qualified workers and that SCSEP staff are kept informed of progress and/or opportunities resulting from these initiatives.

In addition to the training provided as part of a community service employment assignment, SCSEP providers will offer individual instruction, work experience or other training opportunities as appropriate. The state grantee will actively monitor planned versus actual goals to ensure the State is

meeting their negotiated goals. The state grantee will provide technical assistance if the sub-grantee fails to meet their goals.

3. The State's long-term strategy for serving minority older individuals under SCSEP. (20 CFR 641.302 (c))

   New Hampshire's population is predominately white. The state is gradually becoming more diverse; however the number of minorities enrolled in SCSEP remains low. The below chart provides the 2021Census Bureau data estimates for the following statistics on race for the state of NH and the nation. The following are the statistics on race for NH: White (93.1%), Black (1.8%), American Indian/Alaska Native (0.3%), Asian (3.0%), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (0.0%), Persons reporting two or more races (1.8%), Hispanic/Latin Origin (4.0%), and White persons not Hispanic (89.8%). The following are the statistics on race for USA: White (76.35%), Black (13.4%), American Indian/Alaska Native (1.3%), Asian (5.9%), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (0.2%), Persons reporting two or more races (2.7%), Hispanic/Latin Origin (18.3%), and White persons not Hispanic (60.4%).

The 2018 Census Bureau data estimates the following statistics on race for the state of NH and the nation.	NH	USA
White	93.2%	76.5%
Black	1.7%	13.4%
American Indiana/Alaska Native	.3%	1.3%
Asian	3%	5.9%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0%	0.2%
Persons reporting two or more races	1.8%	2.7%
Hispanic/Latin Origin	3.9%	18.3%
White persons not Hispanic	90%	60.4%

   Although the number of minority seniors in New Hampshire is relatively small, we have been successful in recruiting and enrolling some minorities in the program. SCSEP Staff have developed excellent working relationships with Ascentria Care Alliance. Additionally, we partner with the International Institute in Manchester. Though these connections are helpful, our most valued connection comes from current and former participants that refer our services by word of mouth.

   serves on two minority focused committees: Concord Workforce Alliance and the Lakes Region Refugee Connections Committee. These connections have directly contributed to the increase in minority participation.

4. A list of community services that are needed and the places where these services are most needed. Specifically, the plan must address the needs and location of those individuals most in need of community services and the groups working to meet their needs. (20 CFR 641.330)

NH is a small state with very limited state funding to support non-profit agencies. Community service needs are fairly consistent throughout the state; therefore SCSEP funding and equitable distribution plans typically drive the process for determining where to focus limited resources. Organizations are non-profit or public agencies including: senior centers, public libraries, county government, public nursing homes, group homes, hospitals, food pantries, and Head Start.

Most Needed Service Areas:

Coos, Grafton, and Sullivan Counties continue to be some of the hardest hit by economic struggles. Some of the identified concerns are:

- Jobs are limited and there is competition for available positions.
- Local Community Colleges do what they can, but skills training is limited in the area.
- Residents are moving from the area to find work and/or wage growth.
- The older population is growing.
- Initiatives in the area are in their infancy and have yet to show results.
- No present initiative helps the older working population.
- Transportation remains an issue and residents are isolated in this area; especially isolated seniors in rural areas.

Most Needed Services:

- Financial Assistance remains a top priority.
- Fuel assistance, SNAP, tax abatements, rental assistance
- Food – often seniors are deciding between food, energy, or medicines.
- Health Care
- Job-Readiness Training – soft-skill training, and professional behavior remain a consistent barrier to employment for the SCSEP population.
- Access to training including basic computer skills.
- Veterans – Services are increasing in the state for this population, but Veterans' knowledge of these services/benefits is lacking.
- How to transfer a Veteran's experience in the military over to the civilian workplace
- Strong coordination among organizations and agencies within the state that focus on services to seniors is imperative as NH is a small state with very limited funding.

The statewide Community Action Agencies: Belknap-Merrimack Community Action Program, Tri-County Community Action, Southern NH Services, Southwestern Community Action and Community Action Partnership of Strafford County, provide many essential services to the SCSEP population. Programs including the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, Electric Assistance Program, Fuel Assistance, Weatherization, Affordable Housing, Transportation, ServiceLink, Meals on Wheels, Senior Companion Program and Senior Centers are specifically targeted to the senior population. Agency staff, especially those in the Elder Services Department, work hand-in-hand with SCSEP to ensure eligible participants are aware of the services and programs they need to support their personal and employment-related needs.

The ServiceLink Resource Centers have provided extensive assistance to our participants including Social Security Benefits, Accessing Health and Medical Services, Legal Services, Medicare and Health Insurance coverage.

5. The State's long-term strategy to improve SCSEP services, including planned long-term changes to the design of the program within the State, and planned changes in the use of SCSEP grantees and program operators to better achieve the goals of the program. This may include recommendations to the Department as appropriate. (20 CFR 641.302(k))

   Improvement of SCSEP services will be realized through the continued commitment to establish and formalize partnerships among the myriad of agencies and organizations that provide services to mature workers in the state. SCSEP providers recognize that socialization and supportive services are important to the success of a SCSEP participant in seeking, obtaining, and maintaining employment. SCSEP staff will participate in quarterly meetings with key personnel from the agencies and organizations who provide such support. The focus of these meetings will be to share best practices statewide, integrate resources to the extent possible and reduce duplication of efforts where they exist.

   Developing stronger relationships with employers is a challenge with the additional barrier of age discrimination and/or stereotyping by employers. Fortunately, through the efforts of the US Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, Older Worker Program and other organizations such as AARP, there is a wealth of information available to SCSEP staff and others to help educate employers on the issues specific to an aging workforce, and how to break through artificial barriers to employment. It is envisioned that SCSEP staff will use the data/information currently available and/or gathered from the use of tools such as the Workforce Assessment Tool, to create new strategies for engaging the business community in the placement of older workers in the workforce.

6. The State's strategy for continuous improvement in the level of performance for SCSEP participants' entry into unsubsidized employment, and to achieve, at a minimum, the levels specified in OAA Section 513(a)(2)(E)(ii). (20 CFR 641.302(f))

   The overall goal of the SCSEP is to place participants in unsubsidized employment for the purpose of sustained self-sufficiency. This is achieved through engaging and developing partnerships with employers, identifying employment opportunities with established career ladders, placing individuals in high growth industries and occupations as well as other industries and occupations that provide substantial employment opportunities for participants and retention activities once participants enter the workforce.

   At every point of communication with potential or enrolled participants, the goal and how to achieve the goal of unsubsidized employment is discussed. As part of the enrollment process, participants are given an overview of the NH Works system. Pre-COVID, participants were scheduled for a tour of the center closest to where they reside. During the tour, they are registered in the Job Match System and are introduced to appropriate NH Works staff to ensure they have a level of comfort to visit the office on a regular basis. Participants are encouraged to attend workshops offered in the centers including resume writing, job search and interviewing skills.

   Regional training sessions are offered throughout the year at various locations throughout the state which cover the following topics:

   - Completing On-Line Job Applications
   - Resume Writing
   - Writing a Cover Letters & Thank You Notes

- Highlighting Your Transferable Skills
- Interviewing Techniques
- Mock Interviews with Human Resource Managers

Participants are regularly made aware of all employment-related activities scheduled in their communities including job and information fairs, employer networking events, local job clubs, and workshops available at NH Works. SCSEP staff share job search tips as well as spotlighting available "hot jobs" and other job leads.

Program staff attend many employer-related functions to gain knowledge on the labor market, industry changes, needs, concerns, and job opportunities.

One of the results of the recent pandemic has been a disconnect between SCSEP and NH Works staff. These relationships are currently being rebuilt through partnership meetings as well as community partnerships. SCSEP staff are eager to get back into the NH Works offices so that they can re-establish the strong relationships with the NH Works system partners including NH Employment Security, and NH Department of Education – Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation. These partner relationships promote dual enrollments, ongoing referrals, training and employment opportunities, shared services including assessments, workshops, presentations and connections to needed services.

SCSEP staff maintains excellent working relationships with the Job Placement Specialists through WIOA, Employer Service Representatives and Veteran Employment Representatives through NH Employment Security as well as the Business Resource Specialists through the BEA and encourage them to make employers aware of the SCSEP. These connections allow the program staff to be aware of job openings, employer and training needs and industry trends.

<u>Location and Population Served, including Equitable Distribution</u>

1. A description of the localities and populations for which projects of the type authorized by title V are most needed. (20 CFR 641.325 (d))

   NH is a small state with very limited state funding to support non-profit agencies and similar organizations. Community service needs are fairly consistent throughout the state; therefore SCSEP funding and equitable distribution plans typically drive the process for determining where to focus limited resources. The Office of Workforce Opportunity is well positioned to help identify the areas and populations for which community service projects like SCSEP are most needed.

2. List the cities and counties where the project will be conducted. Include the number of SCSEP authorized positions and indicate where the positions changed from the prior year.

The following are the State Grantee PY2019 Plan for authorized positions by county: Belknap (13), Merrimack (25), Rockingham (6), and all other counties are zero. This is a total of 44 authorized positions. The following are the National Grantee PY2019 Plan for authorized positions by county: Carroll (12), Cheshire (15), Coos (10), Grafton (15), Hillsborough (48), Rockingham (27), Strafford (16), Sullivan (11), Merrimack and Rockingham at zero – totaling 154 authorized positions. Combining PY2019 State and National Plans the following are NH's PY2019 number of authorized positions by county for all Grantees: Belknap (13), Carroll (12), Cheshire (15), Coos

(10), Grafton (15), Hillsborough (48), Merrimack (25), Rockingham (33), Strafford (16), Sullivan (11) – totaling 198 authorized positions.

The chart below shows the number of authorized positions by county. The following are the State Grantee PY2020 Plan for authorized positions by county: Belknap (11), Merrimack (22), Rockingham (6), and all other counties are zero. This is a total of 44 authorized positions. The following are the National Grantee PY2020 Plan for authorized positions by county: Carroll (13), Cheshire (14), Coos (9), Grafton (16), Hillsborough (50), Rockingham (25), Strafford (18), Sullivan (10), and Belknap and Merrimack are zero. This is a total of 155 positions. Combining PY2020 State and National Plans the following are NH's PY2020 number of authorized positions by county for all Grantees: Belknap (11), Carroll (13), Cheshire (14), Coos (9), Grafton (16), Hillsborough (50), Merrimack (22), Rockingham (36), Strafford (18), and Sullivan (10) – a total of 199 authorized positions.

The difference between total number of authorized positions for all Grantees from PY2019 to PY2020 is one additional authorized position.

County	NH – All Grantees PY2019	NH – All Grantees PY2020	State Grantee PY2019 Plan	State Grantee PY2020 Plan	National Grantee PY2019 Plan	National Grantee PY2020 Plan	Difference
Belknap	13	11	13	11	0	0	2
Carroll	12	13	0	0	12	13	1
Cheshire	15	14	0	0	15	14	-1
Coos	10	9	0	0	10	9	-1
Grafton	15	16	0	0	15	16	1
Hillsborough	48	50	0	0	48	50	2
Marrimack	25	22	25	22	0	0	-3
Rockingham	33	36	6	11	27	25	3
Strafford	16	18	0	0	16	18	2
Sullivan	11	10	0	0	11	10	-1
Totals	198	199	44	44	154	155	1

3. Describe current slot imbalances and proposed steps to correct inequities to achieve equitable distribution.
4. The State's long-term strategy for achieving an equitable distribution of SCSEP positions within the State that:
    a. Moves positions from over-served to underserved locations within the State in compliance with 20 CFR 641.365.

       To ensure equitable access to SCSEP services throughout the state, Section 508 of the 2006 Older Americans Act (OAA) Amendments requires the development of an Equitable Distribution (ED) report, to be updated on an annual basis. The "equitable share" of "slots" (i.e., enrollments) for each county within a state is determined by USDOL based on Census Bureau information and the ratio of eligible individuals in each service area to the total eligible population in the state. The number of

slots/enrollments allocated to each provider is determined by USDOL based on a formula that looks at the total money available on the national level, the percent of funds allocated to States and National programs as defined in OAA regulations, and the program cost per participant (based on state and federal minimum wages). Once an equitable share of slots is determined for each county, the State must then work with each of the SCSEP service providers within the state to determine how many slots each provider will have within a given county consistent with the total number of slots available to each provider overall. The chart in section (c)(2) shows how many slots each provider plans to serve in each county in order to achieve equitable distribution of services throughout the state. Over time the shifting of slots from program to program and/or changes in the equitable distribution factors result in over and/or under enrollments in counties that need to be adjusted as participants exit the program.

The chart in section (c)(2) (Current Equitable Distribution) provides the information needed to assess the location of the eligible population and the current distribution of people being served. Both national and the state grantees are expected to move positions from over-served to underserved locations. All grantees operating within a state must consult with the Office of Workforce Opportunity (i.e., state agency responsible for preparing the State Plan and the ED Report) before moving slots from one geographic area to another. Final approval must be received from USDOL before moving slots.

To address future issues the State will work with Operation Able to implement the following strategies:

- To the extent possible, one provider should be operating within a single county to avoid duplication, minimize the risk of over-serving in one area of the state and help to reduce confusion among host agencies and/or participants.
- Operation Able will offer services in eight of the ten counties as the National Grantee, and offer services in the remaining two counties as the State Grantee.
- Each program will manage enrollments to achieve the agreed upon ED plan over time.
- Each program will enroll all new participants in accordance with the agreed upon ED slot plan.

A process similar to the one outlined above will be implemented at the beginning of each program year covered under this SCSEP State Coordination Plan to ensure compliance with OAA regulations, and continued progress toward ensuring sufficient access to SCSEP services throughout the state.

b. Equitably serves rural and urban areas.

See previous section, which states that a process similar to the one outlined in that section will be implemented at the beginning of each program year covered under this SCSEP State Coordination Plan to ensure compliance with OAA regulations, and

continued progress toward ensuring sufficient access to SCSEP services throughout the state.

c. Serves individuals afforded priority for service under 20 CFR 641.520. (20 CFR 641.302(a), 641.365, 641.520)

NH does not have a waiting list and is able to serve all individuals eligible and appropriate for services. Priority is given to individuals from target groups with barriers to employment, veterans and veteran spouses in accordance with WIOA priority of service requirements.

5. The ratio of eligible individuals in each service area to the total eligible population in the State. (20 CFR 641.325(a))

The American Community 2019 Survey reflects below the number of individuals who are 65 and older and persons living in poverty. In comparing the number of these potentially eligible candidates for SCSEP to the Equitable Distribution plan, the state and national grantees will be able to serve approximately .81% of potentially eligible candidates. It is recognized that the percent of services varies per county but the sample size is small and there are a number of varying factors.

County	Total population	55 years and older	Persons in poverty	ED plan
Belknap	64,460	40.9%	9.9%	11
Carroll	51,500	48.5%	10.1%	13
Cheshire	77,329	36.7%	11.6%	14
Coos	31,289	41.9%	19%	9
Grafton	92,201	37.3%	12.1%	16
Hillsborough	424,079	31.7%	9.8%	50
Merrimack	155,238	34.8%	9.0%	22
Rockingham	316,947	36.0%	5.9%	36
Strafford	132,416	29.8%	14.1%	18
Sullivan	43,533	39.5%	13.8%	10
Totals	1,388,992	35.0%	9.8%	199

The above chart displays by county the total population, percent of persons 55 years and over, percent of persons in poverty, and the number of authorized positions according to the equitable distribution plan. The following are the statistics by county accordingly: Belknap (64,460, 40.9%, 9.9%, 11); Carroll (51,500, 48.5%, 10.1%, 13); Cheshire (77,329, 36.7%, 11.6%, 14); Coos (31,289, 41.9%, 19%, 9); Grafton (92,201, 37.3%, 12.1%, 16); Hillsborough (424,079, 31.9%, 9.8%, 50); Merrimack (155,238, 34.8%, 9.0%, 22); Rockingham (316,947, 36.0%, 5.9%, 36); Strafford (132,416, 29.8%, 14.1%, 18); Sullivan (43,533, 39.5%, 13.8%, 10); and total for all counties (1,388,992, 35.0%, 9.8%, 199).

6. The relative distribution of eligible individuals who:
   a. Reside in urban and rural areas within the State.
   Six of the ten counties in New Hampshire meet the definition of a rural county – Belknap, Coos, Carroll, Cheshire, Grafton and Sullivan. For SCSEP purposes, rural designation is determined by actual residence using the Rural-Urban Community Area Codes (RUCA) 22

for each city and town in New Hampshire. Participants residing in rural areas within the state are tracked via the SCSEP application process and reported on the SCSEP quarterly performance report (QPR) in GPMS, the case management system for the program. Program year 2020 final QPR data shows that 85% of the participants served by CAPBMCI participants reside in rural areas of the state. This data reflects a healthy balance (rural participants) of service to individuals residing in both rural and urban areas. The State will continue to monitor the urban/rural ratio of services over the coming years to ensure this balance is maintained over time.

b. Have the greatest economic need.
Program participants must be at least 55 years of age and have a family income of no more than 125% over the Federal poverty level. Enrollment priority is given to persons over age 60, veterans, and qualified spouses of veterans. Preference is also given to minority, limited English-speaking and Indian-eligible individuals. Finally, preference is also given to eligible individuals who have the greatest economic need.

c. Are minorities.
New Hampshire's population is predominantly White. The 2021 Census Bureau estimates that 93.1 percent of the Granite State's population is White compared to 76.3 percent nationally. Slowly the Granite State's population is becoming more diverse, but the incidence of minorities in our population is still very small. Although the number of minority seniors enrolled in SCSEP is relatively few, the SCSEP program continues efforts to recruit and enroll minorities into the program. The data in the chart below shows the rate we are enrolling minorities into the program compared to the number of minorities in NH. Staff will continue to reach out to eligible minorities that could benefit from the program. The chart shows NH SCSEP service to minorities in PY2019 (from the SCSEP Analysis of Service to Minority Individuals Volume II report) for minorities overall was 9.0% and for the following demographics: Hispanic (1.5%), Black (1.5%), Asian (0%), American Indian (0.00%), and Pacific Islander (0%). The Census percent minority analysis of service to minorities in PY2019 for minorities overall was 5.3% and the for the following demographics: Hispanic (1.1%), Black (1.8%), Asian (1.3%), American Indian (0.6%), and Pacific Islander (0%). The following is the SCSEP service to minorities data from the final report from SPARQ for PY2020: Hispanic (4.0%), Black (2%), Asian (2%), American Indian (0.00%), and Pacific Islander (0%). Lastly, the chart shows SCSEP service to minorities data from SPARQ PY2021 Quarter 1 report: Hispanic (5.0%), Black (3.00%), Asian (3.0%), American Indian (3.0%), and Pacific Islander (0%).

Services to Minorities (SCSEP Data for NH PY2019, PY2020 and PY2021 Quarter 1): Services to minority population have similar percentages to state data, recognizing that both are a small percentage.

NH SCSEP Percent Minority Analysis of Service to Minorities PY2019 Volume II	Census Percent Minority Analysis of Service to Minorities PY2019 Volume II	SCSEP Percent Minority SPARQ PY20 FINAL	SCSEP Percent Minority SPARQ PY 2021 Q1
Minority Overall	Minority Overall		
9.0 %	5.3%		

Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic
1.5%	1.1%	4%	5%
Black	Black	Black	Black
1.5%	1.8%	2%	3%
Asian	Asian	Asian	Asian
0	1.3%	2%	3%
American Indian	American Indian	American Indian	American Indian
0	.6%	0	3%
Pacific Islander	Pacific Islander	Pacific Islander	Pacific Islander
0	0	0	0

d. Are limited English proficient.
The US Census data reports that 8% of NH residents speak a language other than English at home at age 5+ between 2015 and 2019. The PY2020 final QPR reflects that 0% of its participants were individuals with limited English proficiency.

e. Have the greatest social need. (20 CFR 641.325(b))
According to the 2020 American Community Survey, it is estimated that of the total population in New Hampshire (1,355,244), 345,034 individuals are over the age of 60. This figure is almost evenly split between males and females. Of this population, 96.5% are white individuals. In addition, of those 345, 034 individuals, 93.1% speak only English; 6.9% speak a language other than English and only 2.4% speak English less than "very well". According to the Survey, New Hampshire has 336,437 civilian noninstitutionalized individuals. Of those, 73.1% have no disability.

As can be seen from the statistics above, there are limited numbers of individuals in New Hampshire that may fall under the definition of having the greatest social need. However, the SCSEP staff continues to look at the demographics of the areas that are served to make sure that individuals who may be eligible for SCSEP are recruited and enrolled. Staff will continue to work with other community agencies throughout the area to target those who have the greatest social need.

7. A description of the steps taken to avoid disruptions to the greatest extent possible, when positions are redistributed, as provided in 20 CFR 641.365; when new Census or other reliable data become available; or when there is over-enrollment for any other reason. (20 CFR 641.325(i), 641.302(b))

When new Census data indicates that there has been a shift in the location of the eligible population or when over-enrollment occurs for any reason, positions must be shifted in a gradual manner in order to achieve equitable distribution goals as well as encourage unsubsidized employment to make positions available for eligible individuals in the areas where there has been an increase in the eligible population. However, at no time will a service provider terminate a participant from the program

based solely on a need to shift positions for the purpose of achieving equitable distribution. The goal shall be to achieve equitable distribution through targeted recruitment and job placement activities that redirect new enrollments in underserved areas, resulting in minimal disruption to services to current participants.

Furthermore, Operation Able will not transfer positions from one geographic area to another without first notifying the BEA – Office of Workforce Opportunity, who will submit in writing, any proposed changes in distribution that occur after submission of the Equitable Distribution Report to the Federal Project Officer for approval. NH SCSEP grantees will coordinate any proposed changes in position distribution and agree on changes through a consensus process prior to submitting the proposed changes to the Office of Workforce Opportunity to forward on to the regional Federal Project Officer for initial review and approval. All participant transfers must receive final approval from the USDOL SCSEP Grant Officer.