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Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP)

In addition, a State Office position coordinates employment activities statewide. The Employment Initiative Program Coordinator serves as LRS' direct contact to the VR Business Network and distributes job leads and information to the regional offices. In FY 2015, the VR Business Network provided job leads from all over the country. Some of the job leads were from the following companies: Walgreen's, Lowe's, TJX Companies, Office Max, Wells Fargo, DOL, Manpower, Inc., USDA, Marriott International, and many others.

LRS continues to participate with Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) in the "Employment First" initiative, which was designed to provide employment as a first option for persons with developmental disabilities, as an alternative to institutionalization, and to provide integration/independence in the community.

LRS participates in roundtable discussions hosted by OCDD to inform their staff and providers of new requirements related to integration of individuals with developmental disabilities into their communities as a result of new Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) rules, as well as how to better collaborate with LRS to achieve goals set forth in WIOA. (Page 214-215) Title IV

Customized Employment

Additionally, 48% of counselors indicated that the quality of services provided to meet the needs of consumers could be improved. Seventy percent of staff responding felt that more CRPs are needed in their area to serve specific services or to serve specific disability populations. Populations that were identified as needing further CRPs to serve include the deaf, deaf-blind and blind/visually impaired, felons/ex-felons with disabilities, individuals with cognitive impairments/intellectual disabilities, autism, mental illness, paraplegic/quadruplegic, and traumatic brain injuries. In addition, it was noted that more CRPs are needed to provide services to transition students, to provide services such as supported employment in rural areas, job readiness/placement, sign language interpretation, assistive technology services and training, training, and customized employment. (Page 195) Title VI

LRS will provide ongoing support services, including customized employment and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain youth with most significant disabilities, to work toward competitive integrated employment; beginning at Job Stabilization / Transition to Extended Services.

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Purchased supported employment services (Milestones) are identified and listed on the IPE and must be obtained through an approved Supported Employment CRP and generally cannot exceed 24 months or four years for youth with disabilities (ages 14-24). If a Consumer requires longer than 24 months in reaching job stabilization or four years for youth with disabilities, the LRS Counselor can extend the service in accordance with Plan guidelines (Page 208) Title VI

Braiding/Blending Resources

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

DEI/Disability Resource Coordinators

With support of the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grant (2012 -2015), LWC worked to ensure the physical, communication and programmatic accessibility of all One-Stop Career Centers by conducting specialized training for all center staff on topics including accessibility for all, disability etiquette and awareness, and identifying and assisting job-seekers with hidden disabilities. LWC will continue to maintain these investments in staff training and technology to make certain One- Stop Career Center staff serve adult job-seekers with disabilities effectively.

LWC has incorporated accessibility criteria as part of the One-Stop certification policy criteria in collaboration with the Workforce Investment Council, local boards and CEOs. Additionally, all One-Stop Centers will be monitored onsite annually to ensure compliance with this requirement. (Page 88) Title I

Financial Literacy/Economic Advancement

Goal 2: Expand career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to close the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways and improved career services and the expansion of bridge programs.

1. Expand and incentivize the utilization of evidenced-based workforce strategies that support targeted populations (e.g., the long-term unemployed, individuals with disabilities, veterans, out-of-school youth) into sector-based career pathway initiatives to achieve similar outcomes relative to other populations. (Page 37-38) Title I

School to Work Transition

Job-seekers who have large gaps in their work history, limited, obsolete or unknown skills, limited education, inadequate credentials, lack soft skills, have significant barriers to employment or a combination of any of these factors as well as any job-seeker determined most likely to exhaust all their UI benefits shall be considered not workforce ready.

Job-seekers who are not workforce ready shall be provided individualized career services, consisting of a minimum of a comprehensive assessment and development of an individualized

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employment plan (IEP) in the context of case management. (Page 62) Title I

The comprehensive assessment is the foundation for development of an IEP, and no IEP shall be created without completing a comprehensive assessment. In many cases the comprehensive assessment will then be an ongoing process that may result in changes to the goals and objectives of the IEP.

The IEP is developed with a job-seeker to identify or create employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives and the right combination of services to assist in achieving goals and objectives. In short — “Where am I now?” “Where do I want to go?” “How will I get there?”

The IEP must include goals and objectives that are SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound). A case note must accompany the IEP and must justify the plan based on the identified barrier(s) to employment.

Case management requires a regular follow-up and review or revision of the IEP until such time as the job-seeker becomes workforce ready or enters a training program. In either case, follow-up is critical, using a 30-day cycle until the job-seeker attains employment or completes training. (Page 62) Title I

Case Management requires a regular follow-up and review or revision of the IEP, until such time as the job seeker becomes workforce ready or enters a training program. In either case follow-up is critical, using the 30, 60, and 90-day cycle until employed or training is complete is appropriate — except for long term training. For long-term training, Career Specialists should follow the most current guidance. (Page 121) Title II

The formal interagency agreement provides for initial contact to be made with the transition student as early as age sixteen. This is accomplished by the development of criteria and timelines for an effective and efficient referral process; provision of orientation and information sessions for students and their families; and LRS counselors determining transition students’ eligibility for VR services within the timelines established by agency policy.

For each student determined eligible for services, every effort will be made to ensure those who are in an Order of Selection (OOS) Category currently being served by LRS leave the school system with an approved IPE in place that incorporates appropriate segments of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and projected employment needs, as applicable. (Page 171) Title II

The Program Coordinator works collaboratively with DOE Transition Coordinator in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities including VR services. Both agencies share responsibility to coordinate the provision of services, conduct outreach, and identify financial responsibility as needed. The DOE will assure that all students with disabilities and their families have knowledge of LRS policies and services including brochures and promotional information supplied by LRS. Information dissemination begins with the writing of the transition service page and continues through referral to LRS. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) also invite LRS representatives to IEP meetings at the students’ request, when

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a transition service page is being written for a student with a disability who may be eligible for and/or interested in VR services;

- facilitate appropriate orientation meetings among LRS staff, student and family members;
- provide time for LRS staff to meet with teachers, guidance counselors, and other appropriate personnel for such purposes as information sharing/gathering at both the individual and agency levels; and
- assist in the development, provision, and evaluation of interagency vocational assessment processes and functional vocational transition programs. (Page 172) Title II

Current LRS policy and guidelines address the allocation of 15% of State's VR allotment for the provision of services of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to high school students with disabilities between the ages of 16 - 21 who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services. The required activities of Pre-ETS are workplace readiness training, job exploration counseling; work-based learning experiences; counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary education programs at institutions of higher education; and instruction in self-advocacy. LRS assigned vendors to work with each high school across the state to make Pre-ETS services available to students who receive IDEA funds or students who are an individuals with a disability for the purposes of section 504 of the Act (29 U.S.C.794). (Page 172-173) Title II

LRS will use agency funds for the provision of Pre-ETS and VR services on the approved IPE that relates directly to the achievement of the agreed upon vocational goal, which is not the responsibility of the education system. The DOE will use agency funds for the provision of educational services on the approved IEP that relates directly to the achievement of the agreed upon educational goal...

LRS Transition Counselors in each region meet with a school liaison, usually the guidance counselor, to provide information regarding LRS services. The school liaison relays the information to students with disabilities and coordinates the student's initial meeting with the LRS Transition Counselor.

LRS Transition Counselors conduct outreach by hosting transition meetings at area high schools to provide information about VR services and to accept referrals. Information disseminated at these meetings includes agency brochures, client handbooks describing the VR processes/services, and referrals to other community resources students may need to access. Counselors work with the students, parents and educators to plan services needed for successful transition from school to work from the point that the student with a disability is identified.

Counselors attend "Career Days" at the high schools to share information with transition students on available services that may identify career goals and to share information regarding services available to assist them in reaching their goals. (Page 173) Title II

Approximately three hundred and fifty (350) consumers could be referred for supported

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employment services during each fiscal year. Once eligibility for supported employment services has been established, LRS continues to collaborate with OBH to ensure that services are provided in a timely manner and to assure the development of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The IPE shall specify the responsibilities of all parties involved in the supported employment program for the individual and shall include reporting requirements for both agencies. (Page 174- 175) Title II

LRS has five Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCAs) established with separate School Districts in Grant, Bossier, Evangeline, Orleans and Franklin Parishes as well as with Sci Academy and GW Carver. Through these TPCAs, a Transition Specialist provides workplace readiness training including self-advocacy, work-based learning experiences, and identification of employers who will host students for work-based learning.

Bossier Parish Community College has a program called Program for Successful Employment (PSE) funded through a TPCA with LRS to provide job readiness to students with disabilities, work with employers to help find job placement and provide follow up. Virtual Academy of Lafourche has hired a transition specialist, through a TPCA, to provide workplace readiness training including self-advocacy, work-based learning experiences, and identification of employers who will host students for work-based learning. (Page 177) Title II

Some examples of collaborative efforts include Transition Core Team meetings held statewide attended by the DOE, the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, Families Helping Families, and other interested individuals. These meetings are held to assist agencies who serve transition students as they exit from school to work.

LRS has a Program Coordinator specializing in Assistive Technology who conducts in-service training annually to keep field staff members abreast of the most recent technology available to assist individuals with disabilities.

Specialized training is provided to our staff members working with low-incident disabilities to include such training as orientation to deafness, mobility training, sign language coursework, deaf-blindness training, and graduate level training specific to working with low-incident populations (i.e. visual impairment/hearing impairment/significant cognitive impairment). (Page 188) Title II

Respondents from other components of the statewide workforce investment system were given survey links to complete the survey online.

Needs identified by respondents included transportation; benefit planning; job coaching; post-employment services; transition from school to work; assistive technology devices/services; and job placement.

The primary barriers identified by respondents included the lack of medical insurance/care; adjustment to disability; fear of losing government benefits; lack of public resources; lack of employer acceptance of an individual's disability; and the lack of transportation.

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Fifty percent of LRS employees responding noted that they are satisfied or very satisfied when working with the Business and Career Solution Centers (BCSC). Thirty-eight percent noted that they have not worked with a BCSC. Thirty nine percent used a BCSC in the last month to access/provide services to individuals with disabilities. Eighteen percent utilized the BCSC in the last three months. Seventy-four percent of staff are familiar with services available through their local BCSC. (Page 194) Title II

LRS shall provide for continuity of services once an otherwise eligible individual is selected for services and has begun to receive services under an IPE, irrespective of the severity of the individual's disability. LRS will continue to provide needed VR services to all individuals with an existing Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

All services, including post-employment services, shall be available to individuals receiving services under an Order of Selection insofar as such services are necessary and appropriate to the individual's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in order to ultimately place them in successful employment.

All Agency policies and procedures governing the expenditure of funds, consumer financial participation, and use of comparable services and benefits are applicable to individuals receiving services under an Order of Selection. (Page 204) Title II

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services estimates that it will serve 13,843 individuals during fiscal year 2019 in the vocational rehabilitation program. This number includes approximately 9,260 cases that are expected to receive services under an IPE. The estimated number of individuals who will exit with employment after receiving services is 1,283. The estimated number of individuals who will exit without employment after receiving services is 1,609. In addition, approximately 5,300 students with disabilities will be served through the Pre-Employment Transition Services program. (Page 205) Title II

LRS continues to renew and revise existing local cooperative agreements, as applicable, with the 70 school districts and 146 Charter Schools in Louisiana. The LRS Transition Program Coordinator continues to collaborate and partner with DOE, OCDD, Work Incentive Planning Program, Office of Community Services, LWC, and the Office of Youth Development in an effort to network, share information and utilize comparable benefits to enhance VR services to transition students. The primary focus of LRS' collaboration is to identify and address barriers (e.g. policies, eligibility process, resource allocation); assure effective service provision through the support of local interagency core teams, provide cross-agency training, outreach, engage in capacity building of young adults and family outreach efforts; provide continued support of innovative models and practices related to transition; and provide information and technical assistance. The Program Coordinator provides guidance and information to the Rehabilitation Counselors regarding specific transition issues. The Program Coordinator worked collaboratively with WINTAC's Coordinator using conference calls, to discuss transition topics and provide information to LRS' field offices. The Training Unit developed a School-to-Work Job Readiness curriculum and has trained staff to implement the curriculum with eligible students. Training will continue to be provided statewide. VR Counselors are encouraged to provide services at least once a month, when feasible, to students determined appropriate for job readiness training. (Page

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214) Title II

Two Master Rehabilitation Counselor reviews were conducted by the Quality Assurance Unit during the 2017 review year. Each of the caseloads reviewed for promotion to Master Rehabilitation Counselor status exceeded the 90% compliance level required.

Strategy 2. Explore opportunities for consumers to participate in Telework in order to increase employment outcomes.

Progress: Telework employment options are considered for consumers when appropriate.

Strategy 3. Identify and collaborate with employers to provide job development, Work-Based Learning Experiences and job placement.

Progress: Through collaboration with the LRS Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialists (REDS) and local businesses throughout the state, 115 jobs were developed leading to successful job placements. Additionally, LRS vendors work with businesses throughout the year in developing jobs and placing consumers.

Strategy 4. Increase Counselor presence in secondary education settings in order to improve provision of vocational rehabilitation services to transition students. (Page 216) Title II

Progress: Pre-ETS counselors and REDS have identified employers and placed students with disabilities into Work-Based Learning Experiences.

Strategy 6. Increase resources for assistive technology assessments and devices to improve employment outcomes.

Progress: Two additional, out-of-state vendor/providers have been vetted, and added to provide rehabilitation driving assessments and training on a fee-for-service basis, to include vehicle modification specifications for LRS consumers. A contractual agreement to hire a Physical Therapist and Rehabilitation Engineer through LSU Health Sciences Department was negotiated and approved. These professionals will conduct seating and positioning assessments, wheelchair and personal mobility evaluations, home modifications for accessibility evaluations, job accommodations assessments, and other rehabilitation engineering field services as required. The state-approved list of assistive technology and rehabilitation technology providers/vendor has been updated, and referral forms made available to the regional offices. (Page 217) Title II

Strategy 1. Perform comprehensive statewide needs assessment to determine needs of students with disabilities.

Progress: The needs assessment is scheduled to be conducted in calendar year 2017 for submission in the State Plan submitted in 2018.

Strategy 2. Expand outreach to students with disabilities to make them aware of VR services including Pre-ETS.

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Progress: Pre-ETS counselors throughout the state attend IEP meeting, career fairs, and other school functions to make them aware of LRS services.

Strategy 3 Monitor the provision of Pre-ETS services to determine effectiveness and possible improvement to service delivery process.

Progress: Pre-ETS counselors monitor vendor activities in the schools to ensure delivery of appropriate services and determine any improvements needed.

Objective C. Increase the number of Randolph-Sheppard Managers earning at least \$25,000 annually by expanding opportunities and enhancing consumer service delivery in the Randolph-Sheppard Program. . (Page 219) Title II

Career Pathways

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

Apprenticeship

The Local Boards are responsible for developing local plans for the governor's approval, designating local One-Stop operators, designating eligible partners of training services, negotiating local performance measures with the state workforce board and the governor, monitoring local system performance against established performance measures, and helping to develop the labor market information system for local areas. Local Boards will facilitate relationships between Partner Programs, local entities, and supportive service agencies for a strengthened service delivery in regard to provision of services to youth. These relationships will include, as a minimum, procedures for youth participant co-enrollment and common intake as necessary to integrate: intake, case management, and reporting. This shall be the case for all Partner Programs under which youth may be served. Youth services shall begin with a systematic approach to gathering information about strengths and assets, need and challenges, and interests and goals. These assessments shall be used to determining program eligibility, and subsequently guide the development of individualized plans and all other Case Management activities. Youth shall be co-enrolled as necessary in any programs under WIOA funding sources and any Partner Program that is not WIOA funded, e.g., Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Children and Family Services that is necessary based on their needs assessment. Youth will be simultaneously co-enrolled in any and all programs under which they are eligible for, and receiving, services. This will prevent youth having to wait until they exit one program in order to access services offered by other programs, and allow them to receive the best combination of services from different funding streams. For any program year, LWDBs must spend not less than 75 percent of local workforce development area funds to provide direct services to out-of-school youth. For any program year, LWDBs must spend not less than 20 percent of the funds allocated to the local area to provide in school youth and out of school youth with work experiences such as summer employment, pre-apprenticeship, internship, job shadowing, and on-the-job training. Local boards shall ensure that parents, participants, and other members of the community with experience relating to the programs for youth are involved in its design and implementation. One-Stop operators shall carry out programs that:

- Provide an

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assessment of academic levels, skill levels and occupational skills, any prior work experience, employability, interests and aptitudes. (Pages 111-112) Title II

Work-eligible recipients shall participate in appropriate work activities as agreed upon in the Family Success Agreement. Work-eligible is defined as families containing an adult under sixty years of age, or teen head of household, that is not disabled, incapacitated, or caring for a family member who is disabled or incapacitated as documented by a medical expert to which the status of disability is clearly established and explained. Work-eligible excludes cases in which only the child portion of need that is unrelated to a sanction or penalty, known as a child-only case, is considered in determining eligibility. The work activities may include but are not limited to: Unsubsidized employment, Subsidized employment, Unpaid work experience, On-the-job training, Job search/job readiness, Vocational education, Satisfactory attendance at secondary school or in course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalency, in the case of recipients who have not completed secondary schools or received a certificate, Education directly related to employment, in the case of a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or certificate of equivalency, Job skills training directly related to employment, community service, and The provision of child care to an individual who is participating in community service. Participants, who are found not to possess basic workplace or basic literacy skills, as determined by an assessment, shall combine employment and job readiness and job search activities with activities designed to increase their basic and workplace literacy skills. (Page 242) Title IV

Work Incentives and Benefits

The state integrated One-Stop Center operations under the Workforce Investment Act several years ago. Within the past two years, stand-alone Wagner-Peyser offices have been eliminated. Each of Louisiana's fifteen Workforce Development areas has established at least one Comprehensive Center that has been certified by its respective board as meeting the criteria to be branded as an American Job Center. Smaller offices operated by local boards and/or One-Stop operators (contractors) where all Program Partners are not present, shall be designated and operated as "Affiliate" One-Stop centers and may have any subset of partners, but shall not be operated as Wagner Peyser stand-alone Employment Services offices.

Under the plan, local boards will have the flexibility to include additional partners in One-Stop Centers, in particular and specifically identified by the law:

- Employment and training programs administered by the Social Security Administration, including the Ticket to Work and the Self-Sufficiency Program.
- Employment and training programs carried out by the Small Business Administration.
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) employment and training programs.
- Other programs authorized under the National and Community Service Act of 1990. (Page 48)

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Ticket-to-Work: LRS continues to network and collaborate with MAXIMUS, as well as many other agencies in the state, to ensure Ticket-to-Work is successful in Louisiana. LRS continues to maintain a statewide 1-800 Ticket Hotline number for individuals interested in learning more about their Ticket and how LRS would be able to assist them.

In FY 2017, LRS received \$1,163,021.25; this amount was a slight decrease from FY 2016's \$1,488,446.32 which was received from the Social Security Administration's (SSAs) reimbursement program. The Program Coordinator continues to work closely with SSA to insure all documentation is submitted properly so that claims can be processed. (Page 226) Title II

Employer/Business

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

Data Collection

Programmatic/Fiscal Onsite Monitoring: Programs are identified for onsite monitoring through a comprehensive risk analysis based on the following factors: (1) desk monitoring; (2) need to verify data quality and program expenditures; (3) consistent low performance on NRS indicators in several categories; (4) prospective noncompliance with grant requirements identified through review of programmatic and fiscal reports, or ongoing communications with the program; (4) unresolved audit findings; (5) ongoing lack of progress in resolving required actions from prior monitoring visit; (6) significant staff turnover in the program; and (7) recent or newly established programs.

The goals for State onsite monitoring visits are to:

- ensure that programs meet AEFLA requirements;
- improve the quality of federally-funded activities;
- provide assistance identifying and resolving accountability problems; and,
- ensure the accuracy, validity, and reliability of data collection and data reporting as well as policies and procedures for program accountability. (Page 76) Title I

Vocational Rehabilitation:

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) will monitor the services provided within the guidelines of the existing corporative agreements and evaluate if modifications will be needed when they are renegotiated.

LRS will monitor vendors to ensure the quality of supported employment services provided to eligible consumers. The monitoring will utilize site reviews and include quality indicators to

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evaluate the assessment of employment outcomes and an evaluation of the provision of services. The monitoring will be carried out by the state and field office staff. (Page 76) Title I

511

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination: Section 188

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.

Recognizing the high unemployment rate among individuals with disabilities and the qualified-employee shortage businesses are facing, the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and access to all programs, services and facilities. Each One-Stop Career Center should utilize the one-stop disability access checklist provided by the United States Department of Labor to self-evaluate its current level of accessibility.

With support of the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grant (2012 -2015), LWC worked to ensure the physical, communication and programmatic accessibility of all One-Stop Career Centers by conducting specialized training for all center staff on topics including accessibility for all, disability etiquette and awareness, and identifying and assisting job-seekers with hidden disabilities. LWC will continue to maintain these investments in staff training and technology to make certain One- Stop Career Center staff serve adult job-seekers with disabilities effectively. (Page 88) Title I

Disseminate information on effective outreach to, partnerships with, and services for, businesses

- Disseminate information on effective service delivery strategies to serve workers and job seekers
- Disseminate performance information and information on the cost of attendance including tuition and fees, for participants in applicable training programs on the Eligible Training Provider's List (ETPL) with recognized post- secondary credentials, as well as OJT and IWTP
- Disseminate information on physical and programmatic accessibility, in accordance with sec. 188 of WIOA relative to nondiscrimination, if applicable, and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 for individuals with disabilities

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- Conduct evaluations of State Programs, in coordination with evaluations of programs and activities carried out by the U.S. Secretary of Labor
- Disseminate a list of providers of youth workforce investment activities eligible to receive competitive, or sole source, grants and contracts for training with credentials for youth
- Provide re-designation assistance to local areas
- Provide assistance in the development of Regional Plans
- * Operate a fiscal and management accountability information system (MIS) to manage, track, and report primary indicators of performance for Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker Programs
- Conduct continuous, and at least annually, monitoring and oversight of activities carried out by sub-recipients of WIOA funding to conform to the Uniform Administrative Requirements (UAR)
- Provide additional assistance to local areas that have high concentrations of eligible youth (Page 100) Title I

Vets

Jobs For Veterans State Grant (JVSG)

STRENGTHS Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist are providing individualized career services to 99% of the Veterans they provide services to. Despite serving only veterans with Significant Barriers, DVOPs have achieved an Entered Employment Rate (EER) of 66%. Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) are integrated in to the Business Services Teams within their assigned workforce regions. LVERs conduct employer outreach with and as a part of regional business services teams.

OPPORTUNITIES Incorporate the service delivery strategy utilized by DVOPs in to the One-Stop Centers statewide. Currently the EER for all Veterans receiving services statewide is 51%. Large opportunity for improvement. LVERs could be more involved in employer engagement centered on assisting employers to develop and start registered apprenticeship programs and On-the-job training programs. These efforts could provide more opportunities for Veterans to learn while they work. (Page 33) Title 1

The LVER responsibilities are specifically targeted to promote the advantages of hiring veterans to employers, employer associations and business groups. LVER roles and responsibilities are consistent with 38 U.S.C. § 4104, VPL 07—10 and VPL 03—14.

As such, the LVER serves an important role in the state's Business Services Delivery Model. In coordination with the other members of the business services team, the LVER advocates for employment and training opportunities through outreach to employers, training facilities, unions, apprenticeship programs and private and government businesses. The LVER also participates in

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job fairs, promotes programs that offer licensing and credentialing opportunities and develops and makes presentations to employers. Each LVER must provide a monthly report to the state veterans coordinator detailing their outreach activities. LVER Staff members conduct outreach to perform the following activities:

- Conducting employer outreach;
- In conjunction with employers, conducting job searches and workshops and establishing job search groups;
- Coordinating with unions, apprenticeship programs and businesses or business organizations to promote and secure employment and training programs for veterans;
- Informing federal contractors of the process to recruit qualified veterans;
- Promoting credentialing and licensing opportunities for veterans; and
- Coordinating and participating with other business outreach efforts. (267-268) Title II

To maximize the impact of the streamlined LVER staff, the state takes a top—down, cooperative approach to employer outreach. LVER staff shall coordinate with their business service team partners, and other state agencies or programs such as Louisiana Rehabilitative Services (LRS), to conduct outreach to employer associations at the state and regional level. In this way the maximum number of employers can be efficiently and effectively incorporated into the promotion of hiring of veterans. This outreach will educate employers on the advantages of hiring veterans, and inform employers on how to find qualified veteran applicants by leveraging the State workforce system and OSCCs. The state intends to increase veteran employment by making a sound business case to employers regarding the advantage of hiring veterans and providing employer’s tools and contacts to do so effectively. (Page 268) Title IV

Mental Health

10. The eligible provider’s collaboration with other available education, training and social service resources in the community. Particularly, the eligible provider should have, or have the means to establish, meaningful partnerships with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, local workforce investment boards, One-Stop Centers, job training programs and social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries for the development of career pathways.

11. The flexibility of program scheduling offered by the eligible provider, including coordination (when available) with federal, state and local support services such as child care, transportation, mental health services and career planning.

12. The eligible provider’s management information system; the expectation will be that the eligible provider will use the state-administered designated MIS for all grant related data

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collection and reporting. (Page 149) Title II

LRS staff members take advantage of training opportunities provided through webinars and teleconferences as well as on-site training. Numerous types of training and support continue to be provided and/or coordinated by State Office Program staff members to support the field staff. Such Training for PY 2017 included PEPNET, Travel Training, TBI Conference, Deaf Counselor Training, Ethics Symposium at Southern University, AWARE, Case Management, CATS, Share Point, Pre-ETS, Regional Manager and District Supervisor training.

Additionally, the agency has specific monthly in-service training requirements (4 hours per month), which are conducted by the regional field offices to ensure continuous education for all professional and paraprofessional staff members. This training is provided by experienced staff members or by knowledgeable community providers who specialize in the area of training required. Rehabilitation Counselor Associates (RCAs) are required to attend all in-service training with the Rehabilitation Counselors and also attend separate training as needed. Examples of training topics include assessment, guidance and vocational counseling, eligibility, planning, disability related issues, assistive technology, disability services at colleges and universities, ethics, community-based employment outcomes, mental health, and employment related issues. (Page 185) Title II

Upon reviewing survey information of individuals receiving SSI/SSDI, the top needs identified by respondents included job placement (46%); job coaching (30%); benefits planning (30%); transportation (29%); job readiness skills (28%); and vocational guidance and career counseling (27%). They identified barriers to employment as being the fear of losing their government benefits (52%), lack of employer acceptance of their disability (44%), adjustment to disability (32%); lack of transportation (38%); lack of public services (36%); the slow job market (36%); and lack of medical insurance (27%).

Respondents receiving supported employment services identified the following as needs not being met, job placement (23%); training/tuition assistance (21%); transportation (21%); room & board (15%); mental health counseling (14%); post-employment services (14%); benefits planning (13%); and equipment for work (13%).

The barriers to employment identified by respondents receiving supported employment services included the fear of losing government benefits (40%); lack of transportation (39%); employer acceptance of their disability (36%); their personal adjustment to the disability (29%); lack of public resources (29%); the slow job market (21%); and the lack of medical insurance/care (20%). (Page 193) Title II

To assist Louisiana families in becoming economically self-reliant so that their dependence on government benefits for basic needs is minimized, the department implemented the STEP program so that cash assistance recipients, with certain exceptions, are actively engaged in meaningful activities designed to enable their transition from cash assistance to self-reliance. It is further intended that cash assistance recipients demonstrate active and diligent personal responsibility in achieving self-reliance through employment and increased workplace literacy. All appropriate state agencies responsible for employment, training, and educating Louisiana's

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citizens are expected to cooperate in the pursuit of this goal.

Once an applicant is certified for eligibility, a comprehensive assessment will be conducted and include workplace literacy, basic skills and educational attainment, interests and aptitude related to employment, barriers to employment, need for education, supportive services such as child care and transportation, and other supportive services. Specialized assessments can occur for issues that arise after an initial assessment has been completed and could include substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health screening, or others as determined by the department. (Page 240) Title IV

RTW/SAW

Through policy, LWC has refined the state's response to the U.S. Labor Department mandate that the workforce development system become a seamless, integrated system. Prior to implementation, One-Stop Center operations used a rigid customer flow and team model. This new policy establishes a revision and refocusing effort to drive clients to the "right door" because of the state's need to respond to a decrease in funding and environmental as well as socio-economic changes.

Goals are as follows:

- Change the lock-step process and team approach in providing job-seeker and employer services to a more flexible process (or roadmap) that allows quick response to changes in the labor market and workforce needs.
- Add flexibility to the delivery of training services by simplifying the process for identifying qualified candidates.
- Create a process that recognizes the ever-changing funding environment associated with federal mandates and grants, so that it provides necessary flexibility to respond to specific grant and funding mandates of U.S. Department of Labor programs regarding unemployment insurance benefits (UI), workforce participation, veteran's services and National Emergency Grants.
- Support the state's redesign of its business engagement Process in a way that optimizes agency response to in-demand industry needs in hiring, retaining, training and advancement of workers.
- Anticipate the ongoing need for creating contingency plans to support economic growth in targeted industry sectors, and developing improved relationships with local and state economic development entities with the goal of pre-empting shortfalls in a skilled workforce.
- Address the need to reintegrate specific UI recipient related functions into the job-seeker process in order to shorten the return-to-work time for individuals receiving unemployment insurance benefits. (Page 57) Title I

*All enclosed information is cited directly from final state plan as of June 30, 2019

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