Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
Missouri Combined State Plan

12/11/2015

For Public Comment

Public Comment Period Closes:
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Public Comment Email Address: MOWIOAPlan@ded.mo.gov

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Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
Missouri Combined State Plan

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OVERVIEW

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

Options for Submitting a State Plan

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

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

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

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- Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
- Employment and Training Programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))
- Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (Programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)
- Unemployment Insurance Programs (Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (Programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))
- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.)) [1]
- Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))

How State Plan Requirements Are Organized.

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

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

[1] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

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

When responding to Unified or Combined State Plan requirements, States must identify specific strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations.[2] While discussion of and strategies for every target population is not expected, States must address as many as are applicable to their State's population and look beyond strategies for the general population.

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

Paperwork Reduction Act: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) provides that an agency may not conduct, and no person is required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Control numbers and the public reporting burden for the information collections within these instructions may be found in the PRA Burden Table at the end of this document. These estimates include time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Responding to this collection is required to obtain or retain the Federal grant benefit. In addition, responses to this information collection are public, and the agencies offer no assurances of confidentiality. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the [INSERT POC] and reference the related OMB Control Number(s). Note: Please do not return the completed plan to this address.

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I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

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

- ☐ **Unified State Plan**. This plan includes the Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program,
  Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation Program.
- ☐ **Combined State Plan**. This plan includes the Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation Program as well as one or more of the optional Combined State Plan partner programs identified below. Indicate which Combined State Plan partner program(s) the State is electing to include in the plan.
  - o Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)
  - o Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
  - o 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)))
  - o Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))
  - o Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))
  - o Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (Programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)
  - o Unemployment Insurance Programs (Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)
  - o Senior Community Service Employment Program (Programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))
  - o Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development

- Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))
- Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program[3] (Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))

Missouri is submitting a Combined State Plan for PY2016-PY2020. Combined State Plan partners are:

Title/Program	Missouri Agency
Title I	**Division of Workforce Development**
Title II	**Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**
Title III	**Division of Workforce Development**
Title IV	**Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation – General Rehabilitation Services for the Blind**
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	**Family Support Division**
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program	**Family Support Division**
Community Services Block Grant Program	**Family Support Division**

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[3] The Reentry Employment Opportunities Program (REO), formerly the Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (RExO), is referred to by its original name (RExO) in this document. This name change is a recent decision that was not incorporated into WIOA.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

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

(a) **Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis.** The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions, economic development strategies, and labor market in which the State's workforce system and programs will operate.

(1) Economic and Workforce Analysis

(A) *Economic Analysis*. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the State, including sub-state regions and any specific economic areas identified by the State. This includes:

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

Missouri's WIOA partnership includes a functional bureau of state government housed within the Department of Economic Development called the Missouri Economic Research Information Center (MERIC). The following economic analysis has been prepared to explain Missouri's economic conditions and trends, as well as to explain pertinent industrial and occupational demand.

Real-Time Labor Market Analysis

In 2012 MERIC began using a new tool to assess current, or real-time, demand for occupations throughout the state. The tool, provided by Burning Glass Technologies, captures online job advertisements and aggregates those jobs by occupation and industry codes. While on-line advertisements do not represent all job openings, as other informal networks are also used, it does provide a broad picture of hiring activity and serves as one measure of current labor demand.

Industrial Demand

Industry demand analysis from November 2014 through October 2015 showed that the Healthcare Industry (Hospitals and Ambulatory Health Care Services) was a top job advertisement. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services along with Insurance Carriers and Related Activities also had a high number of job advertisers. Educational Services rounded out the top five. A few of the industries, such as Food Services, General Merchandise Stores and Administrative Services have high turnover rates so the large number of job advertisements can reflect the need to refill positions rather than to add new jobs.

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Top Ten Real-Time Labor Demand Industries by Online Job Ads

Industry	Job Postings
Hospitals	29,350
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	23,057
Ambulatory Health Care Services	16,716
Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	14,154
Educational Services	13,840
Food Services and Drinking Places	11,131
Truck Transportation	10,295
Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	9,642
General Merchandise Stores	7,643
Administrative and Support Services	6,509

Source: Burning Glass Technologies (November 1, 2014-October 31, 2015)

Occupational Demand

Job analysis highlights the top ten occupations Missouri employers advertised for in the past year. Truck Drivers were in the greatest demand, followed by Registered Nurses, Retail Salespersons and Software Developers. Sales Representatives and Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers followed. Several Administrative occupations, such as Secretaries and Human Resources Specialists also made the list.

Real-Time Labor Market Analysis provides a snapshot of current labor demand that is particularly helpful to current job seekers interested in who is hiring and for what occupations. MERIC has developed products, like the Real Time Labor Market Summary, using this tool. The Labor Market Summary provides both a regional and statewide snapshot of data found in job ads and is published every other month. MERIC and DWD will continue to explore how this data can inform workforce and economic development efforts to meet the needs of businesses around the state.

Top Ten Real-Time Labor Demand Occupations by Online Job Ads

Occupation	Job Postings
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	20,363
Registered Nurses	17,593
Retail Salespersons	11,443
Software Developers, Applications	10,984
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	10,064
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	7,864
Customer Service Representatives	7,527
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	4,673
Human Resources Specialists	4,597
Computer Systems Analysts	4,491

Source: Burning Glass Technologies (November 1, 2014 - October 31, 2015

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

Short-Term Projections

MERIC develops short-term employment projections based on industry trends and staffing patterns. The top ten industries expected to have job openings over the projections period of 2010 to 2012 included the health care sectors of Ambulatory Health Care, Nursing and Residential Care, Hospitals, and Social Assistance Services. Other sectors included Administrative and Support Services, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, Specialty Trade Contractors, Food Services, Durable Good Wholesalers, and Transportation Equipment Manufacturers.

Industry analysis leads to occupational projections which were developed for the state and two major workforce regions, St. Louis and Kansas City. The top job openings take into account both growth and replacement needs for an occupation over time. For example, a large amount of job openings that employers fill come from the need to replace workers who have moved into other positions or left the business entirely. In the top ten list below, all occupations have more replacement openings than growth openings.

The top ten occupations for the 2014 to 2016 time period include five from the service industry: Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers (8,938); Cashiers (8,407); Retail Salespersons (6,755); Waiters and Waitresses (5,896); and Customer Service Representatives (3,654). With relatively low wages, these service sector occupations have large amounts of turnover.

Statewide Top Ten Short-Term Occupation Projections Sorted by Total Openings

Occupation	2014 Estimated Employment	2016 Projected Employment	Growth Openings	Replacement Openings	Total
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers	76,031	77,685	1,654	7,284	8,938
Cashiers	73,201	73,741	540	7,867	8,407
Retail Salespersons	80,379	81,218	839	5,916	6,755
Waiters and Waitresses	54,311	54,578	267	5,629	5,896
Customer Service Representatives	50,864	51,848	984	2,670	3,654
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers	41,983	42,725	742	2,672	3,414
Office Clerks, General	65,041	65,195	154	2,675	2,829
Registered Nurses	64,733	65,244	511	2,196	2,707
General and Operations Managers	55,956	56,830	874	1,773	2,647
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	43,680	44,650	970	1,331	2,301

Source: MERIC Employment Projections

In the St. Louis area, the top occupations in total openings are projected to be: Combined Food Preparation and Service Workers (3,125); Retail Salespersons (2,581); Cashiers (2,508); Waiters and Waitresses (2,350); and Customer Service Representatives (1,523). The top five occupations for projected openings in the St. Louis area are the same top five occupations, while in different order, in the statewide trends.

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Saint Louis Top Ten Short-Term Occupation Projections Sorted by Total Openings

Occupation	2014 Estimated Employment	2016 Projected Employment	Growth Openings	Replacement Openings	Total
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers	27,248	27,763	515	2,610	3,125
Retail Salespersons	30,637	30,963	326	2,255	2,581
Cashiers	22,603	22,682	79	2,429	2,508
Waiters and Waitresses	22,288	22,328	40	2,310	2,350
Customer Service Representatives	22,128	22,490	362	1,161	1,523
Registered Nurses	29,723	29,896	173	1,008	1,181
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers	14,253	14,466	213	907	1,120
General and Operations Managers	19,969	20,236	267	633	900
Office Clerks, General	20,532	20,519	0	845	845
Accountants and Auditors	11,639	11,786	147	674	821

Source: MERIC Employment Projections

The Kansas City area had the same top occupations that were projected for St. Louis and statewide: Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers (1,883); Cashiers (1,427); Waiters and Waitresses (1,272); Retail Salespersons (1,239); and Customer Service Representatives (702).

Kansas City Top Ten Short-Term Occupation Projections Sorted by Total Openings

Occupation	2014 Estimated Employment	2016 Projected Employment	Growth Openings	Replacement Openings	Total
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers	15,837	16,203	366	1,517	1,883
Cashiers	12,655	12,722	67	1,360	1,427
Waiters and Waitresses	11,635	11,701	66	1,206	1,272
Retail Salespersons	14,749	14,903	154	1,085	1,239
Customer Service Representatives	10,062	10,236	174	528	702
Team Assemblers	5,922	6,337	415	193	608
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers	6,983	7,098	115	445	560
Registered Nurses	12,419	12,520	101	421	522
General and Operations Managers	11,040	11,195	155	350	505
Office Clerks, General	10,949	10,952	3	450	453

Source: MERIC Employment Projections

Long-Term Projections

MERIC develops long-term employment projections based on industry trends and staffing patterns. The information below describes the industries projected to have the most job openings from 2012 to 2022 based on both growth and replacement needs.

Missouri 2012-2022 Industry Projections

Industry	Employment 2012 Estimated	Employment 2022 Projected	Change 2012-2022 Numeric	Change 2012-2022 Percent
Restaurants and Other Eating Places	186,111	202,334	**16,223**	8.72%
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	148,063	162,627	**14,564**	9.84%
Employment Services	52,243	64,569	**12,326**	23.59%
Individual and Family Services	28,055	37,887	**9,832**	35.05%
Building Equipment Contractors	32,174	41,864	**9,690**	30.12%
Offices of Physicians	39,703	47,012	**7,309**	18.41%
Computer Systems Design and Related Services	30,174	36,953	**6,779**	22.47%
Elementary and Secondary Schools	150,296	156,895	**6,599**	4.39%
Nursing Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities)	45,791	52,360	**6,569**	14.35%
Home Health Care Services	18,954	24,440	**5,486**	28.94%

Source: MERIC Employment Projections

For the 2012–2022 time period, the top industries of net change statewide are projected to be Restaurants (16,223); General Medical and Surgical Hospitals (14,564); Employment Services (12,326); Individual and Family Services (9,832); and Building Equipment Contractors (9,690).

Industry analysis in the St. Louis and Kansas City areas show very similar trends to the statewide figures which is to be expected given the large influence of these two cities on the state's economy. One difference from the statewide list for both St. Louis and Kansas City is the inclusion of Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services in the top ten.

The long-term statewide occupational projections show that the top job openings are in the Food and Retail Service Industries. The definition of *Total Openings* is the projected new growth along with replacement needs. Cashiers, for example, shows a total projected employment of 71,037 for 2022, only 678 more than the 2012 estimate of 70,359 jobs. This means of the 31,096 job openings over 10 years, 30,418 are replacement openings due to turnover while only 678 are new. Total openings are important to job seekers while new jobs indicate where new training needs may be.

Statewide Top Ten Long-Term Occupation Projections Sorted by Total Openings

Occupation	2012 Estimated Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Growth Openings	Replacement Openings	Total
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers	71,838	81,664	9,826	27,430	37,256
Retail Salespersons	81,144	86,702	5,558	27,754	33,312
Cashiers	70,359	71,037	678	30,418	31,096
Waiters and Waitresses	50,674	52,836	2,162	24,380	26,542
Registered Nurses	66,973	74,992	8,019	12,985	21,004
Customer Service Representatives	49,992	56,011	6,019	13,603	19,622
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers	40,838	45,090	4,252	12,650	16,902
Office Clerks, General	63,309	65,958	2,649	13,301	15,950
General and Operations Managers	53,128	58,220	5,092	9,939	15,031
Nursing Assistants	42,318	47,465	5,147	8,048	13,195

Source: MERIC Employment Projections

The St. Louis area mirrors the top four occupation projections of the state. Registered Nurses are number six in St. Louis, compared to the statewide projections of fifth. The St. Louis region includes the same occupations on the top ten list as statewide projections with one exception, Janitors and Cleaners appear tenth in St. Louis, instead of Nursing Assistants projected tenth on the statewide list.

St. Louis Top Ten Long-Term Occupation Projections Sorted by Total Openings

Occupation	2012 Estimated Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Growth Openings	Replacement Openings	Total Openings
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers	27,087	30,373	3,286	10,343	13,629
Retail Salespersons	30,726	32,328	1,602	10,510	12,112
Cashiers	24,220	24,416	196	10,471	10,667
Waiters and Waitresses	20,082	20,744	662	9,662	10,324
Customer Service Representatives	21,504	24,731	3,227	5,851	9,078
Registered Nurses	29,548	32,676	3,128	5,729	8,857
General and Operations Managers	20,881	23,323	2,442	3,906	6,348
Office Clerks, General	22,735	24,280	1,545	4,776	6,321
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers	13,750	15,432	1,682	4,259	5,941
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	15,744	18,118	2,374	2,963	5,337

Source: MERIC Employment Projections

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In Kansas City, the projections change a little but still have the top four in total openings to be the Food and Retail Service Industries. While in a different rank order, the top ten occupations in St. Louis and Kansas City are the same.

Kansas City Top Ten Long-Term Occupation Projections Sorted by Total Openings

Occupation	2012 Estimated Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Growth Openings	Replacement Openings	Total Openings
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers	14,598	16,451	1,853	5,574	7,427
Retail Salespersons	14,709	15,614	905	5,031	5,936
Waiters and Waitresses	10,700	11,093	393	5,148	5,541
Cashiers	11,961	12,169	208	5,171	5,379
Customer Service Representatives	9,257	10,485	1,228	2,519	3,747
Registered Nurses	11,752	13,084	1,332	2,278	3,610
General and Operations Managers	11,828	13,187	1,359	2,213	3,572
Office Clerks, General	11,954	12,748	794	2,511	3,305
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers	6,706	7,575	869	2,077	2,946
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	8,227	9,507	1,280	1,548	2,828

Source: MERIC Employment Projections

(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.

The recession and prolonged recovery displaced a large number of workers and made it difficult for young job seekers entering the labor force as fewer openings and delayed retirements increased job competition. This has been true for the nation as a whole and for Missouri as well. Employers through this difficult economy have looked for ways to increase worker productivity to keep cost down and the business doors open. This need for higher productivity is not new but did accelerate through the recession and means that employers will increasingly demand higher levels of basic and specialized skills as hiring activity continues to pick up.

MERIC worked with the St. Louis Community College in 2015 to survey businesses in the state's largest regional economy about workforce needs. In the *State of the St. Louis Workforce Report*,[4] surveyed employers indicated that the largest challenge to continued employment growth was the shortage of workers with knowledge or skills. Employers indicated that finding workers, even with college degrees, with adequate basic skills was a challenge. Throughout the workforce, job applicants often lacked basic personal effectiveness competencies such as communication skills, work ethic, discipline, critical thinking or interpersonal skills.

Many jobs in an economy are entry level in nature, such as Retail Salespeople and Food Service workers, that require little technical training but do require basic skills. Many businesses need these workers, as is indicated in the job openings data, and realize that many of these occupations face high turnover rates largely due to lower wages. While these lower skilled jobs are plentiful and offer an opportunity for the challenged job seekers, employers still expect applicants to have common business skills of professionalism, communication, and problem solving abilities.

[4] Full report at www.missourieconomy.org/pdfs/2011_sostl.pdf

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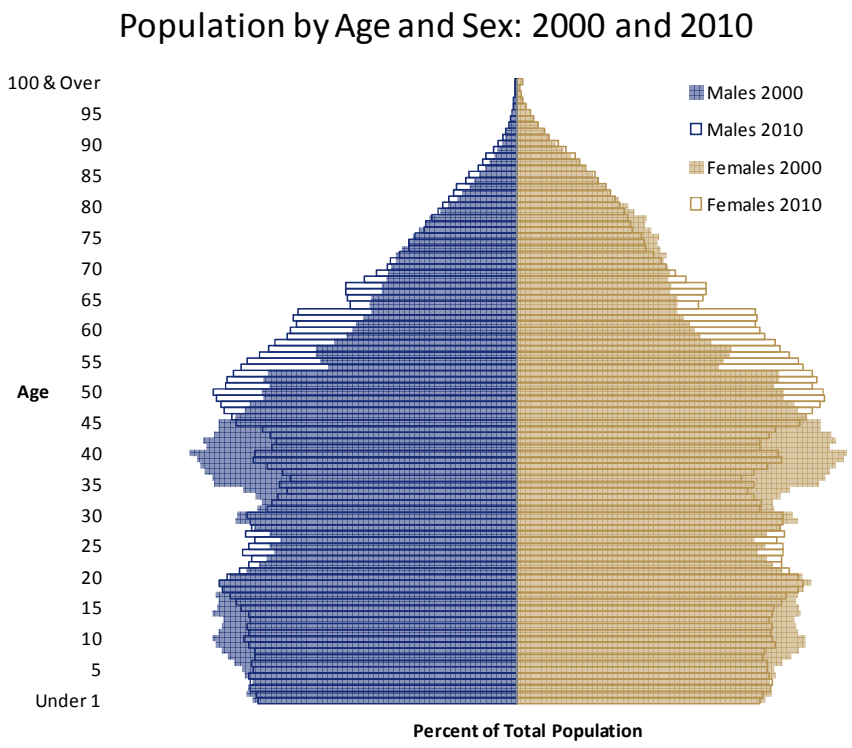
(B) *Workforce Analysis*. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA[5]. This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups[6] in the State and across regions identified by the State.

Missouri gained 393,716 people between 2000 and 2010 to bring the total population to 5,988,927. The population added more males (213,300) than females (180,416). However, the total distribution remains unchanged with 49 percent of the population male and 51 percent female.



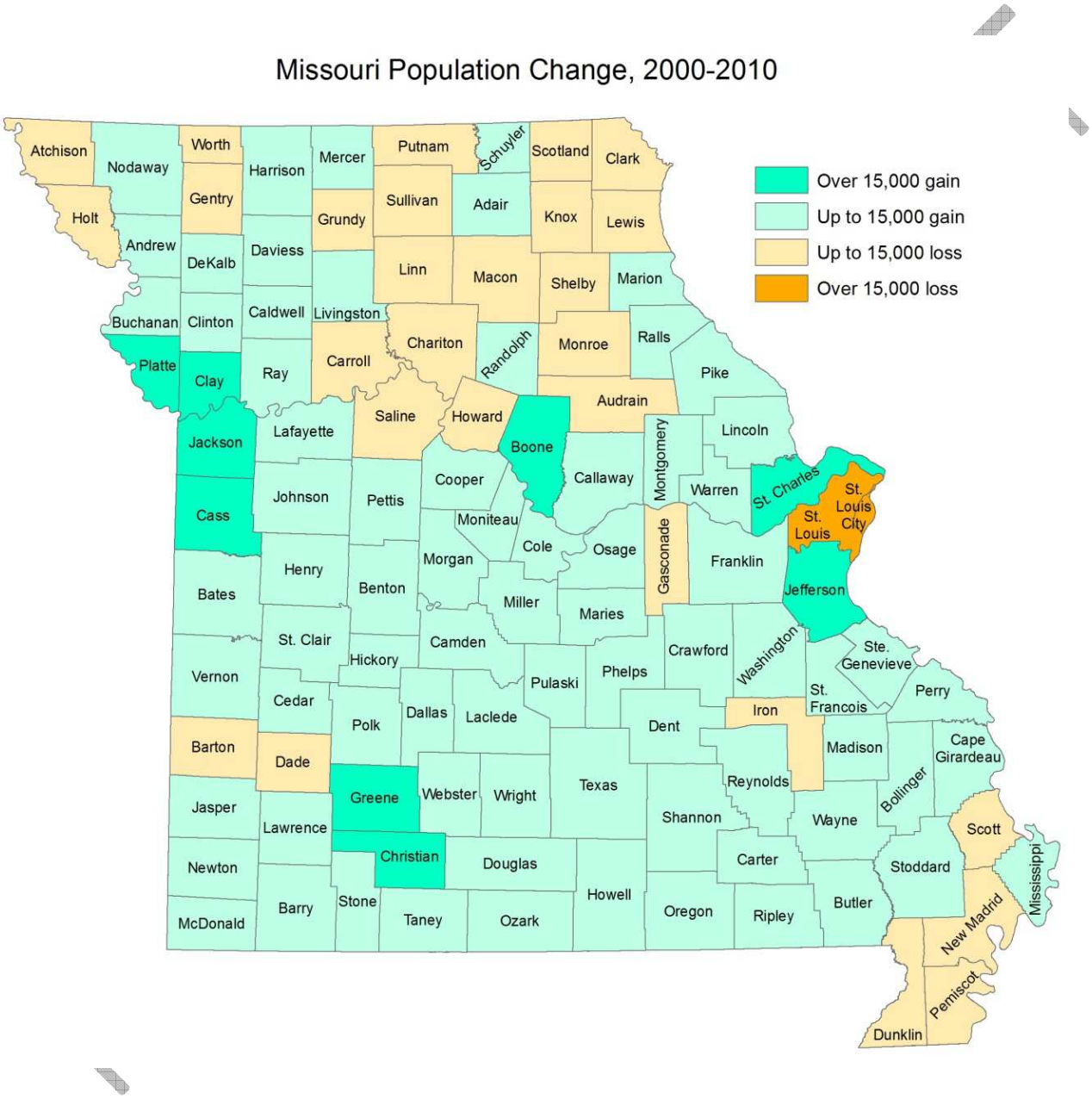
The population is aging as the above chart illustrates. The percent of total population between the ages of *45 and 64* went from 22 percent of the 2000 population to 27 percent of the 2010 total population. These gains are countered by losses in the share of *under 18* and between the ages of *35 and 44*.

Geographic Change

With the most recent census, St. Louis and Kansas City remain the largest population centers for Missouri and show some shifting of populations further out from the urban core. Also over the decade a growing share of the state's population shifted to the Ozarks, southwest Missouri, and the smaller metropolitan areas of Springfield, Columbia and Cape Girardeau.

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

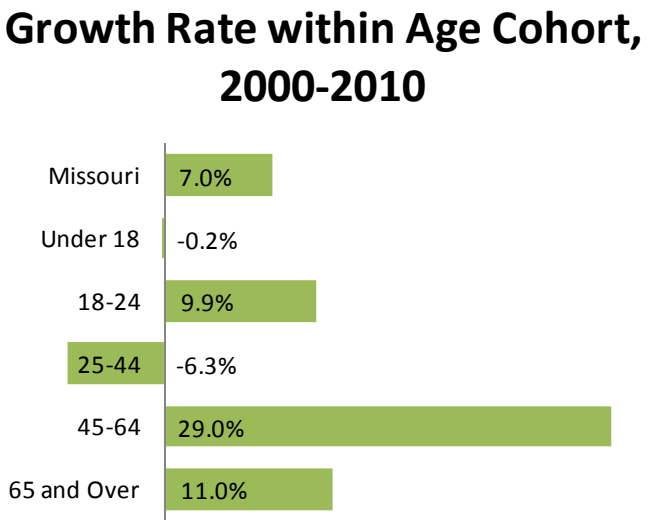
Counties in non-metropolitan areas grew over the decade in population by 80,853 residents. Taney (11,972) and Pulaski (11,109) represented the fastest growing counties outside of the major metro areas, increasing by 30% and 27% respectively. Twenty seven rural counties declined in population over the past decade. Pemiscot (-1,751) Scott (-1,231) and Dunklin (-1,202) declined the most in population for rural counties; while Atchison (-12%) and Carroll (-10%) experienced the highest percentage losses.

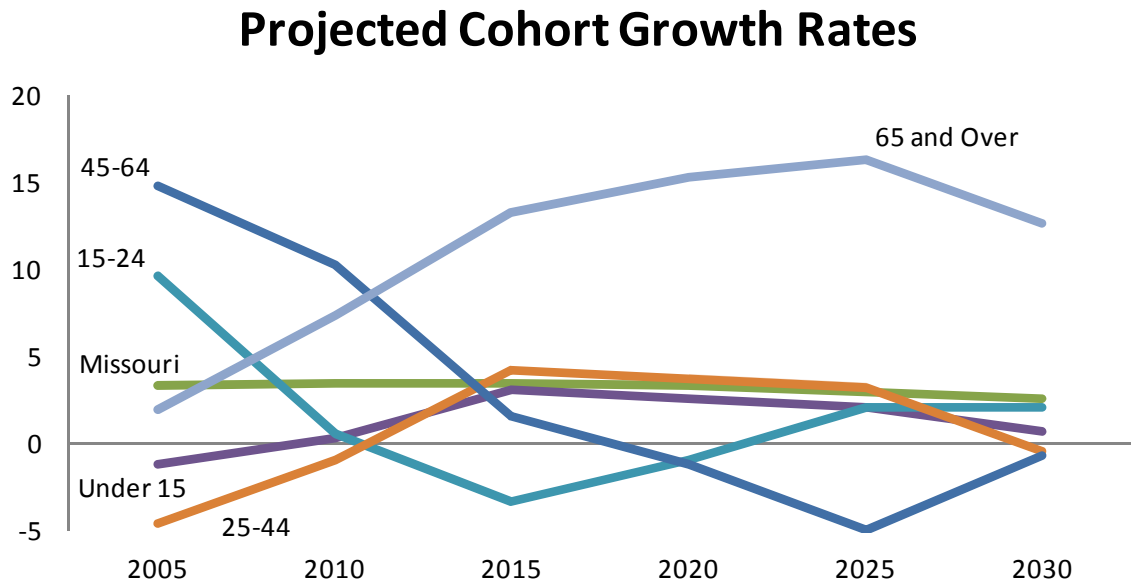


Age Cohort Growth

The population of Missouri experienced 7 percent growth between 2000 and 2010. The *45-64* age group, with a growth rate of 29 percent, far outpaced all other age cohorts. The *25-44* age group saw a decrease of 6.3 percent.

The Missouri Office of Administration projects Missouri population growth out to 2030. By 2015 the *65 and Over* and *25-44* cohorts are expected to outpace the state's growth rate, with 13.2 percent and 4.3 percent, respectively. The *15-24* cohort is projected to decline by 3.4 percent between 2010 and 2015.





Missourians between the ages of 15 and 64, generally considered the working age population, increased by 8.6 percent to 3,973,008 people between the years 2000 and 2010. In 2010, this group consisted of exactly two-thirds of the overall Missouri population. Segmented further, Missourians age 25 to 34 constitutes the young population able to fill the potential workforce gaps of the future. Nationally, over the course of the next two decades, it is projected that 10,000 Baby Boomers will reach retirement age per day. This labor shortage will leave a large gap to be filled by the 25 to 34 demographic.

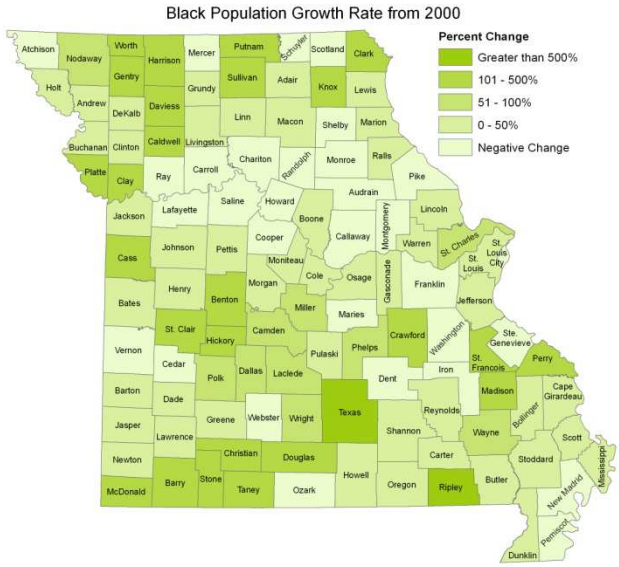
Migration

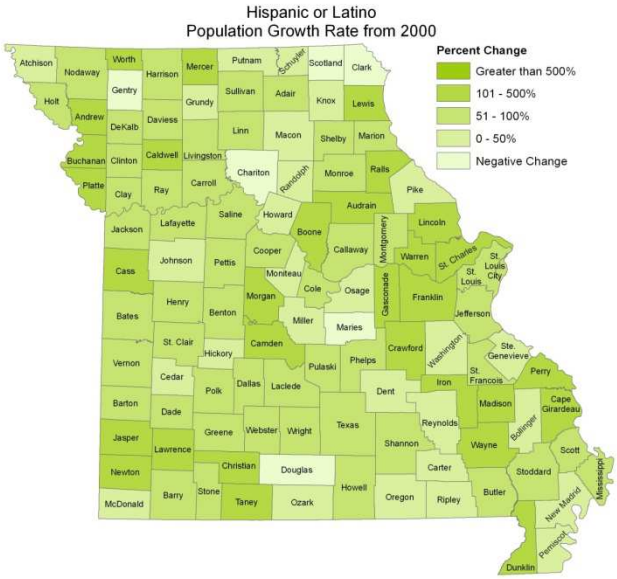
In 2014, Missouri had nearly 173,300 migrants enter the state from other locations according to the U.S. Census 1-Year American Community Survey. Migrants from abroad totaled 19,960 whereas migrants from other states number 153,320. Illinois had the most migrants to the state at 24,210, followed by Kansas (18,850) and Texas (11,322). During the year 154,325 residents moved out of Missouri with most locating in Kansas (22,240), followed by Illinois (15,333) and Texas (11,921).

From 2000 to 2010, 85 counties had a net migration increase. Of those counties, 44 had a net increase of more than 1,000 in-migrants during those 10 years. Sixteen of those counties are in the St. Louis (6), Springfield (5), and Kansas City (5) metro areas. St. Charles County (76,602) had the greatest influx of residents, followed by Clay (37,933), Greene (34,783), Boone (27,188) and Christian (23,137).
Other large in-migration counties over the same period were, Jefferson (20,634), Jackson (19,278), Cass (17,386), Platte (15,541), and Lincoln (13,622) rounding out the top ten. St. Louis City and St. Louis County had the largest net out migration of any county, losing more than 28,895 and 17,361 residents respectively from 2000 to 2010.

Minority Population Growth

Missouri's largest minority race category, Black or African American, experienced significant population increases during the 2000's. The Black population grew 10.2 percent from 629,391 in 2000 to 693,391 in 2010. The state also added 2,300 American Indian and Alaska Native persons between 2000 and 2010, with most of the growth occurring in northeast Missouri. Missouri's Asian and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander population experienced a large growth rate, of 61.1 percent, growing from 64,773 in 2000 to 104,344 in 2010.





Texas (1688%), Ripley (717%) and Daviess (475%) counties reported enormous percent increases in their Black population since 2000. For a second straight decade St. Louis County reported the largest increase in persons (39,723), a 20.5 percent increase; followed by Jackson County with 8,976, a 5.9 percent increase; and St. Charles County with 7,325, a 95.9 percent increase. Twenty-seven Missouri counties more than doubled their

Black population between 2000 and 2010. Five counties saw a loss of at least half of the Black population. St. Louis City experienced the largest decline in the number of Black persons, losing 21,106 persons.

Missouri's largest ethnic population, people of Hispanic or Latino Origin, grew by 79 percent from 118,592 in 2000 to 212,470 in 2010, down from the 92 percent growth of the previous decade. Missouri's population of Hispanic or Latino Origin has more than tripled since 1990, and accounts for a growing percentage (3.5) of the state's population compared to 2.1 percent of the 2000 population count. Seventeen counties exceed the state's average concentration. Sullivan County, with 18.5 percent of its total population being of Hispanic or Latino Origin is the only county in Missouri to exceed the United States concentration of 16.3 percent. McDonald County, with 11.2 percent, is the only other county to exceed 10 percent of its total 2010 population being from Hispanic or Latino Origin.

Current Minority Population

The U.S. Census Bureau publishes population information for demographic groups by state and county. In 2013, Missouri's total population numbered just over 6 million. The charts illustrate the percentage of the two largest minority groups in the state for that year.

Missouri has a significant population of Black or African American citizens. The state's population of Black citizens is 691,128, or nearly 12 percent of the total population. The Missouri counties with the highest percentage of Black population include St. Louis City (48.6 percent), Pemiscot (27.3 percent), Mississippi (24.0 percent), Jackson (23.8 percent) and St. Louis County (23.2 percent).

An estimated 219,703 Hispanics called Missouri home, accounting for almost 4 percent of Missouri's total population. Missouri counties with the highest Hispanic populations include Sullivan (18.4 percent), McDonald (11.3 percent), Pulaski (9.5 percent), Saline (8.7 percent), Jackson (8.4 percent) and Barry (7.9 percent). See 2013 Population Percentage Maps below.

Special Workforce Considerations

Along with the many unprecedented changes Missouri will make to implement WIOA, there are also some unprecedented considerations and challenges placed in the forefront of workforce analysis through the release of the Ferguson Commission report.

Among the highest priority are "signature calls to action" in the report, four of the top five are firmly grounded in WIOA's intent for creating viable and flexible talent development pipelines. Below are these calls for action and the implications for workforce needs.

- **Enhance collaboration between educational institutions and employers.**
- **Ensure employer-educator collaboration to build a love of learning.**

These calls are what is intended by the facilitation and implementation of an industry and occupational sector strategy initiative. It will include employer engagement with workforce boards and local educational institutions aimed at achieving the collaboration needed for a talent pipeline where all are equally included.

- **Create an innovation education hub.**

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While this recommendation is more definitive of a program solution that would evolve from the intended employer-educator engagement of WIOA, it is one example of a concrete action that Missouri's WIOA implementation will support and contribute solutions toward.

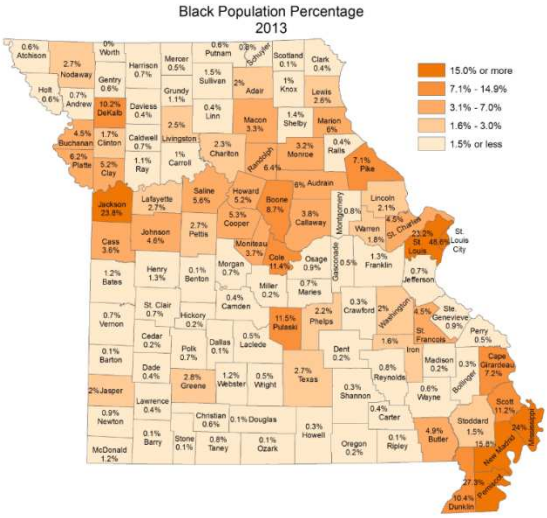
- **Preferentially fund job training programs that show impact.**

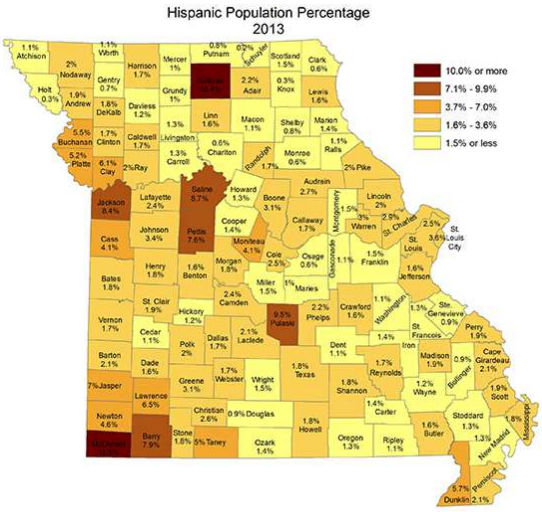
The changes being implemented under WIOA with the Eligible Training Provider System will indirectly serve to move the system of funding training toward approving eligibility only for those that demonstrate significant levels of performance. While this system cannot provide preferential funding, it is being designed to impose performance thresholds prior to granting eligibility for training providers to receive job training funds.

- **Develop a state supported funding plan for public transit.**

Although this fifth signature call is outside the scope of action by a workforce development partnership, this call is recognized as a priority need and collaborative strategies supporting it are part of ongoing solution discussions among workforce, education and social services agencies.

Of the seven other significant recommendations from the Ferguson report at least five are also embraced specifically by the design of a sector-based career pathways system under WIOA. These recommendations include: evaluating job training success and award accordingly, launching best practice driven job training programs, expanding funding for job training and wage support programs, implementing work-based learning opportunities, and identifying job training best practices. The remaining two recommendations are: ensuring college counseling for all high school students and prioritizing tax incentive programs for youth-serving job programs. These are program specific action steps that will be accommodated by WIOA and can be explored as part of the partnership implementation of new programs.

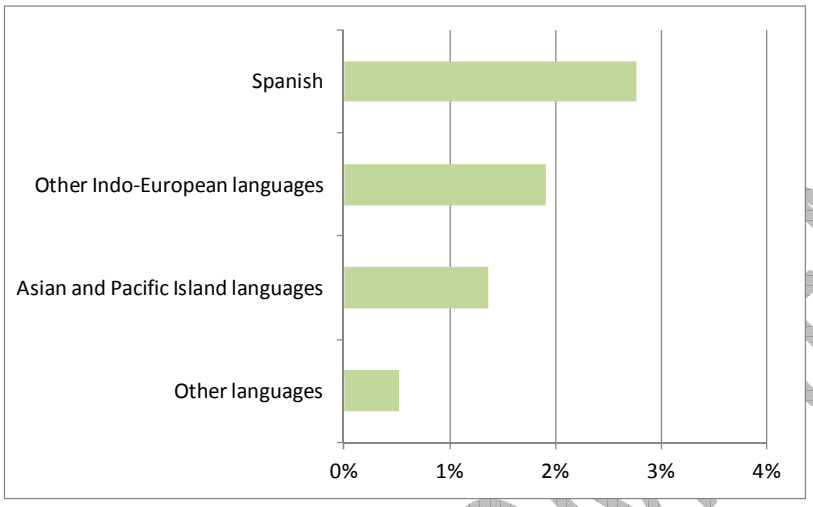




Limited English Proficiency

According to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 6.6 percent (245,246) of Missouri's population aged five and over spoke a language other than English at home. The most common non-English languages spoken in Missouri homes were Spanish (2.8 percent), Other Indo-European Languages (1.9 percent), Asian and Pacific Island Languages (1.4 percent) and Other Languages (.5 percent).

Percent of Missouri Population
Speaking Non-English Languages at Home



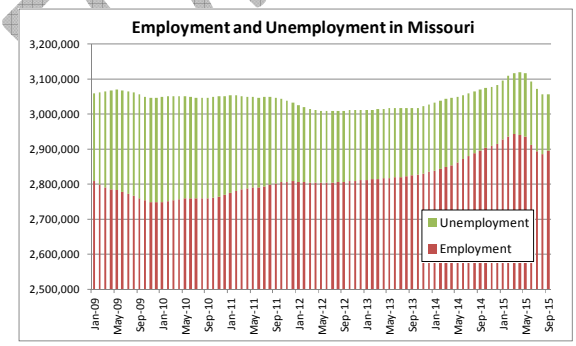
Individuals with Disabilities

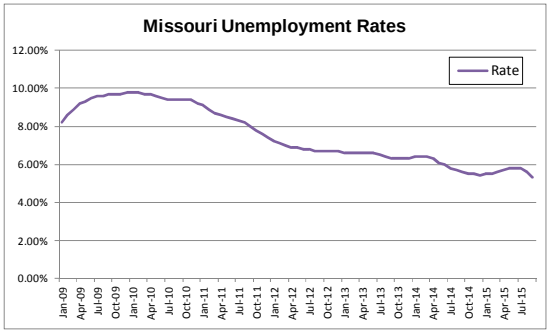
According to the American Community Survey 2009-2013 estimates, just over 12 percent, or 447,803 Missourians age 18-64, had a disability. Ambulatory difficulty was the most prevalent disability type at 6.5 percent of the state population. About 5.3 percent of the population had a cognitive difficulty, followed by 4.3 percent with an independent living difficulty.

This includes: —

(i) Employment and Unemployment. Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data and trends in the State.

During the recession, the number of Missourians employed in the state decreased, while the number of unemployed increased to over 9 percent statewide. Over time, employers have become more confident in hiring workers, and the unemployment rate has decreased to a low of 5.3 percent in September 2015 to a low of 5.0 in October 2015.





Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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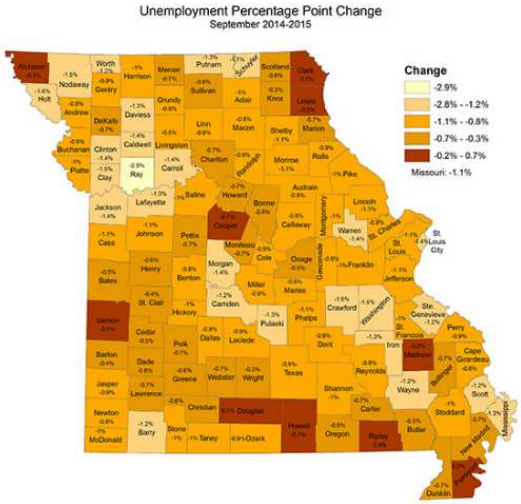
Even with the low unemployment rate statewide, Missouri still has pockets where the unemployment rate is high. The brighter news is that unemployment has decreased in every county during the past year.



Missouri's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2014 totaled nearly $260 billion. The Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental and Leasing sector was the largest at 19 percent. Manufacturing and Professional and Business Services represented 13 percent of Missouri's output, followed by Government at 12 percent. Over the past ten years, GDP has increased in real terms by 6 percent, while the nominal GDP growth has been 32 percent. From 2009 to 2014, Missouri's GDP increased by 4 percent in real terms, while it increased by 14 percent in nominal terms. In 2013, Missouri had the fourth most diversified economy in the United States. This diversity allows Missouri to better withstand and recover from significant, unfavorable changes in any one sector.

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Missouri Gross Domestic Product (Millions of chained 2009 dollars)

Industry	2004	2009	2014	% of 2014 Total GDP	Net Change 2004 to 2014	% Change 2004 to 2014
All industry total	**$245,583**	**$249,783**	**$259,847**	**100%**	**$14,264**	**6%**
Private industries	$214,186	$216,592	$228,601	88%	$14,415	7%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	$3,017	$3,061	$3,014	1%	-$3	0%
Mining	$1,274	$1,047	$1,153	0%	-$121	-9%
Utilities	$4,429	$4,234	$5,181	2%	$752	17%
Construction	$13,523	$10,162	$9,016	3%	-$4,507	-33%
Manufacturing	$36,443	$30,626	$33,037	13%	-$3,406	-9%
Durable goods manufacturing	$17,146	$13,049	$16,438	6%	-$708	-4%
Nondurable goods manufacturing	$19,362	$17,578	$16,681	6%	-$2,681	-14%
Wholesale trade	$16,156	$15,293	$16,502	6%	$346	2%
Retail trade	$16,646	$15,662	$15,976	6%	-$670	-4%
Transportation and warehousing	$8,587	$8,399	$8,857	3%	$270	3%
Information	$10,169	$13,797	$12,672	5%	$2,503	25%
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing	$38,350	$46,229	$48,224	19%	$9,874	26%
Finance and insurance	$14,358	$19,734	$19,407	7%	$5,049	35%
Real estate and rental and leasing	$24,127	$26,495	$28,871	11%	$4,744	20%
Professional and business services	$27,910	$28,788	$33,665	13%	$5,755	21%
Professional, scientific, and technical services	$12,855	$14,958	$15,596	6%	$2,741	21%
Management of companies and enterprises	$9,079	$6,813	$9,768	4%	$689	8%
Administrative and waste management services	$6,073	$7,017	$8,349	3%	$2,276	37%
Educational services, health care, and social assistance	$20,822	$23,439	$24,988	10%	$4,166	20%
Educational services	$2,533	$2,827	$2,908	1%	$375	15%
Health care and social assistance	$18,293	$20,611	$22,085	8%	$3,792	21%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	$10,572	$9,812	$10,402	4%	-$170	-2%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	$3,313	$3,276	$3,582	1%	$269	8%
Accommodation and food services	$7,267	$6,535	$6,821	3%	-$446	-6%
Other services, except government	$6,993	$6,044	$5,888	2%	-$1,105	-16%
Government	$31,406	$33,192	$31,285	12%	-$121	0%

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Although farm output in Missouri makes up a small percentage of the state's total Gross Domestic Product, agriculture is an important part of Missouri's economy. Missouri is second only to Texas in the total number of farms at just over 99,170 establishments and is a top ten producer of hogs (7th among states), cattle, poultry, and cotton (9th). Missouri's grain production is ranked 11th in the nation and represents the state's top valued commodity. Many of these products are exported or serve as feedstock to Missouri's second largest production sector, food manufacturing, which in 2014 employed over 38,000 people in the state.

Missouri non-farm employment in September 2015 totaled more than 2.7 million workers and the top subsectors for jobs were in Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, and Local Government. Over the past two years the Manufacturing sector has seen the highest percentage growth (4.1 percent) while Leisure and Hospitality (2.8 percent) and Trade, Transportation and Utilities (2.6 percent) rounded out the second and third spot. Manufacturing had declined by 45,000 jobs from 2007 to 2009, a decrease of 14.8 percent, but from 2013 to 2015 jobs rose by 10,300.

From September 2013 to September 2015, the subsector of Durable Goods Manufacturing saw the largest increase in employment (11,500), followed by Health Care and Social Assistance (7,300) and Accommodation and Food Services (7,100). As a whole, Professional, Scientific, and Technical (-2,300) had the largest decline, followed by Government positions (–1,700). Construction employment has begun a rebound, increasing by 2.4 percent after large decreases in employment dating to 2007.

Missouri Industry Employment - September 2013 to September 2015

Industry	Number of Jobs Sept 2013	Sept 2015	Net Change	% Change
Total Nonfarm	**2,727,400**	**2,775,200**	**47,800**	**1.8%**
Natural Resources and Mining	4,200	3,900	-300	-7.1%
Construction	113,200	115,900	2,700	2.4%
Manufacturing	253,200	263,500	10,300	4.1%
Durable Goods	148,300	159,800	11,500	7.8%
NonDurable Goods	104,900	103,700	-1,200	-1.1%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	516,300	529,500	13,200	2.6%
Wholesale Trade	118,900	122,000	3,100	2.6%
Retail Trade	300,800	306,300	5,500	1.8%
Transportation Warehousing and Utilities	96,600	101,200	4,600	4.8%
Information	57,000	56,900	-100	-0.2%
Finance	164,400	165,700	1,300	0.8%
Finance and Insurance	129,300	128,300	-1,000	-0.8%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	35,100	37,400	2,300	6.6%
Professional and Business Services	348,900	353,300	4,400	1.3%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical	131,300	129,000	-2,300	-1.8%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	63,000	65,600	2,600	4.1%
Administrative and Support Services	148,700	155,700	7,000	4.7%
Educational and Health Services	431,900	441,400	9,500	2.2%
Educational Services	53,700	55,900	2,200	4.1%
Health Care and Social Assistance	378,200	385,500	7,300	1.9%
Leisure and Hospitality	289,000	297,100	8,100	2.8%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	45,900	46,900	1,000	2.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	243,100	250,200	7,100	2.9%
Other Services	113,200	113,600	400	0.4%
Government	436,100	434,400	-1,700	-0.4%
Federal Government	51,900	52,800	900	1.7%
State Government	100,800	102,700	1,900	1.9%
Local Government	283,400	278,900	-4,500	-1.6%

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

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

Top Occupations and Skills

The top ten occupations were analyzed for skill needs using WorkKeys® scores. WorkKeys® skill scores, for Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, and Locating Information, provide a standardized scoring system ranging from 3 to 7 (low to high) and are based on national foundational and personal assessments used to measure cognitive abilities and the work potential of individuals.

The majority of the top ten occupations based solely on total openings require short-term on-the-job training. Registered Nurses and General and Operations Managers are the only two occupations that usually require a formal degree, while Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Drivers require training and specialized driver's license. General and Operations Managers and Registered Nurses require the highest scores, at 5 for the WorkKeys® scores of Reading for Information and Applied Mathematics, and a score of 4 in the Locating Information section. Specific skills at this level might include applying technical terms and jargon and applying complex instructions that include conditionals to situations. The remaining eight occupations require scores of 3 or 4. These include specific skills such as converting simple money and time units and calculating averages, ratios, or rates using whole numbers and decimals.

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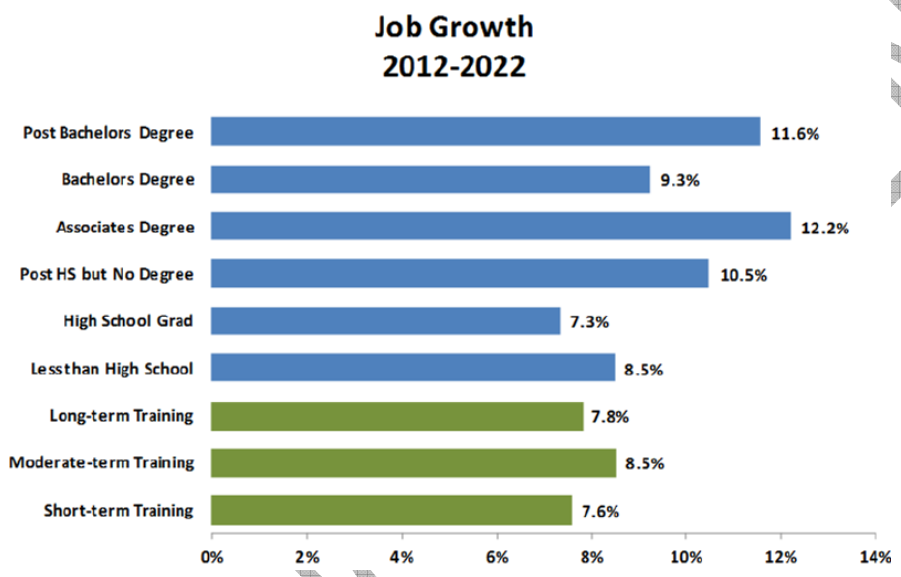
Fastest Growing Jobs by Education Level

Long-term projections are used to identify the fastest growing occupations, thereby providing a perspective on the potential need for more job training and education resources. Fueled by the growth in Healthcare occupations, careers requiring an Associate's degree are expected to experience the highest growth rates between 2012 and 2022. Growth in occupations requiring post high school training, or long-term On-the-Job Training (OJT), will be fueled by Construction and Transportation occupations. Social Sciences occupations will dominate the growth of master's degree jobs.



Top Growing Occupations

Over the long-term, industry needs for certain occupations grow while others decline. These growing occupations will need trained workers to fill employer demand and will, in turn, offer job seekers bright prospects for employment.

Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers have the largest growth openings (9,826), followed by Personal Care Aides (9,073) and Registered Nurses (8,019) (See table on next page). When occupations are separated by typical education training levels, the mix of top ten occupations highlights the job growth needs of industry by shorter-term training, longer-term to associate's degree, and bachelor's degree or higher.

Shorter-term training jobs include occupations in retail and food service (Combined Food Preparation and Serving and Retail Salespersons), healthcare (Personal Care and Home Health Aides and Medical Secretaries), office services (Office Clerks and Customer Service Representatives), and in logistics (Truck Drivers and Freight and Stock Movers).

Longer-Term to Associate's degree occupations, sometimes referred to as Middle Skill jobs, show that in addition to Registered Nurses, other healthcare occupations (Nursing Assistants and Licensed Practical Nurses) have high growth openings. Construction-related jobs (Carpenters and Electricians) are in the top ten due to the need to replace the large number of jobs lost in this industry over the last few years as construction activity picks back up over the decade.

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Bachelor's degree or higher occupations show top job growth in management (General and Operations Managers and Market Research), financial fields (Accountants/Auditors and Cost Estimators), followed by jobs in education (Elementary and Middle School Teachers). Strong growth can also been seen in information technology (Computer Systems Analysts and Software Developers).

Top Ten Long-Term Occupation Projections by Growth Openings and Education

Occupation	2012 Estimated Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Growth Openings
Now - typically requires short-term on-the-job training			
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers	71,838	81,664	9,826
Personal Care Aides	31,359	40,432	9,073
Customer Service Representatives	49,992	56,011	6,019
Retail Salespersons	81,144	86,702	5,558
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	52,290	56,856	4,566
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers	40,838	45,090	4,252
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	42,788	46,773	3,985
Medical Secretaries	15,846	19,762	3,916
Construction Laborers	18,391	22,071	3,680
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	30,113	33,383	3,270
Next - typically requires an associate's degree or long-term training			
Registered Nurses	66,973	74,992	8,019
Nursing Assistants	42,318	47,465	5,147
Carpenters	21,878	26,279	4,401
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	42,718	47,026	4,308
Cooks, Restaurant	19,841	22,538	2,697
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	16,173	18,826	2,653
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	23,650	25,947	2,297
Electricians	10,893	13,113	2,220
Computer User Support Specialists	14,430	16,614	2,184
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	18,786	20,960	2,174
Later - typically requires bachelor's degree or beyond			
General and Operations Managers	53,128	58,220	5,092
Accountants and Auditors	25,850	29,134	3,284
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	23,146	25,504	2,358
Computer Systems Analysts	10,948	13,105	2,157
Lawyers	12,617	14,409	1,792
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	6,515	8,235	1,720
Software Developers, Applications	11,747	13,465	1,718
Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	13,914	15,344	1,430
Construction Managers	9,603	10,825	1,222
Cost Estimators	5,013	6,188	1,175

Source: MERIC Employment Projections

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

SHORT-TERM PROJECTIONS

Employment by Education Level

Occupations typically requiring short-term On-The-Job Training (OJT) and moderate-term OJT will experience the highest employment increase from 2014 to 2016: short-term OJT (+ 12,053) and moderate-term OJT (+8,636). Workers in occupations that require just a bachelor's degree will account for over 17 percent of the total employment in 2016.

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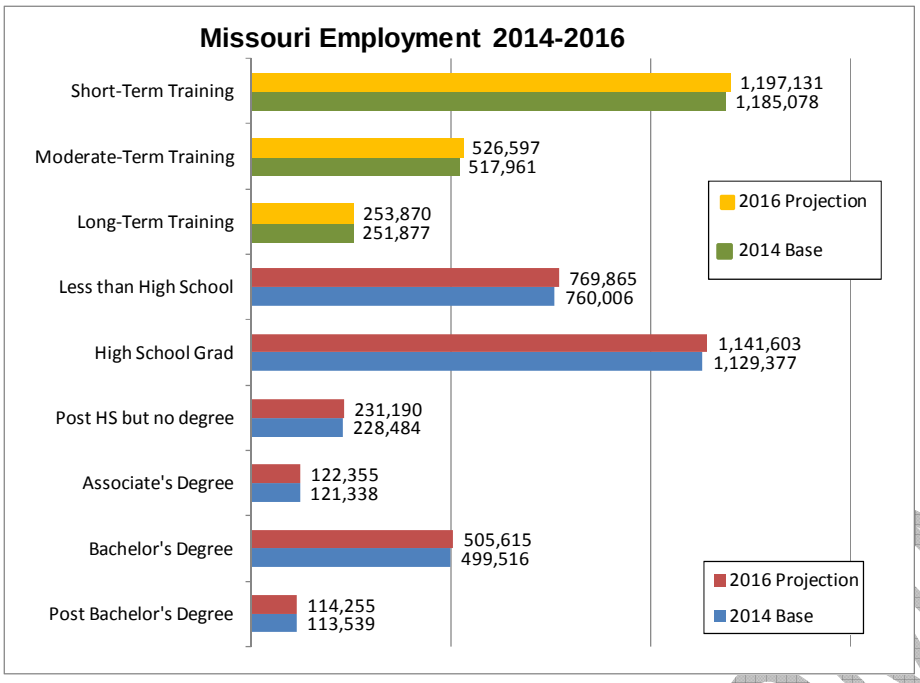

Top Occupations by Education Level

The 2014-2016 short-term occupations projections are used to identify the top ten occupations based on total openings and level of education or training needed. Top occupations requiring short to moderate-term training include service and support occupations. Healthcare occupations dominate the top new openings requiring long-term training to an associate's degree, while the remainder of the occupations represent a variety of career options. The top occupations requiring a bachelor's degree or higher include Education, Information Technology and Management and Business occupations.

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Top Ten Short-Term Occupation Projections Sorted by Total Openings

Occupation	2014 Estimated Employment	2016 Projected Employment	Growth Openings	Replacement Openings	Total
Now - typically requires short-term on-the-job training					
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers	76,031	77,685	1,654	7,284	8,938
Cashiers	73,201	73,741	540	7,867	8,407
Retail Salespersons	80,379	81,218	839	5,916	6,755
Waiters and Waitresses	54,311	54,578	267	5,629	5,896
Customer Service Representatives	50,864	51,848	984	2,670	3,654
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers	41,983	42,725	742	2,672	3,414
Office Clerks, General	65,041	65,195	154	2,675	2,829
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	30,961	30,755	0	1,973	1,973
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	43,785	44,233	448	1,480	1,928
Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop	9,514	9,479	0	1,828	1,828
Next - typically requires an associate's degree or long-term training					
Registered Nurses	64,733	65,244	511	2,196	2,707
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	43,680	44,650	970	1,331	2,301
Nursing Assistants	42,543	42,942	399	1,490	1,889
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	16,520	16,689	169	768	937
Computer User Support Specialists	14,117	14,491	374	389	763
Teacher Assistants	16,430	16,343	0	698	698
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	10,610	10,643	33	483	516
Firefighters	6,522	6,635	113	334	447
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	7,743	7,636	0	425	425
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	12,451	12,520	69	351	420
Later - typically requires bachelor's degree or beyond					
General and Operations Managers	55,956	56,830	874	1,773	2,647
Accountants and Auditors	26,038	26,400	362	1,508	1,870
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Ed	23,883	24,032	149	1,029	1,178
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Ed	20,569	20,446	0	1,122	1,122
Computer Systems Analysts	11,555	11,990	435	319	754
Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Ed	14,431	14,521	90	622	712
Software Developers, Applications	12,679	13,075	396	271	667
Substitute Teachers	16,998	16,940	0	548	548
Cost Estimators	5,317	5,535	218	321	539
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	7,199	7,541	342	177	519

Source: MERIC Employment Projections

Top Occupations by Skill

The top ten occupations were analyzed for skill needs using WorkKeys® scores. WorkKeys® skill scores, for Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, and Locating Information, provide a standardized scoring system ranging from 3 to 7 (low to high) and are based on national foundational and personal assessments used to measure cognitive abilities and the work potential of individuals.

The majority of the top ten occupations based solely on total openings require short-term OJT. Registered Nurses and General and Operations Managers are the only two occupations that usually require a formal degree, while Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Drivers require training and specialized driver's license. General and Operations Managers and Registered Nurses require the highest scores, at 5 for the WorkKeys® scores of Reading for Information and Applied Mathematics, and a score of 4 in the Locating Information section. Specific skills at this level might include applying technical terms and jargon and applying complex instructions that include conditionals to situations. The remaining eight occupations require scores of 3 or 4. These include specific skills such as converting simple money and time units and calculating averages, ratios, or rates using whole numbers and decimals.

Fastest Growing Jobs by Education Level

Fast growth in occupations means that they will provide a larger share of new positions in the future, thereby providing better employment prospects and more favorable conditions for mobility and advancement. Fueled

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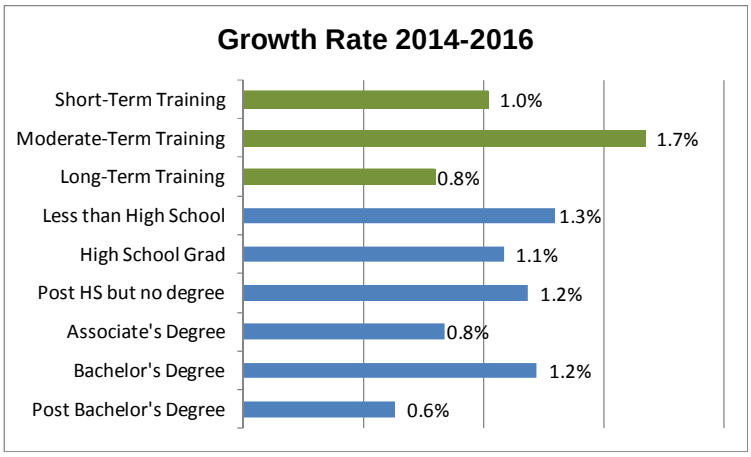
by the growth in Healthcare, Technical and Education occupations, careers requiring Moderate-Term Training (1.7 percent) are expected to experience the largest growth rates over the short term.



LONG-TERM PROJECTIONS

Jobs by Education Level

Occupations typically requiring short-term OJT are expected to account for the largest portion of 2022 employment change. Occupations requiring short-term OJT are projected to experience the highest number of increased employment at over 88,000, or 7.6 percent growth. Employment in occupations requiring an associate's degree or long-term OJT is also expected to grow by approximately 40,000, or 8.5 percent. Increased employment is also anticipated for occupations requiring a bachelor's degree. Employment for this education level is projected to increase by over 10,000, or 7.8 percent.

As estimated for the year 2022, sixty-six percent of workers in Missouri will be employed in occupations that require no formal postsecondary education (includes short-term OJT to work experience in a related occupation). Workers in occupations that require just a bachelor's degree will account for over 17 percent of the total employment in 2022.

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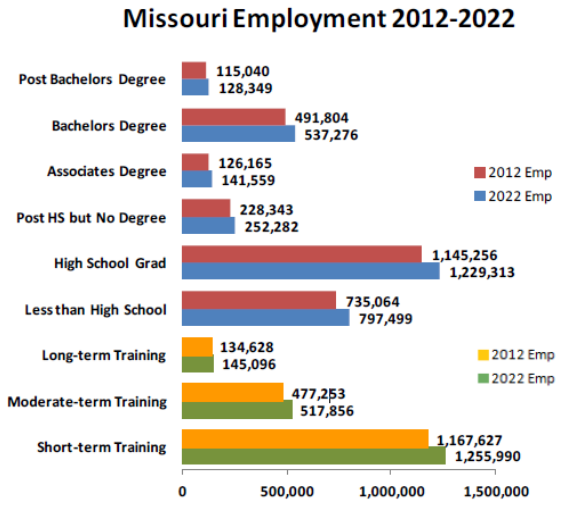

Top Occupations by Education Level

The 2012-2022 long-term occupations projections were used to identify the top ten occupations based on total openings and level of education or training needed. Top occupations requiring short to moderate-term training include service and support sector occupations. Healthcare, Supervisor and Maintenance and Carpenter occupations dominate the top new openings requiring at least long-term training or as much as an Associate's degree. The top occupations requiring a bachelor's degree or higher include Education, Information Technology and Business and Financial occupations.

Top Ten Long-Term Occupation Projections Sorted by Total Openings

Occupation	2012 Estimated Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Growth Openings	Replacement Openings	Total
Now - typically requires short-term on-the-job training					
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers	71,838	81,664	9,826	27,430	37,256
Retail Salespersons	81,144	86,702	5,558	27,754	33,312
Cashiers	70,359	71,037	678	30,418	31,096
Waiters and Waitresses	50,674	52,836	2,162	24,380	26,542
Customer Service Representatives	49,992	56,011	6,019	13,603	19,622
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers	40,838	45,090	4,252	12,650	16,902
Office Clerks, General	63,309	65,958	2,649	13,301	15,950
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	42,788	46,773	3,985	8,051	12,036
Childcare Workers	29,413	32,192	2,779	8,646	11,425
Personal Care Aides	31,359	40,432	9,073	2,245	11,318
Next - typically requires an associate's degree or long-term training					
Registered Nurses	66,973	74,992	8,019	12,985	21,004
Nursing Assistants	42,318	47,465	5,147	8,048	13,195
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	42,718	47,026	4,308	6,832	11,140
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	23,650	25,947	2,297	5,611	7,908
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	18,786	20,960	2,174	5,300	7,474
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	27,433	29,486	2,053	5,270	7,323
Carpenters	21,878	26,279	4,401	2,696	7,097
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	29,863	30,350	487	6,498	6,985
Cooks, Restaurant	19,841	22,538	2,697	3,913	6,610
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	16,173	18,826	2,653	3,948	6,601
Later - typically requires bachelor's degree or beyond					
General and Operations Managers	53,128	58,220	5,092	9,939	15,031
Accountants and Auditors	25,850	29,134	3,284	7,651	10,935
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Ed	23,146	25,504	2,358	5,093	7,451
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Ed	19,966	20,670	704	5,426	6,130
Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Ed	13,914	15,344	1,430	3,061	4,491
Computer Systems Analysts	10,948	13,105	2,157	1,720	3,877
Lawyers	12,617	14,409	1,792	2,020	3,812
Substitute Teachers	16,570	16,999	429	2,829	3,258
Software Developers, Applications	11,747	13,465	1,718	1,506	3,224
Cost Estimators	5,013	6,188	1,175	1,610	2,785

Source: MERIC Employment Projections

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(iv) Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.

Analysis of the skills and education gaps that employers have identified is an important step in determining what training issues need to be addressed. National business surveys point to skills gaps that have negatively impacted the economy, such as a 2011 manufacturing survey that indicated 74 percent of respondents had workforce shortages or skills deficiencies in skill production jobs, even with a large number of unemployed manufacturing workers available for hire[7]. At the state level, MERIC has developed target industry competency models, conducted business surveys, and recently acquired a real-time labor market skills demand tool that provides valuable insight into the needs of Missouri employers.

MERIC conducted Industry Competency Model analysis for many of the state's targeted industry sectors, such as Energy, Information Technology, Transportation, and Life Sciences. In doing so, the reports revealed that workers will need to enhance their existing skills sets to meet the demands of new and evolving technologies used in these growing industry sectors, and employers seek a good skill mix of both technical and soft skills in their workers. Interdisciplinary knowledge is a key ingredient to success, especially in high-tech sectors. Proficiency in rules and regulations was also rated as highly important and necessary for work in today's complex business environment.

The Industry Competency Model reports also highlighted issues related to the overall aging of the workforce. The imminent retirement of a large segment of workers across the targeted sectors could result in a shortage of this specialized labor pool. The ability to produce a sustainable pipeline of skilled workers will be important for the success of these sectors and the economy as a whole.

Missouri employers indicate through job advertisements the basic and specialized skills needed to be successful in their business. While these needed skills do not necessarily point to gaps, it does provide a snapshot of skill demand and reinforces some of findings from earlier surveys and competency model analysis. MERIC researchers analyzed over 376,000 online job advertisements from November 2014 to October 2015, using a tool from Burning Glass Technologies, to determine what skills were in greatest demand over the year.

Top Missouri Real-Time Labor Demand Skills

Top Baseline Skills Needed	Rank
Communication Skills	1
Organization Skills	2
Writing	3
Customer Service	4
Problem Solving	5

HEALTHCARE Top Specific Skills Needed	Rank
Patient Care	1
Treatment Planning	2
Patient/Family Education and Instruction	3
Patient Direction	4
Collaboration	5

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY Top Specific Skills Needed	Rank
SQL	1
Oracle	2
JAVA/JavaScript	3
Technical Support	4
LINUX	5

FINANCE Top Specific Skills Needed	Rank
Accounting	1
Financial Analysis	2
Financial Statements	3
Financial Reporting	4
Business Analysis	5

ENGINEERING Top Specific Skills Needed	Rank
CAD/AutoCAD	1
Electrical Engineering	2
Mechanical Engineering	3
Repair	4
Manufacturing Processes	5

MANUFACTURING/PRODUCTION Top Specific Skills Needed	Rank
Inspection	1
Repair	2
Mathematics	3
Cleaning	4
Packaging	5

Source: Burning Glass Technologies (November 1, 2014 - October 31, 2015)

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[7] Boiling point? The skills gap in U.S. manufacturing. Deloitte Consulting and the Manufacturing Institute, 2011. Complete report at www.themanufacturinginstitute.org

When considering all occupations, common skills are listed the most in job advertisements and show that basic business fundamentals, communication, organization and writing skills are the most cited. Customer service skills and problem solving complete the list of top five common skills.

Analysis of specific occupational clusters shows more targeted skill needs in jobs related to healthcare, information technology, finance, engineering and manufacturing. Many of these occupational clusters relate to the industries Missouri has targeted for economic growth.

Basic skills cover a broad range of topics, such as reading and writing, applied math, logic flows, information gathering, ethics, etc., and mainly relate to the educational efforts of primary and secondary schools, institutions of higher learning, and workforce training programs. From the workers' standpoint, many of these skills are hopefully gained through education and early work opportunities as a younger person however evidence from skills gap analysis suggest this is still a challenge. Partnerships by educators, businesses, workforce and economic developers should continue to focus efforts on this issue as these basic skills form the foundation for successful, occupation-specific training to follow.

Specific occupational skills are learned through longer-term employment in an industry which provides training or through the more formal education of apprenticeships, community colleges, or four-year universities. Attaining these skills, outside of business experience and training, presents some challenges to job seekers, particularly those who have been unemployed for a long time period, and to educational institutions. Job seekers need affordable, flexible training alternatives, especially if the person needs to work while gaining new skills. Education providers work to keep up with industry trends and technology while also needing to adapt to new, cost-effective learning methods. As with basic skill development, stakeholders in a healthy, growing economy must also partner to meet the needs of both workers and business.

Missouri's opportunities for long-term economic growth will increasingly depend on a well educated, flexible workforce that responds quickly to changing business needs. Targeted efforts to prepare workers start at a young age, are honed through higher education and work experience, and are sustained by a culture and ability to embrace life-long learning. Taking bold, and sometimes difficult, steps to equip Missouri's workforce for success will be one of the strongest economic development tools a state can have in retaining and attracting the industries of the future.

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[1] Boiling point? The skills gap in U.S. manufacturing. Deloitte Consulting and the Manufacturing Institute, 2011. Complete report at www.themanufacturinginstitute.org

[1] Full report at www.missourieconomy.org/pdfs/2011_sostl.pdf

(2) Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis**.** The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in (a)(1)(B)(iii) above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in (a)(1)(A)(iii) above. This must include an analysis of –

(A) *The State's Workforce Development Activities*. Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and mandatory and optional one-stop delivery system partners.[8]

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

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

Missouri's WIOA partnership brings a wide range of diverse efforts to meet the education and skill needs of the workforce (labor supply) and the employment needs of employers (labor demand).

The workforce development system uses a model for customer intake and registration that encourages the participant in each program to know their skills and to determine the best manner for application and job search with those skills. Missouri Job Centers use a universal type of customer service where each client takes an initial skills assessment to determine whether they are job search ready or in need of skills remediation. They also offer a range of opportunities for skilling up clients, including workshops for resume preparation, job search and networking skills, interviewing skills and occupational exploration.

After these basic skills options, customers also have access to information and are given the opportunity at each Job Center to obtain a National Career Readiness Certification (NCRC) using the ACT skills certification system. It is anticipated that all partners' customers will benefit from these Job Center services through WIOA integration.

Partners have developed effective methods for appropriate referral. Each partner offers unique strengths and when in collaboration can further enrich service delivery. The partnerships being created through WIOA will engage the core agencies and programs in a manner never before attempted and serve to strengthen these workforce oriented services with better educational integration.

The weaknesses within the current system are not that different from others across the nation in that better connections among the workforce system with Career and Technical Education, secondary and higher education are needed. Such enhancements are being embraced and significant role definition among the partners is being discussed and incorporated into the core focuses of sector strategy and career pathways integration to make systemic improvements.

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[8] Mandatory one-stop partners**:** Each local area must have one comprehensive one-stop center that provides access to physical services of the core programs and other required partners. In addition to the core programs, for individuals with multiple needs to access the services, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the one-stops: Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American Programs, HUD Employment and Training Programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs, Unemployment Compensation Programs, and YouthBuild. TANF is now a required partner, unless the Governor takes special action to make TANF an optional one-stop partner.

The individual capacities of each partner are evident in the scope of services they provide and the exemplary performance of their programs, as measured both by federally reported performance measures and key business metrics such as total number of customers served, effective labor force attachment and skills progression. This partnership is dedicated through further integration of their programs in the environment of ongoing development of sector strategies and career pathways to prosper under a significant improvement in capacity.

(b) **State Strategic Vision and Goals.** The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategic vision and goals for developing its workforce and meeting employer needs in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include—

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

Missouri's WIOA partners will build an integrated demand-driven workforce system that leads to self-sufficiency.

(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 should—

(A) Include goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment[9] and other populations.[10]

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

Missouri recognizes that the barriers to employment adults face are the same barriers faced by youth. Therefore, Missouri is focused on the following goals for both adults and youth.

1. Overcome employment barriers.

The partners recognize that not all job seekers have the same opportunity to achieve competitive integrated employment. Many individuals, including youth, face employment barriers. The law recognizes these barriers to employment and that overcoming them improves the quality of the workforce, reduces welfare dependency, and enhances the productivity and competitiveness of the state. These barriers limit access to education, rehabilitation, employment, transportation and independent living.

2. Maximize efficiency and access to services.

Missouri has a history of looking for the best services to meet the clients' needs. Title I, Title II and Title IV are national leaders in progressive service delivery, outcomes, and leading systemic change. Missouri will continue

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

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

to lead the nation under this new law. Missouri is committed to continuous improvement, therefore, analysis will be performed at each step to meet this goal.

Each partner has an information collection process which is used to serve clients. Appropriate data will be shared between each partner to maximize efficiency. In addition, each partner will create methods of referral that will develop improved service access. Each partner can refer where appropriate, but while each partner develops knowledge of all available services, the job center will provide the conduit to the required partners.

3. Develop career pathways.

Missouri's career pathway model focuses on clients and employers. The sector strategies developed in Missouri will satisfy employers by providing qualified candidates for available positions. Clients looking for employment will use the information provided by sector strategies to know which career cluster will have the best opportunities for finding self-sufficient employment. Education and training are clear paths to better careers. Ideally, it is optimal to first obtain all the needed education and skills and then find a career. Missouri realizes that there are also clients who need to have concurrent and in some cases consecutive sessions of education and skill attainment with employment. Missouri intends to offer multiple entry and exit points for clients who need additional skills and employment until they reach a self-sufficient career.

Missouri is using Maher and Maher Consultants to develop sectors and sector strategies for Missouri's Workforce Development Boards. Each board will develop their own plan for career pathways based on local employment opportunities, educational choices, and client demographics. The local boards, with representatives of secondary and postsecondary education programs, shall lead efforts in the local area to develop and implement career pathways within the local area by aligning the employment, training, education, and supportive services that are needed by adults and youth, particularly individuals with barriers to employment.

4. Place a strong emphasis on employment retention.

Missouri recognizes the need for continuing support once initial employment is obtained. Missouri will leverage all the required partners' services to focus on helping clients maintain success in employment; research indicates that employees who receive on-going education are more likely to retain employment. In addition, up-skilling while employed can improve employment retention and career advancement.

Initial career assessment will help find long-lasting employment for clients consistent with their skills, interests and capabilities. Sector strategies and labor market information will help job centers determine employment that will be available for years into the future rather than short-term employment opportunities.
People who achieve successful long-term employment have gained more than the minimum level of skills. Missouri is committed to providing education, training, and skills above the minimum level. Missouri workers will have opportunities to gain stackable credentials and skills that will retain employment.

5. Engage employers to meet their needs.

To engage employers, Missouri partners will coordinate, collaborate and cooperate in business service programs. Emphasis will be on meeting current employment needs and forecasting employment opportunities and career advancement. The WIOA partners have representatives on business services teams that connect directly to employers. A single point of contact system with employers will be utilized. The website jobs.mo.gov, a common employment support system, can be accessed by both WIOA partner agencies and

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employers. This system provides a common employment resource. WIOA partners are also working on a statewide Sector Strategies Initiative, which involves collaboration between core programs to leverage resources to serve business.

(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.)

See Appendix 1 for Missouri's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures.

It is very important for the public knowledge about the proposed levels of performance for each program found in Attachment 1 to emphasize that all of these numbers are subject to change. The U.S. Department of Labor in partnership with the U.S. Department of Education and the Rehabilitation Services Administration have not yet released key program performance calculation instructions to the states. While the State Workforce Development Plan must be submitted by March 3, 2016, it has been estimated that the final instructions on how to calculate the performance measures are not expected to be completed by the federal agencies until as late as July 1, 2016. For this reason, readers of the State Plan must understand that the performance levels provided have been developed based upon the historical success of each program using trends and projection models to provide estimates proposed for use when further negotiations are held with the federal government.

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

All of the core partners will be involved in assessing the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system as well as determining how to best use the results in pursuit of continuous improvement. The assessment will include the utilization of data to identify the efficacy of initiatives implemented to meet the goals, a review of governmental structure and policies, evaluation of interagency partnerships and an investment in shared technology. Missouri's goal for assessment is to ensure a statewide demand-driven workforce system.

(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 Section (a).

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Strategy #1- Utilize Partnerships to Provide High-Quality Customer Service
Strategy #2 - Create Sector Strategies
Strategy #3 - Develop Career Pathways
Strategy #4 - Leverage Leadership from Core Partners to Move Forward on Missouri Goals
Strategy #5 - Create Environments that Foster Local Partnerships
Strategy #6 - Devote and Reallocate Resources that Generate Partnerships

(1) Describe the strategies the State will implement, including sector strategies and career pathways, as required by WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D).

Missouri has been a national leader in creating and implementing progressive models in service design and delivery and, in many cases, WIOA codifies work already accomplished in Missouri. Of Missouri's six strategies to achieve our strategic vision and goals, the first three are strategies the state will use to implement WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D):

Strategy #1 - Utilize Partnerships to Provide High-Quality Customer Service
Strategy #2 - Create Sector Strategies
Strategy #3 - Develop Career Pathways

Strategy #1 – Utilize Partnerships to Provide High-Quality Customer Service

Each WIOA partner is committed to providing the highest quality customer service possible. This is evident in the ways Missouri's customer service methodologies are used as models across the nation. WIOA has written into law many of the initiatives Missouri has already undertaken but also reemphasizes the need to continue to look for ways to enhance customer service with a focus on improving co-enrollment and synergizing services.

Every partner will create as many opportunities to connect additional services for the client as possible. These opportunities are to be accomplished through creative and innovative methods including co-location, knowledge of other services, better communication, and leveraging supportive services provided by mandatory partners.

Effectively meeting client needs means providing the most comprehensive service for the client using the entities that are dedicated to providing that service. Improving methods of sharing of clients and client information will avoid the necessity for any partner to create redundant services and use resources to recreate services already provided.

Strategy #2 – Create Sector Strategies

Sector Strategies and Career Pathways:

Missouri recognizes effective sector-based strategies require an openness to a new way of doing business and new levels of cooperation among stakeholders in workforce, economic development and education. Our approach expands efforts to ensure that the entire state is developing and implementing a more systematic and streamlined approach to sector strategies, while allowing regional flexibility in service design and delivery. To assist in our efforts, Missouri has partnered with the consulting firm Maher & Maher, a specialized change management and workforce development consulting firm, to provide guidance during the launch year and

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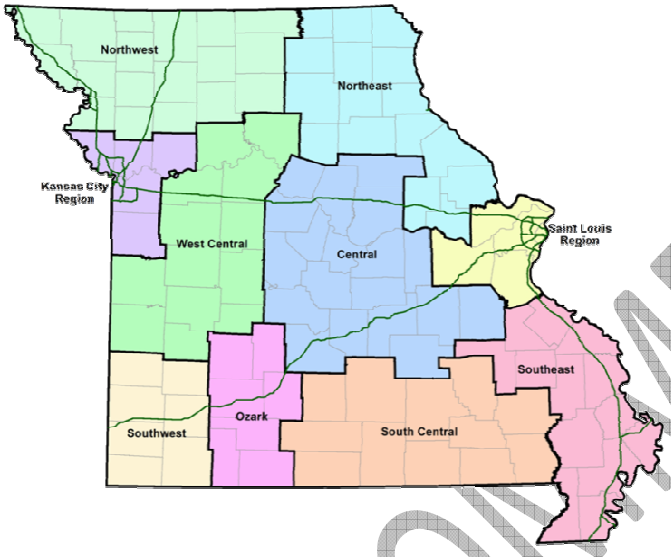
establish a foundation to achieve transformative system change. Tools developed during launch will enable regional teams to embark on achieving a shared vision of building a talented and skilled workforce that would meet employer needs and ultimately spur economic growth in Missouri's 10 Economic Development Regions.



Following is a comprehensive outline describing Missouri's vision and project mission to implementing sector strategies and career pathways. It includes a portion of the team charter adopted by the Statewide Sector Strategies Steering Team consisting of all core WIOA partners. It articulates a timeline and aligns team members around a common sector framework of being data driven, regional focus and guided by industry.

Statewide Sector Strategies Steering Team	Regional Sector Strategy Team
Governor's Office	Local Elected Official
Department of Economic Development	Regional/Local Economic Development
State Workforce Development Board	Local Workforce Development Boards/Directors
Division of Workforce Development	Division of Workforce Development
Department of Elementary and Secondary Ed.	K-12 Representatives
Department of Higher Education	Higher Education
Community/Technical Colleges	Community/Technical College
Adult Education	Adult Education
Vocational Rehabilitation	Vocational Rehabilitation
Department of Social Services – Family Support Division	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Missouri Employment and Training Program
Department of Labor & Industrial Relations	Targeted Industry Organizations
State Chamber	Local Chamber
Industry Organizations	Community Based Organizations
MERIC	Career & Technical Education Career Center

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Sector Strategy Vision

Missouri will have a talent development system that supports strong regional economies by aligning the resources of all partners, public and private, toward developing a talent pipeline that creates meaningful career pathways for a range of workers and skill levels in important regional industries.

System services will be framed by industry sector initiatives that are data driven, regionally designed, and guided by business; the State will support sector initiatives through policy, board/staff development, funding, and other activities; and public partners will be committed to allocating (and/or re-allocating) existing resources to support sector/pathway partnership initiatives.

The sector system is governed regionally and the strategies are directly reflected in unified regional and local plans that integrate education, training, support services, and other workforce services. Those plans are implemented across organizational silos, and from the regional level to the service delivery level, where everyone is aligned to sector needs and goals.

Sector Strategy Mission

Interdisciplinary public/private sector teams at the statewide and regional levels will be facilitated through a process to plan, build, begin to implement, and provide for sustaining a talent development system erected on a foundation of delivering workforce-related services through a sector strategy framework based at the regional level. This involves building support for transformative system change, and providing venues, processes, best practices, and tools that enable the project team to embark on achieving the State's vision. The project will seek to ensure that:

- **Local public and private stakeholders partner and provide leadership to formulate comprehensive data-based regional workforce and economic development strategies;**

- **Local workforce boards, workforce development areas, economic development entities, technical/community colleges, and public education systems collaborate as a team with critical industry employers to plan regionally and deliver services efficiently and effectively; and**

- **Strategic and operational aspects continuously interact to adjust to changing conditions in building regional talent pipelines, addressing skill gaps, and creating meaningful career pathways for a range of workers and skill levels in important regional industries.**

Sector Strategy Project Phases

Sector Strategies, which are regional, industry-focused approaches to building skilled workforces, are proving to be one of the most effective ways to align public institutions and agencies with industry to address the talent needs of employers. Project activities begin with an extensive data analysis that identifies statewide growth industry sectors and potential growth sectors for the economy in each of Missouri's 10 Economic Development Regions. Throughout the project launch year, a framework will be designed to support development of diverse sector partnerships to advance talent development, further develop integration of career pathways, identify and align resources to support collaborative strategies, and help align business and job seeker service delivery strategies. At the conclusion of the launch year, Maher and Maher will provide Missouri with a web-based toolkit of project resources and a content management system to host the toolkit.

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They will also provide a final report that will provide the roadmap by which regional sector strategies will be implemented. Missouri will use Maher and Maher's guided resources as a catalyst moving forward to better align workforce programs with each other and with the needs of employers for a skilled workforce.

Phase I: Data Analysis

- **Gather, synthesize, and analyze economic, workforce, and education data**

Phase II: Workforce Development Planning

- **Statewide and regional target sectors validated by leaders**
- **Regional self-assessment of readiness**
- **Statewide launch- facilitated support for regional sector plan development**

Phase III: Industry Engagement and Launch Meetings

- **Regional launch meetings with industry in each of the 10 Economic Development Regions**

Phase IV: Toolkits and Final Documents

- **Web-based toolkit to support regional implementation of sector strategies statewide**

Strategy #3 – Develop Career Pathways

Missouri's career pathway strategy is to focus on client and employer. Education and training are clear paths to better careers. Ideally, it is optimal to first obtain all the needed education and skills and then find a career. Missouri realizes that there are also clients who need to have concurrent and in some cases consecutive sessions of education and skill attainment with employment. Missouri intends to offer multiple entry and exit points for clients who need additional skills and employment until they reach a self-sufficient career.

(2) Describe the strategies the State will use to align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, mandatory 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 gaps identified in the State's workforce analysis.

The strategies Missouri will use to align the core programs are:

Strategy #4 - Leverage Leadership from Core Partners to Move Forward on Missouri Goals **Strategy #5 - Create Environments that Foster Local Partnerships** **Strategy #6 - Devoting and Reallocating Resources that Generate Partnerships**

Strategy #4 - Leadership from Core Partners to Move Forward on Missouri Goals

Missouri provides progressive leadership at the state level to effect change. In order to align the core programs, Missouri set the stage by creating committees at the state level where each of the core partners

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were represented. The committees were to establish policy at the state level as well as provide guidance to the local partners to carry out the WIOA state vision.

Strategy #5 - Create Environments that Foster Local Partnerships

Missouri continues to create opportunities where representatives from all available partners can meet, discuss their services and needs, and design new ways to partner motivated by new goal requirements. This has proven to be one of Missouri's most effective strategies to create alignment across agencies.

Missouri's combined partners have committed to creating multiple opportunities to create an environment of partnership. Focusing on the five state goals, multiple meetings are being held for local partners to meet, learn about available services, and foster partnering opportunities.

Strategy #6 - Devote and Reallocate Resources that Generate Partnerships

WIOA is a call to partner in new and better ways. Missouri's strategy to meet this call is to show our resolve to partnership by committing resources to create new or enhance existing partnerships. Missouri committed to using resources to benefit our mutual customers and provide funding to encourage partners to work together.

Missouri is committed to finding connections between core partners, mandatory partners, and partners in each region. Missouri's core and mandatory partners are reallocating resources to create environments to foster partnering at the local level as well as maintain resource allocations that keep existing partnerships at the local level.

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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).

The Missouri Workforce Development Board (MoWDB) was in place during implementation of the Workforce Investment Act and will remain as the policy board for WIOA implementation.

The MoWDB assists the Governor in carrying out its functions by providing the "table" of leadership among partner agencies to convene regular and ad hoc meetings as necessary. The State Board is committed to the alignment and a streamlined workforce development system furthering the vision of the State Agency Steering Committee.

A state plan development process was launched by the Board. The State Board Planning Committee led the overview and endorsement of the draft State Plan narrative. Ultimately the State Board approved the State Plan.

Members of the State Board are united in furthering the implementation of systemic changes in WIOA concerning the identification of barriers to employment; development, endorsement and implementing strategies to eliminate employment barriers. Currently, the solidification and unification of a multi-faceted career pathways model is also an objective and implementation priority. These objectives and others will be included in a statewide outreach and communication strategy that will effectively serve in marketing WIOA and will especially aim to create branding notoriety and brand management for America's Job Centers within Missouri.

A core focus of the State Board objectives includes the Sector Strategies Initiative. The firm Maher and Maher was secured and this initiative was launched in October 2015. From this model, the consultant developed and the Board endorsed the essential employer engagement within local workforce board areas to identify and promote the correct sector strategies within each region.

The State Board will also lead continuous improvement, quality management and oversight within the system. This will include state training and cross-training of staff to be incorporated into the state performance accountability system.

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

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(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.

Strategy #1 - Utilize Partnerships to Provide High-Quality Customer Service
Strategy #2 - Create Sector Strategies
Strategy #3 - Develop Career Pathways
Strategy #4 - Leverage Leadership from Core Partners to Move Forward on Missouri Goals
Strategy #5 - Create Environments that Foster Local Partnerships
Strategy #6 - Devote and Reallocate Resources that Generate Partnerships

Strategy #1- Utilize Partnerships to Provide High-Quality Customer Service

Updated Missouri Job Center Activities

In 2009, the Division of Workforce Development (DWD) and the Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) designed the Next Generation Career Center (NGCC) service delivery model, which was the original strategic framework of principles to streamline job center processes. WIOA required the Missouri Career Centers to be renamed Missouri Job Centers and the Local Workforce Development Board to be renamed Local Workforce Development Boards. It is in this same spirit of responding to both a changing economy and to the changing needs of the customers of the Missouri Job Centers that Missouri is working toward the new state vision of WIOA.

The new strategic framework for Missouri's Workforce System includes the following:

1. **Integrate Services to Better Serve Customers**
   a. **Missouri's Job Centers will continue to move beyond mere partnership to true integrated service delivery for all of our customers.**
   b. **The Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program partners commit to a strengthened partnership so customers can easily reap the full benefits of the workforce system.**
   c. **Job Centers implement an integrated customer flow that responds to customer needs. Staff-supported services are emphasized and Job Center services are continuously promoted and provided until the customer's goal has been achieved. This integrated flow has three major functions: welcome/assessment, skill development, and employment.**
   d. **Cross-trained Job Center staff fulfills all of these customer flow functions. Staff focus on the service function and not on silo programs.**
   e. **All Job Center customers are enrolled in the performance pool of both the WIOA Adult program and Wagner-Peyser program during the first Job Center visit. All Trade Act customers are enrolled in the performance pool of the WIOA Dislocated Worker program.**

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f. **Enhanced opportunities will be provided for the customers of the Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and TANF program partners to be easily co-enrolled in the Wagner-Peyser and/or the Adult programs, so customers can benefit from comprehensive workforce services.**

2. **Lean Processes and Streamline Service Delivery by Removing Bureaucratic Barriers and Waste**
   a. **In order to serve customers better, reserve staff time for value-added service delivery, and make integrated services a reality Missouri's partners will continue to actively work to streamline requirements and alleviate bureaucratic barriers. Missouri will continue to look for opportunities to remove unneeded paperwork, move to paperless files whenever possible, reduce unnecessary documentation and reporting, and ensure all policies and requirements support integrated and efficient service delivery.**
   b. **Missouri partners will focus on quality service delivery with compliance as a necessary responsibility. Local partners will continue to streamline their own policies, procedures and practices. Missouri will ask no more than what is required by state policy regarding customer eligibility and data system management.**

Effective Referral Activities

HUB Model

While the ultimate goal is to develop interconnections to and from all 19 required One-Stop partners, Missouri will begin this effort by using the MJC network as the central hub for interagency referrals and service integration.

In order to meet the requirement to provide a direct connection from the MJC to each required partner's services, Missouri will hold all MJC staff accountable for knowing enough about each available service in order to give an individual the information they need to make an informed choice as to whether or not to access the services. We plan to accomplish this through the development of local resource guides for each Job Center and significant staff training. The local resource guide developed by MJC staff will be shared with each of the 19 required partners in order to facilitate referrals to the MJC for direct access to any service in the system.

DWD will also require MJC staff to document every referral including the method of referral and subsequent follow-up. Each referral must include an initial assessment (to the degree information can be shared), listing of services already planned, and the service requested of the organization receiving the referrals.

Core and mandatory partners have committed to using the provided resource guide to first provide good referrals to the local Job Center and also increasing their knowledge of any other available and applicable service providers. Each partner has also committed to using the model of documenting referrals and completing follow up of referred clients to be consistent in the activity. This information will be used to measure referral activity and success rates of co-enrollment and alignment of services.

There are additional partner-based activities that are being used to align activities across the core programs. Examples include:

- **TANF: Any participant referred to Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) must complete the same assessment as required by Title I (Career Ready 101).**
- **TANF: Ability to apply for benefits online**

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- **SNAP E&T program will be operated through the Missouri Job Center system. Each SNAP recipient will be co-enrolled in Title I and Title III services to provide them immediate access to career pathways information, training and employment services.**
- **FSD allows for the use of jobs.mo.gov for their clients job search. The time is counted towards their required participation hours for the respective programs.**
- **Title II is currently negotiating with all WIOA partners market Title II services to any client needing educational services as well as researching improved ways to provide information and services.**
- **Title IV: VR is actively participating with all local workforce boards and works closely with Missouri Job Centers to provide program accessibility, physical access to services, and assistive technology for people with disabilities.**

Strategy #2 -Create Sector Strategies

Sector Strategy Activities

Missouri recognizes effective sector-based strategies require an openness to a new way of doing business and new levels of cooperation among stakeholders in workforce, economic development and education. Our approach expands efforts to ensure that the entire state is developing and implementing a more systematic and streamlined approach to sector strategies, while allowing regional flexibility in service design and delivery. To assist in our efforts, Missouri has partnered with the consulting firm Maher & Maher, a specialized change management and workforce development consulting firm, to provide guidance during the launch year and establish a foundation to achieve transformative system change. Tools developed during launch will enable regional teams to embark on achieving a shared vision of building a talented and skilled workforce that would meet employer needs and ultimately spur economic growth in Missouri's 10 Economic Development Regions.

Strategy #3 -Develop Career Pathways

Career Pathway Activities

Missouri's career pathway model will focus on the jobseeker and the employer. The sector strategies developed in Missouri will satisfy employers by providing qualified candidates for available positions and the jobseekers will use the information to know which career cluster will have the best opportunities for finding self-sufficient employment and the pathways available to reach their goals. Education and training are clear paths to better careers. Ideally, it is optimal to first obtain all the needed education and skills and then find a career. Missouri realizes that there are also clients who need to have concurrent and in some cases consecutive sessions of education and skill attainment with employment. Missouri intends to offer multiple entries and exit points for clients who need additional skills and employment until they reach a self-sufficient career.

All partners are committed to support the efforts of the other partners by ensuring that their services are available to the participants referred by WIOA partners. It is our mutual agreement that once any partner sets an individual on a career pathway, it is every other partner's responsibility to contribute, as appropriate, to the participant's success along the pathway.

Missouri's examples include:

- **Scholars@Work: Title I and Title II are partnering to provide an exciting opportunity for those receiving both services. The participants in this pilot receive Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) education classes concurrently with employment and employability skills. Youth earn a paycheck while pursuing**

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their High School Equivalency. This project overcomes one of the greatest challenges youth face in meeting a career goal. Through stipends to take care of financial needs along with individualized coaching and training, youth can earn the equivalent of a high school diploma on a pathway to success.

- **Developing new initiatives to expand apprenticeship opportunities for Adult, Dislocated Workers & Youth such as new contracts with the labor organizations such as AFL-CIO and the UAW. We are working with local employers to develop apprenticeship opportunities.**

- **In addition to training services, the Title I & Title IV partners have work based programs such as on-the-job training and work experience which offer the customers the opportunity to combine education, training and employment services. VR & Rehabilitation Services for the Blind supports career pathways by providing a variety of services to students, youth and adults with disabilities. Additional services may include assistive technology, case-management, and post-employment support to provide job retention.**

- **The Adult Education program is piloting a new staffing role within Adult Education local programs to connect students with core and required partners, local employers, and post-secondary institutions. Each local AEL local program will receive funding to participate in the pilot. Each pilot will hire a case manager/job coach to be responsible for connecting targeted AEL students with available partners, services, and opportunities to achieve employment and/or post-secondary enrollment focusing on student success and making the connections with available partners.**

- **Place a strong emphasis on employment retention - Missouri Adult Education currently provides services to employed/incumbent students. Studies show that those who improve their education also improve their employment and promotion opportunities. Missouri's Local Adult Education program staff will counsel each student to determine their educational goals and assist them with obtaining pathway knowledge to help them retain employment and continue to create promotional opportunities. If needed they will connect these individuals with resources from the workforce partners to help them achieve their goals.**

- **The major barriers to employment for all partners participants is a lack of a high school diploma, low educational skills, and lack of English language skills. Missouri's AEL funded classrooms are preferred providers in overcoming educational barriers. All partners have access to direct linkages to Adult Education.**

- **TANF provides supportive services that assist workforce customers the ability to remove barriers with overcoming barriers to begin career pathways.**

- **Using TANF funds, the Title I partners are able to provide subsidized employment during the summer months to youth between the ages of 16-24 that are at or below the 185% poverty level. Partnering with Vocational Rehabilitation, the partners may be able to place individuals with disabilities that need workplace coaches into positions.**

- **The Family Support Division offers customers access to computers in their local offices to complete job searches using the workforce site jobs.mo.gov, which is counted towards meeting the employment requirements for TANF.**

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- **The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training Program will be operated through the Missouri Job Center system. Each SNAP recipient will be co-enrolled in Title I and Title III services to provide them immediate access to career pathways information, training and employment services.**

- **Missouri Community Colleges and the Missouri Job Centers partner with the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant programs. This program targets Trade Act Assistance workers, veterans, unemployed, underemployed and low skilled workers and prepares them for employment in high-wage, high-skill occupations. The Community Colleges design programs that are responsive to the workforce needs of multiple employers within an industry sector by working closely with regional and national employers and industry groups. These employer and industry partners will help identify and map necessary skills and competencies, as well as assist in designing curricula, programs, assessments or credentials that will help quickly connect ready-to-work Americans with ready-to-be-filled jobs.**

Strategy #4 - Leverage Leadership from Core Partners to Move Forward on Missouri Goals

Missouri WIOA Steering Committee

State agency leaders from the combined agencies created a steering committee to guide Missouri's combined partners in developing a vision, goals and activities for Missouri's local workforce development boards. They were charged with providing consistent messaging from all partners. Each combined plan partner has committed to consistent messaging toward aligning programs and has shared Missouri's strategic vision and goals. Missouri's initiated a State-level Memo of Understanding that informed all partners Missouri values finding ways to work together.

Subcommittees were created to focus on aligning combined partners and strengthening workforce development activities. The subcommittees are: Administrative, Service Design and Delivery, Employer Engagement, Technology, Data and Outcomes, Youth Services, One-Stop Certification, Infrastructure

- **Administrative: Core partner identification, State Interagency Agreements (Local MOUs), Agreements and MOUs with other Agencies/Institutions, Cross Training and Technical Assistance, Labor Market Information, State and Local Board Membership composition**

- **Service Design and Delivery: Programmatic descriptions for quality referrals, Referral and follow up, Transition and Youth, Assistive Technology Services**

- **Employer Engagement: Services to employers, Sector Strategies and Career Pathways, Labor Market Information**

- **Technology, Data and Outcomes: Data sharing, data fields, data collection points, confidentiality**

- **Youth Services: Develop methods and strategies to support collaboration between partner agencies, promote greater understanding of the services provided by each agency, discover methods to avoid duplication of services**

- **One-Stop Certification: Establish criteria and procedures for Local Boards to use when certifying one-stop centers**

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- **Infrastructure: Determine state agency infrastructure costs to be shared with local WDB's**

Strategy #5 - Create Environments that Foster Local Partnerships

Missouri has begun the process of fostering local partnership with a series of meetings and conferences to connect Core Partners, Mandatory Partners, Optional Partners, as well as any stakeholders who can assist clients we serve.

Title I:

- **Held a meeting of stakeholders to define the new law, new responsibilities, opportunities for partnering, and strategies to enhance service delivery within the Missouri WIOA system to maximize participant success.**
- **Held a Sector Strategy Meeting where stakeholders from WIOA as well as local Workforce Board regions (employers, etc.) to discuss data and targeted employment sectors.**
- **Hosted a joint youth summit with Title II and IV to inform Local Board and subcontractor staff of WIOA changes.**

TANF:

- **Offered a WIOA Partnership Meeting conference of all partners to describe the services offered, who is eligible, and how best to connect services. This conference used regional breakout sessions to allow stakeholders to meet and plan for implementation of WIOA.**

Title IV:

- **Hosted a business outreach partner meeting for stakeholders who work with employers and employer engagement. The meeting began with presentations on each partner service and a best-fit for employer engagement. The regional break-out sessions created an environment of collaboration.**

Strategy #6 - Devoting and Reallocating Resources that Generate Partnerships

Missouri's partners are dedicating resources to implement WIOA through improved communication and collaboration.

- **Title II is allocating resources to each local provider to find successful processes to create linkages between core and mandatory partners, local employers, and post-secondary institutions. The best practices will be shared with all WIOA partners.**
- **Title III (Wagner-Peyser) is allocating resources to provide National Career Readiness Certificate testing for all of Missouri's Community Colleges.**
- **Title IV has used liaison positions for over 10 years to specifically focus on partnering with key agencies, such as Missouri Department of Mental Health, all Missouri Workforce Development Boards, Centers of Independent Living and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Office of Special Education. These positions have been enhanced to include all mandatory partners under WIOA and continue to create linkages enabling an effective coordination and delivery of services.**

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(B) *Alignment with Activities outside the Plan.* Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be aligned with programs and activities provided by mandatory 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.

Updated Missouri Job Center Activities

The new strategic framework for Missouri's Workforce System includes the following:

Activity #1: Engage More Businesses, Improve Business Services, and Link with Economic Development.
Local Boards will work with partners to:

- **Develop strategies to actively engage businesses and seek the workforce intelligence needed to develop effective, demand-driven services for workforce system customers;**
- **Customize and disseminate labor market information that will contribute to the human resource planning for businesses and information needs of economic development partners;**
- **Coordinate with state, regional, and local economic development partners in recruiting, retaining, and expanding businesses for vibrant local economies;**
- **Ensure that Job Centers offer customized comprehensive recruitment services that help businesses find the workers they need through easy access to the full range of workforce system talent, services, and partners;**
- **Support entrepreneurial skill development to help individuals start and grow businesses to help local economies thrive;**
- **Regionally target key economic sectors, convene those sectors, map talent pipelines, and develop career pathways to ensure businesses have available the qualified workforce they need to grow and prosper;**
- **Continuously seek alignment of the workforce system and Job Center services with the identified needs of the targeted sectors.**

Activity #2: Creating Effective Referral Activities. Missouri will align with partners outside of WIOA by using a central hub model.

- **Hub Model**

  In order to meet the requirement to provide a direct connection from the MJC to each required partners' services, DWD will hold all MJC staff accountable for knowing enough about each available service in order to give an individual the information they need to make an informed choice as to whether or not to access the services. We plan to accomplish this through the development of local resource guides for each Job Center and significant staff training. The local resource guide developed by MJC staff will be shared with each of the 19 required partners in order to facilitate referrals to the MJC for direct access to any service in the system.

  Policy will require MJC staff to document every referral including the method of referral and subsequent follow-up. Each referral must include an initial assessment (to the degree information can be shared), listing of services already planned, and the service requested of the organization receiving the referrals.

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Any applicable partnerships that are created between local partners that are not in the local resource guide will be reported to the nearest job center for addition to the guide.

- **Title I has dedicated phone lines for UI claimants to file a claim and/or resolve issues related to a claim.**
- **The Childcare Program has worked with Job Centers to accept childcare applications and submit them to the Family Support Division for processing.**
- **Title IV: To provide services for people with disabilities, VR partners with organizations outside the workforce system such as community rehabilitation providers, Centers for Independent Living, and local education agencies.**

Activity #3: Developing and Delivering Sector Strategies Activities

Missouri recognizes effective sector-based strategies require an openness to a new way of doing business and new levels of cooperation among stakeholders in workforce, economic development and education. Our approach expands efforts to ensure that the entire state is developing and implementing a more systematic and streamlined approach to sector strategies, while allowing regional flexibility in service design and delivery. To assist in our efforts, Missouri has partnered with the consulting firm Maher & Maher, a specialized change management and workforce development consulting firm, to provide guidance during the launch year and establish a foundation to achieve transformative system change. Tools developed during launch will enable regional teams to embark on achieving a shared vision of building a talented and skilled workforce that would meet employer needs and ultimately spur economic growth in Missouri's 10 Economic Development Regions.

Activity #4: Career Pathway Activities

- **Title I is creating new initiatives to develop apprenticeship opportunities. New apprentiships are being developed with local employers and new contracts are being established with AFL-CIO, UAW.**
- **Local Chambers of Commerce are being encouraged to sign up members to take the ShowMe Heroes pledge and receive recognition from the Governor's Office.**

Activity #5: Activities Designed to Foster Local Partnerships

- **Missouri's Adult Education is currently negotiating with all WIOA partners to market Title II services to any client needing educational services as well as researching improved ways to provide information and services.**
- **The development of the MJC resource guide will require outreach to, and coordination with, service providers outside of the plan to ensure a robust mix of services are available for participants.**

Activity #6: Partnership Resource Activities

- **Title II is allocating resources to each local provider to find successful processes to create linkages between core and mandatory partners, local employers, and post-secondary institutions. The best practices will be shared with all WIOA partners.**
- **Title III (Wagner-Peyser) is allocating resources to provide National Career Readiness Certificate testing for all of Missouri's community colleges.**
- **Title IV has used liaison positions for over 10 years to specifically focus on partnering with key agencies, such as Missouri Department of Mental Health, all Missouri Workforce Development**

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Boards, Centers of Independent Living and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Office of Special Education. These positions have been enhanced to include all mandatory partners under WIOA and continue to create linkages enabling an effective coordination and delivery of services.

- **Title IV is using an existing partnership with Missouri's Department of Mental Health to align both services to WIOA.**

(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 mandatory and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services, including supportive services to individuals including those populations identified in section II(a)(1)(B). The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

The Hub Model will provide high-quality, customer-centered services, including supportive services, which will be delivered through Missouri's Job Center (MJC) system. It brings together workforce development, education, and other human resource services in a seamless customer focused delivery network that enhances access to the programs' services. Though this long term employment outcomes are improved for individuals receiving assistance. One-stop partners administer separately funded programs in compliance with their individual statutory requirements while continuing to provide a set of integrated streamlined services to customers.

- **Scholars@Work: Title I and Title II are partnering to provide an exciting opportunity for those receiving both services. The participants in this pilot receive AEL education classes concurrently with employment and employability skills. Youth earn a paycheck while pursuing their High School Equivalency. This project overcomes one of the greatest challenges youth face in meeting a career goal. Through stipends to take care of financial needs along with individualized coaching and training, youth can earn the equivalent of a high school diploma on a pathway to success.**

- **Title II: Lack of a high school diploma, low educational skills, and lack of English language skills are each barriers to self-sustaining employment. Missouri's AEL provides classes so people can overcome educational barriers. Attendance in class is necessary to be successful in gaining education. Title II has shared the most common barriers to attendance with all WIOA partners and is designing ways to work with partners to address these barriers for each client.**

- **Missouri partners are researching ways to maximize limited resources and reduce duplication of services where possible**

- **The new strategic framework for Missouri's Workforce System includes the following:**

  1. **Integrate Services to Better Serve Customers**
     a. **Missouri's Job Centers will continue to move beyond mere partnership to true integrated service delivery for all of our customers.**
     b. **The Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program partners commit**

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to a strengthened partnership so customers can easily garner the full benefits of the workforce system.

c. **Job Centers implement an integrated customer flow that responds to customer needs. Staff-supported services are emphasized and Job Center services are continuously promoted and provided until the customer's goal has been achieved. This integrated flow has three major functions: welcome/assessment, skill development, and employment.**
d. **Cross-trained Job Center staff fulfills all of these customer flow functions. Staff focus on the service function and not on silo programs.**
e. **All Job Center customers are enrolled in the performance pool of both the WIOA Adult program and Wagner-Peyser program during the first Job Center visit. All Trade Act customers are enrolled in the performance pool of the WIOA Dislocated Worker program.**
f. **Enhanced opportunities will be provided for the customers of the Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and TANF program partners to be easily co-enrolled in the Wagner-Peyser and/or the Adult programs, so customers can benefit from comprehensive workforce services.**

2. **Lean Processes and Streamline Service Delivery by Removing Bureaucratic Barriers and Waste**
   a. **In order to serve customers better, reserve staff time for value-added service delivery, and make integrated services a reality, Missouri will continue to actively work to streamline requirements and alleviate bureaucratic silo barriers to providing customer-focused quality service. Missouri will continue to look for opportunities to remove unneeded paperwork, move to paperless files whenever possible, reduce unnecessary documentation and reporting, and ensure all policies and requirements support integrated and efficient service delivery.**
   b. **DWD will continue to focus its monitoring on quality service delivery and with compliance as a necessary responsibility. Local partners will continue to streamline their own policies, procedures and practices; and require no more than what is required by state policy regarding customer eligibility and data system management.**

- **WIOA partners are committed to support the efforts of the other partners by ensuring that their services are made available to all WIOA participants referred by WIOA partners. It is our mutual agreement that once any partner sets an individual on a career pathway, it is every other partner's responsibility to contribute, as appropriate, to the participant's success along the pathway.**

- **Missouri is piloting a new role within Adult Education offices to connect students with core and required partners, local employers, and post-secondary institutions, called Transitions in Partnership (TIP). Each local AEL office will receive resources to be a part of the pilot. Each pilot will be involved using a person dedicated to connecting targeted AEL students with available partners, services, and opportunities to achieve employment and/or post-secondary enrollment which focuses on student success and making the connections with available partners. Each pilot will run through Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017, and each program will produce a final report to develop best practices. The best practices will be shared with all WIOA partners.**

(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, mandatory and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and

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projected workforce needs. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

Identifying and Meeting the Needs of Business

Missouri uses an integrated approach to service delivery for business customers. An emphasis has been placed on products and services that assess candidate skills and provide for skills enhancement, resulting in better candidates for the business customer. Missouri has multiple initiatives to assess candidate skills, upgrade workplace skills and connect businesses with job seekers.

Each workforce area has a Business Services Team plan that guides outreach and services to businesses. Business Services Teams are made up of workforce system staff whose mission is to connect employers to a skilled workforce. To ensure an integrated service model, teams now include business representatives from Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) along with other core and required partners who touch businesses. While the design and makeup of each team varies slightly from region to region, the basic structure and outcome of this model is the same. At a minimum, the members of the teams include business representatives and other Job Center staff assigned to business services, OJT Marketing Specialists, Local Veterans Employment Representatives, VR Business Outreach Specialists and a variety of other partners who work with businesses. Additionally, the Kansas City and Vicinity Region employs Disability Program Navigators, which are also included on their business services team.

Business services teams meet on a regular basis to discuss, coordinate and develop strategies to meet the specific needs of businesses in their local workforce region. Each local team has established strategies to determine business needs in their region. These include the use of labor market information, involvement and coordination with local Chambers of Commerce, local educational agencies, local and state economic developers, regional planning commissions, human resource groups and other business organizations. Each workforce region is now engaging in sector planning to better address skills gaps and create career pathways. Missouri has contracted with a consultant to provide technical assistance and guidance to each region in developing sector strategies. In early 2016, all workforce regions will fully launch regional sector partnerships with key industries.

Business services teams are demand driven and strive to accommodate employer requests or provide referral to resources that can meet their needs. A demand-driven message is conveyed to all staff through the Workforce Development Board Directors, Business services team leaders, Job Center functional leaders and WIOA partner staff. Business services drives the products and services offered in the workforce system. Teams are aware of the business climate and current workforce needs of businesses in their regions. This allows the system to offer the appropriate products and services that will prepare jobs seekers to meet current demands.

Each region's employer outreach goals and procedures, as well as each core partner's specific procedures are outline in their respective business services plans and are shared and coordinated with business services team staff. Those regions with high concentrations of agricultural employers also have agricultural outreach plans. Outreach is conducted to both agricultural and non-agricultural businesses on a daily basis through various methods, including regional employer meetings and forums, through local human resource groups, agricultural and other industry associations, Chambers of Commerce as well as direct contact with individual businesses. In addition, the State Monitor Advocate and regional agricultural outreach staff coordinate with the business services teams to ensure coordinated agricultural outreach.

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In order to better serve employers with their diversity outreach needs, Missouri's workforce system has partnered with VR to access technical assistance from Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) National Center on Leadership for the Employment and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities (LEAD Center). Through this collaboration, partners have developed a statewide survey which will be sent to gather basic inclusion practices by businesses and provide opportunities for outreach to businesses for assistance in meeting their needs in connecting with qualified, diverse candidates.

To ensure continuous improvement, DWD has created two new positions aimed at improving services to business customers. The Employer Satisfaction Coordinator will be surveying employer customers and assessing the effectiveness of services provided to businesses, determining employer satisfaction and providing feedback to workforce directors and business services teams. The Business Services Coordinator will be continuously reviewing job orders with a lack of adequate referrals to identify issues and help regions and individual employers with revising orders to ensure maximum results. In addition, the Employer Engagement Committee, made up of state level staff from all core partner agencies, has been established to provide guidance to regions, make recommendations to the State Steering Committee, and coordinate statewide meetings as needed to ensure continued partner collaboration.

Missouri encourages a single point of contact system. Each regional team has developed protocols and procedures necessary to avoid duplication of efforts and are outlined in their regional business outreach plans. A common case management system, Toolbox, is available to workforce system staff to document employer contacts and services provided. Through WIOA collaboration, the Toolbox system will be utilized by all VR Business Representatives and other core partner staff that touch businesses to document their business contacts. A common database allows business team members to better coordinate and avoid duplicative employer contacts through easy access to service notes, program participation and job order history. Through cross training and collaborative meetings with outreach staff from all partners, the business services teams have an understanding of each agency's business focused programs and services. This allows staff to provide information on all relevant programs to business customers and to integrate and coordinate services among agencies. In addition, teams have identified common programs and services, such as On-the-Job Training, which can be co-marketed to employers.

(E) *Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions.* Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's education and training providers, including community colleges and area career and technical education schools, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system.

Education will be the key for successfully implementing career pathway programs within each region's identified sectors. Using leveraged resources and labor market data, the partners, which include business and education, will build upon current programs and create new strategies to provide training for individuals to find employment in their communities with opportunities for growth.

Using the states strategies, which focus on customer service, sector strategies and career pathways, we will collaborate with our educational partners create accessible training programs that meet the needs of our customers and will provide them with meaningful training.

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

The state and local areas will work together to better align and utilize resources for education and training options to help low-income individuals, especially those with limited skills or barriers to economic success, earn meaningful credentials and advance in the workplace. Using asset mapping strategies and through the development of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), each region will have the ability to discuss how cost sharing will occur for optimal benefit to the job seeker.

The one-stop delivery system works closely with education providers to provide customers with a large amount of educational offerings. All education providers are listed on the State's ETPS. This ensures customer choice and satisfaction while ensuring program effectiveness. Missouri's strategy to meet this call is to show our resolve to partnership by committing resources to create new or enhance existing partnerships. Missouri is committed to using resources to benefit our mutual customers and provide funding to encourage partners to work together.

(G) *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.

As described in Section III. (a)(2)(E), the State works closely with education providers to ensure participant access to post-secondary credentials such as diplomas, certificates, and degrees. The partners will work together to focus on strategies to improve access to post-secondary credentials by creating comprehensive and flexible service delivery models which are directly tied to the needs of the labor market and high-demand occupations in the local areas. The Job Center staff will work with each customer to create a comprehensive service plan for their career pathway which will be enhanced by the attainment of stackable credentials enable participants to learn the specific skills needed to gain employment in demand occupations.

(H) *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.

The core programs used to implement Missouri's strategic vision will be integrated with all other economic development strategies through partnership, communication and alignment among other economic development agencies and organizations.

Governance and implementation of these strategies will be provided by Missouri's DWD partner to the WIOA core programs. DWD is a Governor's cabinet level division of the Department of Economic Development (DED). Through this relationship, the WIOA strategies of all partners will be integrated into the staff overview and training, communication opportunities and information shared by DED departmental staff. The DED deploys economic development program representation and support to the state through the use of regional economic development staff and community and economic development staff.

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In addition to the ability to inform and implement WIOA strategies among Missouri economic development staff at the state agency level, these strategies will also be promoted through public information and workshops presented to local economic development agencies and staff associated with these organizations. Local economic developers are informed and stay in communication with State level workforce development strategies through attendance at the Governor's Economic Development Conference, held annually and through a private, not for profit membership group called the Missouri Economic Development Council (MEDC). The MEDC also meets throughout the year to share information, coordinate and integrate strategies and activities to align them between State and local levels.

All local Workforce Development Boards have close working relationships with local economic development agencies through their WIOA implementation. In most cases, local economic development agencies are represented by seat on the local workforce development board.

Finally, statewide economic development agencies will be integrated with WIOA implementation by members seated on the State Workforce Development Board.

(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) The State operating systems that will support the implementation of the State's strategies. This must include a description of–

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

Missouri is well suited to the initial implementation of WIOA in that its case management systems are well-developed, largely considered best-in-class. They have features that are integrated through: client\customer registration and enrollment, case management, a background database, communication, and labor market information.

Separately, these systems are:

- **The AWARE system – Vocational Rehabilitation**
- **System 7 – Rehabilitation Services for the Blind**
- **ACES - AEL system supporting the federal National Reporting System – Adult Education and Literacy**
- **Toolbox – Division of Workforce Development**
- **FAMIS – Family Support Division, Department of Social Services**

The Toolbox system has been in place since 2007 and was initially designed to be an enterprise format. This means the online accessible system is all of these things: client registration, case management, database and reporting and accessible from a portal called www.jobs.mo.gov. The system is customer friendly, self navigable for client partial registration, and transitions smoothly to staff assisted program enrollment. From the jobs.mo.gov portal, the system also has a public-facing side that communicates information, including job opening information, features about programs, and labor market information.

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In September 2015 DWD awarded a newly developed contract with a vendor to replace the Toolbox workforce system with a nationally renowned firm, Geographic Solutions (GEOSOL).

The AWARE system was deployed in 2009 and is also considered excellent among several state client/users. The other systems are also well established and will not be in need of replacement within this planning timeline. For this reason, since WIOA was enacted over just the last year, these independent federated systems will be used to meet immediate implementation needs.

Labor market information products are constantly being developed and modified for application at jobs.mo.gov through the Department of Economic Development by the Missouri Economic Research Information Center (MERIC).

These systems are well suited to jointly assisting in supporting direction for state strategy implementation, analysis of outcome data at various implementation phases, and ultimately jointly providing outcome and performance reporting.

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

Missouri intends to accommodate the convenience of data entry and collection of data from job centers through these enterprise systems.

The currently designed Information Collection Request for Performance Reporting appears to enable all five enterprise programs to aggregate reports and to submit them separately. However, Missouri will engage in collaborative evaluation and assessment of data through the JobSTAT model developed by the Division of Workforce Development.

(2) The State policies that will support the implementation of the State's strategies (e.g., co-enrollment policies and universal intake processes).

HUB Model

- **Missouri has created policies that will require the Missouri Job Center (MJC) network as the central hub for interagency referrals and service integration. The creation of the local resource guide will be a requirement met by MJC staff .**

- **DWD will require MJC staff to document every referral including the method of referral and subsequent follow up. Each referral must include an initial assessment (to the degree information can be shared), listing of services already planned, and the service requested of the organization receiving the referrals.**

- **Each partner has also committed to using the model of documenting referrals and completing follow up of referred clients to be consistent in the activity. This information will be used to measure referral activity and success rates of co-enrollment and alignment of services.**

- **TANF: Any participant referred to Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) are encouraged complete the same assessment as required by Title I (Career Ready 101), and complete the jobs.mo.gov registration.**

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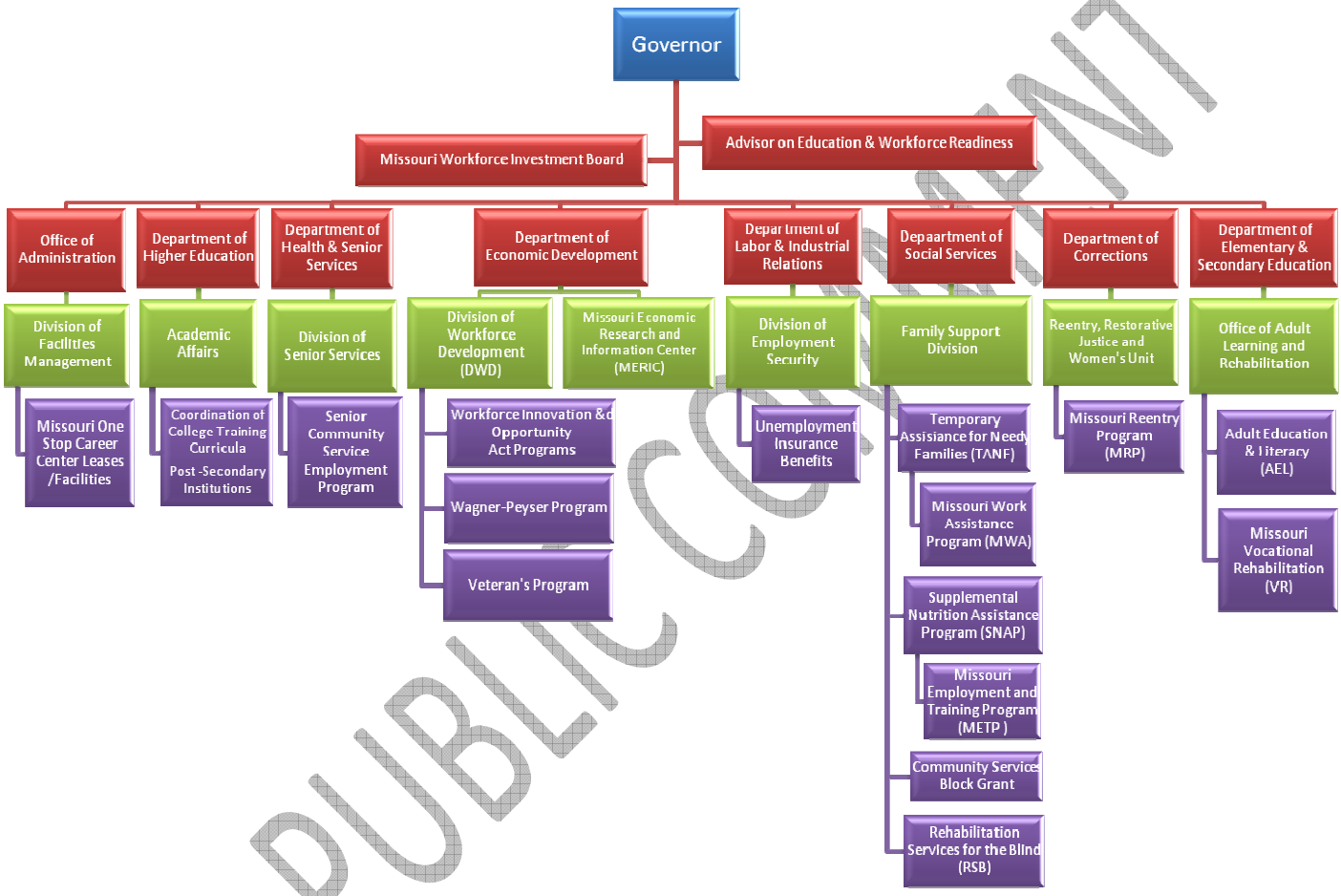
(3) **State Program and State Board Overview.**

(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.



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(B) State Board. Provide a description of the State Board, including---

(i) *Membership Roster.* Provide a membership roster for the State Board, including members' organizational affiliations.

https://jobs.mo.gov/community/mo-workforce-development-board

Contact Name	Organization/Location	Membership Category
Aubuchon, Matthew J.	The Boeing Company, St. Louis, MO	Business
Barton, Garland	DRS Technologies, West Plains, MO	Business
Canon, Cara S.	ProEnergy Services, Sedalia, MO	Business
Cook, Jr., Don W.	Capital International Communications, St. Louis, MO	Business
Dankert, Herb	Jarden Plastic Solutions, Springfield, MO	Business
Deggendorf, Michael	Great Plains Energy/KCPL, Kansas City, MO	Business
Downing, Mike	Department of Economic Development, Jefferson City, MO	One-Stop Partner
Feuerborn, Wayne H.	HNTB Corporation, Kansas City, MO	Business
Fraker, Lyndall	Missouri House of Representatives, Jefferson City, MO	State Legislator
Gaal, John	The Carpenters' District Council of Greater, St. Louis, St. Louis, MO	Organized Labor
Hoskins, Reginal L. (Reggie)	Center for Workforce Development, Ozarks Technical Community College, Springfield, MO	Workforce Investment Provider/Education
Kinkade, Brian	Department of Social Services, Jefferson City, MO	One-Stop Partner
Kratky, Michele	Missouri House of Representatives, Jefferson City, MO	State Legislator
LeGrand, Roberta	Mondi Jackson, Jackson, MO	Business
McKenna, Ryan	Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Jefferson City, MO	One-Stop Partner
Pantleo, Michael	Career and Technical Education Center, Fort Osage R-I School District, Independence, MO	Youth Programs
Prenger, Jeanette H	ECCO Select, Kansas City, MO	Business
Russell, David R.	Department of Higher Education, Jefferson City, MO	One-Stop Partner
Skains Jr., William L.	Aircraft Recyclers, Branson, MO	Business
Stromberg, Jr., LeRoy J	Alberici Constructors, Inc., St. Louis, MO	Business

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Tennison, Joshua	Independent Stave Company, Lebanon, MO	Business
Thurston, Cheryl	Missouri AFL-CIO, Jefferson City, MO	Organized Labor
Toenjes, Leonard	Associated General Contractors of St. Louis, St. Louis, MO	Business
Turbaugh, Ray	Arvest Bank, Carthage, MO	Business
Vandeven, Margie	Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Jefferson City, MO	One-Stop Partner
Vasterling, Gail	Department of Health and Senior Services, Jefferson City, MO	One-Stop Partner
Walters, Kelly	The Empire District Electric Company, Joplin, MO	Business
Wilson, Anthony	DeLong's, Inc., Jefferson City, MO	Business

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

The leadership of WIOA partners will contribute engaged discussion, staff support and team building of communication, presentations, and reports to the State Workforce Development Board. The contributions of leadership will be directed and coordinated by the Board Executive Director and its staff support.

(4) **Assessment of Programs and One-Stop Program Partners.**

(A) Assessment of Core Programs. Describe how the core programs will be assessed each year based on State performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. This State assessment must include the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs broken down by local area or provider.

Each of the separate core programs will be assessed each year based on the state performance accountability measures. This assessment will include compilations of data about best practices within each core program for assessing quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs as they break down by local area and as aggregated at the state level.

Where these assessments indicate the need to cross analyze data among programs, Missouri has the capability to match federated data by using the Workforce Longitudinal Data System (WLDS). The WLDS is a data warehouse which enables data from any program to be analyzed against the labor force attachment, earnings, unemployment status, and educational status among workforce outcomes. The WLDS data warehouse is fully functional and research is enabled by a data sharing governance structure described in the Interagency Memorandum of Understanding for data sharing.

(B) Assessment of One-Stop Program Partner Programs. Describe how other one-stop delivery system partner program services and Combined State Plan partner program included in the plan will be assessed each year.

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The data stewards representing the WIOA partnership among core programs will work in collaboration with providers of one-stop partner programs to develop proposed metrics that may be used to perform assessments among one-stop partner programs. These assessments will be aligned with the other assessments and lead to assessing the quality, effectiveness and improvement of these programs as delivered in the Missouri Job Centers.

(C) Previous Assessment Results. Provide the results of an assessment of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner program included in the plan during the preceding 2-year period. Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

The leadership of WIOA partners will contribute discussion, subject expertise and support the program assessment model previously developed by the Division of Workforce Development. The DWD has established a continuous improvement model called JobSTAT.

JobSTAT is a comprehensive model which focuses on the application of continuous improvement strategies to the performance management analytical system. JobSTAT is premised upon an integrated communication system which calls for each local workforce development area to be represented by a key subject matter expert in the use of the database and its reporting system. In nearly every instance, each of the fourteen local areas have one primary and one back-up staff support as subject matter experts (SMEs). This provides approximately twenty-eight professionally trained staff to the regions, yet they also support to the state's central performance management needs.

These SMEs are the field contacts with the central state agency and are available to address performance management needs and issues that may come from the state's concerns. In turn, Missouri manages and conducts, at a minimum on a quarterly basis, periodic meetings to address data entry, data analysis and a wide range of evaluation needs with the regional SMEs. The meetings are conducted using a continuous improvement model by resulting in action items and management strategies to be implemented in the duration between meetings. The success of JobSTAT is evident in a wide range of performance management achievements, but bears out strikingly in that over the last two program years workforce agencies have had absolutely no performance measure failures among fourteen workforce board areas, and thirty-seven Job Centers within them, in reporting the WIA Common Measures.

Missouri is including representatives from its partner agencies as state agency representatives attending, participating in performance considerations and contributing to the JobSTAT analytic and performance management structure.

JobSTAT is one way each of the core programs may be assessed each year. Partners will look at quality, effectiveness and improvement strategies for programs among all providers; including data entry policy, analytical data and performance reports to inform all about the interoperability of the data.

Other one-stop center partners will also be informed and asked to participate in JobSTAT meetings to also engage in shared discussion about their performance management and analytical needs.

Additionally, Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation, Rehabilitation Services for the Blind and Adult Education and Literacy met all required federal performance standards during the past two years. These programs will apply

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the same quality of service utilized in meeting those standards to achieve the new performance measures and provide that level of quality while moving forward.

(5) **Distribution of Funds for Core Programs.** Describe the methods and factors the State will use in distributing funds under the core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions.

(A) For Title I programs, provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—

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

(ii) Adult and training activities in accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) or (b)(3),

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

The State of Missouri uses the formula outlined at Section 128 (b) for allocation of youth funds not set-aside for statewide purposes. The formula is three equal parts: relative share of individuals unemployed in Areas of Substantial Unemployment (ASU), relative share of individuals in areas of Excess Unemployed, and relative share of economically disadvantaged youth. This local allocation mirrors the national allocation to the states and so we use the data elements that DOL/ETA uses in their allocation to the states.

The State of Missouri uses the formula outlined at Section133 (b)(2)(A)(i) for allocation of adult funds not set-aside for statewide purposes. The formula is three equal parts similar to the youth allocation: relative share of individuals unemployed in Areas of Substantial Unemployment (ASU), relative share of individuals in areas of Excess Unemployed, and relative share of economically disadvantaged adults. Again, this local allocation mirrors the national allocation to the states and so we use the data elements that DOL/ETA uses in their allocation to the states.

The State of Missouri uses the data categories outlined at Section 133 (b)(2)(B)(ii) for allocation of dislocated worker funds not set-aside for statewide purposes which includes rapid response activities. The data categories are insured unemployment data (average number unemployed based on UI records), unemployment concentrations (unemployed in ASU), plant closings and mass layoff data (from WARN and non-WARN layoffs), declining industries data (summary of employment losses for prior 2 years), farmer-rancher economic hardship data (when an appropriate data source can be identified in consultation with MERIC), and long-term unemployment data (long-term unemployed).

The funds allocated to local areas are figured using data provided to DWD by MERIC.

The State of Missouri reserves the right to utilize the alternative allocation methodologies outlined in WIOA but does not currently incorporate any additional data elements.

ASU and Excess Unemployed are defined in detail in WIOA but generally refer to unemployment rates of 6.5% and 4.5% respectively.

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(B) For Title II:

(i) Describe how the eligible agency will award multi-year grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers in the State, including how eligible agencies will establish that eligible providers are organizations of demonstrated effectiveness.

Applications will be competitive, open, and available to all eligible applicants. Grants/contracts are awarded for one year, with two one-year renewals based on performance and available funding.

Each eligible provider desiring a grant or contract from the Office of Adult Education and Literacy shall submit an application containing such information and assurances as the eligible agency may require, including:

(1) a description of how funds awarded under this title will be spent consistent with the requirements of this title;
(2) a description of any cooperative arrangements the eligible provider has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities;
(3) a description of how the eligible provider will provide services in alignment with the local plan under section 108, including how such provider will promote concurrent enrollment in programs and activities under title I, as appropriate;
(4) a description of how the eligible provider will meet the State adjusted levels of performance described in section 116(b)(3), including how such provider will collect data to report on such performance indicators;
(5) a description of how the eligible provider will fulfill one-stop partner responsibilities as described in section 121(b)(1)(A), as appropriate;
(6) a description of how the eligible provider will provide services in a manner that meets the needs of eligible individuals; and
(7) information that addresses the considerations described under section 231(e), as applicable.

(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.

Notice of program and funds available will be made in at least two major newspapers that have statewide circulation and the Grant and Invitation for Bid Applications will also be placed on the Department's website. The Office of Administration has established guidelines and procedures for the selection and awarding of grants/contracts.

Missouri will ensure that the same grant or contract announcement and application procedure will be used for all eligible providers. Access to the grant or contract bid specifications will be available only through Office of Adult Education and Literacy website, ensuring that the same grant or contract bid specifications will be used for all eligible providers.

(C) Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation

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

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under which VR services are provided for individuals who are blind, describe the process and the factors used by the State to determine the distribution of funds among the two VR agencies in the State.

The distribution of funds as confirmed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) is 87% for Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation and 13% for Missouri Rehabilitation Services for the Blind.

(6) **Program Data**

(A) Data Alignment and Integration**.** Describe the plans of the lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs, along with the State Board, to align and integrate available workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through postsecondary education, and to the extent possible, the Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan. The description of the State's plan for integrating data systems should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date.

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

(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.

(iii) Explain how the State board will assist the governor in aligning technology and data systems across mandatory 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.

(iv) Describe the State's plans to develop and produce the reports required under section 116, performance accountability system. (WIOA section116(d)(2)).

Planning Note: States should be aware that Section 116(i)(1) requires the core programs, local boards, and chief elected officials to establish and operate a fiscal and management accountability information system based on guidelines established by the Secretaries of Labor and Education. Separately, the Departments of Labor and Education anticipate working with States to inform future guidance and possible information collection(s) on these accountability systems. States should begin laying the groundwork for these fiscal and management accountability requirements, recognizing that adjustments to meet the elements above may provide opportunity or have impact on such a fiscal and management accountability system.

While it is premature to put forth in this planning document solidifying goals and plans for an interoperable management information, case management, and performance reporting system, Missouri has successfully aligned program outcomes even when programs are federated among separate agencies.

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Missouri successfully implemented and met all obligations within a Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) grant program within the DWD. The project was completed over three years, concluding in 2014, and entailed research and collaboration in the development of a Statewide Longitudinal Data System and a Workforce Longitudinal Data System. Through the application of this learning, and the use of the interagency data sharing agreement, a significant array of data matching to result the aggregated workforce outcomes (distinctly for unemployed persons) is possible and was exemplified in WDQI reports. The success of a Workforce Data Quality Initiative demonstrates that decision making metrics can establish effective data alignment and program policy integration even though the separate core programs remain as separately functioning federated systems.

As noted in State Planning guidance, establishing a fiscal management accountability information system based on guidelines between the Secretaries of Labor and Education remains in progress and is forthcoming.

(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.

Missouri will use the workforce development system to assess the exiters from its core programs using direct results or proxy determinations depending upon the core program. The data for entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education *or* entering or remaining in employment will be the factors produced for each core program. This will be done using the state's Workforce Longitudinal Data System (WLDS) during initial implementation. Missouri will not set additional indicators.

(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.)

Missouri's workforce performance data system for reports and queries, as well as its WLDS, were designed from inception to use the UI Wage Record Data. These systems use an automated, daily, overnight data load of UI Wage Record Data matched to workforce participant data.

(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.

The privacy safeguards within these provisions of education law surround the Family Education Right to Privacy Act (FERPA). These privacy considerations are embraced within the state workforce development system in three significant ways: 1) any access to such data is only by an employee of the State of Missouri and through the respective human resources units of each agency has agreed to adherence to confidentiality considerations of participant data as a term of employment; 2) any access to such data is limited only to persons having been trained in the access, use and application of confidential participant data using respective agencies confidentiality training; and 3) adherence to the use of aggregate data in the analysis and evaluation of participant data means the system is FERPA compliant.

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(7) **Priority of Service for Veterans**. Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority of service provisions for veterans in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act, codified at section 4215 of 38 U.S.C., which applies to all employment and training programs funded in whole or in part by the Department of Labor. States should also describe the referral process for veterans determined to have a significant barrier to employment to receive services from the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist.

The Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs) are fully integrated into the Missouri Job Centers as detailed by the DVOP/LVER agreement with the Secretary (Veterans State Plan). The role of the DVOP staff will not be to supplant the Wagner-Peyser responsibilities for providing priority of service to veterans, but to assist veterans with significant barriers to employment (SBE) to overcome their barriers or mitigate their barriers so the veteran is job ready through case management. Once the veteran is job ready the LVER will work with employers to create employment opportunities for the job ready veterans. DVOP/LVER will not be assigned duties that violate Title 38. DVOP will share case management for veterans enrolled in WIOA and other programs with the providers of those programs.

The Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) requires compliance with Title 38, Chapters 41 and 42, in that all service delivery points of the grantee will provide veterans' priority of service in the provision of all labor-exchange services, and specifically when making referrals for job openings and training opportunities.

Local service delivery points are monitored to ensure that programs provide the required priority of service to veterans. Whenever necessary, corrective action plans will be developed and appropriate technical assistance concerning priority of service to veterans will be provided. The agreement reached between Veterans' Employment and Training and the State will be the governing agreement for veterans' services within the Missouri Job Centers where funding is used to provide services to the state's veteran customers.

Missouri passed legislation in 2012 to include the Hero at Home program services under the state's Show-Me Heroes program. Now the Show-Me Heroes program, in addition to promoting the hiring of veterans and recognizing employers who do so, includes training services for National Guard and Reservists returning from deployment, their spouses and separating active duty military personnel. To date, 4,517 Missouri employers have taken the pledge to consider veterans in their hiring, and 7,766 veterans have been hired by Show-Me Heroes employers.

(8) **Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System.** 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. (This Operational Planning element applies to core programs.)

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Missouri has a committee to specifically focus on one-stop certification criteria. The committee will assist in establishing and evaluating the criteria for certification, including accessibility. This committee includes VR, RSB and the 22 Centers for Independent Living (CILs) who will assist with training and technical assistance to ensure accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities.

In order to better serve Missouri Job Center customers, the workforce partners are working with ODEP's National Center on Leadership for the Employment and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities (LEAD Center) for technical assistance. Through this collaboration, partners developed a statewide survey that was sent to gather information from job seekers on the social, environmental and physical accessibility of the Missouri Job Centers. Local areas are using this feedback as a guide to improve training and technical assistance for serving people with disabilities.

Each Workforce Development region has a dedicated Equal Opportunity officer, which comprises a statewide team, which includes VR staff.

IV. COORDINATION WITH COMBINED STATE PLAN PROGRAMS. If the State is submitting a Combined State Plan, describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination of the core programs and the other programs and activities covered by the Combined State Plan.

The State of Missouri is submitting a WIOA Combined State Plan which will include the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program. These partners participate on the state steering team and with all planning committees.

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V. COMMON ASSURANCES (for all core programs)

The 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 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 and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, 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;
6.	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 adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs to carry out workforce investment activities under chapters 2 and 3 of subtitle B;
7.	The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, 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;

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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.	The State will conduct evaluations and research projects on activities under WIOA core programs; that 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, that the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education under WIOA.

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OMB Control Number 1205-0NEW

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

(OMB Control Number: 1205-0NEW)

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—

(a) General Requirements

(1) *Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas*.

(A) Identify the regions and the local workforce development areas designated in the State.

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

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

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

After the enactment of WIOA, throughout the year of 2015, each local area in Missouri that was originally designated a local area for the purposes of the Workforce Investment Act have requested they be considered for initial designation under WIOA.

In compliance with WIOA, Sec. 106(b)(2), the Division of Workforce Development reviewed the performance and fiscal integrity of these areas. This review found that each of the original fourteen WIA workforce areas experienced no performance failures among the required nine Common Measures during the last two Program Years. In addition, it was determined that no region experienced significant findings of financial audit creating any detriment to their fiscal integrity.

Further, in compliance with WIOA Sec. 106(b)(2), the Governor approved the initial designation request of each workforce development area.

Because each area was approved and designated as requested, Missouri did not develop an appeals process to be used by the local chief elected officials in the event their request was denied, as provided in WIOA Sec. 106(b)(5). This process assigns local areas to a region in compliance with WIOA Sec. 106(1) and proposed regulations to WIOA at Sec. 679.210(a).

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This establishes fourteen workforce development areas as follows:

> **The Northwest region, Northeast region, Kansas City and Vicinity region, West Central region, St. Louis City region, Southwest region, Ozark region, Central region, South Central region, Southeast region, East Jackson County region, St. Louis County region, St. Charles County region, and the Jefferson-Franklin County Consortium region.**

In compliance with WIOA Sec. 106(c)(2) and the proposed regulations at Sec. 679.510(a): Local Boards within the regions identified through the process explained above must participate in a regional planning process.

It is the policy of the State of Missouri that among these fourteen regions the greater Kansas City region and the greater St. Louis region are two overwhelmingly evident regions that consist of multiple workforce development areas that:

- **Share a single labor market;**
- **Share a common economic development area; and**
- **Possess the Federal and non-Federal resources, including appropriate education and training institutions to administer WIOA activities.**

Further, these regional planning areas were defined by the study of the following:

- **Population centers;**
- **Commuting patterns;**
- **Land ownership;**
- **Industrial composition;**
- **Location quotients;**
- **Labor force conditions; and**
- **Geographic boundaries.**

Based on these obviously relevant factors, it is the policy of the State of Missouri that:

- **For the Kansas City Region, one regional plan must be prepared for the local planning areas of Kansas and Vicinity region and the East Jackson County region; and**
- **For the St. Louis Region, one regional plan must be prepared for the local planning areas of: The City of St. Louis region, the County of St. Louis region, the County of St. Charles region and the Jefferson-Franklin County Consortium region.**

Regarding the general requirements, (a)(1)(D), about the appeals process required in WIOA Sec. 121(h)(2)(E). This calls for the Governor to establish an appeals process for a One-Stop Partner administering a program relating to determinations on infrastructure funding. Such a determination may be appealed on the basis that it is inconsistent with the requirements for funding. And, such an appeals process shall ensure prompt resolution of the appeal.

There is insufficient determination about agreements or provisions for infrastructure funding at the present time to make final determinations about an appeals process.

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(2) Statewide Activities.

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

Due to budget cuts in recent years, there are insufficient funds for workforce development activities beyond the required activities. Therefore, statewide activities include the coordination and alignment of data systems, regional planning and service delivery, industry or sector partnerships, the development and training of staff along with technical assistance, operating fiscal and management accountability, monitoring and oversight, dissemination of information pertaining to and managing the state's Eligible Training Provider System, and evaluation of these various activities.

The state policies and guidance can be found on the jobs.mo.gov website. The issuance regarding the statewide workforce development system and the use of state funds is DWD Issuance 13-2014 Change 1, Program Year 2015 (PY15)/Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Formula Allocations for Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker Programs to Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA) found at https://jobs.mo.gov/sites/jobs/files/dwd_issuance-13-2014-c1_w2att_2015-07-07.pdf .

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

The state uses WIOA rapid response funds to support a state Rapid Response unit, branded in Missouri as the Employment Transition Team, or ETT, which is assigned to the Dislocated Worker Program section of the Division of Workforce Development (DWD). The Trade Act unit is also part of the Dislocated Worker section. WIOA NPR 682.330 guides activities of the Rapid Response unit to promote economic recovery and vitality by developing an ongoing, comprehensive approach to identifying, planning for, and responding to layoffs; and preventing or minimizing their impact on workers, businesses, and communities. The State recently issued a Statewide Employment Transition Team Policy (DWD Issuance 07-2015) to be utilized across all Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA). Outlined in the information below, this policy provides a consistent and clear standard for ETT coordination in the LWDAs.

The WIOA requires each state to carry out statewide ETT activities or designate an entity to do so on its behalf. The DWD has opted to operate the ETT program at the state level in coordination with local Workforce Development Boards (WDB). DWD's Workforce Coordinators, located regionally, shall take the lead role in responding to layoff events, and shall be responsible for coordinating, providing, and overseeing ETT services in their assigned areas.

While ETT is required for mass layoffs and closures, it is the intent of WIOA for services to be provided to as many workers as possible. DWD Workforce Coordinators shall provide onsite or in person ETT services to any layoff affecting 25 or more. Layoffs affecting 24 or less may be offered onsite as needed or requested by the employer. At a minimum, smaller layoffs will be provided informational packets that include the ETT programs and services brochure, the Division of Employment Security (DES) UI Benefits fact sheet, the Missouri Economic Research Information Center (MERIC) regional Real Time Labor Market Summary and any local brochure, as requested by the LWDB. Every ETT event is unique; therefore, each event shall be assessed

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individually, and services provided shall be determined based on the wishes of the employer, the needs of the affected workers, and the timeframe of the layoff.

Effective ETT requires local partnership. Workforce Coordinators are the designated lead for any and all layoff events; however, local coordination is critical and required to ensure both employers and affected workers receive all needed services, and that they are delivered in a seamless fashion. Workforce Coordinators shall ensure coordination with WDB Directors, Functional Leaders, regional business services teams, Union Representatives, and community groups. Directors and Missouri Job Center (MJC) Functional Leaders shall be kept informed throughout the ETT process and notified of layoff activity, meeting dates, planned events, and changes in layoff schedules.

The Workforce Coordinator shall be the primary contact for employers participating in ETT.
DWD Workforce Coordinators shall contact the affected employers within 24 hours of being informed of a potential layoff to inform them of ETT services and arrange for an in-person planning meeting. Workforce Coordinators shall also immediately notify the WDB Director or their designee. Onsite worker meetings and other services shall be coordinated with the employer and delivered based on the employer's schedule. Workforce Coordinators shall conduct meetings at any time that works best for the employer, regardless of time of day. Worker meeting agendas and participants shall be approved by the employer in advance.

ETT meetings should include a representative from DES to present Unemployment Insurance information, a MJC representative to present programs and services information, a Trade Act Representative (if applicable) and the appropriate union representative (if applicable). In addition, a representative from the USDOL Employee Benefits Administration shall be included when appropriate. If a MJC representative is unavailable or a WDA chooses not to participate, the Workforce Coordinator shall be responsible for presenting MJC information.

ETT funds support a variety of local and State ETT activities and services such as the electronic worker-survey system. During ETT events, a survey is distributed to workers to determine their specific needs. The surveys are electronically tabulated and shared with the MERIC. Results of the surveys are also shared with DWD regional Workforce Coordinators and WDBs and are used to determine the needs of workers from each layoff. Surveys also help with determining labor availability for economic development purposes and provide demographic data that contribute toward meeting the needs of dislocated workers and the hiring needs of businesses. The State also uses ETT funds to create a funding pool for Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) and OJTs. These funds are provided to each region in addition to their formula distribution, ensure that dislocated workers remain competitive and keep their skills current. When regions have obligated or spent all of their formula funds and pool funds, additional funding can be requested. Based on availability of funds and the justification, additional funding may be awarded. The State also uses these funds to contract with State partners: UAW and the AFLCIO—to provide assistance, labor/management committees (Transition Teams), peer counselors, and many other services to promote and coordinate the reemployment of dislocated workers; Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DOLIR) to ensure that a UI expert is at all ETT meetings; and University of Missouri Extension to provide FastTrac New Ventures Entrepreneurial Training, and Take Control of Your Finances workshops. Additionally, the State's ETT unit provides a two-day Career Compass Workshops for dislocated workers to assist them in navigating to a new career path. The State's ETT unit regularly reviews these processes and activities surrounding the provision of ETT services to ensure effectiveness.

ETT should be proactive and strategic, not just a response to layoffs. Building and maintaining relationships with the business community is critical. Regional Workforce Coordinators and local Business Services teams typically have established relationships with local businesses. These relationships allow for early warning of

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potential layoffs, as well as allow opportunity for early intervention to help avert a layoff through programs such as Missouri's Shared Work Program. Administered by the Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Shared Work is an alternative to layoffs for businesses faced with a reduction in available work. It allows participating business to reduce employee hours by 20-40% while supplementing their employees' lost wages with Unemployment Insurance benefits.

(C) In addition, describe the State policies and procedures to provide Rapid Responses in cases of natural disasters including coordination with FEMA and other entities.

Typically, the state pursues opportunities for assistance through Natural Disaster Emergency Grants. As a practice, DWD consults and coordinates with SEMA, the local workforce boards and local elected officials in designing these grants and for implementation.

Missouri operates a temporary employment program called Disaster Recovery Jobs Program (DRJP) to be utilized when a major disaster is declared by FEMA and a Dislocated Worker Grant is awarded. The purpose of the DRJP is to restore public infrastructure and services so that business and employment activities can be resumed through temporary employment of unemployed persons.

DWD is required to coordinate with FEMA when there is a dislocation event that is the result of a natural disaster in order to avoid any duplication of services or effort. Local offices will invite FEMA representatives to early intervention meetings discussing the potential worksites. DRJP work will not overlap FEMA cleanup efforts. Best practice is to allow FEMA to complete all work prior to DRJP employment cleanup begins.

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

At the time the Trade Act petition is filed, the DWD Trade Act Coordinator notifies the local Trade Act representatives and the DWD Dislocated Worker Programs section which houses the State Trade Act staff and ETT Coordinators. At the time the ETT Coordinator schedules a rapid response meeting, they invite the local Trade representative and a DES representative to provide information on the TAA, Trade Reauthorization Act (TRA), and UI. The local Trade Act representative covers information relating to TAA benefits and services including criteria and timeframes. The DES representative provides information on UI and TRA including how to file a UI and TRA claim. Employee Transition Team staff provides the potentially eligible Trade Act business with informational handouts on Trade Act benefits and services, job center services, and supportive service information. Once a company's Trade Act petition is certified, the DWD Trade Act Coordinator obtains a list of affected workers from the Trade Act affected business. The workers are sent a written notice to inform them of the petition certification. The notice includes instructions on how to access benefits and services under the program as well as a Trade Act informational pamphlet with specific information regarding the Trade Act

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Program. In addition, the workers are directed to visit their local Missouri Job Center. When requested, the ETT staff and the DWD Central Office Trade Act staff also provide training to a transition team made up of workers from the Trade Act affected company. This team assists other Trade Act affected workers with accessing benefits and services available under the Trade Act program.

(b) Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Requirements

(1) *Alternative Training Models*. If the State is utilizing alternative 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.

Comprehensive Job Centers will provide access to training services aligned with regional sector strategies. These services may include occupational skills training, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training programs that combine workforce training with related instruction, skill upgrading and retraining, entrepreneurial training, transitional jobs training, job readiness training provided in combination with other training, Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) activities, and customized training.

(2) *Registered Apprenticeship.* Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy and services.

Through the local planning guidance, the states will require Local Workforce Areas (LWA) to identify and reach out to the Registered Apprenticeship training program sponsors within their local areas. The State will verify with the Office of Apprenticeship the status of Registered Apprenticeship sponsor. Eligible Training Provider System (ETPS) guidance requires that Registered Apprenticeship training programs be contained in the state's system.

DWD has partnered with the AFL-CIO and United Auto Workers (UAW) to connect Dislocated Workers (DW) with union apprenticeship opportunities. DWD has provided funding to the AFL-CIO and UAW for Labor Liaison services. The Labor Liaison identifies apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities and works with the local workforce boards and Job Centers in the Kansas City and St. Louis Metro areas to connect DWs to those opportunities. In St. Louis, this project focuses on placing minorities and women in the Building Union Diversity (BUD) Program that provides pre-apprenticeship training in the construction trades.

(3) *Training Provider Eligibility Procedure.* Provide the procedure for determining training provider eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

Eligible Training Provider requirements, registration information and frequently asked question (FAQ) can be found online at: https://jobs.mo.gov/jobseeker/missouri-eligible-training-provider-system . In addition there is a link to the current list of eligible training providers.

(c) Youth Program Requirements. With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA,—

(1) Identify the State-developed criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants for youth workforce investment activities and describe how the local boards will take into consideration the ability of the providers to meet performance accountability

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measures based on primary indicators of performance for the youth program as described in section 116(b)(2)(A)(ii) of WIOA in awarding such grants.[11]

Local Boards must assess the ability of an organization to meet the guidelines established in DWD Issuance 03-2015 titled Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth Program Framework and Design, and section 116 (b)(2)(A)(ii) in order to award grants to local organizations that provide youth workforce development activities through the RFP process. https://jobs.mo.gov/sites/jobs/files/dwdissuance03-2015_081215_0.pdf

(2) Describe how the State will use funds to carry out Youth Program elements described in WIOA section 129(c)(2).[12]

The State will contract with each of the state's 14 local workforce development boards to ensure that each youth program element described in WIOA section 129(c)(2) is administered in their defined area of the state.

(3) Provide the language contained in the State policy for "requires additional assistance to complete and educational program, or to secure and hold employment" criterion specified in WIOA sections 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VIII) and 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII).

The state does not have policy for "requires additional assistance to complete and educational program, or to secure and hold employment." This will be locally defined by each workforce development board. It will then be submitted to and approved by the State.

(4) Provide the State's definition of "alternative education".

The definition of "alternative education" is determined by the State Education agency. An alternative school in Missouri provides education to students through the school district that leads to graduation from the school district. An alternative school in Missouri is coded as a classroom within a district, rather than a separate entity outside the district.

(5) Include the State definition, as defined in law, for not attending school and attending school as specified in WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(B)(i) and Section 129(a)(1)(C)(i). If State law does not define "not attending school" or "attending school," indicate that is the case.

Missouri state law does not define not attending school or attending school.
Section 167.031, RSMo, states that any parent, guardian or other person having custody or control of a child between the ages of 7 and the compulsory attendance age for the district, must ensure that the child is enrolled in and regularly attends public, private, parochial, home school or a combination of schools for the full term of the school year.

- **The term compulsory attendance age for the district shall mean 17 years of age or having successfully completed 16 credits towards high school graduation in all other cases.**

[11] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)
[12] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)

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- **Children between the ages of 5 and 7 are not required to be enrolled in school. However, if they are enrolled in a public school their parent, guardian or custodian must ensure that they regularly attend.**

(6) If utilizing the portion of the basic skills deficient definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B), include the specific State definition.

Missouri is utilizing the basic skills definition as contained in WIOA. The term basic skills deficient means with respect to an individual who is a youth or adult, that the individual is unable to compute, solve problems, read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

Does not apply to Missouri

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

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

~~(2) The entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds, as determined by the governor, if different from that for the State. (WIOA section 108(b)(15).)~~

~~(3) The type and availability of WIOA title I Youth activities, including an identification of successful providers of such activities. (WIOA section 108(b)(9).)~~

(e) Waiver Requests (optional). States wanting to request waivers as part of their title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

(1) Identifies the statutory or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested and the goals that the State or local area, as appropriate, intends to achieve as a result of the waiver and how those goals relate to the Unified or Combined State Plan;

(2) Describes the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers;

(3) Describes the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted;

(4) Describes how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:

(A) supporting employer engagement;

(B) connecting education and training strategies;

(C) supporting work-based learning;

(D) improving job and career results, and

(E) other guidance issued by the Department.

(5) Describes the individuals affected by the waiver, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment; and

(6) Describes the processes used to:

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(A) Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;
(B) Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;
(C) Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;
(D) Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver.
(E) Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report.

(7) The Secretary may require that States provide the most recent data available about the outcomes of the existing waiver in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

Missouri will not propose the waiver of any provisions during its initial WIOA implementation year.

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 career and training services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients or basic skills deficient; **DWD ISSUANCE 09-2014, Change 1: Update 70 Percent Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL)** **CURRENT HYPERLINK:** **https://jobs.mo.gov/sites/jobs/files/updated-70percent-lower-living-standard-income-levelllsil_dwdissuance2014-09-c1_20150410_w2att.pdf**
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; **CURRENT DOCUMENTATION AND COMMENT:** **DWD Issuance 09-2008: Priority of Service to Veterans** **CURRENT HYPERLINK:** **https://jobs.mo.gov/sites/jobs/files/priority-service-to-veterans_dwdissuance2008-09-a1.pdf**
3.	The State established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;

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	CURRENT DOCUMENTATION AND COMMENT: **DWD Issuance 08-2001: Local Elected Officials Guide** **CURRENT HYPERLINK:** **https://jobs.mo.gov/sites/jobs/files/local-elected-officials_dwdissuance2001-08-a1.pdf**
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); **CURRENT DOCUMENTATION AND COMMENT:** **DWD Issuance 14-2014: Policy for LWDB Membership Requirements and Certification/Decertification Procedures Under WIOA** **CURRENT HYPERLINK:** **https://jobs.mo.gov/sites/jobs/files/policy-lwdb-membership-reqs-certify_dwdissuance2014-14_w4attach.pdf**
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; **Not Applicable**
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; **CURRENT DOCUMENTATION AND COMMENT:** **CURRENT HYPERLINK:** **https://jobs.mo.gov/sites/jobs/files/mowib-strategic-implementation-plan-with-cover-page-june-2011.pdf**
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); **CURRENT DOCUMENTATION AND COMMENT:**

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	CURRENT HYPERLINK: **http://www.moga.mo.gov/mostatutes/stathtml/62000005111.html**
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; **CURRENT DOCUMENTATION AND COMMENT:** **CURRENT HYPERLINK:** **https://jobs.mo.gov/sites/jobs/files/dwd_issuance-13-2014-c1_w2att_2015-07-07.pdf**
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; **CURRENT DOCUMENTATION AND COMMENT:**
10.	Priority of Service for covered persons is provided for each of the Title I programs; and **CURRENT DOCUMENTATION AND COMMENT:**
11.	The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report. **CURRENT DOCUMENTATION AND COMMENT:** **CURRENT HYPERLINK:** **https://jobs.mo.gov/sites/jobs/files/dwd-2013-annual-report.pdf**
12.	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); **CURRENT DOCUMENTATION:**

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WAGNER-PEYSER ACT PROGRAM (Employment Services)

(a) Employment Service Professional Staff Development.

(1) 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.

As background information, the Division of Employment Security (DES) under the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DOLIR) is primarily responsible for the payment of unemployment insurance (UI) benefits to claimants who are unemployed through no fault of their own and the collection of UI tax contributions from employers. Division of Workforce Development (DWD) which is under the Department of Economic Development (DED) is responsible for the provision of employment and training services to various populations, including the unemployed.

In order to provide high quality services to both jobseekers and employers the DES and DWD utilize a collaborative approach to providing training to continuously enhance the professional development for the Missouri Job Center staff. Various methods are utilized to present training to staff on new programs and services including: in-person training by subject matter experts from both agencies, webinars, captivating videos imbedded in the state's case management system, program specific desk aides, on-the-job training, and conference calls.

(2) Describe strategies developed to support training and awareness across core programs and the Unemployment Insurance program and the training provided for Employment Services and WIOA staff on identification of Unemployment Insurance (UI) eligibility issues.

Many unemployed Missourians are not eligible for UI benefits, but would benefit from Wagner-Peyser services. Although DES is limited in the assistance it can provide, DWD's Missouri Job Centers offer valuable and much-needed help to the unemployed and underemployed. DES added information regarding reemployment services available at Missouri Job Centers to many brochures, publications, posters, and web pages. DES and DWD have an ongoing effort to provide the most current information on the Labor website, DWD's website, and through social media (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, etc.) to assist claimants and other individuals seeking job center services with their reemployment process.

(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.

Missouri maintains an environment within both agencies that allows for data sharing and improved communications. In order to provide relevant information and meaningful assistance to UI claimants seeking assistance in filing a claim for unemployment compensation through Missouri's Job Centers, DES and DWD will establish a priority phone line that will allow a UI claimant to speak directly with a DES claim center specialist.

(c) Describe the State's strategy for providing reemployment assistance to UI claimants and other unemployed individuals.

The Required Job Services (RJS) Program is designed for UI claimants when they report to a Missouri Job Center after filing an initial UI claim. This program provides a defined set of required job services, which provide UI

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claimants the opportunity to have the skills needed to compete for high-wage jobs in emerging industry sectors. All RJS participants receive an orientation to Job Center services and are assessed for individual skills. While meeting with Job Center staff, RJS participants are given current labor market information and provided assistance with job searching. The primary outcome of RJS is for claimants to receive enhanced services that allow them to be better job candidates and return to employment in a shorter time frame.

(d) Describe how the State will use W-P funds to support UI claimants, and the communication between W-P and UI, as appropriate including the following:

DES and DWD understand that reemploying claimants to reduce the average duration of UI benefit claims is critical to the effective and efficient operation of each agency. To accomplish this task, the DES and DWD will continue to look for opportunities to use Wagner-Peyser funds to improve reemployment services.

(1) Coordination of and provision of labor exchange services for UI claimants as required by the Wagner-Peyser Act;.

The Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) is intended to identify UI claimants with a high potential for exhausting their regular UI benefit entitlement and direct them to reemployment services to accelerate their return to work. Claimants selected for profiling are required to report to a Missouri Job Center for one-on-one staff assisted services.

Staff members from the DES and DWD continue to work together to coordinate and improve efforts to reemploy UI claimants. Missouri Job Center staff members identify potential eligibility issues related to claimants refusing suitable work or a referral to apply for suitable work. An automated process is in place for DWD staff to refer potential issues to the DES for investigation. Claimants may be determined ineligible to receive UI benefits when barriers to reemployment are discovered or they refuse to apply for suitable work as directed by Missouri Job Center staff. This collaboration between the DES and DWD helps to ensure the integrity of the UI benefits program.

The DES and DWD utilize a collaborative effort to further ensure the integrity of the UI program when the identity of a claimant is in question upon filing a claim for unemployment benefits. The claimant is directed to report to a Job Center with documents to prove identity. The DES is currently working to improve this initiative by implementing an automated identity proofing program slated to go into operation in 2016.

(2) Registration of UI claimants with the State's employment service if required by State law;
(3) Administration of the work test 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
(4) Provision of referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources.

(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—

(1) *Assessment of Need*.

(A) 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.

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Housing and Transportation are the two primary needs for farmworkers.

- **Housing - Only ten employers (12%) who hired temporary laborers provided some type of housing for their workers**

- **Transportation - Since many of the temporary farm workers do not live close to their employer, transportation may be another barrier to the employees. Few employers reported providing transportation benefits to their workers.**

(B) Provide an assessment of available resources for outreach and whether the State believes such resources are sufficient. If the State believes the resources are insufficient, provide a description of what would help and what the State would do with the additional resources.

Missouri believes the current resources for outreach are sufficient. Missouri's agricultural outreach plan implemented a new strategy in 2015. The Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW) program has added two additional staff at central office to help coordinate and implement agricultural services. Each staff will be assigned ½ of the state (seven regions), who will work with Job Center staff to develop agricultural programs tailored in accordance with each region's agricultural profile. This systematic approach ensures program integrity via training, monitoring and development of quality outreach activities and partnerships.

Each region has a local contact person assisting central office staff in implementation and coordination of local outreach activities to include assigning one merit staff from offices in areas of high concentration of farm workers. This strategy will increase local program knowledge and will increase MSFW registrations in addition to providing a wide range of services to the farm workers and agricultural employers.

(2) *Outreach Activities.*

(A) Describe the State agency's proposed outreach activities including strategies on how to contact farmworkers who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the employment service offices.

Each region of the State will have a contact person assisting central office staff in implementation and coordination of local outreach activities. Training will be completed on outreach throughout the State requiring at least one local staff person to attend. This strategy will increase local program knowledge and will increase MSFW registrations for Missouri and provide a wide range of services to the farm workers and agricultural employers.

Also, Migrant Education staff will play a huge rule in outreach to assist DWD in contacting farmworkers who are not being reached by normal intake activities, and we expect that partnership to continue. In addition, faith based organizations will partner to conduct outreach in order to direct more MSFWs to the local Missouri Job Centers.

(B) The plan for the proposed outreach activities must include:

(i) The goals for the number of farmworkers who will be contacted each program year by W-P staff.

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It is projected that the Southeast region will work to increase their agricultural job orders by 15 and contact 100 MSFWs by the end of September 2016. During the peak season, their goal is to obtain job orders resulting from the previous quarters outreach efforts and contact an additional 100 MSFWs. Post season goals are to reach 50 MSFWs as well as working with employers to provide seasonal labor needs.

The West Central region is working to increase the numbers which had dropped due to the closing of one of the Missouri Job Centers in the area that was a major site for MSFW. The goal for the Region will be to increase the current enrollment by 25. In the past this region had exceeded expectations in registrations, job orders and job developments and plans to reach their goals and exceed them in 2016.

(ii) The number of farmworkers who will be contacted each program year by other agencies under cooperative arrangements. These numerical goals must be based on the number of farmworkers estimated to be in the State in the coming year, taking into account the varying concentration of farmworkers during the seasons in each geographic area, the range of services needed in each area and the number of W-P and/or cooperating agency staff who will conduct outreach.[13]

Per the USDA Census report, Missouri has 18,263 farms that hired seasonal workers, totaling 47,033 workers statewide. Of these hired labor workers 71% work less than 150 days. All regions will continue to partner with local agencies whenever possible including the WIOA Title I section 167 grantees. If outreach and referral are the only components of a partnership, community service agencies prefer a non-written agreement to conduct outreach.

Missouri Migrant Education agency and churches are two of our most active partners. Local churches provide a variety of supportive services (food, rent money, clothing, transportation), while Migrant Education provides education and human resource service opportunities that strengthen and enhance the development of the migrant child and family.

(iii) The State's plans to conduct outreach to as many farm workers as possible.

The Migrant Seasonal Farmworker program is operated with 10% Wagner-Peyser funding. This funding is used to support two positions, including the State Monitor Advocate. At the time the plan was written, only 1.5 positions were staffed. Missouri's goal for the MSFW Program is 200 outreach contacts per year. Active participation by field staff, and engagement with partners, makes this goal achievable. DWD conducts outreach to workers in groups, instead of one-on-one consultations. This has resulted in a huge increase of MSFW registrations which more than doubled in the last year.

(iv) The number of outreach workers dedicated to outreach to farmworkers by service areas.

The MSFW program has added two additional staff at central office to help coordinate and implement agricultural services. Each staff will be assigned one half of the state equivalent to seven regions, who will

[13] The numerical goals that must be included in the agricultural outreach plan are in reference only to the proposed outreach activities and are not negotiated performance targets.

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work with Job Center staff to develop agricultural programs tailored in accordance with each region's agricultural profile.

(3) *The State's strategy for*:

(A) Coordinating outreach efforts with WIOA Title 1 section 167 grantees as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups.

Regions will continue to partner with local agencies whenever possible including the WIOA Title I section 167 grantees. If outreach and referral are the only components of a partnership, community service agencies prefer a non-written agreement to conduct outreach.

Missouri Migrant Education agency and churches are two of our most active partners. Local churches provide a variety of supportive services including food, rent money, clothing, and transportation. Migrant Education provides education and human resource service opportunities that strengthen and enhance the development of the migrant child and family.

(B) Explaining to farmworkers the services available at the local one-stop centers.

Missouri employers have a dedicated webpage on *jobs.mo.gov*. The employer services menu includes information on job postings, free consulting, innovative programs, informative workshops, and contact information for the business representative serving the area where the employer is located. Every new business registrant in *jobs.mo.gov* is contacted by a business representative who offers additional workforce system services.

(C) Marketing the employment service complaint system to farmworkers and other farmworker advocacy groups.

Missouri has developed brochures and an online website to market the employment service complaint system to farmworkers and other farmworker advocacy groups.

(D) Providing farm workers with a basic summary of farmworker rights, including their rights with respect to the terms and conditions of employment.

Missouri has developed brochures and an online website to market the employment service complaint system to farmworkers and other farmworker advocacy groups.

(E) Urging those farm workers who have been reached through the State's outreach efforts to go to the local one-stop center to obtain the full range of employment and training services.

Missouri business representatives and MSFW outreach staff located around the state solicit job orders from agricultural employers. Outreach workers coordinate employer outreach with business representatives prior to making contact with the agricultural employer. Through close coordination with MSFW outreach staff, multiple agencies such as the WIOA 167 grantees, Chambers of Commerce, local economic development organizations, community colleges, and DWD ensure business needs are met. This close coordination results in a streamlined and efficient service delivery while preserving the integrity of the program and avoiding duplication of services.

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(4) *Services provided to farmworkers and agricultural employers through the one-stop delivery system*. Describe the activities planned for providing the full range of employment and training services to the agricultural community, both farmworkers and agricultural employers, through the one-stop delivery system.

DWD will provide Wagner-Peyser Act funded services to migrant workers and to prospective and actual employers of these individuals. DWD will make every effort to strengthen its working relationships with MSFWs and employers to encourage utilization of Missouri Job Centers. Efforts will continue to include the full range of the Missouri Job Center services delivered through an outreach effort designed to locate, contact, and inform migrant and seasonal farmworkers about the employment and training services available statewide and particularly in the Southeast and West Central regions. Additional efforts include ensuring that MSFW customers are referred to the WIA 167 grantees for assistance.

DWD will ensure that MSFWs are offered the same range of employment services, benefits and protections, including counseling, testing and job training referral services, as is provided to non-MSFWs.

Wagner-Peyser services provided through the Missouri Job Centers include:

- **registration for Wagner-Peyser and other services**
- **explanation and use of *jobs.mo.gov***
- **counseling**
- **referral to job openings**
- **improving job-seeking skills**
- **testing**
- **assessment**
- **referrals to supportive services and other providers including the WIA 167 grantee**
- **information on employment and training opportunities**
- **labor market information**
- **tax credit programs**
- **information n the Job Service complaint system, including filing and processing of complaints**

(5) *Other Requirements*.

(A) State Monitor Advocate. The plan must contain a statement that indicates that the State Monitor Advocate has been afforded the opportunity to review and approve the AOP.

All recommendations were included as the State Monitor Advocate presented them in the annual MSFW summary developed under 20CFR 653.108(t) in the preparation of this plan.

(B) Review and Public Comment. The plan must provide information indicating that WIOA Section 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees, other appropriate farmworker groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations, have been given an opportunity to comment on the State AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

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In accordance with 20 CFR Subpart B, 653.107(d)(1), (2), and (3), DWD will provide a copy of the Missouri Wagner-Peyser Agricultural Outreach plan to UMOS, Inc. (WIOA Section 167 grantees). Comments from other appropriate groups will be obtained through making the entire WIA plan available for public comment.

(C) 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.

DWD's last assessment of progress (AOP) was for PY 2014 and the goal was to meet four out of five equity indicators of compliance, as well as meeting four out of seven minimum service level indicators, even though the state is not required to do so. No problems or difficulties were encountered in meeting equity indicators, minimum service levels, or planned levels of activity.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:	
1.	The Wagner-Peyser 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.	The State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111 (State agency staffing requirements) if the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers;
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 services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and
4.	State agency merit-based public employees provide Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities in accordance with Department of Labor regulations.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAMS

The State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to Adult Education and Literacy programs under title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

(a) Aligning of Content Standards. Describe how the eligible agency will, by July 1, 2016, align 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)).

Recent Missouri legislation has required the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop new, Missouri specific state standards and they are still in the process of being developed.

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Until Missouri completes new standards, Missouri AEL will continue to use the CCR standards. Professional development delivered in Missouri to Adult Education teachers is based on CCR standards. When new standards are available, professional development

MO AEL Adopted CCR in 2013 and have used OCTAE approved, ESL content standards since 2010.

(b) Local Activities. Describe how the State will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of local activities.

Missouri Adult Education will use the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA when creating local provider applications, will require each local provider to respond to the each consideration, and the responses will be evaluated and scored prior to awarding local provider agreements. Each applicant will be expected to provide one or more of the Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA). In their application they will identify which activity(s) they plan to provide and will be expected to describe how they meet each of the considerations for each activity they offer.

During the application process, local program applicants will describe which services they plan to offer based on determined need and describe how the services will be provided (considerations). Services include:

1. **Adult education**
2. **Literacy**
3. **Workplace adult education and literacy activities**
4. **Family literacy activities**
5. **English language acquisition activities**
6. **Integrated English literacy and civics education – currently fund 12 local programs to offer EL/Civics and these grants will be extended one more year**
7. **Workforce preparation activities**
8. **Integrated education and training**

The scope of Missouri Adult Education will be to make all activities available at the local level utilizing Title II funding and strategic partnerships. Title II funding will be used to provide the content of Basic Skill development, academic education, secondary skills toward high school equivalency, post-secondary remediation, and English language acquisition for those eligible. Organizationally, Title II will provide Basic Skill development, academic education, secondary skills toward high school equivalency, post-secondary remediation, and English language acquisition directly to the consumer and will partner with other agencies to fully meet all the components of Integrated Education and training and Workforce Preparation. Title II will provide adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce prep and workforce training. Title II may use partners to meet some of the requirements for workforce prep but will rely on partnerships to provide workforce training for specific occupations.

Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA)

Adult education;
Literacy;
Workplace adult education and literacy activities;

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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.

(c) Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals. Describe how the State will establish and operate programs under section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals, including how it will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II subtitle C, any of the following academic programs for:

Adult education and literacy activities;
Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
Secondary school credit;
Integrated education and training;
Career pathways;
Concurrent enrollment;
Peer tutoring; and
Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

Missouri has an established a correctional education program for institutionalized individuals and it has been operating successfully for over 15 years. They are required to submit an application through Missouri's competitive bid process. Allowable Correctional activities are:

Adult education and literacy activities;
Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
Secondary school credit;

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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.

Funded correctional educations programs are required to give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

(d) Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program. Describe how the State will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs under Section 243 of WIOA, for English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries.

Missouri has an established program that integrates English Literacy with Civics Education. Missouri will continue to operate the program in the coming Program Year. Missouri provides services to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enable such adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Services include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and may partner with Title I and other partners to provide workforce training.

Describe how the State will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C, an Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program and how the funds will be used for the program.

The Integrated English Literacy and Civics program will be included into the Adult Education competitive bid process, which will require a description of the activities provided in the context of the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities.

Missouri will provide Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education in combination with integrated education and training by providing English language acquisition activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation and workforce training. Title II may use partners to meet some of the requirements for workforce preparation but will exclusively rely on partnerships to provide workforce training for specific occupations.

Describe how the program is designed to (1) prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and (2) integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

Missouri created sector strategy teams at the regional level which include adult education programs providing English language acquisition activities. Career pathways and employment strategies will be created for the sectors identified. Adult English language learners have opportunities to be placed in unsubsidized

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employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency. Adult Education will partner with Title I and other sector stakeholders, to design opportunities for the English language learner.

(e) State Leadership. Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out the required State Leadership activities under section 223 of WIOA.

The Department will use no more than 12.5% of federal funds for the following AEL activities to develop or enhance the adult education system of the state:

1. **The alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop partners, including eligible providers, and the development of career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities.**

2. **The establishment or operation of high quality professional development programs to improve the instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under section 231(b), including instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel of a State or outlying area, and dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to such programs.**

3. **The provision of technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities receiving funds under this title, including—**
   i. **the development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available and appropriate, in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, distance education, and staff training;**
   ii. **the role of eligible providers as a one-stop partner to provide access to employment, education, and training services; and**
   iii. **assistance in the use of technology, including for staff training, to eligible providers, especially the use of technology to improve system efficiencies.**

4. **The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities and the dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the State.**

Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out permissible State Leadership Activities under section 223 of WIOA, if applicable.

The Department may use funds made available under section 222(a)(2) for one or more of the following adult education and literacy activities:

1. **The support of State or regional networks of literacy resource centers.**
2. **The development and implementation of technology applications, translation technology, or distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology.**
3. **Developing and disseminating curricula, including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults.**
4. **Developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways.**

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5. **The provision of assistance to eligible providers in developing and implementing programs that achieve the objectives of this title and in measuring the progress of those programs in achieving such objectives, including meeting the State adjusted levels of performance described in section 116(b)(3).**

6. **The development and implementation of a system to assist in the transition from adult education to postsecondary education, including linkages with postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education.**
7. **Integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers.**
8. **Activities to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities.**
9. **Identifying curriculum frameworks and aligning rigorous content standards that—**
   i. **specify what adult learners should know and be able to do in the areas of reading and language arts, mathematics, and English language acquisition; and**
   ii. **take into consideration the following:**
      a. **State adopted academic standards.**
      b. **The current adult skills and literacy assessments used in the State or outlying area.**
      c. **The primary indicators of performance described in section 116 of WIOA.**
      d. **Standards and academic requirements for enrollment in nonremedial, for-credit courses in postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education supported by the State or outlying area.**
      e. **Where appropriate, the content of occupational and industry skill standards widely used by business and industry in the State or outlying area.**
10. **Developing and piloting of strategies for improving teacher quality and retention.**
11. **The development and implementation of programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners, which may include new and promising assessment tools and strategies that are based on scientifically valid research, where appropriate, and identify the needs and capture the gains of such students at the lowest achievement levels.**
12. **Outreach to instructors, students, and employers.**
13. **Other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title.**

(f) Assessing Quality. Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II and take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.

Missouri Adult Education has a three component monitoring system:

1. **Desk Review – an annual review of AEL grants/contracts. The final review is developed using monthly reviews of financial reports and quarterly reviews of program data. The data will include numbers served, performance data, and may include analysis of student demographics;**
2. **Self Assessment – for a select number of districts/programs, a self-monitoring report will be submitted to the Department for review to determine compliance with grant/contract requirements;**
3. **On-Site Monitoring – a select number of programs will be scheduled for an on-site review.**

Corrective Action. If any of the monitoring components reveal areas of noncompliance, the local provider will be required to submit a corrective action with the Missouri Adult Education office.

Improving Quality. Missouri contracts with the University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri Training Institute to provide high-quality professional development to improve Missouri's Adult Education instruction,

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including instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel of a State or outlying area, and dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to such programs.

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAMS 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;
2.	The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;
3.	The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;
4.	All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;
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;
6.	The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;
7.	The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and
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 supplement and not supplant provisions);
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;
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; and
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.

1. SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html

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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

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan [14] must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA:

(a) Input of State Rehabilitation Council. All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

(1) input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including input and recommendations on the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, recommendations from the Council's report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other Council reports that may have been developed as part of the Council's functions;

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) reviewed Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation's (MVR) services portion of the Combined State Plan for the Title I and VI B programs. On behalf of the Council, Aimee Wehmeier, SRC chairperson, submitted the following comments and suggestions:

1. The SRC Planning Committee, acting for the SRC, had an opportunity to review and comment on MVR's services portion of the Combined State Plan. We are in support of your plan.

2. We applaud MVR's response to the passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Your commitment to cooperating, collaborating and coordinating with other components of the statewide workforce development system is commendable. Improving partnerships and supporting people, including youth and students, with disabilities to obtain competitive integrated employment benefits everyone.

3. We would like to acknowledge MVR's work on the goals and priorities for FY2015. Results demonstrate that though good faith effort was made, MVR was unable to achieve Goal 1: Improve the accountability and performance of service providers. We recognize that improving the accountability and performance of service providers is an ongoing process. The SRC recommends MVR continue to work on strategies to assist them in reaching the goal that was not met and provide an update at future Council meetings.

4. The SRC agrees that MVR's goal of increasing employment outcomes for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is needed. We support your strategies to develop training in serving people with ASD as well as to collaborate with the Department of Mental Health and other agencies.

5. The SRC is pleased that MVR's efforts to improve efficiency and cost effectiveness allowed the agency to currently eliminate its waiting list and place eligible applicants into services. The SRC recognizes the progress made on reducing the waiting lists. However, the SRC believes that any waiting list is undesirable and will

[14] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(iii) of WIOA

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force more individuals to become dependent on public assistance and increase the number of individuals who drop from the program before services are provided.

6. The SRC would like to commend MVR for meeting or exceeding five out of six required Standard 1 performance indicators in FY2015 and meeting two of the three required primary indicators. MVR also achieved successful performance on Standard 2. We acknowledge that all performance indicators were exceeded except 1.5. For performance indicator 1.5, the federal standard is .52, and MVR was at .51.

7. The SRC shares with MVR a concern that the economy makes MVR's role in accessing employment opportunities for people with disabilities more challenging. SRC continues to support MVR's efforts to find solutions by encouraging innovation and job creation and focusing on high quality employment outcomes.

The SRC had opportunities in the past year to provide input on other important matters with your agency. Some of these were reviewing and providing input to the FY2017 goals, priorities, strategies and state plan; the SRC FY2015 annual report; recommendations on policy revisions; state rule changes, collaboration with other disability-related councils; customer satisfaction survey results; the participation in and feedback from public hearings; hearing decision reviews; the recruitment and selection of an impartial hearing officer; and reviewing MVR's outcomes and performance indicators.

The SRC appreciates the opportunity to work with MVR on these matters of importance to people with disabilities in the state of Missouri.

(2) the Designated State unit's response to the Council's input and recommendations; and

Response to SRC recommendation 1: MVR is pleased that the SRC is in support of MVR's services portion of the Combined State Plan.

Response to SRC recommendation 2: MVR is pleased that the SRC recognizes our commitment to supporting WIOA initiatives and our desire to work with other components of the statewide workforce development system in improving competitive integrated employment opportunities for people, including youth and students, with disabilities.

Response to SRC recommendation 3: MVR appreciates the acknowledgment from the SRC about meeting goals, which were established for FY2015. MVR agrees to comply with the SRC's recommendations to continue working on the goal that was not met and update the SRC at quarterly meetings about the progress toward meeting that goal.

Response to SRC recommendation 4: MVR appreciates the SRC's support of the goal of increasing employment outcomes for individuals with ASD and will keep the SRC informed about the continued progress toward reaching this goal.

Response to SRC recommendation 5: As of September 30, 2015, all priority categories were open without a wait list. Significant progress has been made, and MVR will continue striving to completely eliminate all priority category waiting lists now and in the future. MVR agrees with the SRC that waiting lists are undesirable and have many negative effects on people with disabilities.

Response to SRC recommendations 6 and 7: MVR is pleased that it met or exceeded five of the six required Standard 1 performance indicators in FY2015 and that two of three required primary indicators were met. It is

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also happy that it successfully achieved Standard 2. While almost all performance indicators were exceeded, Indicator 1.5 was missed by a small margin. The economic outlook for jobs is a significant concern. MVR will strive to increase quality employment outcomes, develop and maintain strong partnerships with other agencies and provide effective employment services.

MVR expresses its sincere thanks and appreciation for the excellent assistance from the SRC this year. The SRC has been extremely active and helpful with the development of FY2017 goals and priorities. In addition, the Council reviewed consumer satisfaction information, reviewed new policy and procedural changes along with hearing decisions, recruited and selected an impartial hearing officer, attended 2015 public hearings, and collaborated on other important issues. MVR looks forward to working with the SRC in the future to better serve people with disabilities.

(3) the designated State unit's explanations for rejecting any of the Council's input or recommendations.

MVR did not reject any of the Council's input or recommendations.

(b) Request for Waiver of Statewideness. When requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non-statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:

(1) a local public agency will provide the non-Federal share of costs associated with the services to be provided in accordance with the waiver request;
(2) the designated State unit will approve each proposed service before it is put into effect; and
(3) requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

This agency has not requested a waiver of statewideness.

(c) Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System. Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

(1) Federal, State, and local agencies and programs;
(2) State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;
(3) Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture;
(4) Noneducational agencies serving out-of-school youth; and
(5) State use contracting programs.

Cooperation, Collaboration and Coordination

MVR has long-standing working relationships with partner agencies both inside and outside of the statewide workforce development system. The first part of this section will focus on those relationships and activities within the SWDS.

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Cooperation with the Statewide Workforce Development System (SWDS)

The SWDS of services are provided through the Division of Workforce Development's (DWD) 14 workforce regions in Missouri. MVR is a key partner and works closely with the job centers to provide vocational rehabilitation services to eligible persons with disabilities. MVR has appointed a state liaison to collaborate with DWD, and MVR staff serves as active members on all 14 local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs). MVR district supervisors participated in the development of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with all fourteen WDBs. These MOUs direct and explain how partners work together to deliver services to persons with disabilities in the local community.

Through the MOUs with job centers, MVR is the primary referral source from job center partners for people with disabilities. MVR counselors visit various Missouri Job Centers (both full service sites and satellites) frequently to provide services to consumers in a timely fashion. One Missouri Job Center location (where all partners, including MVR, are co-located) has an intra-building electronic linkage which has been effective.

MVR also provides ongoing cross-training and technical assistance to job center staff regarding rehabilitation technology and accommodations in the workplace. An MVR director works with partner agencies to facilitate collaboration with workforce development agencies and ensure that all federal regulations pertaining to Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act are followed.

MVR has access to DWD's statewide case management system. Many MVR counselors and business outreach specialists have been given access to this system known as Toolbox. This arrangement helps strengthen MVR's and DWD's partnership and improves the sharing of resources for individuals with disabilities.

Both MVR and DWD are using Missouri Connections as a vocational guidance tool for their clients. DWD and MVR have collaborated by integrating MVR offices into each of the 14 workforce regions and creating mutual login passwords to access Missouri Connections. This eliminates the duplication of clients' records and allows for more efficient and effective services for mutual clients.

(1) Federal, State and Local Agencies and Programs

Public Institutions of Higher Education (IHE)

In collaboration with the Missouri Rehabilitation Services for the Blind, MVR has written cooperative agreements with all 34 public IHEs in Missouri. These agreements outline the responsibilities of each entity regarding the provision of services pursuant to the regulations specified in 34 CFR 361.53(d)(1).

Client Assistance Program (CAP)

MVR and CAP management staff meet on a quarterly basis to discuss important issues such as order of selection, new policies, best case practices, due process hearings and mediation, performance indicators, joint training activities and public hearings. The CAP is a frequent participant and presenter at MVR-sponsored training sessions. The director of advocacy services with Missouri Protection and Advocacy Services, which CAP is a part of, is a governor-appointed member of the State Rehabilitation Council and sits on the Council's Planning Committee, which reviews the state plan, and also on the Impartial Hearing Officer and Program Evaluation Committees.

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Missouri Department of Mental Health (DMH)

MVR has appointed a state liaison to collaborate with DMH and the governor's office in a variety of projects and activities. The Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council has active and cooperative participation with MVR, DMH, the governor's office and other agencies.

MVR has active participation in the following DMH programs:

- **Division of Behavioral Health - Psychiatric Services State Advisory Council**
- **Division of Developmental Disabilities State Employment Leadership Network**
- **MVR/Division of Behavioral Health Individual Placement with Supports Evidence-Based Supported Employment Program implementation**
- **The Healthy Transitions Initiative (Transition Youth Behavioral Health)**
- **Show Me Careers: Missouri's Transition to Employment Collaborative Grant (Transition Youth – Developmental Disability)**

MVR is collaboratively funding Disability Benefits 101 with DMH's Division of Behavioral Health Services.

Missouri Rehabilitation Services for the Blind

MVR and Missouri Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) have a cooperative agreement for serving individuals who are Deaf-blind. Individuals who meet the Helen Keller definition of Deaf-blind may receive services from both agencies. MVR and RSB staff participated in joint training to discuss the cooperative agreement and best case practices developed to outline coordination of services from both agencies. The cooperative agreement provides an opportunity for each agency to serve individuals with multiple disabilities by taking advantage of the skills and expertise within each agency, while at the same time, utilizing the resources of MVR and RSB to the best advantage.

Missouri Reentry Process

MVR participates in the Missouri Reentry Process, which encourages collaboration between state and local agencies to improve the transition of offenders leaving prison and returning to Missouri communities and work. State and local agencies include the Departments of Corrections, Mental Health, Revenue, Social Services, Economic Development, Public Safety, and Health and Senior Services; Elementary and Secondary Education; Missouri Board of Probation and Parole; and Office of the State Court Administrator. Local community representatives include law enforcement, the faith-based community, crime victims and service/treatment providers.

Centers for Independent Living (CILs)

There are 22 Independent Living Centers in Missouri. MVR and the CILs work together on a regular basis to routinely share referrals and provide services to mutual clientele. A number of the CILs have MVR district staff as active board members.

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MVR continues to collaborate with the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and the CILs to provide direct services to people with disabilities. The state plan developed by MVR and SILC details the tasks necessary to accomplish the delivery of independent living services that will assist consumers with disabilities to achieve their goals. MVR and SILC utilize an outcome-based measurement tool for the CILs. This tool measures consumer satisfaction using a telephone survey method rather than previously used mail-out surveys. MVR has also developed cross-trainings with the CILs to improve the provision of services. A transition toolkit was developed through the collaboration of MVR, the CILs and local education agencies.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Compensated Work Therapy Program

MVR has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Compensated Work Therapy Program (CWT). MVR and CWT are mutually committed to promoting and enhancing competitive employment opportunities for veterans, enabling every individual to reach his or her life's potential. MVR and CWT are prepared to work together in bringing enhanced employment opportunities to veterans with disabilities leading to greater individual and family economic stability and security.

(2) State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998

MVR and Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT) have collaborated to develop a cooperative agreement to ensure maximum statewide utilization of services. By establishing a cooperative relationship, MVR and MoAT can increase rehabilitation technology services utilization and understanding by taking advantage of the expertise and knowledge within each agency. The agreement provides a plan for the coordination of services; for using the resources of the cooperating agencies to the best advantage; to provide information sharing, technical support and training; to facilitate the referral of potential eligible persons between agencies; and to jointly serve eligible persons obtain rehabilitation technology services. A VR staff member is a representative on the MoAT Advisory Council.

(3) Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture

MVR works closely with the U.S. Department of Agriculture-funded Agricultural Engineering Extension of the University of Missouri-Columbia (UMC) in the delivery of information and assistance for agricultural operators with disabilities.

MVR and the AgrAbility Project housed within UMC and the Brain Injury Association of Missouri has had a productive working relationship for more than ten years. The mutual goals of MVR and AgrAbility are a commitment of delivering vocational rehabilitation services, rehabilitation technology, information, education and a safe environment for farm operators with disabilities. Operating under an MOU, MVR and AgrAbility completed a fee-for-service plan for rehabilitation technology services.

MVR and AgrAbility staff set the following goals for future activities:

- **Collaborate with the National AgrAbility Project on hosting joint training with partner agencies, MVR staff, CRP staff, consumers and AgrAbility staff.**

- **Participate in national conferences and forums on AgrAbility, MVR and rehabilitation technology services for rural agricultural services for eligible persons with disabilities.**

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(4) Non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth

MVR sponsors students with disabilities to participate in the Governor's Council on Disability Missouri Youth Leadership Forum that focuses on leadership, citizenship, social and career development skills.

CRPs work with out-of-school youth in providing job development and placement services along with skills training.

MVR cooperates with the CILs in providing services for adults and students with disabilities. It coordinated summer work experience pilot projects with the CILs. The CIL Summer Pre-Employment Transition Services Pilot Projects provided potentially VR eligible students with disabilities access to job exploration activities, workplace readiness training and social support and self-advocacy, including peer mentoring.

(5) State use contracting programs

MVR does not participate in state-use contracting programs.

(d) Coordination with Education Officials. Describe:

(1) The designated State unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services, as well as procedures for the timely development and approval of individualized plans for employment for the students.

Transition services provide eligible or potentially eligible students with disabilities, the knowledge, skills and opportunities to make a successful transition to postsecondary education/training, independent living and competitive integrated employment based on their educational and career goals.

MVR, in collaboration with the Office of Special Education and local education agencies, will provide or arrange for the provision of pre-employment transition services in the areas of job exploration counseling, work-based-learning experiences, counseling on opportunities for post-secondary education/training, workplace readiness training, and self-advocacy, including peer mentoring, for all students in need of such services who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services.

Each local MVR district office will also participate in pre-employment transition coordination with the local education agency to include attending IEP meetings when invited, using conference calls and video conferences, when necessary; working with local workforce development entities and employers to develop work opportunities for students with disabilities; coordinating pre-employment transition services with transition services provided in accordance with IDEA; and, when invited, attending person-centered planning meetings for youth receiving services under Title IX of the Social Security Act. To effectively coordinate these services, MVR:

- **conducted statewide training to include guidance regarding IEP participation for all MVR staff that served students in Missouri high schools;**

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• worked in partnership with the Parent Advocacy Coalition Educational Rights Center to develop a video introducing VR services that can be shown at IEP meetings;

• conducted cross training on services to youth with local job center staff and MVR staff in Kansas City and St. Louis, the two largest metropolitan areas of the state;

• invited special education personnel to train new MVR counselors on transition services within the IEP;

• provided cross training with local CILs to include information regarding benefits planning; and

• is currently working in collaboration with DMH's Division of Developmental Disabilities to provide cross training with MVR counselors and IDD case managers regarding their respective services.

To deliver pre-employment transition services, MVR developed two summer pilot projects, which include a six week paid summer work experience, one for VR eligible students with disabilities in partnership with CRPs and a pilot project with CILs for students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR. MVR collaborated with businesses and school districts to provide services in these pilot projects.

In addition, MVR is contracting with the Hook Center, a regional professional development center at the University of Missouri, to provide assistance with the provision of pre-employment transition services. The University hired 23 transition specialists located across the state, who are certified teachers and can go into the classroom, to collaborate with local education agencies and MVR to provide pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities who are potentially eligible for VR services.

MVR is also working with Wonderland Camp, an educational camp for children, teenagers and adults who have disabilities, to provide internship opportunities for both students and youth with disabilities. This past year, MVR sponsored students and youth with disabilities to participate in a week long Missouri Youth Leadership Forum, developed by the Governor's Council on Disability, that focuses on leadership, citizenship, and social and career development skills. MVR is utilizing its business outreach specialists to work with employers on creating work experiences for youth and students with disabilities. And, it is collaborating with its WIOA partners in providing seamless, coordinated services to youth and students with disabilities.

MVR has a policy that outlines transition activities and services including the timely development and approval of an individualized plan for employment (IPE) for each eligible student prior to leaving high school. MVR will provide for the development of the IPE as early as possible during the transition planning process, but, at least, by the time the eligible student leaves the school setting. The IPE will include specific transition services or pre-employment transition services and supports needed for an eligible student with a disability or a youth with a disability, including youth with the most significant disabilities, to achieve an employment outcome or projected post-school employment outcome. An IPE is required to be developed in consideration of the IEP of a student with a disability under IDEA or a student's Section 504 services.

(2) Information on the formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency with respect to:

(A) consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;

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(B) transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs;
(C) roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;
(D) procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

The DESE Cooperative Agreement is a written agreement within the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) between MVR and the Offices of Special Education and College and Career Readiness as well as Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB). The purpose of this agreement is to facilitate the coordination of transition services from school to post-secondary training and/or employment for individuals with disabilities who are enrolled in secondary education and are/or may be eligible to receive vocational rehabilitation services. This agreement addresses the following:

(A) consultation and technical assistance;

(B) transition planning to include pre-employment transition services, focusing on competitive integrated employment outcomes;

(C) roles and responsibilities and financial obligations;

(D) outreach and identification; and

(E) work-based learning experiences to include programs like Project Search.

Special Education Advisory Panel

DESE appointed an advisory panel for the purpose of providing policy guidance with respect to special education and related services for youth and students with disabilities in the state. The advisory panel is appointed by the commissioner of DESE and includes MVR's assistant director of Transition Services. Other members include:

- **parents of children with disabilities (ages birth through 26)**
- **individuals with disabilities**
- **representatives of other state agencies involved in the purchase or delivery of related services**
- **administrators of programs for children with disabilities**
- **state agencies' representatives who provide services to children with disabilities including welfare and juvenile corrections**
- **representatives of private schools and public charter schools**

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• vocational, community or business organizations

Missouri Connections

Missouri Connections is a web-based career exploration tool to assist Missourians in determining their career interests, explore employment opportunities, set up career plans and establish job search strategies and resources. Sponsored by DESE and the Department of Economic Development (DED), Missouri Connections is free of charge to students, parents, guidance counselors, educators and job seekers. Through Missouri Connections, DWD, Department of Higher Education, MVR and local school districts can utilize the same career planning tool with their clients/students. In addition to general career exploration/resource sharing, students/job seekers may also develop a career portfolio by creating a unique username/password that will allow them to login and save information regarding their specific career interests, job search, resume, etc. Students/job seekers who are receiving services through one or more of the above entities may also choose to share their login information thus eliminating the duplication of clients' records and allowing for more efficient and effective services for mutual clients.

MVR Transition Ad-hoc Team

MVR's assistant commissioner appointed an ad-hoc Transition Team, composed of MVR management and counselor staff as well as special education transition specialists and a representative from the CILs, to provide recommendations about transition-related activities and services for students and youth with disabilities. The team is involved with: coordinating joint statewide training activities for special educators, rehabilitation counselors, providers, and MPACT; developing strategies to better measure and increase overall success rates of students with disabilities receiving transition services; increasing the overall participation and employment outcome of students with disabilities in work experience programs; developing strategies for increasing student engagement and decreasing the dropout rate for students with disabilities from Missouri high schools; and developing strategies for outreach/improving transition outcomes for students from underserved populations.

Missouri Interagency Transition Team (MITT)

The MITT was formed through the Office of Special Education and includes members representing state-level agencies, including MVR, across Missouri who have an interest in improving post-secondary outcomes for youth with disabilities. The MITT meets to collaborate, break down service barriers, share resources, improve overall systems of service and improve data sharing among agencies.

The director of Transition Services works closely with other MVR management staff to disseminate information and provide technical assistance to improve transition services and outcomes in Missouri.

Missouri Parent Training and Information Center (MPACT)

MPACT is a statewide parent training and information center serving all disabilities. A representative of MVR's supervisory staff is an active member of the MPACT Board. In addition, a representative of MPACT is a member of the State Rehabilitation Council. MVR and MPACT collaborate on projects to assist students and children with disabilities to reach their full potential.

Community Transition Teams (CTTs)

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CTTs are developed and supported in Missouri to elevate community awareness of and commitment to the improvement of post-secondary outcomes of youth with disabilities. CTTs are trained on transition planning, services and effective practices as well as implementing a strategic plan for transition in their respective communities. There are 42 CTTs, and an MVR counselor is a required partner on each local CTT.

Project Search and Other Employer-Based Transition Training Programs

Project Search is a one-year, employer-led internship opportunity for VR eligible youth with cognitive/intellectual disabilities. It provides employability skills training and workplace internships for individuals with the most significant disabilities particularly students transitioning from high school to adult life. MVR is one of five required partners in the Project Search model. The other required partners are education, a Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP), a long-term provider (follow-along) and business. The first pilot Project Search site was in the St. Charles County School District. The Office of Special Education awarded funding for training and technical assistance to replicate the Project Search High School Transition Program in the following schools: St. Louis City Public Schools, KC North School District, Sedalia Smith Cotton High School, the Independence School District, and Jefferson City High School. In addition to the Project Search programs, MVR is partnering with the Special School District of St. Louis County, the Franklin County Cooperative, Windsor C-1 School District in Jefferson County, St. Mary's Hospital in St. Louis and Mercy Hospitals in each of those counties to provide similar employer-based transition training programs prior to high school graduation for eligible students with most significant disabilities. MVR district offices and counselors that serve each of these schools serve on an executive management team. MVR has made a commitment to assist with referrals and partial funding for training for MVR eligible youth to participate in these programs. In addition, through the supported employment program model, MVR is also working in partnership with CRPs and two other school districts, in Rolla and Columbia, to provide services for youth with disabilities through their employer-led work experience programs.

Show Me Careers Grant – Missouri's Transition to Employment Collaborative

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Developmental Disabilities, awarded the Institute of Human Development, University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC), a "Partnerships in Employment Systems Change" grant to fund the Show Me Careers project. These funds are used to increase competitive employment outcomes for youth and young adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities and promote change efforts leading to the development of policies and practices that support competitive employment in integrated settings for youth and adults with developmental disabilities. The MVR director of Transition Services served as a lead consultant in the development of this grant. The MVR director of Transition Services, MVR director of Mental Health Services and the MVR director of Workforce Development, continue to actively serve on the Missouri Show Me Careers Leadership Consortium that will support a statewide structure through which to demonstrate evidence-based practices, revise and develop needed policies and practices, and enhance statewide collaborations.

In order to scale-up or enhance evidence-based practices that support seamless transition, eight Missouri Pilot Communities were chosen through a competitive application process to test ideas on how to bring real and lasting change in the area of transition. Pilot communities developed plans tailored to their local needs and available resources. Initially there were eight Pilot Communities selected to receive funding, coaching, leadership training and technical supports. The remaining seven are: Access II (Gallatin), L.I.F.E. (Farmington), Northeast Missouri (LOQW), Platte County, Show-Me-Columbia, St. Charles County and United Cerebral Palsy (St. Joseph).

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Add Us In-Kansas City Grant

The Office of Disability Employment Policy awarded the Institute of Human Development, UMKC, a grant to improve employment opportunities for minority youth and enhance employer engagement. The MVR director of Transition Services served as a lead consultant in the development of this grant, and the Transition Services Kansas City MVR district supervisor continues to play an active role in the continuation and completion of grant activities. The overall goal of Add Us In-KC is "to provide a continuum of career opportunities for minority youth with disabilities within the greater Kansas City area through a business-led network that creates jobs and markets workforce training and services to prospective employers."

(e) Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations. Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

MVR enters into cooperative written agreements with nonprofit, private CRPs to provide services on a fee-for-service basis to individuals with disabilities. MVR does not own or operate any of the programs. The CRP must be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) or other approved accreditation entities as specified in the agreement. All CRPs must agree to the provisions of and sign the cooperative agreement with MVR prior to providing services to MVR consumers. CRPs provide services which may include job development, supported employment, employment skills training, employment services and employment transition services for individuals with disabilities. All CRP programs emphasize community integrated competitive employment.

MVR district offices meet with local CRPs to outline joint activities assisting mutual consumers in reaching employment outcomes. MVR and CRP staff offer input on service delivery processes and develop action plans to improve those processes. Other collaborative activities involve joint training programs.

Multiple ad hoc teams composed of MVR and CRP staff members work together developing new ideas and designing processes to successfully support and implement those new ideas. For example, an ad hoc team focused on CRP staff training standards developed a recommendation for annual training requirements to be completed by CRP staff members. This recommendation has been successfully incorporated into the revised CRP-VR agreement.

Collaboration and partnership continue to be cornerstones of the relationship between VR and CRPs in Missouri and have created an environment of creativity and innovation. The CRP-MVR steering committee meets regularly to review progress on projects, service delivery and to discuss current and future issues warranting attention.

(f) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services. Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

As indicated in section (e), MVR enters into cooperative written agreements with CRPs to provide services on a fee-for-service basis to individuals with disabilities, which includes youth with the most significant disabilities.

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Ad hoc teams composed of MVR and CRP staff members worked together developing new ideas and designing processes to successfully support and implement those new ideas. The CRP-MVR steering committee meets regularly to improve services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities who are receiving supported employment services. Through collaborative efforts, MVR and CRP partners have strengthened the requirements for CRP who want to provide Employment Services Plus in the areas of deaf/hard of hearing, brain injury, and/or autism spectrum disorder. Two MVR district offices and a CRP in Mid-Missouri began piloting a newly designed supported employment model for adults and youth diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. Additionally, through collaborative efforts between CRPs and MVR, a successful pilot project which provided a six week work experience for students with disabilities was developed and completed during the summer of 2015. Through this pilot project, 143 students with disabilities were able to experience work in a competitive integrated environment.

The CRPs provide SE services, which may include:

- **community-based assessments;**
- **job supports;**
- **survey of businesses and assurance of potential community-based exploration, assessment and work sites suited to the needs of the clients;**
- **analysis of all relevant job-related variables (e.g., transportation, job restructuring, tax credit for employers, etc.);**
- **provision of direct training at employment sites until employment standards have been achieved;**
- **development of an internal advocacy system;**
- **provision of long-term, extended services support with the individual or employer; and**
- **customized employment for individuals and employers.**

(g) Coordination with Employers. Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

(1) VR services; and

MVR continually reviews its strategies to develop new employer relationships and support those who employ persons with disabilities. Some of its flexible strategies include increasing work-based learning opportunities, on-the-job training, internships and customized employment.

MVR is reviewing its internal processes to work more effectively with employers and WIOA partners. MVR customizes its services to meet the needs of employers. It has several employer projects underway. MVR has recently partnered with Staples to customize an employment and training program in its distribution center. It is partnering with Toys R Us in providing similar customized services. MVR is also working with BJC Healthcare to assist in their recruitment and interview process for applicants with disabilities through the utilization of a resource called Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP). TAP is a collaboration with businesses to assist them in finding candidates with disabilities and connecting them with available job openings.

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In order to meet business needs, MVR developed business outreach specialist positions that provide statewide coverage at local and state levels. Business outreach specialists work with labor market information to support both business and MVR staff needs. These specialists not only offer outreach to employers and businesses, they also work with WIOA partners to collaborate and create a single point of contact among agencies. MVR has representatives on regional WIOA business services teams. The teams will work with local Chambers of Commerce, local educational agencies, local and state economic developers, regional planning commissions, human resource groups and other business organizations to determine employer needs in workforce regions across the state.

MVR is involved in sector strategies planning at the local and state levels to address skills gaps and create career pathways to better serve employers with their individual needs and to provide them with prepared candidates. It has been forming employment collaboratives at the local levels to ensure employers receive the best possible delivery of services. MVR will work with businesses to ensure they have resources for necessary workplace accommodations and rehabilitation technology.

(2) transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities.

MVR is utilizing its business outreach specialists to work with employers on providing paid and unpaid work experiences for youth and students with disabilities. It has been coordinating with employers, school districts, CRPs and CILs to provide summer work experience pilot projects. MVR is also working with Wonderland Camp on an internship program. MVR will collaborate with the WIOA business services teams on developing opportunities for pre-employment transition services.

(h) Interagency Cooperation. Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

(1) the State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act;

MVR is in ongoing conversations with the Missouri State Medicaid Authority, Missouri Department of Social Services MOHealthNet Division, to update its current MOU to consider the requirements of WIOA. This includes coordination of employment activities with the Missouri Department of Mental Health (DMH) Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) and Division of Developmental Disabilities (DD), which serve individuals with mental illness, substance use disorders and intellectual disabilities provided under the Medicaid state plan and waivers.

(2) the State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities; and

(3) the State agency responsible for providing mental health services.

MVR has an MOU with DMH, the state agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities and mental health services, which covers DMH's DBH and DD divisions. The agreement outlines the collaboration on existing services, alignment of funding sources, information and data sharing, referrals and on-going development of services.

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DMH's DBH and MVR work together to increase access to evidence-based supported employment, also known as Individual Placement and Support (IPS), for adults with serious mental illnesses who are interested in improving their work lives. Missouri has 12 Community Mental Health/Treatment Centers (CMHCs) participating in this implementation collaborative. Ongoing technical assistance and fidelity reviews to the evidence-based practice are provided by a state trainer and a team consisting of MVR and DMH employees. The partnership between DMH and MVR includes a training format, offered to interested CMHCs statewide, on adopting IPS and on improving existing employment activities within treatment services. DMH and MVR are implementing IPS for youth with serious mental illnesses in one current site with more to come.

Additional partnering activities include the sponsoring of an employment summit with the Missouri Coalition for Community Behavioral Healthcare to facilitate clinical integration of behavioral health and community employment efforts and MVR's and DMH-DBH's co-funding of the customized Missouri benefits planning website DB101.

MVR has appointed a state liaison to collaborate with DMH and the governor's office in a variety of projects and activities. MVR has active participation in many of DMH programs.

(i) Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development. Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

(1) Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

(A) Qualified Personnel Needs. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

(i) the number of personnel who are employed by the State agency in the provision of VR services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;

(ii) the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

(iii) projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

MVR developed a system of collecting and analyzing data annually to determine the needs of qualified personnel. This describes the data system on the following: personnel/personnel development; recruitment, preparation and retention of qualified personnel; standards; requirements for vocational rehabilitation counselor (VRC) positions; staff development activities; personnel to address individual communication needs; performance evaluation system; and coordination with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

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In FY2015, MVR received 13,687 new applications, developed 9,225 Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs), placed 5,063 clients into successful employment outcomes and had 5,328 cases closed after eligibility but before services were received.

The VRCs, district supervisory positions and clerical staff are directly involved in providing services for individuals with disabilities (14 supervisors and assistant supervisors have a partial caseload). The number of individuals who had an open file with MVR as of September 30, 2015 was 14,077. The average number of cases per VRC is approximately 98 per counselor.

MVR's management team reviews each vacancy to determine if the position should be filled, relocated or reclassified to a counselor position (if the position was a different one) based upon factors such as current need and expected population growth. The goal for MVR is to continually evaluate caseload sizes, office work load and staffing to maximize efficiency.

(i & ii) MVR is made up of the following sections: Disability Determination, Independent Living and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). There are approximately 660 full-time employees in all three sections. This report will focus on the VR section. As of September 30, 2015, the breakdown of the MVR Client Services Section needed for service delivery is as follows:

144 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors

8 Assistant Supervisors

24 District Supervisors (one also serves as regional manager, 14 have a partial caseload)

63 Clerical Support Staff Positions

Administrative Staff:

1 Assistant Commissioner

5 Coordinators (three are shared with all sections of MVR)

1 Field Operations Manager

6 Regional Managers

11 Program Directors (two are shared with all sections of MVR)

1 Human Resource Manager (shared with all sections of MVR)

5 Assistant Directors (three are shared with more than one section of MVR)

3 Supervisors (shared with all sections of MVR)

1 Human Resource/Payroll Benefit Specialist

5 Quality Assurance Specialists

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2 Accounting Analysts

1 Executive Assistant

3 Administrative Assistants (two are shared with more than one section of MVR)

1 Procurement Specialist (shared with all sections of MVR)

1 Program Specialist

1 Billing Specialist

1 General Services Specialist

(iii) MVR anticipates approximately 13 VRCs per year will be needed to fill the vacancies from retirements, resignations, terminations, etc. The total VRCs needed for a five-year period is approximately 65. MVR estimates that 2 assistant supervisors, 12 district supervisors, 36 clerical support staff and 24 administrative staff may be needed over the next five years to fill vacancies due to turnover and retirements.

Row	Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
1	VR Counselor	144	4	65
2	Assistant Supervisor	8	0	2
3	District Supervisor	24	0	12
4	Clerical Support	63	1	36

5	**Administrative staff**	**49**	**2**	**24**

(B) Personnel Development. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

(i) a list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;

(ii) the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

(iii) the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

There is one graduate rehabilitation counselor training program in Missouri. Maryville University in St. Louis, a private institution, offers a master's level degree program in rehabilitation counseling. Graduates of this program are ready to take the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) certification test and also the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) test upon graduation. Maryville University began offering a new program with a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling in September 1999. The program had 45 students enrolled in the fall 2015 semester, and 7 students are expected to graduate from Maryville University by summer 2016. MVR will continue to work closely with Maryville University to recruit and hire potential graduates of the program.

MVR is also working with other graduate counseling programs in Missouri and offers practicum or internship opportunities.

Row	Institutions	Students enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency	Current students expected to graduate by summer 2016	Graduates from the previous year
1	**Maryville University**	**45**	**1**	**7**	**8**

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(2) *Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel.* Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

MVR works actively in recruiting new counselors with master's degrees in rehabilitation counseling or other related areas. As mentioned above, Missouri has one graduate level rehabilitation counseling program that, at this time, is not sufficient to produce the number of qualified rehabilitation professionals needed by MVR in all areas of the state. Even though graduate enrollment is high at Maryville University, many of the students are not willing to relocate from the St. Louis area. To address this issue, job announcements are sent to other institutions of higher learning that have rehabilitation counseling programs such as Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, Emporia State University, Arkansas State University, University of Arkansas, and Missouri universities that offer graduate-level counseling, social work and/or psychology programs.

MVR advertises all openings with the jobs.mo.gov web page and lists all openings on the agency's website. Additionally, MVR advertises all openings on multiple online job search sites, including Indeed.com.

MVR sends all job announcements to its state's historically black college, Lincoln University-Jefferson City, Missouri; as well as other historically black colleges such as Southern University-Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Fort Valley State College-Fort Valley, Georgia; and Mississippi State-Starkville, Mississippi.

MVR utilizes a diversity consultant to assist with ongoing staff development activities and outreach to underserved populations around the state. The consultant and the MVR Diversity Team work with MVR staff as well as CRP staff. The diversity consultant presented in-person training sessions for all staff in each of MVR's 25 offices and in-person training to new counselors this past year.

At the end of FY2015, approximately 12% of all professional staff and 24% of support staff with MVR were persons from diverse backgrounds. MVR also actively recruits individuals with disabilities. District supervisors and VRCs in MVR district offices receive all VRC job notices. Other disability organizations, including CILs and CRPs, are consulted about recruiting persons with disabilities. At the end of FY2015, approximately 28% of all professional staff and 14% of support staff with MVR were persons with disabilities.

MVR continues to offer non-paid as well as paid graduate internships for potential employees. MVR also considers candidates who have completed their necessary coursework and need to complete their internship requirement for open positions with the agency. During FY2015, MVR provided two students with unpaid internships and practicum experiences to enable them to complete their graduate coursework. Those students will be considered for upcoming counselor vacancies.

MVR has a close working relationship with graduate rehabilitation counselor programs at Maryville University, University of Arkansas, University of Southern Illinois-Carbondale and Emporia State University. MVR representatives sit on the advisory councils of the above programs or make regular contacts and visits to recruit students from the above master's level rehabilitation programs. Staff development needs and important future training/recruiting issues are discussed at these advisory meetings.

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(3) *Personnel Standards*. Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

(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

MVR acknowledges the state code: 5 CSR 20-500.140 is the standard in Missouri for the highest degree required for VRCs.

The State of Missouri requires that a qualified VR counselor must have the following minimum qualifications:

- **A master's degree from an accredited college or university in rehabilitation counseling, guidance and counseling, psychology, social work, or closely related field; and**
- **Fluency in American Sign Language or other appropriate mode of communication if the counselor provides services to individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing.**

MVR is pleased that two VRCs completed CSPD requirements for their master's degree in counseling during FY2015. MVR has identified three VRCs who need supplemental coursework, certification or licensure to meet the requirements for CFR 361.18 and RSMo 337. At the end of FY2015, MVR had 142 VRCs who met the CSPD requirements. There are a total of 144 VR counselors, some of which are part-time positions.

MVR continues to prioritize the CSPD funding of the VRCs mentioned above who are involved in university coursework, certification (CRC) and licensure (LPC). MVR is committed to ensuring that VRCs' tuition, fees and books are funded to obtain necessary coursework to meet the above requirements.

The human resource manager (HRM) for MVR develops an individualized plan with each newly hired staff member to identify/evaluate specific staff development needs, required courses, available resources and timelines necessary to achieve the standards in RSMo 337 or the appropriate CRC requirement. The HRM also monitors each staff development plan to ensure that all objectives are met. As necessary, the HRM consults with the state licensing boards and CRC officials. All staff is required to submit updated transcripts to the HRM to ensure compliance with the objectives of the standards.

The above plan is non-discriminatory and encourages the retraining and recruitment of persons with disabilities and from diverse backgrounds.

Annually MVR reviews the performance evaluations for rehabilitation staff to determine if they are consistent with the actual job functions, agency values and the Rehabilitation Act mandates. A part of this evaluation assesses their levels of performance based on the RSA performance standards and indicators.

(B) the establishment and maintenance of education and experience requirements, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

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MVR continuously evaluates its hiring and training processes to ensure that staff has the education and experience necessary to provide a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and needs of persons with disabilities. As mentioned earlier, MVR uses the state code: 5 CSR 20-500.140 as the standard in Missouri for the highest degree required for VRCs. This basic educational requirement is enhanced with ongoing training for new and experienced counselors focusing on business development/engagement and effective service delivery to persons with disabilities.

Many newly hired VRCs have had experience working with a CRP partner providing direct employment services to persons with disabilities. Other new VRCs have previous work experience with an independent living center, job center or a community mental health agency. Paid or unpaid work experience in helping persons with disabilities obtain and maintain employment is considered valuable prior work experience.

MVR has a comprehensive professional development system that ensures that its personnel have an understanding of the medical and psychosocial aspects of a variety of disabilities. Initially, MVR strives to hire counselors who meet the state code: 5 CSR 20-500.140 and prior experience working with persons with disabilities. MVR augments that with professional development opportunities by providing training focused on specific disabilities. Additionally, MVR sends counselors to conferences that focus on specific disabilities such as the Missouri Brain Injury Association Conference. MVR has statewide and regional specialists that have had extensive training and experience in their area of expertise, e.g., business specialists, mental health, autism, assistive technology, AgrAbility, benefits planning, brain injury, hearing impairments, vision impairments, learning disabilities and self-employment. These specialists are available to provide direct assistance to clients as well as consultation with counselors. All counselors, regardless of their tenure, have the opportunity to work with a mentor who has expertise and experience in an area that is of interest to them.

MVR's clients have repeatedly expressed the value of having a high quality rehabilitation counselor in reaching their employment goals. This input is gained through customer satisfaction surveys, individual letters and public hearings. In order to help counselors assess their client's skills and abilities to obtain and retain employment, MVR has stressed the value of counseling skills. Counselors are encouraged to have a "tool bag" of skills. Primary in this tool bag is the ability to hear and understand clients' goals, provide informed choice and address the specific barriers to successful employment. All professional MVR staff has been trained in Motivational Interviewing (MI), an evidence-based practice, which helps clients and counselors have constructive conversations that identifies their values and goals resulting in an individualized plan to reach their employment goal. Using MI, counselors and clients identify clients' skills and abilities, the supports that they need to reach their goals, plan for setbacks and challenges, and how successful employment will affect their lives.

MVR has a multi-pronged approach to assist staff with modifying environmental and attitudinal barriers that clients face. Group training and individual assistance is provided to new and existing staff to effectively learn and perform their position. As mentioned earlier, MVR places a high value on the counseling skills of staff. All professional staff and many support staff have received four days of MI training. On-going MI training is available for all staff. MVR offers case management training to new counselors within the first six months of their employment. New counselors are also trained to learn to advocate and understand environmental and attitudinal barriers clients face. All counselors are encouraged to maximize resources by knowing and forming relationships with the varied resources in their territories. Many times these resources can provide assistance with environmental and attitudinal barriers. MVR recognizes the value of group trainings but also provides individual assistance to counselors through mentoring and coaching experiences.

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Advances in rehabilitation technology are creating opportunities for clients. MVR has statewide and regional specialists who offer expertise in this area. These specialists will provide individual consultation and also help staff remain up-to-date with regional trainings. During FY2015, all counselors and supervisors received training on rehabilitation technology. Additionally, MVR utilizes Missouri Assistive Technology for consultation and training purposes.

MVR has been providing additional resources in developing effective relationships with employers in both the public and private sectors. MVR has a team of individuals whose primary responsibility is working with employers and assisting in connecting clients with potential employment. Additionally, all staff is trained and encouraged to develop relationships with businesses. MVR considers employers its partners and works toward helping them address their staffing needs.

MVR looks to the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) for local employment dynamics and labor market information. Job development and placement efforts utilize local level data to assist clients in making informed choices regarding their career goals, considering wages, turnover rates, current vacancies and areas of job creation. MERIC has provided training to MVR staff to aid them in using their website with clients.

(4) *Staff Development*. Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

(A) a system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated State unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; and

MVR has a comprehensive program for in-service training and staff development for all positions. Staff at all levels will attend training in new employee orientation, cultural diversity training, sexual harassment prevention and customer service. Supervisory staff and upper management personnel are required to attend training in leadership, supervision, interviewing and other training offered through the state or other private sources. MVR is invested in its leadership training program for supervisors and emerging MVR leaders. MVR also contracts with the Missouri Training Institute to provide leadership training presentations to supervisory and management staff. Many MVR employees have graduated from, and some are currently participating in, the National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute. MVR utilizes an internal training consultant who assists in leadership training.

All new counselor and paraprofessional staff, together with their district supervisor, completes the New Counselor Training Manual or New Administrative Staff Training Manual, which assists in the development and understanding of the rehabilitation field and the agency's goals, priorities and responsibilities in serving individuals with disabilities under the federal/state VR program. MVR gathers ad hoc teams to address and evaluate specific staff development needs including topics such as leadership development, training manuals, new counselor orientations, and MI.

In addition to New Employee Orientation, new counseling staff receives training specific to vocational counseling/career development, job development/job placement, vocational services, and case management techniques from MVR staff.

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MVR supports staff attendance on an annual basis to the Power-Up Conference, which promotes the use and understanding of assistive technology and rehabilitation technology services and resources across the state. This conference is sponsored by the Missouri Assistive Technology Project. MVR has an ad hoc assistive technology team, which assists the agency in staff development activities for assistive technology.

MVR supports staff attendance at the National AgrAbility Conference. Additionally, statewide training has been provided on services and technology supports for agricultural careers.

Staff development needs are established in a number of ways. A survey of training needs is administered annually to all counseling and paraprofessional staff to ascertain the needs and interests of all MVR staff. MVR also monitors employee performance and has incorporated RSA standards and indicators into staff evaluations. Other methods to determine staff development needs are: quality assurance reviews, evaluation of consumer satisfaction studies, feedback and recommendations from the State Rehabilitation Council and Individual Staff Development/Leadership Plans.

Results of the training needs survey are shared with members of the administrative team and regional managers. MVR works to provide training in a variety of ways to accommodate staff needs. Staff members regularly participate in both in-person and web-based trainings.

The nature and scope of the staff development program is tied to MVR's overall goals and priorities. MVR is committed to improving staff competencies to ensure that the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, will be fully implemented and the philosophy embraced. MVR training supports the goals and priorities that have been established in the comprehensive statewide needs assessment.

MVR just completed the fifth year of a five-year grant from RSA for in-service training to assist with staff development. The following are the goals under this grant, which are supportive of MVR's goals and priorities:

1. Effective recruitment and retention of qualified rehabilitation professionals

2. Effective succession planning

3. Effective leadership development and capacity building

(B) procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

MVR continues to participate and has collaborative relationships with research programs and partner agencies.

Other training areas which MVR frequently sponsors or staff participates in are:

- **Motivational Interviewing**
- **Legal and Ethical Issues in Rehabilitation**
- **Medical and Psychological Aspects of Disability**

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- **Autism Spectrum Disorders**
- **Vocational Counseling/Assessment**
- **Americans with Disabilities Act**
- **Informed Choice**
- **Social Security Work Incentive Programs, including Ticket to Work**
- **Sexual Harassment Prevention**
- **Cultural Diversity**
- **Job Development/Job Placement/Supported Employment**
- **Transition from School to Work and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA issues)**
- **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**
- **Rehabilitation Technology**
- **Missouri Rehabilitation Association Annual Conference**
- **Leadership Training**
- **Individual training requests pertinent to the field of rehabilitation.**
- **Attendance at conferences/workshops related to MVR (e.g., Traumatic Brain Injury, APSE-MO, Power Up, Assistive Technology)**

MVR is involved in a variety of activities to recruit and retain qualified rehabilitation personnel. Recruitment efforts are focused in part on maintaining good relationships with colleges and universities that offer degrees that meet state rule. Additionally, MVR staff sits on their advisory boards, attend career fairs, serve as guest speakers and MVR offers internship opportunities. MVR provides a career ladder for counselors rewarding their success and tenure. MVR has a succession plan team who visited each office during FY2015. This team has shared data related to past turnover and projected turnover (due only to retirement). The team has also shared ways in which any individual staff could enhance their leadership competencies. These office visits were intended to provide informed choice on future leadership opportunities and transparency about the competencies needed to be promoted. Leadership development and capacity building is encouraged statewide through optional trainings, the Emerging Leaders program, guidance from the MVR director of leadership, annual Individual Staff Development and Leadership Plans, tuition reimbursement, team membership and others. MVR encourages each staff member to view themselves as a leader in their current role.

(5) *Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs.* Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to

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communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

MVR employs seven vocational rehabilitation counselors for the deaf (VRCDs) located throughout Missouri who are skilled in manual communication for the deaf and hearing impaired. Each year, they gather for training to discuss services and meet with students at the Missouri School for the Deaf. MVR sends representatives to the Missouri Association for the Deaf Biannual Conference. Five of the VRCDs are deaf or hard of hearing. Each of these counselors met CSPD requirements. One of the district office supervisors is also Deaf/hearing impaired. MVR has three additional counselors who assist this team and have specialized training in this area.

MVR staff work with several assistive technology projects, located at various Centers for Independent Living in the state, which have demonstration centers for exploring, reviewing and demonstrating various assistive technology devices, services and resources that are available to individuals with alternative communication needs. The agency has developed an ad hoc assistive technology team and has identified two assistive technology specialists to assist staff with any assistive technology-related needs regarding services for individuals with disabilities.

Applicants and eligible individuals who have limited English-speaking skills are provided interpreters funded by MVR. All brochures and many forms are translated into Spanish so that individuals and families who speak Spanish have access to information in their native language. At this time, MVR has a counselor who is fluent in Spanish in Cape Girardeau. This counselor has assisted with staff development and Hispanic liaison activities. MVR also has staff bilingual in Japanese and Romanian. The state has a contract with an over-the-telephone foreign language interpretation service, which MVR has utilized upon occasion for translation.

(6) *Coordination of Personnel Development Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.* As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

MVR works closely with the Office of Special Education and school districts to coordinate staff development activities and services for students with disabilities.

During FY2015, the Transition Team, composed of MVR staff and special education personnel from both the state and local level, focused on participation in special education transition-related trainings/professional development activities. Examples of these activities include attendance and presentations at the DESE Summer Transition Institute, attendance at the Missouri Department of Higher Education 2015 Fall Workshop and attendance at the Missouri School Counselor Association Conference.

The Cooperative Work Experience Program (COOP) agreement is an interagency state and local program between the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Special Education, MVR and Career Education); Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB); and local school districts in the state of Missouri. The agreement is embedded in the state transition MOU and is available for all school districts. The purpose is to facilitate the coordination of transition services from school to post-secondary training and/or employment for students with disabilities who participate in special education programs and are eligible to receive vocational rehabilitation services. The MOU outlines roles and responsibilities among participating agencies and school districts in the development of off-campus work experience programs. Through these programs, students with

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disabilities who are receiving services through an IEP can earn high school credit in accordance with Missouri high school graduation requirements for the number of hours they work in a paid competitive, integrated employment setting. Additionally, MVR continues to work collaboratively with providers and local school districts to meet transition needs of students. In FY2015, of all the eligible youth with disabilities who received MVR services and exited the program, 1,753 obtained a successful employment outcome.

MVR, the Office of Special Education, school personnel and CRP staff are involved in partnership activities, joint training and technical assistance activities. The director of Transition Services is a member of the Missouri Interagency Transition Team. The assistant director is an active member of the state's Special Education Advisory Panel and an active member of the MPACT Board. MPACT is a statewide parent training and information center serving all disabilities.

State Rehabilitation Council: The State Rehabilitation Council reviews and comments on the development of the CSPD plan and related policies.

(j) Statewide Assessment.

(1) Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those:

(A) with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;

(B) who are minorities;

(C) who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program;

(D) who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and

(E) who are youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services.

(2) Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and

(3) Include an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition career services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services are coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act .

MVR and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) jointly conduct a comprehensive, statewide assessment of the rehabilitation needs of Missourians with disabilities, annually over a three-year period. MVR submits the results of the needs assessment to the Rehabilitation Services Administration on an annual basis. This attachment pertains to the third of a three-year statewide assessment period and illustrates all areas of need. The conclusions and recommendations of these assessments are incorporated into MVR's goals and priorities for the purpose of improving services to individuals with disabilities.

MVR uses a mixed methods approach to collect, in aggregate, qualitative and quantitative information on the rehabilitation needs of Missouri individuals with disabilities. Information resources include:

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a. Consumer Satisfaction Surveys

MVR routinely surveys a random sample of clients throughout various stages of open cases and case closures to obtain feedback on MVR services and to determine how to better serve the needs of individuals with disabilities.

b. Public Hearings

Annually, MVR conducts public hearings throughout the state to obtain input on the state plan, its key goals and priorities, plan changes and any other topic related to MVR services. In FY2015, MVR and the SRC jointly held public hearings in Cape Girardeau, Columbia, Jefferson City, Kansas City, Springfield and St. Louis, Mo.

c. Input from the State Rehabilitation Council

During quarterly meetings, the SRC provides input to MVR on the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities.

d. Strategic Teams

MVR utilizes both ad hoc and on-going teams, such as the CRP-MVR steering committee team, Transition Team, and Cultural Diversity Team, to gather data from its partners, school districts and underserved individuals with disabilities.

e. Analysis of Standards and Indicators

On a quarterly basis, MVR management reviews data to ensure the standards and indicators are being met or exceeded. The SRC annually reviews and analyzes this information with MVR.

f. During FY2011, MVR conducted a telephone survey of randomly-selected closed cases prior to IPE to identify how well their needs were met. MVR is still using data collected with this tool.

g. MVR used an online questionnaire to survey its staff in FY2011 on the rehabilitation needs of Missourians with disabilities and continues to use the results in its decision-making processes along with feedback from its annual training needs assessment.

Additional resources include:

- **quality assurance case reviews**
- **quarterly reviews of case management data**
- **census data annually or as data is available**
- **data from the American Community Survey**
- **data from other state and federal agencies**

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• data from state and community boards and commissions

• due process hearings and mediations--annually MVR analyzes feedback from hearings

• literature reviews

Feedback from the public hearings cited that a lack of transportation was a barrier to services. MVR will review this issue for possible resolutions. The need for transition services was a common theme throughout the hearings. This need is addressed in this assessment.

The following is a summary of the comprehensive statewide assessment results in response to the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities in Missouri, particularly the VR service needs of:

(A) individuals with the most significant disabilities (MSD) including their need for supported employment (SE) services

Based on MVR data from the last three years, the projected number of eligible individuals with MSD who will receive MVR services in FY2017 will be approximately 14,000. Of that number, approximately 5,200 individuals will need SE services.

From the comprehensive statewide assessment, MVR identified the following services as necessary to meet the key needs of the MSD:

• SE Services -- The nature of the service itself requires intensive one-on-one job training. Services are provided by CRPs and include job development, job coaching, natural supports, task analysis and assessment, counseling and advocacy services and customized employment. Usually, SE services will not exceed nine months, but MVR can provide up to 24 months of community-based job training.

• Assistive Technology and Rehabilitation Engineering Services -- Services include assessment and recommendations for accommodations, assistive devices and assistive technology necessary to improve the quality of work and/or increase work productivity. Services are usually provided over a four-week period by accredited CRPs and qualified rehabilitation engineers.

• Self-Employment Services -- Individuals with MSD will need assistance in setting up approved business plans for self-employment. These services may include required business equipment, various supplies, rental fees or start-up costs for the plan. Services will be provided by MVR counselors and business consultants as needed.

(B & C) individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program

An analysis of the comprehensive statewide assessment revealed that other than when individuals are placed on a waiting list, there are no populations in Missouri that are unserved. MVR counselors refer any individuals on a waiting list to Missouri Job Centers and other resources to assist with employment, housing, food and clothing needs.

The needs assessment identified underserved individuals with disabilities as minority populations of Hispanics and African-Americans, individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI).

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Hispanic Population:

Based on MVR data from the last three years, the projected number of eligible individuals with disabilities who are Hispanic that will receive MVR services in FY2017 will be approximately 400. After analyzing data from the census and the American Community Survey, MVR feels these individuals are significantly underserved when compared to the total number of Hispanics with disabilities in Missouri.

From the comprehensive needs assessment, MVR identified the following services as necessary to meet the key needs of Missouri's Hispanic population with disabilities:

• Interpreter Services -- These services depend upon the specific needs of clients and are provided by MVR's bilingual MVR staff and state-contracted interpreters. The duration of interpreter services mirrors the length of other services.

• Translated Forms -- Many of MVR's translated forms and brochures are now available in offices and on the MVR website.

• Job Placement Services -- Services involve specialists who identify and cultivate job placement possibilities in the community. These services offer short-term follow-up support and can last between three and nine months. MVR counselors and CRPs provide job placement services.

• SE Services (see description above)

• Assistive Technology and Rehabilitation Engineering Services (see description above)
In addition, MVR has a diversity consultant who provides cultural diversity training to all MVR staff. The consultant delivers training specific to each office's population area and assists with developing office plans to address diversity.

African-American Population:

Based on MVR data from the last three years, the projected number of eligible individuals with disabilities that are African-American who will receive MVR services in FY2017 will be approximately 5,800. MVR data reveals that, as a percentage, there are fewer Caucasians dropping from services than African-Americans; therefore, a percentage of African-Americans receiving services are underserved. In addition, MVR reviewed data from the census and the American Community Survey and feels these individuals are underserved when compared to the total number of African-Americans with disabilities in Missouri.

From the comprehensive needs assessment, MVR identified the following services as necessary to meet the key needs of Missouri's African-American population with disabilities:

• Follow-Up Services -- MVR established the need for follow-up services for individuals at risk of dropping out of services. Key MVR staff, MVR intake counselors and CRPs assist with follow-up services and activities. Clients are contacted to uncover reasons for leaving or barriers to receiving services. Key MVR personnel and CRP staff work with community resources to alleviate any barriers. These follow-up services are implemented before clients' cases are closed and can last between three and nine months. In addition, MVR has a diversity consultant who provides cultural diversity training to MVR staff.

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Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD):

Based on MVR data from the last three years, the projected number of eligible individuals with ASD who will receive MVR services in FY2017 will be approximately 1,300. Other variables could have an effect on this estimate such as the economy and the number of applicants coming into the system. MVR reviewed information and recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC); the National Autism Society; NAMI; 2014 newspaper report, MO to "Light It Up Blue" for Autism; the "Fact Sheet on Autism Employment," by Scott Standifer, PhD.; and MVR data. Based on this information and additional research, MVR concludes these individuals are underserved.

From the comprehensive statewide assessment, MVR identified the following services as necessary to meet the key needs of individuals with ASD:

• SE Services (see description above)

• Assistive Technology and Rehabilitation Engineering Services (see description above)

• Job Placement Services (see description above)

• Transition Services -- Transition services assist eligible students and youth with disabilities to successfully prepare them for transitioning into post-secondary education, vocational training or integrated employment. Services can be provided by MVR and coordinated with the Office of Special Education, local school districts and CRPs. Services are provided for the duration of the case.

• Workplace Modifications -- Individuals with ASD may experience difficulties in modulating sensory input. Environmental assessments can be provided to identify distractions such as noise levels, lighting, high traffic areas, etc. Services are provided by CRPs and can overlap SE services usually lasting nine months, but MVR can provide up to 24 months of community-based job training.

• Employment Services Plus (ESP) -- ESP is designed to assist an individual with Autism Spectrum Disorder – Adult (ASD-A), Brain Injury (BI), and/or Cultural Deafness/Hard of Hearing (D/HH) who has barriers that require additional supports to achieve a successful employment outcome. ESP provides augmentative services for clients whose disability-related needs exceed the level of support provided by traditional vocational rehabilitation services but does not merit consideration of SE services.

• Other training appropriate to need such as vocational technical school, community college or college.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI):

Based on MVR data from the last three years, the projected number of eligible individuals with TBI who will receive MVR services in FY2017 will be close to 400. MVR reviewed data from the CDC, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, the Brain Injury Associations of America and Missouri, "2011 Missouri Traumatic Brain Injury Needs Assessment Report," by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services and the University of Missouri Kansas City-Institute for Human Development, and data from brainline.org. Research revealed that Missourians with TBI exceed 13,000. Based on this information and the number of clients with TBI, MVR concludes these individuals are underserved.

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From the comprehensive statewide assessment, MVR identified the following services as necessary to meet the key needs of individuals with TBI:

• SE Services (see description above)

• Job Placement Services (see description above)

• Assistive Technology and Rehabilitation Engineering Services (see description above)

• Transition Services (see description above) (data indicated that one of the highest risk groups for TBI was ages 15 to 24)

• ESP Services (see description above)

(D) individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce development system

Based on information from the Missouri Division of Workforce Development, the projected number of individuals with disabilities that will be served through Missouri's workforce development system for FY2017 is 11,698.

From the comprehensive needs assessment, MVR identified the following services as necessary to meet the key needs of individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce development system:

• job search assistance

• labor market information

• resume assistance

• case management

• assessment

• individual planning and referral

• educational attainment

• skills development and training

• computer skills training

• transportation assistance

Individuals providing the services are representatives from the Division of Workforce Development and other Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program partners.

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(E) individuals who are youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services

In assessing the needs of youth and students with disabilities, research from the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition documents unsatisfactory outcomes achieved by youth with disabilities exiting school. They have difficulty accessing employment, education and community services. There is a need to bridge the information gap between schools, rehabilitation services, community agencies and employers.

Based on December 2014 core data from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary (DESE) Office of Special Education, the number of students, ages 16 to 21, with individualized education plans (IEPs) is 20,943. This number represents students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for pre-employment transition services or other transition services. MVR further disaggregated this data by MVR district office so that school districts were grouped together based on the MVR office that serves each school. Therefore, the local MVR office knows the specific number of students, ages 16 to 21 with IEPs, for each of the schools that they serve.

In Missouri, the approximate number of students with disabilities served under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, K – 12, is 9,500 for FY11-12. MVR estimates that between 4,000 and 5,000 are students with disabilities ages 16 to 21. Combining the 20,943 data with the 4,000 to 5,000 estimates totals more than 24,000 students with disabilities on IEPs or 504 plans. In addition, MVR serves students with disabilities with other physical or mental health impairments not on a specified plan.

MVR has received feedback from many stakeholders such as consumers, parents, school districts and employers regarding the need for services for youth and students with disabilities. There are limited competitive integrated employment opportunities for this population especially in rural areas.

MVR is answering these pre-employment transition needs of eligible or potentially eligible students with multiple strategies that supplement the VR transition services that have traditionally been provided by its staff and partners. These strategies include summer work experience pilot projects coordinated with CRPs and pilot projects with CILs. The VR Summer Work Experience Pilot Project was developed in partnership with CRPs. MVR offered paid summer work experience opportunities in integrated settings for VR eligible students with disabilities. In addition to working, the students received classroom training in soft skills. The CIL Summer Pre-Employment Transition Services Pilot Project provided potentially VR eligible students with disabilities access to job exploration activities, workplace readiness training, social support and instruction on self-advocacy including peer mentoring. MVR collaborated with businesses and school districts to provide services in these pilot programs.

MVR is contracting with the Hook Center at the University of Missouri to provide assistance with the provision of pre-employment transition services through regional pre-employment specialists. The University hired 23 specialists, all certified teachers, to work in collaboration with local education agencies and MVR to provide statewide pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities who are potentially eligible for VR services.

MVR is also working with Wonderland Camp on an internship program for both students and youth with disabilities. This past year, MVR sponsored students and youth with disabilities to participate in the Governor's Council on Disability Missouri Youth Leadership Forum that focuses on leadership, citizenship, and social and career development skills. MVR is utilizing its business outreach specialists to work with employers on creating

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work experiences for youth and students with disabilities. And, it is collaborating with its WIOA partners in providing seamless, coordinated services to youth and students with disabilities.

(2) Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state

a) Establish new CRPs: MVR does not believe that there is a need to establish new CRPs.

b) Expand/develop current network of CRPs: No, MVR does not believe that there is a need to expand or develop the current network of CRPs.

c) Improve CRPs: Yes, MVR has identified the following strategies to improve CRPs within the state:

• The CRP-MVR steering committee will continue to make recommendations to improve services.

• Minimum training requirements for CRP staff members have been developed and incorporated into the CRP-MVR Agreement. The CRP-MVR steering committee will monitor implementation of these new requirements and make recommendations as necessary.

(3) Include an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition career services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services are coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Research verifies that pathways from school to work or secondary to post-secondary education can be more difficult for individuals with disabilities therefore the need for transition career services and pre-employment transition services is great.

DESE reports that for 2013-2014 school year, the percent of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school and who have been:
• enrolled in higher education is 29.13%.
• enrolled in higher education or competitively employed is 55.62%.

This data indicates that over half of students with IEPs are successfully transitioning indicating a need for services.

In 2013, MVR surveyed staff statewide to gather information on practices and services for youth with disabilities. Among the findings, staff reported that some of the barriers that youth with disabilities face in obtaining successful employment is a lack of work exposure or work experiences. A need for widespread education regarding VR services for school staff, students and interested parties was also indicated.

Feedback has shown that not all school districts are open to promoting transition services. MVR is utilizing its transition counselors to forge inroads with school districts statewide. Additional strategies include an MVR-developed YouTube video, which can be shared with parents and students before, during or after IEP meetings. MVR counselors are present at IEP meetings when invited in order to coordinate services that are a part of the VR individualized plan for employment (IPE). MVR conducted a statewide training for MVR staff on outreach, joint service provision and coordination of IEP/IPE services. New MVR counselor training includes a special education transition coordinator who provides training on IEP development and transition services. The DESE Graduation Handbook and DESE Transition Agreement include three work-based learning experiences for students with disabilities on an IEP and are coordinated with special education. Students receive high school

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credit. These three experiences are the COOP Program, employer-based transition training/Project Search for students with most significant disabilities, and unpaid internships.

(k) Annual Estimates. Describe:

(1) The number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services.

The number of individuals in the MVR program who were eligible for services as of September 30, 2015 was 14,077.

(2) The number of eligible individuals who will receive services under:

(A) The VR Program;

(B) The Supported Employment Program; and

The estimated number of eligible individuals who will receive services in FY2017 under the MVR program is 24,300 and the Supported Employment Program is 5,200 for a total of 29,500.

(C) each priority category, if under an order of selection.

The estimated number of eligible individuals who will receive services under each priority category is listed in the table below.

(3) The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services, but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection; and

The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection is currently zero.

(4) The cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category.

The estimated cost in FY2017 for serving the above eligible individuals in the VR and supported employment programs will be approximately $71,525,000. As described in section (m), Order of Selection, of the VR services portion of this state plan, MVR is currently in an order of selection. The estimated cost of services for each priority category is listed in the table below.

Priority Category	Title I or Title VI	Estimated Funds	Estimated Number to be Served	Estimated Cost of Services
1	Title I	$34,500,000	14,000	$2,464

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2	**Title I**	**$35,500,000**	**15,000**	**$2,367**
3	**Title I**	**$1,525,000**	**500**	**$3,050**
Totals		**$71,525,000**	**29,500**	**$2,425**

(l) State Goals and Priorities. The designated State unit must:

(1) Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions.

MVR's goals and priorities for FY2017 were jointly developed and agreed upon by MVR and the SRC, as described in section (a), Input of the State Rehabilitation Council, of the VR services portion of this state plan.

(2) Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs.

The following FY2017 goals and priorities for MVR are as follows:

Goal 1: Increase the number of employment outcomes for youth with disabilities.

Baseline data: The number of youth with disabilities reaching competitive integrated employment in FY2012 was 1,556.

Objective 1:

Increase the number of competitive integrated employment outcomes for youth with disabilities.

Strategies

1. Develop joint training activities with MVR, school and CRP staff. Training will be focused on improving services and outcomes for students with disabilities.

2. Expand pre-employment transition services statewide.

3. Coordinate services with Workforce Development programs that target youth.

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4. Expand individualized placement services to target youth with disabilities receiving services from the Department of Mental Health.

5. Provide opportunities for youth in identified workforce job-driven training programs and STEM degree/certificate programs.

Goal 2: Increase competitive integrated employment outcomes for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Baseline: The number of competitive integrated employment outcomes in FY2012 for individuals with ASD was 136.

<u>Objective 1</u>:

Increase competitive integrated employment outcomes for individuals with ASD.

<u>Strategies</u>

1. Develop and maintain close working relationships with state and local partners (e.g., Department of Mental Health, WIOA partners, Independent Living Centers, CRPs, etc.) to maximize resources and develop appropriate services and support systems.

2. Coordinate joint training activities for MVR counselors and direct services CRP staff to improve services and outcomes for clients with ASD.

3. Develop capacity of regional specialists.

4. Expand specialized employment services for individuals with ASD.

Goal 3: Expand services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness receiving Individual Placement and Support (IPS) services.

Baseline data: At the end of FY2013, the number of individuals with severe and persistent mental illness receiving IPS service authorizations (open/closed) was 707.

<u>Objective 1:</u>

Increase the number of individuals receiving IPS services.

<u>Strategies</u>

1. Training staff on IPS evidence-based practices.

2. Training staff using Motivational Interviewing.

3. Collaborate with the Department of Mental Health Behavioral Health Division on the implementation of evidence-based practices.

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4. Increase the number and service capacity of IPS providers in the state.

5. Explore integration of evidence-based practices/fidelity into other CRP/MVR services.

6. Expand services to include youth with disabilities.

(3) Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:

The goals and priorities were based on an analysis of the following:

(A) the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;

The most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment from FY2015.

(B) the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and

Missouri's anticipated performance under the new performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA. MVR met all required federal performance indicators during the past two years. MVR will apply the same quality of service utilized in meeting those indicators to achieve the new performance measures and provide the same level of quality while moving forward.

(C) other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

Other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program utilized in the development of the goals and priorities are:

• State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) input and recommendations

• RSA monitoring feedback from the Section 107 Monitoring Review

• performance on standards and indicators

• other sources, e.g., CRPs' legislative input, consumer satisfaction surveys, input from the Client Assistance Program, and public hearings

The goals and priorities for carrying out the supported employment program can be found in section (n) of the VR services portion of this plan titled Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI funds.

(m) Order of Selection. Describe:

(1) The order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services.

The order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services.

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Services shall be provided based upon the eligible individual's placement in one of the following priority categories:

Priority Category I: An individual with the most significant disability as defined below.

Priority Category II: An individual with a significant disability as defined below.

Priority Category III: An individual with a disability as defined below.

Definitions:

Individual with the Most Significant Disability: An individual who is seriously limited in three or more of the following functional areas: self-care; communication; mobility; self-direction; work tolerance; work skills; and/or interpersonal skills, and

a. whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time; and

b. who 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.

Individual with a Significant Disability: An individual who has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or two functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; and

a. whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time; and

b. who 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.

Individual with a disability: all other eligible individuals.

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(2) The justification for the order.

MVR continues to experience an increase in the cost of providing services to persons in all categories. Due to this increase in the cost of services and the insufficient financial resources, MVR may not be able to provide services to all eligible individuals. MVR estimates that there will be 29,500 eligible individuals in FY2017 who will receive services.

(3) The service and outcome goals.
(4) The time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.

Estimated Timelines for achieving the Outcome Goals

As of September 30, 2015, all categories are open and do not have a waiting list.

The timeline to reach an employment outcome varies significantly with each individual. It is estimated that the average number of months to reach an employment outcome for category I is approximately 16 months, category II is approximately 19 months, and category III is approximately 15 months.

Priority Category	Number of individuals to be served	Estimated number of individuals who will exit with employment after receiving services	Estimated number of individuals who will exit without employment after receiving services	Time within which goals are to be achieved	Cost of services
1	14,000	2,300	4,400	16 months	$34,500,000
2	15,000	2,700	4,300	19 months	$35,500,000
3	500	175	100	15 months	$1,525,000

(5) How individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities; and

MVR will serve eligible consumers with the most significant disabilities (Priority Category 1) first. Eligible consumers with significant disabilities (Priority Category 2) will be served next following with eligible consumers with disabilities (Priority Category 3).

The following procedures will be followed in the implementation of the order of selection:

1) An eligible individual will be placed in the appropriate priority category and receive written notification of the assigned priority category. The eligible individual's date of application will be used to determine the order of services within a priority category.

2) Individuals will be notified of their right to appeal their category assignment.

3) An eligible individual's placement in a priority category may be changed under justifiable circumstances.

4) Rationale for placement will appear in the individual's case file.

5) The order of selection shall in no way affect the provision or authorization of diagnostic and evaluation services needed to determine eligibility.

6) Services authorized or provided to any eligible individual shall not be disrupted as a result of an order of selection or the closing of a priority category.

7) Order of selection priority categories do not apply to post-employment services.

8) All funding arrangements for providing services, including any third-party arrangements and awards by MVR, shall be consistent with the order of selection. If any funding arrangements are inconsistent with the order of selection, MVR shall renegotiate these funding arrangements so that they are consistent with the order of selection.

9) The order of selection shall in no way affect eligible individuals' access to services provided through MVR's information and referral system.

10) Eligible individuals who are in a priority category that is not open shall be provided accurate vocational rehabilitation information and guidance, including counseling and referral for job placement, using appropriate modes of communication to assist them in preparing for, securing, retaining, regaining or advancing in employment. These individuals will also be referred to other appropriate federal and state programs, including Missouri Job Centers.

11) Individuals being referred to appropriate programs, as mentioned above, shall be provided the following:

(A) a notice of the referral to the agency carrying out the program

(B) information identifying a specific point of contact within the agency to which the individual is being referred

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(C) information and advice regarding the most suitable services to assist the individual to prepare for, secure, retain, regain or advance in employment

(6) If the designated State unit has elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

MVR has elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

(n) Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds.

(1) Specify the State's goals and priorities for funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services.

The FY2017 goals and priorities for the distribution of funds from section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services are:

Goal 1: Monitor and evaluate the supported employment outcome-based model that was implemented FY2013.

Goal 2: Research the efficiency and effectiveness of braided programs with Workforce Development.

Title VI funds are utilized for supported employment, job development and individual and group placement models of supported employment. All Title VI funds for supported employment services are utilized through a fee-for-service as established in MVR's supported employment cost analysis. Title I funds are also utilized for the provision of supported employment services.

In FY2015, a total of 1,234 individuals with the most significant disabilities obtained employment outcomes after receiving supported employment services through MVR. Of the individuals that exited the program and received supported employment services during FY2015, 62.7 percent were successfully employed in competitive jobs. These individuals averaged $8.61 per hour and worked an average of 24 hours per week.

It is estimated that approximately 5,200 individuals with the most significant disabilities will receive supported employment services in FY2017. It is also estimated that in FY2017, MVR will spend approximately 8.5 million dollars in Title VI, Part B funds and Title I funds in supported employment services. These services will be provided through nonprofit, accredited CRPs.

(2) Describe the activities to be conducted, with funds reserved pursuant to section 603(d), for youth with the most significant disabilities, including :

(A) the provision of extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years; and

MVR will provide supported employment services to youth with the most significant disabilities for up to 24 months and will extend, if necessary, should these services be needed to achieve an employment outcome.

MVR will continue to work closely with the Missouri Department of Social Services MOHealthNet Division and the Department of Mental Health (DMH) Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DD) divisions to ensure that youth with the most significant disabilities are receiving extended services.

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(B) how the State will leverage other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services and expanded supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities.

MVR will work closely with the DMH DD division utilizing home and community-based waivers to increase supported employment and extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities.

(o) State's Strategies. Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

(1) The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.

All strategies identified to achieve goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities and overcome barriers to accessing the VR and the supported employment programs in FY2017 are listed below. The following strategies have been developed and reviewed by MVR and the State Rehabilitation Council:

Goal 1: Increase the number of employment outcomes for youth with disabilities.

Strategies

1. Develop joint training activities with MVR, school and CRP staff. Training will be focused on improving services and outcomes for students with disabilities.

2. Expand pre-employment transition services statewide.

3. Coordinate services with Workforce Development programs that target youth.

4. Expand IPS services to target youth with disabilities receiving services from DMH.

5. Provide opportunities for youth in identified workforce job-driven training programs and STEM degree/certificate programs.

Goal 2: Increase competitive integrated employment outcomes for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Strategies

1. Develop and maintain close working relationships with state and local partners (e.g., Department of Mental Health, WIOA partners, Independent Living Centers, CRPs, etc.) to maximize resources and develop appropriate services and support systems.

2. Coordinate joint training activities for MVR counselors and direct services CRP staff to improve services and outcomes for clients with ASD.

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3. Develop capacity of regional specialists.

4. Expand specialized employment services for individuals with ASD.

Goal 3: Expand services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness receiving Individual Placement and Support (IPS) services.

<u>Strategies</u>

1. Training staff on IPS evidence-based practices.

2. Training staff using Motivational Interviewing.

3. Collaborate with DMH-BHD on the implementation of evidence-based practices.

4. Increase the number and service capacity of IPS providers in the state.

5. Explore integration of evidence-based practices/fidelity into other CRP/MVR services.

6. Expand services to include youth with disabilities.

All of the above strategies will be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities in FY2017.

(2) How a broad range of assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process and on a statewide basis.

The following strategies will be utilized:

1. MVR will work jointly with CRPs and other partnering agencies, including WIOA partners, to develop and sponsor on-going training in assistive technology services.

2. At any time during the rehabilitation process, MVR's statewide assistive technology specialists will provide technical assistance to MVR counselors throughout the state.

3. MVR staff will participate in activities, training programs and conferences sponsored by Missouri Assistive Technology.

4. MVR's coordinator for deaf services will meet with all vocational rehabilitation counselors for the deaf on an annual basis to discuss new strategies, resources and issues for deaf and hard of hearing consumers.

5. MVR employs an assistive technology specialist who will continue to help staff in areas of mobility, work accommodations and home and van modifications.

6. The MVR assistant director of rural services will continue to work with the assistive technology needs of farm operators with disabilities and consult with staff statewide.

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7. MVR has an assistant director of Deaf/hard of hearing services who will continue providing statewide support for staff with assistive technology services for clients with hearing impairments.

(3) The outreach procedures that will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities, as well as those who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.

1. MVR will recruit rehabilitation counselors from culturally diverse backgrounds to better serve individuals with significant disabilities from underserved populations.

2. MVR will utilize state-contracted interpreters to reduce communication barriers.

3. MVR will continue to translate forms and brochures in Spanish for the Hispanic community.

4. MVR's diversity consultant will provide cultural diversity training to MVR staff and deliver training to each MVR office. In addition, the consultant will continue to lead the Diversity Team, which includes MVR and CRP staffs.

5. Utilize the strategies under Goal 2 as mentioned under section (o) above.

(4) The methods to be used to improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, postsecondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services).

The methods to be used to improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, postsecondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services) can be found under Goal 1, strategies 1 through 5 under section (o) above.

(5) If applicable, plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the State.

The specific strategies that will be used to improve CRPs can be found under Goal 1 strategy 1, Goal 2 with strategies 1 and 2, and Goal 3 with strategy 5 listed above in section (o). In addition, MVR and CRP staffs offer input on service delivery processes during partnering meetings and develop action plans to improve those processes. The CRP-MVR steering committee meets regularly to review progress on these processes, service delivery and to discuss current and future issues warranting attention. This effort, along with joint training activities, is beneficial to improving both the CRP and MVR programs.

(6) Strategies to improve the performance of the State with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA.

MVR is collaborating, cooperating and coordinating with WIOA partners to work on methods to align data systems, share referrals and determine common intake practices. It will review the performance of the state with respect to the performance accountability measures with WIOA partners to ensure measures are consistent throughout the core programs. Efforts will be directed at cross training to educate partner staff on

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each other's programs. MVR will be analyzing methods to work with partners on braided services among programs.

(7) Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce development system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

MVR will continue to work with DWD, which provides the statewide workforce development system services through the Missouri Job Centers in 14 workforce regions. MVR has appointed a state liaison to collaborate with DWD, and MVR staff serves as active members on all 14 local workforce development boards.

Through Memoranda of Understanding, MVR is an important referral source from job center partners for individuals with disabilities. MVR counselors visit various Missouri Job Centers (both full service sites and satellites) frequently to provide services to consumers in a timely fashion. One Missouri Job Center location (where all partners, including MVR, are co-located) has an intra-building electronic linkage which has been effective. MVR will work with partners in learning what services are available and how to capitalize on resources and processes already in place.

MVR is working closely with all of the WIOA partners in order to provide the best services possible for consumers. Many teams, consisting of members from all of the partner programs, are meeting and developing methods to meet individuals' and employers' needs.

(8) How the agency's strategies will be used to:

(A) achieve goals and priorities by the State, consistent with the comprehensive needs assessment;

MVR obtains input on goals and priorities from the comprehensive statewide assessment of need, which includes the SRC, public hearings and consumer satisfaction surveys. This information is given to the administrative and strategic teams to develop strategies. MVR utilizes a variety of teams to assist with the development and implementation of many of the strategies identified in this section. Team members include MVR staff, management, providers, former consumers and school personnel. Quality assurance reviews are also used to assess the progress of the strategies toward the targets. MVR's Management Team monitors outcomes and progress toward goals on a regular basis.

Goals, priorities and strategies were developed from the statewide assessment of need. Strategies to assist with improving services to clients and families with ASD were established. In addition, MVR will use Strategy 2 from Goal 2 as mentioned above in section (o).

(B) support innovation and expansion activities; and

In FY2015, MVR continued to support innovation and expansion activities through a pilot project involving one of MVR's CRP partners and two MVR district offices in Mid-Missouri. The pilot project is a newly designed supported employment model for people diagnosed with ASD.

Additional strategies to support innovation and expansion activities involve MVR's commitment to growing the IPS model. MVR has implemented IPS services to help individuals with serious and persistent mental illness reach competitive employment. In partnership with the Department of Mental Health (DMH) Division of

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Behavioral Health, MVR has and continues to jointly fund the IPS state trainer to implement the fidelity IPS model. The trainer represents MVR's and the DMH Division of Behavioral Health's model of clinical integration.

MVR will utilize innovation and expansion funds to support activities of the Missouri State Rehabilitation Council and the Statewide Independent Living Council pursuant to 34 CFR section §361.35.

(C) overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State VR Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program.

MVR uses strategies identified in sections (o)(2)(3) and (8)(B) above to overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the state VR program and the state supported employment services program.

(p) Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals. Describe:

(1) An evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals described in the approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan for the most recently completed program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

(A) Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.

(B) Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

Strategies that contributed to the achievement of or factors that impeded the achievement of the FY2015 Goals and Priorities established by MVR and the State Rehabilitation Council were as follows:

Goal 1: Improve the accountability and performance of service providers.

Evaluation of Progress: Not yet achieved.

Factors that impeded the achievement of the above goal in FY2015:

This goal is part of MVR's continuous improvement process. MVR will always strive to improve the performance and accountability of CRPs for the benefit of MVR consumers. After the implementation of the AWARE case management system, MVR initiated a reporting program that will aid in tracking performance.

Goal 2: Increase employment outcomes for individuals with ASD.

Evaluation of Progress: Goal met.

The number of employment outcomes for individuals with ASD at the end of:

FY2011: 121, FY2012: 136, FY2013: 169, FY2014: 209, FY2015: 292.

Strategies that contributed to the achievement of Goal 2 in FY2015:

1. Developed and maintained close working relationships with state and local partners (e.g., Department of Mental Health, WIOA partners, Independent Living Centers, CRPs, etc.) to maximize resources and develop appropriate services and support systems.

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2. Coordinated joint training activities for MVR counselors and direct services CRP staff to improve services and outcomes for clients with ASD.

3. Developed capacity of regional specialists.

4. Expanded specialized employment services for individuals with ASD.

Goal 3: Increase the number of employment outcomes of transition-age consumers.

Evaluation of Progress: Goal met.

The number of transition-age consumers reaching employment outcomes in:

FY2011: 1,636, FY2012: 1,556, FY2013: 1,535, FY2014: 1,640, FY2015: 1,753.

Strategies that contributed to the achievement of Goal 2 in FY2015:

1. The ad hoc Transition Team developed joint training activities with MVR, school and CRP staff. Training focused on improving services and outcomes for students with disabilities.

2. MVR continued to promote the development of partnering activities with school districts and CRPs to provide community-based transition services and opportunities for students with disabilities.

3. Continued emphasis on transition students entering postsecondary education programs.

4. Increased the utilization of Missouri Connections with transition consumers.

5. Identified current practices through MVR surveys and data.

(2) An evaluation of the extent to which the Supported Employment program goals described in the Supported Employment Supplement for the most recent program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

(A) Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.

(B) Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

FY2015 Goals for the Supported Employment Program and strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals were as follows:

Goal 1: Monitor and evaluate the new supported employment outcome-based model that was implemented FY2013.

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Evaluation of Progress: Goal met.

MVR has produced extensive work through the CRP-MVR steering committee team in order to maximize benefits for supported employment (SE), which includes the IPS services. MVR and the CRPs developed and implemented a new outcome-based SE model FY2013. Statewide training for MVR and the CRPs was provided.

MVR also revised its cooperative agreement with CRPs to align with the new outcome-based model. This agreement includes service provision, authorization, billing, compliance and verification processes.

(3) The VR program's performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA.

The most recently completed program year was FY2015 in which MVR utilized standards and indicators as the measure of performance.

MVR met five out of six performance indicators and two of three primary indicators under Standard 1 as required by federal regulations. MVR also achieved successful performance on required Standard 2.

The evaluation revealed the following areas of need and priority: MVR needs to continue to increase the number of employment outcomes. A model of employment services was implemented in FY2011. This has significantly reduced the number of vocational assessments and focuses on the milestones of job placement and 30- and 90-day retention. In addition, MVR implemented an outcome-based model for SE services in FY2013 that emphasizes quality employment outcomes and 30- and 90-day retention.

MVR should continue to focus on and improve quality employment outcomes. By a small margin, MVR did not meet Performance Indicator 1.5, which compares client average wages with Missouri average wages. Certain populations, such as individuals with ASD, continue to be underserved. Joint training with MVR and CRPs has been developed to improve services and employment outcomes.

Standard 1: EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 1.1: The number of individuals exiting the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program who achieved an employment outcome during the current performance period compared to the number of individuals who exit the VR program after achieving an employment outcome during the previous performance period.

Required standard: Equal to or greater than previous year

FY2014: 4,874 FY2015: 5,063 Difference: +189

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 1.2: Of all individuals who exit the VR program after receiving services, the percentage that are determined to have achieved an employment outcome.

Required Standard: 55.8% FY2015: 60.99%

***PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 1.3: Of all individuals determined to have achieved an employment outcome, the percentage who exits the VR program in competitive or self-employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage.**

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Required Standard: 72.6% FY2015: 99.25%

***PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 1.4: Of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive or self-employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the percentage who are individuals with significant disabilities.**

Required Standard: 62.4% FY2015: 96.56%

***PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 1.5: The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive or self-employment with earnings levels equivalent to at least the minimum wage as a ratio to the state's average hourly earnings for all individuals in the state who are employed (as derived from the Bureau of Labor Statistics report, "State Average Annual Pay," for the most recent available year).**

Required Standard: .52 FY2015: .51

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 1.6: Of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive or self-employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the difference between the percentages who reported their own income as the largest single source of economic support at exit and the percentage that reported their own income as the largest single source of support at application.

Required Standard: 53% FY2015: 63.06%

Standard 2: EQUAL ACCESS TO SERVICES

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 2.1: The service rate for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds as a ratio to the service rate for all non-minority individuals with disabilities.

Required Standard: .80 FY2015: .92

(4) How the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized.

In FY2015, MVR continued to support innovation and expansion activities through a pilot project involving one of MVR's CRP partners and two MVR district offices in Mid-Missouri. The pilot project is a newly designed supported employment model for people diagnosed with ASD.

Additional strategies to support innovation and expansion activities involve MVR's commitment to growing the IPS model. MVR has implemented IPS services to help individuals with serious and persistent mental illness reach competitive employment. In partnership with the Department of Mental Health (DMH) Division of Behavioral Health, MVR has and continues to jointly fund the IPS state trainer to implement the fidelity IPS model. The trainer represents MVR's and the DMH Division of Behavioral Health's model of clinical integration.

In 2015, MVR utilized Part B, Title I funds for the SRC and Part B, Title VII funds for the SILC quarterly meetings. These funds were primarily used to pay for council members' travel, meeting expenses and supplies.

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(q) Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services. Include the following:

(1) The quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

MVR maintains cooperative, written agreements with nonprofit, private CRPs to provide services on a fee-for-service basis. All supported employment fees authorized by MVR are a uniform, flat rate as recommended by the RSA 107 Monitoring Review.

Title VI funds are used to secure supported employment (SE) services for consumers. Some of the services may include:

• discovery and exploration;

• community-based assessments;

• job supports;

• surveying businesses for potential community-based exploration, assessments and work sites suited to the needs of the consumers;

• analysis of all relevant job-related variables, (e.g., transportation, job restructuring, tax credit for employers, etc.);

• providing long-term, extended services support with the consumer or employer; a minimum of twice per month; and

• customized employment for individuals and employers.

MVR is committed to providing greater access to SE services. The scope of SE services reaches throughout the state. All counties in Missouri are being served by CRPs that provide SE services.

During FY2015, 1,234 MVR consumers with the most significant disabilities who received SE services successfully achieved their employment goals. 62.7% of the SE consumers who exited the program were successfully employed in competitive jobs. SE consumers worked an average of 24 hours per week and earned an average of $8.61 per hour. There were 640 youth with disabilities that received SE services and exited the system successfully.

MVR district offices meet with local CRPs to outline joint activities to assist mutual consumers reach employment outcomes. MVR and CRP staffs both offer input on service delivery processes during partnering meetings and develop action plans to improve those processes. Other collaborative activities involve joint training programs. Last year, 20 joint trainings were held for MVR and CRP staff on supported employment.

One of the methods that MVR uses to continuously improve SE services and the service delivery process is through the use of a strategic team. The CRP-MVR steering committee meets regularly to improve services, review feedback, monitor progress and to discuss current and future issues warranting attention.

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MVR and the CRPs developed an outcome-based service model that emphasizes quality employment outcomes and retention. The model was implemented FY2013.

The Department of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Behavioral Health Services and MVR have been working to increase access to evidence-based supported employment, also known as IPS, for adults with serious mental illnesses who are interested in improving their work lives. Missouri has 12 Community Mental Health/Treatment Centers participating in this implementation collaborative. DMH and MVR are implementing IPS for youth with serious mental illnesses in one current site with more to come.

To assist in determining the quality and effectiveness of SE services, MVR surveys its consumers. The FY2015 Customer Satisfaction Survey results indicated that 96 percent of SE clients, who left services both successfully and unsuccessfully, felt MVR staff were available when needed and treated them with respect.

(2) The timing of transition to extended services.

MVR can provide up to 24 months of community-based job training. During the provision of assessment, job development and job coaching, the need for services is reviewed in three-month increments by the MVR counselor, the CRP and the SE consumer. Transitioning from supported employment to extended services occurs when the consumer requires job supports for 25 percent of the work time or less. In cases where consumers have serious and persistent mental illness, the 25 percent level does not apply; instead, the benchmark is the successful achievement of goals and objectives as outlined in monthly progress reports.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:	
1.	**The *Department of Elementary and Secondary Education* is authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by WIOA,[15] and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act[16];**
2.	**As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the *Department of Elementary and Secondary Education*[17] agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan[18], the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations[19], policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under**

[15] Public Law 113-128.

[16] Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.
[17] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.
[18] 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 .

[19] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3485; and the State VR Services Program regulations.

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	section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;
3.	**As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated State agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan[20], the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations[21], 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. *Yes***
4.	**The designated State agency and/or the designated State unit has the authority under State law to perform the functions of the State regarding the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement. *Yes***
5.	**The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement. *Yes***
6.	**All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law. *Yes***
7.	**The *Assistant Commissioner, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services* 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. *Yes***
8.	**The *Assistant Commissioner, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services* has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services. *Yes***
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. *Yes***

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[20] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[21] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 6.

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:

The State Plan must provide assurances that:	
1.	**Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.**
2.	**Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement*:* The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 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) **the establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable (Option A or B must be selected):** **(A) is an independent State commission.** **(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council *Yes. Option B was selected.*** (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.**

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	the non-Federal share, as described in 34 CFR 361.60. (d) **the local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds, *No*** (e) **the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act . Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs, *No*** (f) **statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency is requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? *No* See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan.** (g) **the descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11), (24)(B), and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.** (h) **all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act .** (i) **the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.** (j) **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.** (k) **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.** (l) **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)(D) 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 in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act? *No*** (d) **comply with all required available comparable services and benefits, determined to be available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act and.** (e) **comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act .**

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	(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 review, 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, as required by section 101(a)(14)of the Rehabilitation 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**
5.	**Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement*:*** (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.	(a) **Financial Administration*:* The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act.** (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.	(a) **Provision of Supported Employment Services*:* The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.**

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	(b) **The designated State agency assures that:** i. **the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act** ii. **an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act , which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.**

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Rehabilitation Services for the Blind
VR Section State Plan Outline

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan [22] must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA:

(a) Input of State Rehabilitation Council. All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:
- (1) input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including input and recommendations on the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, recommendations from the Council's report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other Council reports that may have been developed as part of the Council's functions;
- (2) the Designated State unit's response to the Council's input and recommendations; and
- (3) the designated State unit's explanations for rejecting any of the Council's input or recommendations.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

The State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind (SRC) provided the following general recommendations during meetings in FY 2014-2015:

1. The SRC recommended that RSB advance services to clients who are deaf/blind.

RSB Response: RSB recently entered into an agreement with Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation to jointly serve clients who are deaf/blind. This allows each agency to use their specific areas of expertise to provide the highest quality services. RSB is in the process of contracting with Helen Keller Center to provide residential training services. Two RSB staff attended Helen Keller Center to receive advanced Orientation and Mobility skill training specific to this population. RSB received the results of a Deaf-Blind Needs Assessment that RSB sponsored and worked with HKNC on during 2013-2014. The resultant data is being reviewed to develop targeted training and programs.

2. The SRC recommended increasing outreach to employers.

RSB Response: RSB has been attending the statewide and all local Workforce Development Board meetings. District office staff have been attending local employment fairs and connecting directly with employers to learn more about their employment needs and discuss the benefits offered by the VR program for new employees and job retention services for existing employees. Each district office now has a tonometer they can use to participate in community and employer health fairs to screen for signs of glaucoma. These activities provide a service to employers, promotes VR services and supports case finding activities. RSB has also proposed hiring a new position with a core focus of employer engagement.

3. The SRC recommended RSB be prepared for the new UEB braille code changes.

[22] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(iii) of WIOA

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RSB Response: RSB is in the process of updating all braille software to be UEB compliant. Staff training has occurred in the UEB code requirements. The Center for Braille and Narration Production has trained staff and updated their software in preparation for the change. RSB has completed a pilot program for teaching braille, Braille Code Master, and it was considered a success. It is a new method of teaching braille, an accelerated learning process. 70-75% of visually impaired who cannot read braille are not employed; that drops to 35% when they learn braille.

4. The SRC requested WIOA updates at each quarterly meeting.

RSB Response: RSB has been providing updates at each meeting.

SRC RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE STATE PLAN:

The State Rehabilitation Council made the following recommendations regarding the goals and priorities for the State Plan:

1. The SRC recommended continuing to analyze and improve case finding activities.

RSB Response: RSB agrees with the SRC recommendation. The goal and strategies to stabilize the downward trend in applications and improve case finding activities will continue.

2. The SRC recommended that for goal 4, strategy 1, a parent and/or professional advisory representation to be included in the workgroup when possible and appropriate.

RSB Response: RSB agrees with this recommendation. The strategy was modified to include the recommended change.

(b) Request for Waiver of Statewideness. When requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non-statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:

(1) a local public agency will provide the non-Federal share of costs associated with the services to be provided in accordance with the waiver request;
(2) the designated State unit will approve each proposed service before it is put into effect; and
(3) requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

This agency has not requested a waiver of statewideness.

(c) Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System. Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

(1) Federal, State, and local agencies and programs;
(2) State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;
(3) Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture;

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(4) Non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth; and
(5) State use contracting programs.

Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) works closely with a wide variety of agencies and programs in coordinating the provision of vocational rehabilitation and client support services. Some of these relationships have been agreed to in written cooperative agreements, such as those with the 22 State Independent Living Centers that spells out referral procedures, coordination of services, and the technical assistance available from both entities; and the Missouri School for the Blind, which provides for joint referral and service coordination.

RSB has partnered with Lighthouse for the Blind and Alphapointe Association for the Blind through a contractual relationship to provide intensive specialized prevocational skills training to youth with disabilities who are blind or visually impaired. Lighthouse for the Blind's summer program delivers a residential program for students who plan to live independently and seek competitive integrated employment or attend a vocational training program or college upon graduation from high school. Alphapointe offers an eight-week program providing competitive work experience to high-school age youth. The goal is to provide each consumer with a foundation for the school-to-work transition, to enable each to practice personal independence through work and goal-setting experiences, and to afford an opportunity for community involvement. This program includes vocational exploration; identifying preferences, interests, and abilities with regard to work; and learning about work related behaviors and self-advocacy. Clients participate in general orientation during the first week of the program. The remaining seven weeks they spend on the job. Short-term job coaching may be provided to assist in orienting the consumers to the particular job site. Consumers receive an hourly wage during their placement at a job site. Involvement in this program is intended to increase a consumer's career awareness, build marketable vocational skills, and support a healthy self-image.

Other relationships such as those with community rehabilitation programs are spelled out in State required contracts for service provision. These specify the services to be provided, their duration, costs, and reporting and billing requirements. Still others are predicated on working relationships for coordination of support services based on individual client need at the local level, such as transportation, housing, recreation, supported employment extended services provided through the Department of Mental Health Regional Offices for individuals with developmental disabilities and Senate Bill 40 Boards (County Developmental Disability Services), and other local agencies involved in provision of physical and mental rehabilitation. RSB does not participate in any state use contracting programs.

A description of RSB services and procedures for referral from the Family Support Division is specified in their Income Maintenance manual and, similarly, RSB policy requires referral of clients to the Family Support Division for determination of eligibility for Supplemental Aid to the Blind or Blind Pension. There are also referral procedures to/from the state-funded Prevention of Blindness Program for ophthalmologic services, as well as the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) for vocational rehabilitation services and training in order to qualify for employment as a Randolph-Sheppard vendor.

Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT) is the state agency that carries out activities under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. RSB and MoAT collaborate to jointly serve eligible individuals and ensure maximum statewide utilization of services, expertise and knowledge within each agency and avoid duplication of services. MoAT does have representation on the SRC to assist in the coordination of activities. RSB has developed a Guide for Self-Employment for use by both clients and staff in the provision of services for individuals with the vocational goal of self-employment. Included is information to aid clients in making connections to programs that provide assistance in starting or operating a business. The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Business and Cooperative Development Service in Missouri is one of

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the organizations listed. Included is information on USDA grants, loans, loan guarantees, and technical skill assistance provided through the Business and Industry Loan program aimed at encouraging development in rural areas in order to create or preserve employment opportunities there, and the Technical Assistance program aimed at assisting the individual, business, and community by dissemination and promotion of technical skills, people skills and personal skills knowledge. RSB has also developed a contractual relationship with the Missouri AgrAbility Project, a Cooperative Extension Service through the University of Missouri, Columbia, administered by the USDA, to assist people with disabilities employed in agriculture by providing training, site visits, on-farm assessments, technical assistance, and agriculture based education.

RSB works cooperatively with Small Business Administration's Small Business Development Centers. Consultants with the Centers lend their expertise to RSB staff and clients in development of proposed business plans. They analyze cash flow and sales projections to determine probability of success of the proposed business and provide recommendations to lenders for funding of plans deemed feasible.

RSB is a Partner Organization with the Starkloff Disability Institute's "The Next Big Step" program. Through this program, Starkloff Disability Institute has partnered with "Role Model Companies" and "Partner Organizations" to help the Role Model Companies find disabled job candidates through Partner Organizations whom they can hire, retain and promote.

The Hyatt St. Louis Regency Hands-On Training Program is a two week (100 hour), hands-on reality based vocational training and placement program for VR eligible individuals with disabilities. Services include hospitality and employability skills training, job coaching and potential placement assistance. The departments available for the skill training included: Culinary Arts, Housekeeping, Laundry, Banquet Set Up, Engineering/Maintenance, Receiving/Storeroom, Clerk, Cafeteria Attendant, Front Desk Clerk, and PBX Operator. Trainees are temporary employees of Hyatt and receive a minimum wage salary while enrolled in the two week course. Graduates receive certificates of completion and limited placement assistance. The program is a partnership between Hands-On Education, Hyatt, MVR, RSB, and St. Louis area school districts and transition teams. Program participation is targeted towards transition clients age 18 or older interested in working in the culinary or hospitality field.

(d) Coordination with Education Officials. Describe:

(1) The designated State unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services, as well as procedures for the timely development and approval of individualized plans for employment for the students.

(2) Information on the formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency with respect to:

(A) consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;

(B) transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs;

(C) roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;

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(D) procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

Outreach:

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and RSB have developed and implemented a joint referral process for local education agencies and RSB as required by 162.1139 Revised Statutes of Missouri for all children identified as visually impaired. The DESE State Plan for Special Education requires that school districts discuss RSB services annually at each student's Individualized Educational Program meeting. RSB staff must refer any client that is not served through an IEP to the Division of Special Education with the parent's consent. The Office of Special Education provides guidance documents and a referral form available online to the local education agencies for this process. RSB continues to offer local administrators of special education (LASE) and the DESE Missouri Blind Task group presentations on RSB transition services at their meetings.

Missouri Interagency Transition Team (MITT)

The Missouri Interagency Transition Team (MITT) was formed through the Office of Special Education to promote interagency collaboration in Missouri at the state level by establishing a group vision for improving outcomes for young adults with disabilities. MITT consists of diverse state-level members, including RSB, that meet quarterly to share resources, develop goals and promote activities to improve transition education, pre-employment transition services, and post-secondary outcomes.

Blind Task Force (House Bill 401):

House Bill 401, signed into law in July 1999, added new requirements to existing Missouri statutes. These statutes changed RSB's policies and procedures for coordination with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on the transition of students with disabilities from receipt of educational services to receipt of vocational rehabilitation services, including pre-employment transition services. The requirements are as follows:

• Establishment of a task force on blind student academic and vocational performance to "develop goals and objectives to guide the improvement of...transition from school to work, rehabilitation services, independent living, and employment outcomes for eligible students." Members are appointed by the Commissioner of Education in cooperation with the Director of the Department of Social Services (RSB's parent agency). Membership is comprised of parents, students, teachers of the visually impaired, a public school special education administrator, a public school building principal who supervises instruction of students who are visually impaired, an employer of persons who are visually impaired, an orientation and mobility specialist, a representative from a university special educator training program, one representative each from the Missouri Council of the Blind and National Federation of the Blind of Missouri, a representative from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, a representative from the Missouri School for the Blind, a representative of the Department of Social Services, and a representative from RSB.

RSB worked as an active partner with the Blind Task Force, coordinating the 2015 Vision Summit for Parents and Educators of Children with Visual Impairment/Blindness. The one day event was host to over 125 parents, professionals, educators, and students. Topics focused on the provision of appropriate education services, accommodations, and pre-employment transition services for students who are blind or visually impaired.

• The creation of a "Blindness Skills Specialist" position at each of the nine DESE Regional Professional Development Centers. Responsibilities of these individuals include coordination of "services available from

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other entities who serve eligible students." DESE has contracted with three specialists, one located at Truman State University in Kirksville, MO, and two located at Missouri State University in Springfield, MO.

• Submission of an annual report from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to the Missouri Legislature. The report is to include the number of students with visual impairments receiving special education services who: 1) receive transition planning services with the cooperation of RSB as part of their Individual Education Plan; and 2) are referred to RSB.

• Establishment of a joint referral system between the Division of Special Education in the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and RSB.

Interagency Cooperative Agreement:

During FFY 2014 the Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services (Vocational Rehabilitation) and Rehabilitation Services for the Blind updated an interagency cooperative agreement for transition services with the Office of Special Education and Office of Career Readiness, which outlines plans, policies, procedures, and financial responsibility of each agency for the coordination of transition services to students with disabilities. The agreement, developed in accordance with IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, includes the following:

1. RSB to provide consultation and technical assistance to local and state educational staff in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post school activities, including vocational rehabilitation services;

2. Transition planning by RSB staff and the educational agency that facilitates development of and completion of their individualized education programs in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA);

3. Roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities of each agency and provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and,

4. Procedures for outreach and identification of students with disabilities who are in need of transition services.

The agreement contains guidance on the primary source of service provision including the educational agencies' financial responsibility in accordance with IDEA and RSB's agreement to pay for employment related transition services provided in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act as amended for vocational rehabilitation services beyond the scope of IDEA.

In addition, the agreement provides the means to ensure joint planning of individualized educational plans and individualized plans for employment and includes the opportunity that students may receive "for credit" work experiences through the Cooperative Work Experience Program.

Missouri Connections:

Missouri Connections is a web-based career exploration tool for:

- **self-awareness assessment**
- **career assessment and awareness**
- **educational and occupational exploration**
- **postsecondary planning**

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- **career preparation and management**
- **job placement**

Missouri Connections provides interactive career exploration features, information on educational options and degree choices after high school, and administrative options for schools to upload course lists and customized career plans of study. Sponsored by DESE and the Department of Economic Development (DED), Missouri Connections is free of charge to students, parents, guidance counselors, educators, and job seekers. Through Missouri Connections, the Division of Workforce Development, under DED, Department of Higher Education, RSB and other WIOA core partners and local school districts can utilize the same career planning tool with their clients/students.

Transition Handbook for the Cooperative Work Experience Program:

A Transition Handbook for the Cooperative Work Experience Program, jointly developed by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and RSB staff, provides policy guidance on transition services. The handbook is available on the DESE website.

Transition Brochure:

A brochure on transition services that was jointly developed by staff of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and RSB is available on DESE's website. It provides a single source for an overview of the technical assistance, consultation, and transition services that are available from the two State vocational rehabilitation agencies. The target audience includes students, parents, school personnel, and community organizations that might be in contact with individuals who could potentially benefit from vocational rehabilitation services.

RSB Vocational Rehabilitation Transition Policy:

RSB has modified procedures for the provision of services to youth in transition and students in transition to be consistent with WIOA requirements and amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This includes the provision of pre-employment transition services to students in transition, which may be provided by our Children's Specialist to students potentially eligible for VR services. Changes also include a 90 day timeframe for development of an Individualized Plan for Employment after the date of eligibility determination, unless RSB and the eligible individual agree to an extension.

Cooperative Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education:

In compliance with the regulations implementing the Vocational Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998, RSB, with the cooperation of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, has developed an interagency agreement for all of Missouri's public institutions of higher education (IHEs). This agreement spells out the financial, support and other responsibilities that are required by the regulations for each party in supporting the post-secondary education of persons with disabilities.

(e) Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations. Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

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Personal Vocational Adjustment Services

Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) uses the state contracting and procurement processes with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers for the provision of comprehensive assessment of personal vocational adjustment skills, and training in those skills. This document also contains the fee for service price the provider will charge for services offered.

The center based vocational rehabilitation services provided by these vendors are specifically designed to meet the training needs of individuals who are blind and visually impaired and include instruction in Braille, orientation and mobility, and the use of software for speech access or enlargement of visual outputs for computer systems.

Agreements for the provision of center based vocational rehabilitation services exist with the following vendors:

Alphapointe Association for the Blind, Kansas City, Missouri

Blindness: Learning in New Dimensions, Inc., [BLIND, Inc.] Minneapolis, Minnesota

Colorado Center for the Blind, Littleton, Colorado

Louisiana Center for the Blind, Inc., Ruston, Louisiana

World Services for the Blind, Little Rock, Arkansas

Rehabilitation Teaching Services

The state contracting and procurement processes have also been used to establish an agreement between RSB and the St. Louis Society for the Blind for the provision of itinerant training in activities of daily living, braille and orientation and mobility.

Rehabilitation Engineering/Braille Instruction/Orientation and Mobility

RSB uses the state contracting procurement processes to establish agreements with individuals and/or community resources such as centers for independent living to obtain rehabilitation engineering, braille instruction and orientation and mobility services.

Supported Employment Services

RSB uses the state contracting procurement processes to establish agreements with Supported Employment Service Providers. Additional information on this is contained in State Plan section f "Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Support Employment Services".

Other Services

RSB utilizes the Expenditure Registration System ERS101 "authorization for services" process to provide other client specific rehabilitation services such as vocational evaluation, employee development, vocational skill training, and job search skill training through non-profit rehabilitation service providers.

(f) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services. Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other

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appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) uses state contracting and procurement processes, including formal requests for proposals (RFP's), to develop service agreements in order to provide supported employment services to clients. These contracts spell out the responsibilities of both the contractor and RSB in the referral of clients and the provision of services, the services that each contractor agrees to provide, and the cost of those services.

The contract specifies that the supported employment service provider is responsible for arranging for extended services, including natural supports. RSB assists the supported employment service provider in the development of natural supports away from the worksite and assists in locating funding for extended services when a resource is not readily available through the contractor. RSB may provide extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities for a period not to exceed 4 years.

The contract agreement for supported employment services serves as the cooperative agreement document between RSB and supported employment service providers and includes a statement to that effect.

(g) Coordination with Employers. Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

(1) VR services; and

(2) transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Rehabilitation Act), provides states with considerable flexibility in the organization of the agency or agencies responsible for the administration of the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program. States may choose to designate one agency to provide VR services to persons with all types of disabilities (known as a "combined" agency), or two distinct agencies, one to serve individuals who are blind and visually impaired and another to serve individuals with all other disabilities (known as "blind" and "general" agencies, respectively) (section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act). Missouri is fortunate to be one of 24 states that have both a general VR agency (Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation-General) and services for the blind VR agency (Rehabilitation Services for the Blind) as core and equal partners for the vocational rehabilitation program. Research indicates that separate blind agencies, when compared to general/combined agencies, show higher quality services specific to the population, resulting in better trained clients ready for the 21st century workforce, higher competitive placement rates, and higher incomes at closure leading toward self-sufficiency for those individuals. This organizational structure provides greater effectiveness and efficiency in working with clients and employers in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services and meeting the vision and requirements of WIOA.

RSB works with employers through a variety of activities at the local level to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities to facilitate the provision of VR services and transition services, including transition services for youth and pre-employment transition services. District offices engage in outreach activities meeting directly with employers to identify employment needs and educate employers about the services RSB can offer for existing and new employees. Each district office and the Prevention of Blindness program have a tonometer to screen for the early signs of glaucoma as a service to employers and to promote VR services. Outreach activities are extended to employer health fairs, job fairs, chamber of

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commerce events, and participating in local Workforce Development Boards. RSB has developed relationships with several employers across the state communicating directly with HR staff on employment needs, identify customized employment opportunities, and provide disability/blindness awareness and sensitivity training. Outreach activities have resulted in competitive integrated employment outcomes and work experience opportunities, both paid and unpaid, for youth and students with disabilities and adult clients.

RSB has one Job Development Specialist that works directly with employers to develop relationships and identify clients from various offices to meet employer needs. This position serves on several committees including the St. Louis Deafblind Taskforce, St. Louis County Disability Resource Committee, Employment Liaison Committee, Employment Working Group for Immigrants and refugees, St. Louis Transition Council, St. Louis Special School District Agency Collaborative, and the Urban League. This position receives and distributes job postings to VR staff and assists clients in the development of business plans required for self-employment vocational goals.

RSB participates in the National Employment Team (NET), a one-company approach to serving a variety of businesses through the national network of VR programs. The NET's vision is to create a coordinated approach to serving business customers through a national VR team that specializes in employer development, business consulting and corporate relations. The NET supports a dual customer base, meeting the employment needs of qualified applicants and support services provided by the VR program. This offers VR agencies a national system for sharing employment resources, best practices, and provides business connections. The point of contact from each VR agency is invited to participate in phone conferences to learn more about a specific company's business, their hiring needs and trends, discuss accessibility and accommodations, and their success with VR services in other states. The result is that businesses have a direct access to a pool of qualified applicants and the support services offered by RSB, and RSB clients have access to national and local employment opportunities and career development resources.

The Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP) was built for VR and businesses to work together for the success of hiring individuals with ABILITIES. TAP is an online system, which includes both a national talent pool of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) candidates looking for employment and a job posting system for businesses looking to hire individuals with disabilities. TAP is led by the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation and the National Employment Team (NET) in partnership with disABLEDperson, Inc., and TAP is supported by the NET, which includes VR Business Consultants in every state, the territories and D.C. who can partner and can provide support services to businesses at the national, state and local level.

TAP services to businesses includes:

- **Post Jobs that will reach all 80 Agencies in 50 States, Territories, and DC**
- **Voluntary Self-Disclosure of Candidates**
- **Résumé searching and Geographic Availability of Candidates**
- **Job Reporting Metrics**
- **Compliance Reports**
- **Preliminary Interview Capability**
- **Online Job Fairs**
- **Printable Transcripts**
- **Partnership opportunities through The NET**
- **Manual or Automated Job Postings through their API**

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Every RSB counselor and district supervisor has access to TAP and can invite any VR client to enter their information into the system. Counselors can help the client enter information, edit résumés, and send job leads to clients.

RSB's clients are able to access jobs.mo.gov, a web-based employment resource for clients and employers maintained by the Division of Workforce Development. This site offers clients career planning and job exploration, self-assessment, and wage and trend data to analyze careers, trends and growing occupations in Missouri. Clients are able to search for job orders and referral information from employers for job openings that meet their qualifications. Clients can access other job portals through this system, expanding the search outside of Missouri. Employers can also perform a job search for available applicants that match the skills for their specific employment needs and can access information on incentives, business resources, and recruitment.

RSB has formal contract agreements with community rehabilitation providers to work with employers and assist clients with job search, job placement and customized employment opportunities. Other services include work based learning experiences, task analysis, and job coaching when needed. RSB contracts with Alphapointe Association for the Blind for an eight-week Summer Transition Employment Program (STEP) providing competitive work experience to high-school age youth. The goal is to provide each consumer with a foundation for the school-to-work transition, to enable each to practice personal independence through work and goal-setting experiences, and to afford an opportunity for community involvement. This program includes vocational exploration; identifying preferences, interests, and abilities with regard to work; and learning about work related behaviors and self-advocacy. Consumers participate in general orientation during the first week of the program. The remaining seven weeks they spend on the job. Short-term job coaching may be provided to assist in orienting the consumers to the particular job site. Consumers receive an hourly wage during their placement at a job site. Involvement in this program is intended to increase a consumer's career awareness, build marketable vocational skills, and support a healthy self-image.

(h) Interagency Cooperation. Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

(1) the State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act;

(2) the State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities; and

(3) the State agency responsible for providing mental health services.

The Missouri Department of Mental Health (DMH) is the state agency responsible for the provision of services to individuals with developmental disabilities and for providing mental health services. RSB collaborates with DMH to develop employment opportunities for community-based employment in integrated settings for eligible clients.

DMH currently administers five Medicaid Home and Community Based (HCB) Waiver programs delivering employment supports and services for individuals with intellectual or other developmental disabilities. The five waivers are the Comprehensive Waiver; Missouri Children with Developmental Disabilities Waiver (MOCDD or Sarah Jian Lopez Waiver); Support Waiver; Partnership for Hope; and Autism Waiver. The partnership with DMH has resulted in a referral process between agencies that maximizes the availability of services to individuals with the most significant disabilities. A description of services available under each waiver can be found at http://dmh.mo.gov/dd/progs/waiver/services.html.

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Division of Developmental Disabilities has a statewide employment initiative, Employment First, for working age citizens with disabilities. Employment services include job preparation, job discovery, and community employment in a competitive integrated work setting that may include ongoing supports. The Division of Behavioral Health provides employment services to individuals with mental illnesses, histories of substance abuse, and/or criminal backgrounds. Clinical and vocational employment services are integrated through state-wide partnerships to help individuals who are interested in employment participate in the competitive labor market with the appropriate level of supports and services to be successful. RSB will continue to partner and collaborate with DMH programs in the delivery of employment services.

Mo HealthNet administers the Medicaid program in Missouri, and reports to the Department of Social Services along with Rehabilitation Services for the Blind. This organizational structure affords RSB access to Medicaid eligibility and services in the utilization of comparable services and benefits. Mo HealthNet coverage is automatically available to recipients of the Missouri Supplemental Aid to the Blind (SAB) and Blind Pension (BP) programs. RSB receives monthly referrals for all individuals who have applied and been found eligible for SAB or BP.

(i) Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development. Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

(1) Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

(A) Qualified Personnel Needs. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

(i) the number of personnel who are employed by the State agency in the provision of VR services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;

(ii) the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

(iii) projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

Each state fiscal year, during the preparation of the funding request for the next fiscal year, Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) studies personnel needs over the preceding two-year period to determine turnover rate. The number of staff employed by the State agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category, is reviewed. Projections are made of the number of personnel, by category, which will be needed by the State agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the State in five years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with severe disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors. Both supervisory and administrative staff have input into the process.

RSB has a total of 100 budgeted full time equivalent (FTE) staff positions. The following positions included in the FTEs are directly involved in providing services to individuals in the VR program: 18 Vocational

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Rehabilitation Counselors (VRCs); 17 Rehabilitation Teachers; 6 Orientation and Mobility Specialists; 1 Job Development Specialist; 6 District Supervisors; 7 Clerical Supervisors; 5 Business Enterprise Area Supervisors; 3 Children's Specialists; and 15 Rehabilitation Assistants. There are additionally 16 administrative and management staff in various positions at the central office in Jefferson City.

All of the named positions above are directly involved in providing services to individuals with disabilities. During FFY 2015, 1874 persons had an open VR case with RSB, resulting in an average of 104 cases per counselor. At the current rate of applications, no increase in the number of VRC positions is envisioned at this time.

Based on historical data, RSB anticipates that approximately two VRCs, two Rehabilitation Teachers and three Rehabilitation Assistants will need to be replaced due to retirements, employment terminations and other causes on an annual basis. The remaining categories of employees average less than one termination per year. The total number of new staff projected to be needed during the five-year period is:

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors = 10

Rehabilitation Teachers = 10

Rehabilitation Assistants = 15

Orientation and Mobility Specialists = 2

District Supervisors = 1

Clerical Supervisors = 2

BEP Area Supervisors = 2

Children's Specialists = 1

Administrative Staff = 3

(B) Personnel Development. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

(i) a list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;

(ii) the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

(iii) the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

There is one graduate rehabilitation counselor training program in Missouri. In September 1999 Maryville University in St. Louis began offering a masters level degree program in rehabilitation counseling. Graduates of this program are ready to take the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) test and also the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) test upon graduation. The program had 43 students enrolled during the fall 2015 semester and 8 students graduated in spring 2015. RSB will continue to work closely with Maryville University to recruit and hire potential graduates.

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Maryville University and the University of Central Missouri (UCM) also possess undergraduate curricula in rehabilitation. Missouri State University (MSU) offers a Graduate Certificate in Orientation and Mobility available to non-degree seeking individuals or as a component of the Master's degree in Special Education, Visual Impairment emphasis. The Orientation and Mobility certification is designed to meet regional needs and is aligned to the standards set by AER and ACVREP.

(2) Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel. Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

The issue of shortage of qualified personnel specifically trained in rehabilitation counseling will be a concern regardless of a change in the personnel standards. Missouri DVR reports employing 144 Rehabilitation Counselors; RSB employs 18. With only one program for rehabilitation counselor preparation in the state, an insufficient number of in-state graduates will be available to meet the foreseeable future needs of public rehabilitation agencies in the state, even if every graduate of the program went to work for a public rehabilitation agency. This necessitates widening RSB's recruiting focus to include graduates from other rehabilitation programs throughout the country, as well as graduates in other disciplines. RSB does anticipate being able to hire Master's level staff who have counseling, psychology or social work degrees as there are a number of university programs in the State that offer those degrees.

In order to meet the need for qualified personnel, RSB has developed a plan to present employment opportunities at RSB to a wider audience. Some of the components of that plan are:

a. Continue to utilize the system of recruitment established by the Missouri State Division of Personnel. This system provides access to Merit System job descriptions and data regarding application for employment with the State of Missouri. The Division of Personnel maintains lists of eligible applicants for contact when a vacancy exists. These job descriptions and notices of vacancies can be found on-line at the Missouri State Government website.

b. Send vacancy announcements and job descriptions to colleges and universities throughout the country that offer academic programs in rehabilitation counseling, teaching, orientation and mobility; to other public and private rehabilitation agencies; and to consumer organizations within the State of Missouri.

c. Post announcements of RSB job opportunities on Internet-based job lists, including National Council of State Agencies for the Blind (NCSAB), Rehabnet, National Orientation and Mobility Certification (NOMC), Orientation and Mobility Listserv, Rehabilitation Counselor Listserv, NFB Missouri Listserv, MCB's Mo-Blind Listserv, and Special Education Exchange.

d. All of RSB's recruiting efforts listed in a-c above emphasize the importance of locating, interviewing and employing individuals who are from minority backgrounds or who have a disability. All of the colleges and universities with a rehabilitation counseling curriculum in Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Arkansas and Illinois give preference to students who are from minority backgrounds or who have a disability.

(3) Personnel Standards. Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section

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101(a)(7)(B) and to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

(A) standards that are consistent with any national or State-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing VR services; and

(B) the establishment and maintenance of education and experience requirements, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The Missouri Merit System qualifications for all RSB counselor positions are the highest standard in the state consistent with RSMO 337. All of RSB's counseling staff meets the existing standards. These current requirements include possession of a Master's Degree from an accredited school of rehabilitation counseling, counseling, counseling and guidance, clinical psychology, counseling psychology, or social work (Possession of a current Certified Rehabilitation Counselor [CRC] certification issued by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification will substitute for possession of Master's Degree). The Missouri Merit System provides a competitive examination process for recruitment and retention of a qualified workforce and governs the appointment, promotion, transfer, layoff, removal, and discipline of employees. To be considered for employment in accordance with state personnel requirements, applicants must meet the established Merit System personnel qualifications and be placed on a register for the specific job classification. Office of Administration, Division of Personnel maintains the register of eligible names that may be considered for new hires.

All of RSB's counseling staff currently possesses a Master's Degree in rehabilitation, counseling, social work or a related discipline. Graduate programs are available in the accepted disciplines at universities within 30 miles of every RSB district office. RSB will utilize Technical Assistance and Continuing Education Program (formerly known as Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program) funding to assist staff in obtaining Master's degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling or a related discipline. RSB coordinates with institutions of higher education including University of Missouri, Missouri State University, University of Central Missouri, and the University of Arkansas to reach out and attract students from acceptable fields of education.

RSB will continue to coordinate with institutions offering graduate education in rehabilitation or related areas to ensure that classes are readily available, either in traditional programs or through use of the Internet and other non-traditional methodologies.

(4) Staff Development. Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

(A) a system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated State unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; and

(B) procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

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RSB supports the attendance of staff members in graduate programs that would meet the criteria established in the standards, i.e., degrees in rehabilitation counseling, education counseling, social work or clinical psychology.

In addition to the academic training referenced above, RSB provides the following opportunities for staff to attain/retain expertise in their profession:

a. RSB has developed and maintains a training curriculum for all new personnel so that they are provided with the basic information needed to perform their jobs. This session includes training on:

-The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998

-Regulations implementing the Rehabilitation Act Amendments

-Current research

-The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

-Informed choice

-Department of Social Services required staff training, such as Civil Rights and Cultural Diversity, HIPAA Privacy, HIPAA Security

-Diseases of the eye

-The rehabilitation process, including assessment, rehabilitation counseling and job development/placement

-RSB programs and policies

-Client Assistance Program

-Supported Employment, Self-Employment, Vocational Evaluation, and Placement manuals

-Use of System 7 Electronic Case Management System

b. RSB participates in a system of supervisory training for new district office personnel. The district supervisor and clerk IV in each office provide a systematic orientation and training curriculum to new staff so that they can learn background information necessary to the area in which they will be employed and the clients they will serve.

c. RSB assigns an experienced vocational rehabilitation counselor to each new counselor to act as a mentor during their probationary period. This counselor is available to provide advice, on-the-job training in specific competencies, and guidance to the new counselor in their adjustment to RSB and the VR process. Other counselors provide peer support in assisting the new counselor in achieving a level of understanding and skills acquisition of the VR process. Central Office provides additional training to staff as necessary and as requested by local offices.

d. In addition to the above, when changes occur in legislation or regulation that effect the service delivery systems, staff are provided with training in order to implement the necessary changes.

e. RSB annually provides training opportunities for staff in topics applicable to job performance.

f. Upon their request, RSB allows rehabilitation technology and engineering vendors to conduct seminars in emerging technology and software items at district offices.

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g. As a result of RSB's Quality Assurance Initiative, the RSB Counselor Academy was developed. The RSB Counselor Academy addresses both new orientation and developmental training for vocational rehabilitation counselors and district supervisors. One component of the RSB Counselor Academy is specific training in Motivational Interviewing. Motivational Interviewing provides additional resources to field staff working with individuals to facilitate changing behaviors, ultimately leading to a successful employment outcome. RSB has placed the MI training via scenarios on DVD onto the agency intranet through the training application called the Employee Learning Center to allow for self-paced learning. Other sessions have focused on Comprehensive Assessment, IPE Development, the Self-Employment Resource Guide and Small Business Plans, and AgrAbility. RSB continued its Counselor Academy series of trainings in FFY 2015. The first day of the two day training was provided to both Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and Rehabilitation Teachers. The staff received training on various eye diseases including diabetes, the resultant functional limitations and effects on the clients' overall heath, eye condition, and ability to work. Other sessions included training on techniques for using low vision aids as well as a session on the Unified English Braille code. Counselor specific training focused on an introduction to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) and a session on Transition. In addition, additional training was provided to staff on how to read profit and loss statements when working with clients seeking to start their own small business.

h. RSB annually supports staff attendance at conferences, webinars and seminars to the extent possible in order to broaden the scope of knowledge available to the staff. Some examples that we have attended or plan to attend include:

-Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT) Power-Up Conference

-Missouri Assistive Technology Wireless Pilot Training

-Missouri Assistive Technology Community Forum

-Business Enterprise Program national and regional conferences

-Monthly SSA claim reimbursement All VR Call

-RSA hosted and sponsored national conferences

-National Federation of the Blind annual state conference

-Missouri Council of the Blind annual state conference- -Missouri School Counselor Association

-Ethics Training

-Section 504 and Students with Disabilities

-Special Education Law

-Association for Education and Rehabilitation conferences

-RSB CM System 7 Training

-Agricultural Assistive Technology Training

-MACRT

-National Advisory Disability Committee – Centene Corp

-Children's Vision Summit

-Visiting Counselor Days – WSB

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-Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS) Basics (webinar)

-Business Leadership and Superior Training

-Progressive Employment Webinar

-Deafblind Awareness Training

-Interviewing for Success

-Helen Keller National Center training opportunities

-WIOA webinars and conferences

i. RSB receives many periodicals regarding rehabilitation subjects. All publications are available to staff upon request, including:

-"The Vendorscope," a publication of the Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America

-Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness

-Publications of the American Foundation for the Blind

-Publications of the National Federation of the Blind

-Publications of the American Council of the Blind

-Publications of RRTC's throughout the country

(5) Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs. Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

RSB utilizes staff with expertise in other languages and other modes of communication to work with clients with special communications needs in their district as needed. RSB has four bilingual staff, including Spanish, Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, and Arabic speakers. More frequently, when this expertise is needed, it is secured from family members or purchased from a third party. RSB subscribes to a telephone service called World Wide Interpreters through which interpreters can be connected with RSB staff and clients to facilitate verbal communication.

RSB currently has one staff member who is able to communicate using sign language. RSB provides sign language interpreters for all public meetings, hearings and forums upon request. TDD service is available at all RSB offices, either through on-site equipment or through Relay Missouri, a service of Missouri's Office of Administration.

RSB has the capability internally and through the Center for Braille and Narration Production at the Missouri State Prison to produce information in accessible media for staff and clients, including braille, large print, audio tape, and electronic formats. All information disseminated by the agency to staff with disabilities, as well as clients, is available in accessible media. In addition, 33.8 % of RSB's field staff providing direct client services can read at least Grade 1 Braille.

(6) Coordination of Personnel Development Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate

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the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

a. HB401, signed into state law in 1999, created a Blind Student Task Force to advise the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) on issues pertaining to children who are blind or visually impaired. RSB has appointment authority for one position on the Task Force.

b. RSB has conducted training in conjunction with DESE in transition and is part of a cooperative agreement with DESE and DVR to ensure the full participation of students with visual disabilities in high school vocational education programs and experiences.

c. Missouri State University (MSU) operates the only graduate education program for Teachers of the Visually Impaired in the state, and RSB continues negotiations with the Visually Impaired Programs professor to assist in recruitment of qualified Orientation and Mobility personnel as well as to further professional development opportunities for current staff.

d. RSB and MVR have developed and implemented a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with institutions of higher education (IHEs) in the state. This MOU outlines each entity's responsibilities in the delivery of adaptive equipment and technological aids and appliances for students with disabilities in colleges and universities throughout the state.

(j) Statewide Assessment.

(1) Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those:

(A) with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;

(B) who are minorities;

(C) who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program;

(D) who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and

(E) who are youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services.

Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB), along with the State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind (SRC), continually assesses the rehabilitation needs of Missourians with visual disabilities on an annual basis as part of its state and strategic planning process. This is year one of the triennial process that culminates in a comprehensive summary of the data in order to ascertain the needs of individuals with vision disabilities throughout the state of Missouri. This assessment period covers the FFY 2014-2015. Conclusions and recommendations of this assessment are incorporated into RSB goals and priorities for the purposes of improving services to individuals with the primary disability of vision loss.

Rehabilitation Services for the Blind is not in an order of selection. RSB projects that funding for the 2017 FFY will meet the needs of all individuals who apply for services.

Data sets include:

1. Recipients of Blind Pension (BP) and Supplemental Aid for the Blind (SAB);

2. Recipients of SSI/SSDI who also receive other benefits from the DSA;

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3. Recipients of Vocational Rehabilitation Services for blind and visually impaired;

4. Recipients of Independent Living Rehabilitation/Independent Living for Older Blind;

5. Recipients of Prevention of Blindness services;

6. Children reported eligible for the American Printing House for the Blind quota registration program;

7. Data elements contained within the Missouri Annual Blind/Visually Impaired Literacy Study December 2014 report; and

8. Additional fractional data sets from various sources include: the Annual Report of the SRC and results of the vocational rehabilitation client satisfaction survey conducted by the SRC; information gained from public hearings held throughout the state in conjunction with the quarterly SRC meetings; Federal Standards and Indicators; input gained from participation and presentations at the annual state conventions held by Missouri Council of the Blind and the Missouri Affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind; Quality assurance case reviews conducted by RSB; Quarterly analysis of case management data; analysis from client review proceedings; and Census data including American Community Survey and Labor data.

Analysis of data sets for FFY 2014-2015:

1. Blind Pension (BP)/Supplemental Aid for the Blind (SAB): BP average monthly caseload for FY 2015 was 2758 and SAB average monthly caseload was 981.

2. SSI/SSDI recipients who are receiving other benefits from the DSA in the form of food stamps, TANF and child care for FY 2015: Average monthly caseload of 105,089.

3. Vocational Rehabilitation clients served during FY 2015 was 1874, and the average length of time on service from opening 02 to closure was 1276 days.

4. Independent Living-State and Independent Living for Older Blind clients served during FY 2015 was 1448.

5. Prevention of Blindness cases for FY 2015 totaled 331, of which 197 cases are currently open and 134 cases closed successful.

6. American Printing House statewide eligible registrants as of January 2015 were 1455, of which 1345 were 21 years of age and under.

7. Self-employment closures in FY 2015 were 5.51% of the total 272 successful closures.

8. The number of school age 5k-21 blind/visually impaired students educated in the general classroom, in an itinerant or resource classroom, in a self-contained classroom, or in a separate educational facility during the 2013-2014 school year was 506. The number of blind/visually impaired students ages 3-5preK is 44.

9. The number of blind/visually impaired blind/visually impaired students graduating in the 2013-2014 school year was 34 with a 94.4% graduation rate.

10. During the 2013-2014 school year 67 blind and visually impaired students were referred to RSB through Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

11. The number of eligible students who received transition planning services with the cooperation of Rehabilitation or Rehabilitation Services for the Blind as part of their IEP for the 2013-2014 school year is 167.

RSB and the SRC have concluded the most common vocational rehabilitation services purchased during FFY 2015 were: Rehabilitation technology 45.68% of all purchased services; Training, including College/University, Vocational, on-the job training, basic academic remedial or literary training and specific job readiness training,

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at 25.43% of all purchased services; Maintenance (food, clothing, shelter) to support other VR services at 11.88% of all purchased services; Assessment at 5.29% of all purchased services; Diagnosis and Treatment of Impairments at 3.69% of all purchased services; and Transportation Services to support other VR services at 2.39% of all purchased services. Augmentative Rehabilitation Services including teaching alternative techniques of Blindness in activities of daily living and orientation and mobility training are largely provided by RSB Rehabilitation Teachers and Mobility Instructors supplemented through fee for service contracts with five CRP's providing comprehensive personal and vocational adjustment services. Supported employment needs are similar; however, with the addition of personnel qualified to work with blind/visually impaired clients in conducting community based vocational assessments, job development, job coaching, and extended support services. Employment services are provided through RSB's vocational counselors and employment services, including Supported Employment purchased through contracted CRPs.

Consideration of the numbers of clients served in the various programs listed above that fall into the categories of Most Significantly Disabled and Supported Employment-eligible without the need to revert to an order of selection, waiting list or financial needs testing, supports the concept that the service needs of most significantly disabled and SE clients are being met. This is consistent with the analysis of the SRC's client satisfaction survey for FY 2015, which indicates a 92% overall satisfaction rate with RSB's ability to meet client needs based on a 36% return rate of survey questionnaires sent to all closed cases.

RSB contracts with five community rehabilitation programs offering comprehensive personal vocational adjustment services, four of which have onsite residential services and one utilizes offsite residential settings, none of which have a waiting list, also supports the concept that services are available to meet the demand for blindness-specific services in the state. RSB has a service agreement with the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults. RSB maintains contracts with 12 Community Rehabilitation Providers offering community employment services including Supported Employment Services to the most significantly disabled. Several of these community contract providers cover multiple districts. The low usage level of SE services, 25 during FY 2015, despite the relatively large number of providers, suggests that the demand for SE services is being met.

Service rates for clients with disabilities who are also members of identified minority groups or that have traditionally been unserved or underserved have been very good compared to the statistical base in the state. RSB's service rate for these clients consistently exceeds the accepted norm of 1.5 times their prevalence in the affected population, with most measurements in the 20+ percent range, while Missouri's minority population is 16%. The percent of Missouri population for 2010 reporting Black/African American is 11.7%. The percent of total served in the RSB vocation program reporting Black/African American in 2015 is 37.01%. The percent of successful closures in 2015 among this population is 21.32%. The percent of Missouri population for 2010 reporting Hispanic or Latino origin was 3.7%. The percent of total served in the RSB vocational program reporting Hispanic or Latin origin was 2.43%. The percent of successful closures in 2015 among this population was 1.1%. Minority income is within 10% of non-minority income, with average weekly earnings of $398.00, compared to $426.00 for non-minorities. In 2015, 33.08 of the total served report ethnic/racial minority status. These results generally support the concept that RSB's services, for individuals who are minorities and from unserved and underserved populations, generally satisfy their vocational rehabilitation needs.

RSB, in cooperation with the Helen Keller National Center, conducted a statewide Deaf-Blind needs assessment during the 2013 calendar year. According to the Helen Keller Center National Registry, Missouri currently has 359 people identified as Deaf-Blind, and another 9 Deaf-Blind individuals whose address has changed and no current contact information is available. RSB identifies 11 individuals who received vocational rehabilitation services with dual diagnosis of vision and hearing loss in 2015. Women have fared well under RSB's policies

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and practices, with 46.32% of the 2015 employment closure cohort achieved by women. 44.75 of total served in 2015 were women.

RSB is committed to the partnership developed with the workforce development system in Missouri to provide employees trained for the 21st century workforce and obtain employment that leads toward self-sufficiency. RSB provides training, joint referrals, and support to the job centers throughout Missouri. RSB remains committed to providing training and supports to the local job centers through individual vocational counselor and supervisor visits and on-demand training for job center staff. Training covers such topics as accessibility, RSB referral process, the use of assistive technology for the blind in employment, and RSB services in general. With the Executive Director of the MOWDB on the SRC for the blind, RSB has access to educate the MOWDB team regarding RSB services and capabilities of the population served. RSB will need to continue working with all partners to develop innovative programs and serve common clients, develop new ways to provide job creation, and work cooperatively to remove the stigma of individuals with disabilities in the workplace. Improved common work needs assessments and referral processes to appropriate agencies will assist in the provision of services and success of clients served.

For the school year 2013-2014 the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has identified 334 blind or visually impaired students ages 14-21 registered with the American Printing House potentially eligible for VR services, including pre-employment or other transition services. 2 students exited school without receiving a diploma.

(2) Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and

RSB considers the current programs for community rehabilitation within the state as being sufficient to meet the current need. This sufficiency is supported by the fact that RSB contracts for employment services, including supported employment, with 12 contract providers, many of whom have multiple offices covering multiple districts. RSB also contracts with five contracted Community Rehabilitations Programs offering comprehensive personal and vocational adjustment to blindness training. There have been no waiting lists for either employment services or comprehensive personal and vocational adjustment training during the past year, nor is a waiting list projected.

(3) Include an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition career services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services are coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act .

Of the 334 students ages 14-21 identified, 167 are receiving transition planning services coordinated with RSB and IEP under the Individuals with Disabilities Act. While Missouri law requires a joint referral process between RSB and the local educational authorities, parents must be informed of RSB services but may refuse to have their child referred to RSB for services. Services are provided in accordance to the interagency MOU with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education that outlines services, responsibilities, and financial obligations for each party. RSB participates in the IEP planning process to coordinate and compliment the provision of VR services for eligible and potentially eligible students and services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

(k) Annual Estimates. Describe:

(1) The number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services.

(2) The number of eligible individuals who will receive services under:

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(A) The VR Program;
(B) The Supported Employment Program; and
(C) each priority category, if under an order of selection.

(3) The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services, but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection; and

(4) The cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category.

The number of individuals in the State who will be eligible for services under this State Plan is estimated to be 1874.

The number of individuals who will receive services with funds provided under the VR program of the Act is estimated to be 1810.

The number of individuals who will receive services with funds provided under the Supported Employment Program of the Act is estimated to be 23.

The total cost of services to individuals eligible to receive them under this State Plan is estimated to be $11,000,000.

Rehabilitation Services for the Blind is not under an order of selection.

(l) State Goals and Priorities. The designated State unit must:

(1) Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions.

(2) Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs.

(3) Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:

(A) the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;
(B) the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and
(C) other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

The following goals were jointly developed and agreed to by Rehabilitation Services for the Blind and the State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind following review of the comprehensive needs assessment referenced in Section (J). The goals appear in their order of priority.
Goal 1: Stabilize the downward trend in new applicants in FFY 2017 to 390.

Baseline data: The number of new applicants in FFY 2011 was 460; the number of new applicants in FFY 2012 was 455; the number of new applicants in FFY 2013 was 436; the number of new applicants in FFY 2014 was 430; the number of new applicants in FFY 2015 was 397; New applicants have been on a downward trend since 2011.

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Goal 2: Improve employment outcomes to enhance economic stability and self-sufficiency for clients who exit the VR program.

Baseline data: In the FFY 2011 reporting period (aggregate data from year 2010 and 2011) the performance level on Standard/Indicator 1.6 was reported as 22.5. In the FFY 2012 reporting period (aggregate data from year 2011 and 2012) the performance level on Standard/Indicator 1.6 was reported as 29.58. In the FFY 2013 reporting period (aggregate data from year 2012 and 2013) the performance level on Standard/Indicator 1.6 was reported as 30.89.

Goal 3: Modernize the VR service delivery system to be consistent with WIOA requirements and improve the quality, timeliness and effectiveness in the provision of those services.

Goal 4: Develop a Transition Services best practice resource guide consistent with federal regulations in the delivery of services to Youth with Disabilities and Students with Disabilities.

(m) Order of Selection. Describe:

(1) The order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services.
(2) The justification for the order.
(3) The service and outcome goals.
(4) The time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
(5) How individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities; and
(6) If the designated State unit has elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

Rehabilitation Services for the Blind is not implementing an Order of Selection.

(n) Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds.

(1) Specify the State's goals and priorities for funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services.
(2) Describe the activities to be conducted, with funds reserved pursuant to section 603(d), for youth with the most significant disabilities, including :
    (A) the provision of extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years; and
    (B) how the State will leverage other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services and expanded supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities.

RSB provides Supported Employment services through the use of contracted Supported Employment Service Providers (SESPs) located throughout the state. Services that may be purchased from SESPs include job development, task analysis, and time-limited individual and group job coaching. RSB expects to receive $56,500 in Title VI funds for FFY 2016. Title VI, Part B funds will only be used to purchase services through the contracted providers following evaluation identifying the client as being eligible for and in need of supported employment services. RSB will augment Title VI, Part B funds once those funds are exhausted.

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A list of the contracted Supported Employment Service Providers and their main office locations are listed below:

-ACT, Columbia, Missouri

-Alphapointe Association for the Blind, Kansas City, Missouri

-Children's Therapy Center, Inc., Sedalia, Missouri

-Community Living, Inc., St. Peters, Missouri

-Community Options, Chillicothe, Missouri

-Independence Center, St. Louis, Missouri

-Job Point, Columbia, Missouri

-Learning Opportunities/Quality Works, Inc., Monroe City, Missouri

-Metropolitan Employment & Rehabilitation Services, St. Louis, Missouri

-Preferred Family Healthcare, Springfield, Missouri

-United Cerebral Palsy of NW Missouri (UCP), St. Joseph, Missouri

-Unlimited Opportunities, Inc., Boonville, Missouri

The supported employment program ensures that individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities, are afforded a full opportunity to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in, or re-enter competitive integrated employment, including supported or customized employment. RSB's employment outcomes for supported employment is recorded at 1.5% of total closures for FFY 2015. Of the individuals that exited the program and received supported employment services during FFY 2015, 80 percent were successfully employed in competitive jobs. These individuals averaged $9.77 per hour and worked an average of 30 hours per week.

RSB will provide supported employment services to youth with the most significant disabilities for up to 24 months and will extend them, if necessary, should these services be needed to achieve an employment outcome. RSB will continue to work closely with the Missouri Department of Social Services MOHealthNet Division and the Department of Mental Health (DMH) Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DD) divisions to ensure that youth with the most significant disabilities are receiving extended services. RSB will work closely with the DMH DD division, utilizing home and community-based waivers to increase supported employment and extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities.

(o) State's Strategies. Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

(1) The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.

The strategies to achieve goals and priorities identified in Attachment (l) were jointly developed and agreed to by Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) and the State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind (SRC) as follows:

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Goal 1: Stabilize the downward trend in new applicants in FFY 2017 to 390.

Baseline data: The number of new applicants in FFY 2011 was 460; the number of new applicants in FFY 2012 was 455; the number of new applicants in FFY 2013 was 436; the number of new applicants in FFY 2014 was 430; the number of new applicants in FFY 2015 was 397; New applicants have been on a downward trend since 2011.

Strategies:

1. Reduce the average number served per year per caseload from the current 104 cases per counselor through efforts to address cases stalled in status 24 without action and cases where contact has been lost and all reasonable efforts to reestablish contact has been done.

2. Establish and implement minimum standards for frequency of client contact and measure that through regular and annual case reviews.

3. Each district office will be responsible for a district specific project to analyze where referrals are coming from and target outreach efforts to major stakeholders and other environments where blind or visually impaired would likely come into contact with and absent from the database.

Goal 2: Improve employment outcomes to enhance economic stability and self-sufficiency for clients who exit the VR program.

Baseline data: In the FFY 2011 reporting period (aggregate data from year 2010 and 2011) the performance level on Standard/Indicator 1.6 was reported as 22.5. In the FFY 2012 reporting period (aggregate data from year 2011 and 2012) the performance level on Standard/Indicator 1.6 was reported as 29.58. In the FFY 2013 reporting period (aggregate data from year 2012 and 2013) the performance level on Standard/Indicator 1.6 was reported as 30.89.

Strategies:

1. Continue the job specific training and maintenance of skills for all vocational counselors and district supervisors through the Counselor Academy initiated in FFY 2012 and develop competency component.

2. Continue to monitor and emphasize the data points of percent of new applicants who are unemployed at application and use of low incident placement strategies such as on-the-job training, supported employment, work experience, and targeted job placement.

3. Continue to emphasize learning appropriate alternative techniques of blindness critical to successful employment, such as orientation and mobility skills; alternative skills of blindness to access, store and retrieve print information; and personal care skills.

4. Develop and improve coordination and collaboration with core partners and local Workforce Development Boards to braid services and assist clients in obtaining employment consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, and capabilities.

5. Enhance employer engagement activities to increase employer services and recruiting, hiring, retaining, and promoting individuals with disabilities.

Goal 3: Modernize the VR service delivery system to be consistent with WIOA requirements and improve the quality, timeliness and effectiveness in the provision of those services.

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Strategies:

1. Update policy manuals and administrative rule based on federal guidance and WIOA requirements.

2. Continue to update and provide high quality staff training and support on implementation of WIOA, effective case service processes, and skills necessary to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

3. Conduct annual case record reviews of case practices to determine consistency and adherence to federal and state requirements and determine where additional guidance is needed.

4. Enter into an agreement with the Missouri Department of Labor to access the UI wage database.

Goal 4: Develop a Transition Services best practice resource guide consistent with federal regulations in the delivery of services to Youth with Disabilities and Students with Disabilities.

Strategies:

1. Create a diverse work group consisting of state level and front line staff, client, parent or other professional advisory representatives when possible and relevant to the group tasks. The goal of the work group is to evaluate the current efforts against best practices and evidence based practices and available resources to assess the strengths and the improvements needed regarding transition services for blind and visually impaired to promote the involvement of stakeholder when planning and implementing services to provide successful transitions to employment, learning and independent living. The work group must assess the strengths and the improvements needed regarding transition services for blind and severely visually impaired and new federal regulations.

2. Train District Supervisors and Counselors in the best practices resource guide and provision of transition services.

All of the strategies in Attachment (o) will be used to improve services to individuals in FFY 2017. Specific strategies used to "expand" services for individuals with disabilities and support innovation and expansion activities are listed as follows:

• Expanding the use of Supported Employment by increasing the number of vendors as needed, training staff to more appropriately use Supported Employment and improving the vendors' capacity to serve blind and visually impaired clients through RSB-provided materials.

• Improving the services provided to clients who are unemployed when they enter the VR system through improved assessment, employment goal development and use of innovative strategies for job development and placement.

(2) How a broad range of assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process and on a statewide basis.

RSB serves only blind and visually impaired individuals, so assistive technology services and devices are provided to almost every client throughout the VR process. Assistive technology services are provided throughout the state by contracted vendors who provide evaluation, consultation, assessments, training, installation, and modifications for clients and employers. Although not specifically listed as technology related, strategies undertaken in increasing services to the transition population, as well as to the group of

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clients who are unemployed at entry into the VR system, rely heavily on planned strategies and activities aimed at improving RSB's performance at assessing clients' assistive technology needs as they relate to the access, storage and retrieval of print information. Improved delivery of assistive technology services through these strategies will result in increased performance in the areas identified by RSB as priorities for FFY 2015 and beyond.

(3) The outreach procedures that will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities, as well as those who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.

Specific strategies that will be used to reduce cultural barriers and identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities include:

• Requiring case recruitment activities for all staff to identify and serve new clients, including those who serve areas with large minority populations.

• Requiring district offices to create and implement outreach plans to locate, gain access to, and serve minority populations.

• Working together with partner agencies to develop joint referrals and best practices for recruiting staff from minority populations or from groups with an awareness of minority population needs and issues in order to increase RSB's success in outreach to minority communities.

• Improving the identification of and service to unserved or underserved populations through an increase in the number and quality of vendors to serve that population and train staff in identification and development of appropriate service plans for clients from that population.

(4) The methods to be used to improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, postsecondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services).

- **Improve the identification of and service to the transition population through revisions in policy and process that target services to that population.**

- **Improve community outreach to schools, parents, students, advocacy groups, and other service providers on the availability of services for students with disabilities.**
- **Utilize the RSB Children's Services program in identification of and possibly providing services to potentially eligible VR clients.**

- **Continue to engage schools and participate in the IEP planning process and coordinate the provision of VR services and pre-employment transition services in accordance with IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, and the Interagency Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.**

- **Continue to participate in statewide initiatives developed to enhance transition services, such as the Missouri Blind Task Force and the Missouri Interagency Transition Team.**

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(5) If applicable, plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the State.

- **Increase the number of community rehabilitation programs contracted to provide Supported Employment and Short Term Community-Based Employment Services when determined necessary.**

- **Provide staff development materials to assist the CRP's in training staff to work with blind and visually impaired client.**

- **Provide training opportunities to include the provision of pre-employment transition services and customized employment services.**

(6) Strategies to improve the performance of the State with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA.

The Missouri workforce development system comprised of all core WIOA partners has developed a Memorandum of Understanding on the implementation of WIOA and creating the partnerships to begin developing common referrals, the braiding of services, and data sharing. These collaborative efforts will enhance access for individuals with disabilities and improve performance for all partners. Performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA are new to vocational rehabilitation and have not yet been measured. RSB met all required federal performance indicators during the past two years prior to WIOA. RSB will apply the same quality of service utilized in meeting those indicators to achieve the new performance measures and provide that level of quality while moving forward.

(7) Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce development system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

RSB has been an active partner of the Missouri workforce development system in the implementation of WIOA at the state level. At the local level, the strategy of requiring staff to undertake specific case recruitment activities to identify and serve new clients will increase RSB's visibility in the workforce development system. Specific work plans for each district office will include on-going contacts with workforce partners, attendance at local WDB meetings, publication of RSB's available services to individuals, as well as emphasis on RSB's role as a resource to workforce partners in accommodation and other disability-related issues.

(8) How the agency's strategies will be used to:
- (A) achieve goals and priorities by the State, consistent with the comprehensive needs assessment;
- (B) support innovation and expansion activities; and
- (C) overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State VR Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program.

Each of the strategies identified in this section are based on the results of the comprehensive needs assessment and have been selected to improve RSB's performance in one or more of the four stated goals. Publication of this plan to staff and the public, along with monitoring of the implementation of the plan by RSB executive and supervisory staff, will ensure that the strategies are widely distributed, have the greatest

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opportunity for input from stakeholders, and are accepted as strategic components to the improvement of services to RSB clients.

(p) Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals. Describe:

(1) An evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals described in the approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan for the most recently completed program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

(A) Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.

(B) Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

Goal 1: Stabilize the downward trend in new applicants in FFY 2015 to 436.

Baseline data: The number of new applicants in FFY 2009 was 553; the number of new applicants in FFY 2010 was 540; the number of new applicants in FFY 2011 was 460; the number of new applicants in FFY 2012 was 455; and the number of new applicants in FY 2013 was 436. New applicants have been on a downward trend since 2008.

Strategies:

1. Reduce the average number served per year per caseload from the current 120 cases per counselor through efforts to address cases stalled in status 24 without action and cases where contact has been lost and all reasonable efforts to reestablish contact has been done.

2. Establish and implement minimum standards for frequency of client contact and measure that through regular and annual case reviews.

3. Each district office will be responsible for a district specific project to analyze where referrals are coming from and target outreach efforts to major stakeholders and other environments where blind or visually impaired would likely come into contact with and absent from the database.

The number of new applicants to the vocational rehabilitation program in FFY 2011 was 460; FFY 2012 was 455; FFY 2013 was 436; FFY 2014 was 430; and FFY 2015 was 397. The Department initiated a dashboard system to measure and track critical data points in January of 2011. One of the critical data points Rehabilitation Services for the Blind measures and tracks monthly is new applicants to the vocational rehabilitation program. An aspect of the dashboard includes graphing trends going back to 2008, and the number of new applicants has been trending downward every year.

Replenish rate is a focus on quarterly statistics presented at Quarterly management meetings. Field staff have received training designed to improve verification of where referrals heard about our services to provide feedback for targeted outreach activities. Case finding project objectives are developed for each district office. One of the barriers to increasing new applicants may be that the average caseload size has been increasing over the last couple of years, to the FFY 2012 high of 127 cases per caseload in the VR program. This may act as a disincentive to increasing new referrals. An analysis of this increase indicates that length of time on service has been increasing as a consequence of a poor economy and an increase in the number of individuals selecting a vocational goal requiring college level training. In an effort to overcome this barrier, in February 2013 RSB began redistricting to redistribute and clear caseloads, resulting in an equalization and reduction of the average caseload size. Caseloads averaged 120 cases per counselor in FFY 2013 and 104 cases per counselor in FFY 2015.

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In FFY 2014 RSB began a coordinated effort with the State Rehabilitation Council in the development of a targeted marketing plan based on historical referral data. RSB is utilizing System 7, the electronic case management system, to identify historical data from the past three years collected at time of referral regarding how applicants heard about RSB and who referred them to the agency. RSB has provided additional training to staff on referral data collection to enhance our understanding of where applicants were hearing about the agency and our vocational services. A three year analysis shows the number of referrals in FFY 2013 was 591 with 73.7% applying for services, FFY 2014 was 572 with 75.2% applying for services, and FFY 2015 was 513 with 77.4% applying for services. While the total number of referrals is decreasing, the number of those individuals applying for services is increasing. The new requirement to serve potentially eligible students with a disability who have not yet applied for VR services could impact these numbers.

Goal 2: Maintain the minimal requirement for the difference between the percentage of clients who report their own income as the largest single source of economic support at the time they exit the VR program and the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of support at the time they apply for VR services to meet the minimum required performance level 30.4; Standard and Indicator 1.6.

Baseline data: In the FFY 2011 reporting period (aggregate data from year 2010 and 2011) the performance level on Standard/Indicator 1.6 was reported as 22.5. In the FFY 2012 reporting period (aggregate data from year 2011 and 2012) the performance level on Standard/Indicator 1.6 was reported as 29.58. In the FFY 2013 reporting period (aggregate data from year 2012 and 2013) the performance level on Standard/Indicator 1.6 was reported as 30.89.

Strategies:

1. Complete training for all vocational counselors and district supervisors in Motivational Interviewing (MI) and work with the Technical Assistance and Continuing Education (TACE) program to develop and implement a system to maintain the skill set and competencies for all vocational counseling staff and district supervisors.

2. Continue the job specific training and maintenance of skills for all vocational counselors and district supervisors through the Counselor Academy initiated in FFY 2012 and develop competency component.

3. Continue to monitor and emphasize the data points of percent of new applicants who are unemployed at application and use of low incident placement strategies such as on-the-job training, supported employment, work experience and targeted job placement.

4. Continue to emphasize learning appropriate alternative techniques of blindness critical to successful employment; such as orientation and mobility skills; alternative skills of blindness to access, store and retrieve print information; and personal care skills.

In FFY 2015, the difference between the percentage of clients who report their own income as the largest single source of support at the time they exit the VR program and the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of support at the time they apply for VR services increased to 36.2, exceeding the minimum required performance level.

MI training has been provided to all vocational rehabilitation counseling staff and an MI training module has been placed on the Employee Learning Center as a mandatory training requirement. The Counselor Academy training in October 2012 provided specific training and maintenance focused on the comprehensive assessment and IPE development. RSB initiated Rehabilitation Teacher job specific and competency based training in FFY 13 via the RT Focus Group and a cooperative agreement with the Nebraska Center for the Blind.

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This provides additional enhancement of the fundamental skills of blindness necessary to achieve and maintain successful employment via hands on training.

In FFY 2013, RSB in partnership with the Helen Keller National Center conducted a statewide needs assessment and analysis to enhance services and employment outcomes to deaf-blind clients. RSB continues to monitor and emphasize the data points of percent of new applicants who are unemployed at application and use of low incident placement strategies such as supported employment to enhance services and employment outcomes to deaf-blind clients through increased use of the supported employment program. RSB entered into a cooperative agreement and provided staff training with Missouri Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to jointly serve deaf-blind clients.

RSB met this goal in 2015. The new WIOA performance accountability measures have made this goal specific to past standards and indicators obsolete and will not be continued. However, RSB will continue to provide the high quality services and staff training that helped achieve this goal.

Goal 3: Develop a strategy to evaluate the specified competencies that are incorporated into the Counselor Academy and MI training designed to amplify professional development.

Baseline Data: Annual review of service records resulted in 89.3% of service records reviewed were satisfactory in section III timeliness, 58.6% of service records reviewed were satisfactory in section I eligibility, and 65% of service records reviewed were satisfactory in section II assessment.

Strategies:

1. Partner with the Technical Assistance and Continuing Education (TACE) Program to insure competencies have been carefully identified and verified.

2. Partner with the TACE program to identify the criteria to be used in assessing achievement of the identified competencies and the conditions under which achievement will be assessed and methodology to implement the evaluation.

3. Utilize the assessment of competencies to maintain skill set.

In FFY 2013, RSB worked with TACE to complete the MI training and developed 12 competencies and a self-assessment tool to maintain the acquired skill set for all vocational counseling staff and district supervisors. Site visits were made to all district offices following the MI training to evaluate the use of Motivational Interviewing and gather staff perspectives and suggestions.

The baseline data for this goal is derived from internal case reviews based on our interpretation of whether the record reflects a strict interpretation of compliance with a combination of RSB policies and procedures beyond the minimal requirements of federal standards.

The intention, continuation and success of the goals and strategies were based on continuing the partnership with the TACE program in the assessment and maintenance of the skill set. These activities were not complete prior to the TACE centers being discontinued. These goals and strategies have been updated to be consistent with the new requirements under WIOA. However, RSB will continue to utilize the skills learned and provide the higher quality services gained from the training activities.

Goal 4: Develop a Transition Services best practice resource guide for District Supervisors and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors, to be completed FFY 2015.

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Strategies:

1. **Create a diverse work group consisting of state level, front line and client representatives. The goal of the work group is to evaluate the current efforts against best practices and evidence based practices and available resources to assess the strengths and the improvements needed regarding transition services for blind and visually impaired to promote the involvement of stakeholder when planning and implementing services to provide successful transitions to employment, learning and independent living. The work group must assess the strengths and the improvements needed regarding transition services for blind and severely visually impaired.**

2. **Train District Supervisors and Counselors in the best practices resource guide and provision of transition services.**

In 2013 a workgroup was created consisting of front line, supervisory and administrative staff to begin reviewing current policy, process and procedures and to begin identifying outside professionals and client representatives to serve on the committee. The work group made significant progress in evaluating processes and updating training information. A training presentation was created that outlined VR transition services, emphasizing coordination with local educational authorities and how VR transition services should coordinate with and compliment, but not replace, services provided under IDEA. In 2013 and 2014 the training was widely presented to district office staff, to the SRC and a public forum, at the Children's Vision Summit, and the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired.

The passage of WIOA and changes to transition services contained therein immediately made a significant amount of the work, training and success of this group obsolete. This group is evaluating the new requirements for youth with disabilities and students with disabilities and incorporating the emphasis on PETS services into the training curriculum and guide. The group is currently functioning with limited information based on WIOA language and expects progress to accelerate once final federal regulations and further guidance is received. The goal has been modified to meet the new requirements.

(2) An evaluation of the extent to which the Supported Employment program goals described in the Supported Employment Supplement for the most recent program year were achieved. The evaluation must:
(A) Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
(B) Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

See Goal 2 above.

(3) The VR program's performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA.

The performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA have not yet been negotiated or measured. The performance indicators below were in effect during the most recent fiscal year.

Standard 1.1: The number of individuals exiting the VR program who achieved an employment outcome during the current performance period compared to the number of individuals who exit the VR program after achieving an employment outcome during the previous performance period. The required performance level is performance in the current period must equal or exceed performance in the previous period. Based on the two

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year aggregate FFY 2015/2014 Indicator 1.1 was 543 employment closures compared to 541 employment closures for previous reporting period (2014/2013) and 540 closures for 2013/2012 reporting period.

Standard 1.2: Of all individuals who exit the VR program after receiving services, the percentage who are determined to have achieved an employment outcome (rehabilitation rate). The required performance level for agencies that serve the blind and visually impaired is 68.9%. The rehabilitation rate for the FFY 2015/2014 reporting period was 72.2%. RSB has been relatively consistent in performance on the percentage of those who exit the program after receiving services with employment outcomes. This percentage is well above the previous blind agency average and national average. This result may be, in part, due to a high number of job retention cases, where the first vocational rehabilitation strategy is to salvage an existing job with appropriate VR services and a persistence in efforts to provide services leading to an employment outcome. Non-competitive employment outcomes, homemaker, continue to represent less than 12% of the total employment outcomes.

Standard 1.3: Of all individuals determined to have achieved an employment outcome, the percentage who exit the VR program in competitive, self- or business enterprise program (BEP) employment with earning equivalent to at least the minimum wage. The required performance level for agencies that serve the blind and visually impaired is 35.4 percent. For the reporting period of the two year aggregate of FFY 2015/2014 RSB attained a performance level of 88.6%. Competitive employment closures for the two year aggregate period is 86.0% of the total for this reporting period, compared to 91.1% for last reporting period. This is reflective of the efforts given to work with clients toward achievement of their vocational goals during a difficult economic climate. Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) has had employment outcomes as a priority for many years and has become part of the agency's culture and is reflected in the employment closures or production numbers. RSB understands the importance of and has supported the chosen vocational goal and employment outcome of unpaid homemaker. New WIOA requirements and proposed regulations eliminate uncompensated employment outcomes, including homemakers, from the scope of the definition for purposes of the VR program. The decrease in the performance level is reflective of an increase in homemaker closures prior to the implementation of the new regulations.

RSB continues to place emphasis on competitive integrated employment outcomes.

Standard 1.4: Of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self- or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the percentage who are individuals with significant disabilities. The required performance level for agencies that serve blind and visually impaired is 89.0 %. For the current reporting period of the aggregate FFY 2015/2014, RSB's performance level is 98.1% of the individuals who exited the program with competitive employment outcomes reported a significant disability. RSB has been consistent over the years focusing efforts on serving individuals with significant and most significant disabilities.

Standard 1.5: The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self- or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage as a ratio to the state's average hourly earnings for all individuals in the state who are employed (as derived from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' report "State Average Annual Pay" for the most recent available year). The required performance level for agencies that serve blind and visually impaired is the ratio .59. The average hourly wage for FFY 2013 and FFY 2014 for individuals exiting the VR program in competitive employment earning at least minimum wage was $14.15. For FFY 2014 and 2015 the average wage was $14.80. As a ratio to the state's average hourly earnings for all individuals, RSB's performance level is .680 for FFY 2014 and .70 for FFY 2015. Individuals who attain successful competitive employment with earning above minimum wage after receiving services from RSB have consistently earned better than blind agency average and national VR agency average.

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Standard 1.6: Of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive employment, self- or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the difference between the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of economic support at the time they exit the VR program and the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of support at the time they apply for VR services. The required performance level for agencies serving individuals who are blind and visually impaired is a difference of 30.4.

During the previous reporting period FFY 2014, RSB's performance level was 30%. For the reporting period FFY 2015, the percentage of individuals reporting their own income as the single largest source of support at the time of application was 45.7%. The percentage of individuals reporting their own income as the largest single source of economic support at the time they exit the VR program was 81.9%. The difference is 36.2%, exceeding the minimum required performance level. In FFY 2015, 50.88% of new applicants were referred due to changes in the circumstances of their employment such that they required VR services to address substantial impediments to performing the essential duties of their job. It is not uncommon for businesses to undergo significant changes to maintain a competitive edge in today's economy and require concomitant competencies from their employees. Much of the adaptive techniques, accommodations, and compensatory skills used by blind and visually impaired are job specific and when changes are made in those specific aspects of the essential job duties, new adaptive equipment, techniques and compensatory skills are needed to meet those challenges. Visual disabilities are often progressive in nature and as individuals lose more vision their needs change significantly to meet employment demands and/or needs to support their employment.

Standard 2.1: The service rate for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds as a ratio to the service rate for all individuals with disabilities from nonminority backgrounds. The required performance level for all agencies is the ratio level of .80 with a minimum of at least 100 individuals from minority backgrounds exiting the program after receiving services. In the previous reporting period (based on a single year of data) FFY 2014, the ratio of minority service rate to non-minority service rate was .84, with 150 individuals representing minorities exiting the VR program. In reporting period FFY 2015, the minority service rate is .87, with 136 individuals representing minorities exiting the VR program. RSB continues to be vigilant in reaching out to individuals representing minorities and knowledgeable regarding cultural factors that amplify or attenuate the vocational rehabilitation process.

(4) How the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized.

In FFY 2015 RSB supported innovation and expansion activities by providing funding for the State Rehabilitation Council and Statewide Independent Living Council. Funding provided was necessary and sufficient for the Councils to carry out their functions, including members travel, supplies, and meeting expenses.

(q) Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services. Include the following:

(1) The quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

(2) The timing of transition to extended services.

Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) offers assessment, job development, task analysis, and time-limited individual and group job coaching leading to supported employment through 12 formal contracts with supported employment service providers. Other services available to clients with a goal of supported employment are the same as those available to clients receiving services under Title I. The supported

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employment program ensures that individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities, are afforded a full opportunity to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in, or re-enter competitive integrated employment, including supported or customized employment. Extended services may be provided to youth with the most significant disabilities for a period not to exceed four years.

Supported employment services are available not only to individuals after leaving their secondary education program, but to students whose IEP and IPE include these services as part of their transition plan and whose school district signs a cooperative work experience program agreement with RSB.

RSB provides supported employment services in accordance with the RSB supported employment service policy and procedures consistent with federal requirements. These guidelines call for case review by Central Office personnel if a client is not ready for transition to extended services after nine months of job coaching. Authorization for additional job coaching may be issued upon Central Office approval of continuation of these services. RSB understands that time limited services may, under special circumstances, be provided up to 24 months or longer as agreed to on the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

Transition to extended services occurs at the point job stabilization is reached. RSB defines "job stabilization" as follows: 1) employer satisfaction with productivity and social and work behaviors; 2) co-worker acceptance of the individual; 3) completion of training, adjustment and fading activities of the job coach; 4) IPE objectives have been met; and 5) the individual is suitably employed in competitive integrated employment and is satisfied with the job.

RSB provides ongoing technical assistance on issues of blindness, employer marketing, and adaptive technology to SESPs as requested.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:	
1.	The Family Services Division is authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by WIOA,[23] and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act[24];
2.	As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the Family Services Division agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan[25], the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations[26], policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the

[23] Public Law 113-128.

[24] Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

[25] 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 .

[26] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3485; and the State VR Services Program regulations.

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	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 agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan[27], the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations[28], policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;**
4.	**The designated State agency and/or the designated State unit has the authority under State law to perform the functions of the State regarding the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement;**
5.	**The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement.**
6.	**All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law.**
7.	**The Director, Family Support Division 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 Director, Family Support Division 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 of the Rehabilitation Services Administration

[27] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[28] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 6.

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(RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:

The State Plan must provide assurances that:	
1.	**Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.**
2.	**Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement*:* The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 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) the establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable (Option A or B must be selected):** **(A) is an independent State commission.** **(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council.** **(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. the non-Federal share, as described in 34 CFR 361.60.** **(d) the local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds, (Yes/No)** **(e) the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act . Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs, (Yes/No)** **(f) statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section**

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	101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? (Yes/No) See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan. **(g) the descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11), (24)(B), and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.** **(h) all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act .** **(i) the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.** **(j) 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.** **(k) 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.** **(l) 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)(D) 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 in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act? (Yes/No)** **(d) comply with all required available comparable services and benefits, determined to be available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act and.** **(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 review, 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, as required by section 101(a)(14)of the Rehabilitation 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**

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	circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs
5.	**Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement*:*** **(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.	**(a) Financial Administration*:* The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act.** **(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.	**(a) Provision of Supported Employment Services*:* 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:** **i. the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act** **ii. an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act , which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.**

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VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Program— and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program.[29] If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the "common planning elements" in Sections II and III of this document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program. The requirements that a State must address for any of the Combined State Plan partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan are available in a separate supplemental document, *Supplement to the Workforce and Innovation Act (WIOA) Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements*. The Departments are not seeking comments on these program-specific requirements, which exist under separate OMB control numbers.

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[29] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING (SNAP E &T) and WORK PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED UNDER SECTIONS 6(d)(4) and 6 6(o) OF THE FOOD AND NUTRITION ACT OF 2008

(OMB Control Number: 0584-0083)

(a) *General Requirements*[30]: *The State agency must prepare and submit an Employment and Training (E&T) Plan to its appropriate Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Regional Office. The E&T Plan must be available for public inspection at the State agency headquarters. A State agency may include its plan for the SNAP E&T program in a Combined Plan under WIOA but will require FNS approval prior to implementation and must continue to make a copy of the plan available for public inspection. If a State includes SNAP E&T in a Combined Plan under WIOA, the State agency will detail the following for each year covered by the Combined Plan:*

SNAP, which is referred to as Food Stamps in Missouri, will keep the combined state plan at the Missouri Department of Social Service Family Support Division's main office: 615 Howerton Court; Jefferson City, Missouri 65102. This plan is and will continue to be available for review upon request.

(1) The nature of the E&T components the State agency plans to offer and the reasons for such components, including cost information. The methodology for State agency reimbursement for education components must be specifically addressed;

Missouri's Employment and Training Program is referred to as the Missouri Employment and Training Program (METP). Customers will be assessed by the Division of Workforce Development (DWD) upon entry into METP. In addition, the University of Missouri (MU) will offer intensive case management services as well as other components to current clientele and other referrals based on need.

Assignment into components does not follow a prescribed sequence. Components are sequenced in such a way that they build upon one another in preparing the participant for new or enhanced employment. Even though METP provides financial support to meet the service components and decrease a participant's dependence on Food Stamp benefits, the DWD and MU will routinely connect participants to a variety of community partners as needed as part of their individualized case management approach. As of December 14, 2015, MU will work with new customers when referred by the WDB. Existing customers will be maintained by MU per the above components.

METP offers the following program components:

1) **Staff assisted job search**
2) **Non-staff assisted job search**
3) **Job search training**
4) **Work-Based Learning**
5) **Vocational training**
6) **Education**
7) **Entrepreneurial Training**
8) **Unsubsidized Employment**

1) Staff Assisted Job Search

This job search may be routinely offered based on need. This component should be appropriately paired with other components based on the participant's need. However, it is understood that in certain

[30] 7 CFR § 273.7(c)(6).

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instances this may be the right path for the participant as a stand-alone component when this component is offered through DWD/WIOA. For MU, this component can only count toward one-half of the required hours for ABAWDs.

2) **Non-Staff Assisted Job Search**
This requires participants to make a pre–determined number of inquiries to prospective employers over a specified period of time based on employer availability an individual need. The search may be designed so that the participant conducts his/her job search independently or within a group setting. This component should be appropriately paired with other components based on the participant's need. However, it is understood that in certain instances this may be the right path for the participant as a stand-alone component. Job search not completed on-line can only be used for half of the required hours. In addition, job search offered through MU can only count toward one-half of the required hours for ABAWDs.

3) **Job Search Training**
This component strives to enhance the job readiness of participants by providing instruction in job seeking techniques and increasing motivation and self– confidence. This may consist of job skills assessments, job finding clubs, job placement services, or other direct training or support activities. The job search training component may combine job search activities with other training and support activities.

4) **Work-Based Learning**
This component is a work experience component designed to improve the employability of participants through actual work experience and/or training and to enable them to move into regular employment. Work experience assignments may not replace the employment of a regularly employed individual. Participants in on-the-job training or individuals employed in programs and activities under this title shall be provided benefits and working conditions at the same level and to the same extent as other trainees or employees working a similar length of time and doing the same type of work. It is permissible to place METP participants in work experience positions with public and private sector entities. This may include, but is not limited to On-the-Job Training paid through Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) or non-FNS funds and subsidized employment paid through non-FNS funds.

5) **Vocational Training**
This component improves the employability of participants by providing training in a skill or trade allowing the participant to move directly into employment.

6) **Education**
This component is an educational program or activities to improve basic skills and increase employability. Such programs include Adult Basic Education (ABE), basic literacy, English as a Second Language (ESL), HiSET, and post– secondary education. The purpose of post-secondary education is academic and the curriculum is designed primarily for students who are beyond the compulsory age for high school. Only educational components that establish a direct link to job–readiness can be approved. Federal E&T funds cannot take the place of nonfederal (i.e., State, local) funds for existing educational services. Federal financial participation for operating education components may be authorized only for costs that exceed the normal cost of services provided to persons not participating in METP.

7) **Entrepreneurial Training**
This component improves the employability of participants by providing training in setting up and operating a small business or other self–employment venture.

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8) **Unsubsidized Employment**
This component is work with earnings provided by an employer who does not receive a subsidy for the creation and maintenance of the employment position. Self-employment activities include individuals who have earned income.

100% Funds: Cost Per Component

Public Consulting Group (PCG) completed a time study for the FSD in October 2015 in order to calculate the cost per component in which the DWD and MU may reasonably expense for each service deliverable. The FSD used the time study completed by PCG to determine cost per component for both DWD and MU.

To determine the cost per component and service (intensive case management and in-kind work) for the DWD, the FSD multiplied the hours given from the time study multiplied by the average state wage and added 10% for indirect costs. The FSD took the average state wage for DWD staff instead of the Kansas City rates to account for state variances.

To determine the cost per component for MU, the FSD multiplied the hours by the actual cost provided. This was done as this information was provided by MU and the total salary with indirect costs was taken into consideration.

Below is the cost per component or service:

JOB CENTER

COST PER TYPE

	Component/Service	Average Hours	Average Statewide Fringe	Average Statewide Salary	Indirect Rate	Total Cost Per Component
1	WIOA Career Service	1.75	$9	$19	10%	$37.02
2	Staff Assisted Job Search	4	$9	$19	10%	$84.62
3	Non-Staff Assisted Job Search	2	$9	$19	10%	$42.31
4	Job Search Training	2.75	$9	$19	10%	$58.17
5	Work-Based Learning (Average of Salaries)	7	$9	$19	10%	$148.08
6	Vocational Training	2	$9	$19	10%	$42.31
7	Education	7.25	$9	$19	10%	$153.37
8	Entrepreneurial Training	1	$9	$19	10%	$21.15
9	Unsubsidized Employment (Average of Salaries)	5.25	$9	$19	10%	$111.06

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COST PER TYPE

	Component/Service	Average Hours	Average Statewide Salary	Total Cost Per Component
6	Vocational Training	2	$49	$98.00
7	Education	7.25	$49	$355.25
8	Entrepreneurial Training	1	$49	$49.00
9	Unsubsidized Employment (Average of Salaries)	5.25	$49	$257.25
10	Intensive Case Management (All state total cost)	10.5	$49	$515.00

DWD and MU will be reimbursed for actual training costs.

(2) An operating budget for the Federal fiscal year with an estimate of the cost of operation for each Federal fiscal year covered by the Combined Plan. Any State agency that requests 50 percent Federal reimbursement for State agency E&T administrative costs, other than for participant reimbursements, must include in its plan, or amendments to its plan, an itemized list of all activities and costs for which those Federal funds will be claimed, including the costs for case management and casework to facilitate the transition from economic dependency to self-sufficiency through work. Costs in excess of the Federal grant will be allowed only with the prior approval of FNS and must be adequately documented to assure that they are necessary, reasonable and properly allocated. A State must submit a plan amendment to request budget adjustments at least 30 days prior to planned implementation;

FNS allocated the FSD $1,529,273 in 100% funding and a total of $948,700 in 50% funding to administer METP for FFY2016. The FSD recognizes that half of the 50% funding ($474,350) is cost reimbursement between the FSD and the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS).

A portion of the FFY2016 award was dedicated to MU for the time period of 10/1/2015 to 12/13/2015. MU is approved to spend up to $331,515 in 100% funding and $10,259 in 50% funding to administer the METP during this period. As of December 14, 2015, the FSD will have at least $1,197,758 in 100% funds and $938,441 in 50% funds to award to DWD and MU for services thereafter in FFY2016.

The FSD will not obligate more than awarded in FFY2016 for services provided on and after December 14, 2015, regardless of contractor. Both the DWD and MU will provide METP services as of December 14, 2015. The DWD can bill for up to $1,086,048 in 100% funds and $439,820 in 50% funds whereas MU can bill up to $111,710 in 100% funds and $498,621 in 50% funds.

<u>50%/50% Funds</u>

Supportive services are designed to provide participants who are either engaged in a component with reimbursement for items to assist and individual to ensure successful participation in one or more of the

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program's components. The FSD will continue to follow the FNS guidance for 50% funds per pages 48-49 of the SNAP E&T handbook (http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ET_Toolkit_2013.pdf). Services must be reasonable in cost and necessary for participant success in order to be paid for with 50% METP funds. The DWD and MU are required to follow the guidance offered in the SNAP E&T handbook.

Occasionally, other expenses arise to (1) ensure successful completion of an METP component or (2) as part of job retention services. Any desired expense that could strengthen the METP customer's services are vetted through the FSD and FNS (if needed) before the expenditure occurs. METP volunteers will not have childcare costs as a qualified expense since the FSD has a child care assistance program.

Missouri has chosen to reimburse transportation and work-related expenses incurred by an METP participant. In addition, both MU and DWD can offer intensive case management services.

(3) The categories and types of individuals the State agency intends to exempt from E&T participation, the estimated percentage of work registrants the State agency plans to exempt, and the frequency with which the State agency plans to reevaluate the validity of its exemptions;

The FSD does not have any exemptions for METP participants.

(4) characteristics of the population the State agency intends to place in E&T;

There are 399,843 SNAP households as of August 31, 2015 (comprising 846,970 Missourians) and all household can choose to volunteer. Six hundred and sixty-six (666) people have volunteered for METP services from January 2014 to October 2015.

(5) The estimated number of volunteers the State agency expects to place in E&T;

The FSD anticipates that a minimum of 1,884 Missourians will participate in METP during FFY2016 based on the current funding level. If additional funding becomes available, the FSD anticipates this number to grow.

(6) The geographic areas covered and not covered by the E&T Plan and why, and the type and location of services to be offered;

METP serves any SNAP volunteer residing in the State of Missouri.

(7) The method the State agency uses to count all work registrants as of the first day of the new fiscal year;

The FSD anticipates that there will be 111,499 mandatory work registrants as of October 1, 2015 with an additional 46,245 new work registrants from October 2, 2015 to September 30, 2016. Therefore, the FSD believes there will be 157,744 total work registrants in FFY2016.

(8) The method the State agency uses to report work registrant information on the quarterly Form FNS–583;

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The unduplicated count of individual work registrants directly impacts the estimated number of work registrants. Family Assistance Management Information System (FAMIS), tracks individual work registrants who register more than once during the federal fiscal year. Individual work registrants are counted only one time during the year as opposed to each time they are registered.

(9) The method the State agency uses to prevent work registrants from being counted twice within a Federal fiscal year. If the State agency universally work registers all SNAP applicants, this method must specify how the State agency excludes those exempt from work registration under 7 C.F.R. §273.7(b)(1). If the State agency work registers nonexempt participants whenever a new application is submitted, this method must also specify how the State agency excludes those participants who may have already been registered within the past 12 months as specified under 7 C.F.R. §273.7(a)(1)(i);

See #8.

(10) The organizational relationship between the units responsible for certification and the units operating the E&T components, including units of the Statewide workforce development system, if available. FNS is specifically concerned that the lines of communication be efficient and that noncompliance by the participant be reported to the certification unit within 10 working days after the noncompliance occurs;

The University of Missouri Extension's (MU) Business Development Program is administering the Missouri Employment and Training Program (METP) from January 2014 to December 13, 2015. The FSD will change the primary implementing agency effective December 14, 2015 by entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Division of Workforce Development (DWD) who will subsequently update their MOU with each of the fourteen Workforce Development Boards (WDB) to provide METP services.

METP will continue to assist participants with job searches, job search training, educational services, vocational and technical training and other miscellaneous support services even though the primary implementing agency will be DWD. The Family Support Division (FSD) will maintain a contract with MU to provide intensive case management services as well as other services and components based on the participant's need on at the request of the WDBs.

The FSD believes the transition to DWD will: streamline services with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA); provide more opportunities for volunteers statewide; establish the increased capacity to support able bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD) seeking services to maintain their Food Stamp benefits; and increase the locations participants can be served at from four locations to thirty-two locations.

MU and the DWD will report information regarding training or work requirements at the end of each business day. In addition, there will be primary contacts with FSD, DWD and MU to facilitate communications.

(11) The relationship between the State agency and other organizations it plans to coordinate with for the provision of services, including organizations in the Statewide workforce development system, if available. Copies of contracts must be available for inspection;

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Insert copies of MOU and Contract when done—In progress

(12) The availability, if appropriate, of E&T programs for Indians living on reservations after the State agency has consulted in good faith with appropriate tribal organizations;

N/A

(13) If a conciliation process is planned, the procedures that will be used when an individual fails to comply with an E&T program requirement. Include the length of the conciliation period; and

N/A

(14) The payment rates for child care established in accordance with the Child Care and Development Block Grant provisions of 45 CFR 98.43, and based on local market rate surveys.

N/A

(15) The combined (Federal/State) State agency reimbursement rate for transportation costs and other expenses reasonably necessary and directly related to participation incurred by E&T participants. If the State agency proposes to provide different reimbursement amounts to account for varying levels of expenses, for instance for greater or lesser costs of transportation in different areas of the State, it must include them here.

For DWD, Transportation and Work Related expenses are guided by the Statewide Supportive Service policy; however, local policy can make this more restrictive. For MU, Transportation Related expenses are administered through gas cards and Work Related expenses are based on need. For both agencies, there must be an unmet need and the participant must use these funds/services and be engaged in allowable services or components.

(16) Information about expenses the State agency proposes to reimburse. FNS must be afforded the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed reimbursements before they are implemented.

The FSD will continue to follow the FNS guidance for 50% funds per pages 48-49 of the SNAP E&T handbook (http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ET_Toolkit_2013.pdf). Services must be reasonable in cost and necessary for participant success in order to be paid for with 50% METP funds. The DWD and MU are required to follow the guidance offered in the SNAP E&T handbook.

(b) Able-bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD)[31]: A State agency interested in receiving additional funding for serving able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) subject to the 3-month time limit, in accordance with 7 C.F.R. §273.7(d)(3), must include the following for each Federal fiscal year covered by the Combined Plan under WIOA:

(1) Its pledge to offer a qualifying activity to all at-risk ABAWD applicants and recipients;
(2) Estimated costs of fulfilling its pledge;
(3) A description of management controls in place to meet pledge requirements;

[31] 7 CFR § 273.7(c)(7)

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(4) A discussion of its capacity and ability to serve at-risk ABAWDs;
(5) Information about the size and special needs of its ABAWD population; and
(6) Information about the education, training, and workfare components it will offer to meet the ABAWD work requirement.

The FSD is not a pledge state. However, the FSD is committed to serving ABAWDs during and after FFY2016. As of August 2015, the FSD has identified 6.9% of Missourians receiving SNAP (58,530 individuals) will be identified as ABAWDs effective January 1, 2016. Approximately 3% to 12% of ABAWDs participated in Employment and Training programs when the ABAWD waiver expired in other states. If 5% of the 58,530 ABAWDs chose to participate in approved training and work components, 2,927 Missourians could be served by DWD, MU or FSD. The FSD estimates that 1,464 ABAWDs will be served through METP and 1,463 will bring their documentation of employment and training directly to the FSD.

(c) Optional Workfare[32]: State agencies or other political subdivisions must describe in detail in the plan how the political subdivision, working with the State agency and any other cooperating agencies that may be involved in the program, will fulfill the provisions of 7 C.F.R. §273.7(m). If a State opts to operate an optional workfare program or modify an existing optional workfare program, through a Combined Plan under WIOA, it must provide the following:

(1) State agencies or political subdivisions submitting a workfare plan must submit with the plan an operating budget covering the period from the initiation of the workfare program's implementation schedule to the close of the Federal fiscal year for each year covered by the Combined Plan. In addition, an estimate of the cost for one full year of operation must be submitted together with the workfare plan for each Federal fiscal year covered by the Combined Plan.

N/A

(2) If workfare plans are submitted by more than one political subdivision, each representing the same population (such as a city within a county), FNS will determine which political subdivision will have its plan approved. Under no circumstances will a SNAP recipient be subject to more than one SNAP workfare program. If a political subdivision chooses to operate a workfare program and represents a population which is already, at least in part, subject to a SNAP workfare program administered by another political subdivision, it must establish in its workfare plan how SNAP recipients will not be subject to more than one SNAP workfare program.

N/A

(d) Voluntary Workfare[33]: State agencies and political subdivisions may operate workfare programs whereby participation by SNAP recipients is voluntary. In such a program, the penalties for failure to comply, as provided in 7 C.F.R. §273.7(f), will not apply for noncompliance. The amount of hours to be worked will be negotiated between the

[32] 7 CFR **§ 273.7**(m)
[33] 7 CFR **§ 273.7**(m)(8)

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household and the operating agency, though not to exceed the limits provided under 7 C.F.R. §273.7(m)(5)(ii). In addition, all protections provided under 7 C.F.R. §273.7(m)(6)(i) shall continue to apply. Those State agencies and political subdivisions choosing to operate such a program shall indicate in their workfare plan how their staffing will adapt to anticipated and unanticipated levels of participation for each Federal fiscal year covered by the Combined Plan under WIOA. FNS will not approve plans which do not show that the benefits of the workfare program, in terms of hours worked by participants and reduced SNAP allotments due to successful job attainment, are expected to exceed the costs of such a program. In addition, if FNS finds that an approved voluntary program does not meet this criterion, FNS reserves the right to withdraw approval.

N/A

(e) Comparable Workfare[34]: The State agency or political subdivision must provide a description of its program, including a methodology for ensuring compliance with 7 C.F.R §273.7(m)(9)(ii) for each Federal fiscal year covered by the Combined Plan under WIOA.

N/A

(f) Process[35]: The State agency must submit amendments to the SNAP E&T segment of the Combined Plan for FNS approval at least 30 days prior to the planned implementation in order to receive federal SNAP E&T funding for the activities not covered by the approved Combined Plan.

If the FSD requests to modify the approved METP state plan for FFY2016, it will do so at least 30 days in advance by requesting the modified combined WIOA state plan for FFY2016 or later.

(g) Plan Modifications[36]: If FNS determines that the performance of a State agency with respect to employment and training outcomes is inadequate, FNS may require the State agency to make modifications to the State E&T plan to improve the outcomes.

The FSD will respond to any modifications as requested by FNS in order to improve the outcomes of METP.

Funding Disclaimer: Funds may not be available when SNAP E&T portions of a Combined State Plan under WIOA are approved. FNS's obligation after approving a SNAP E&T plan submitted as part of a Combined State Plan is contingent upon the availability of an appropriation from which payment can be made. Any FNS funding resulting from an approval of a SNAP E&T plan submitted as part of a Combined State Plan is subject to FNS receiving sufficient funds (in the Program Financial Control System for FNS) to fund this and all prior approved SNAP E&T plans submitted as part of a Combined State Plan in their entirety in the time and date order received. Federal reimbursement to States for 50 percent of State administrative expenditures and for participant reimbursements is subject to the above conditions.

[34] 7 CFR **§ 273.7**(m)(9)
[35] 7 CFR § 273.7(c)(8)
[36] 7 U.S.C. 2025(h)(5)(E) as amended by Agricultural Act of 2014 .

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TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES PROGRAM (TANF)

(OMB Control Number: 0970-0145)

States that include TANF in the Combined State Plan must outline how the State will meet the requirements of section 402 of the Social Security Act including how it will:

(a) **Conduct a program designed to serve all political subdivisions in the State (not necessarily in a uniform manner) that provides assistance to needy families with (or expecting) children and provides parents with job preparation, work, and support services to enable them to leave the program, specifically cash assistance, and become self-sufficient (section 402(a)(1)(A)(i) of the Social Security Act).**

The Temporary Assistance cash program shall include requiring an applicant for or recipient of cash assistance to participate in work activities as defined in an individual employment plan.

Parents and needy caretaker relatives will not be referred for work participation services in the following situations:

- **Child only cases;**
- **Parents and needy caretaker relatives who are caring for children under the age of 12 months;**
- **Parents and needy caretaker relatives who are permanently disabled;**
- **Parents and needy caretaker relatives who are 60 years of age or older;**
- **Parents and needy caretaker relatives who are needed in the home to care for a disabled household member; or**
- **Parents and needy caretaker relatives who received 60 months and beginning January 1, 2016 forty-five months Temporary Assistance and are currently extended due to an existing hardship and not employment and training ready.**

(b) Require a parent or caretaker receiving assistance to engage in work (defined by the State) once the State determines the parent or caretaker is ready to engage in work, or once he or she has received 24 months of assistance, whichever is earlier, consistent with the child care exception at 407(e)(2) (section 402(a)(1)(A)(ii) of the Social Security Act)

Unless otherwise exempt or temporarily excluded from participation, a parent or caretaker receiving assistance must engage in work activities when the Family Support Division has determined that he/she is ready to engage in work. The purpose of work participation services is to provide the necessary services and supports to assist Temporary Assistant participants to be successful in obtaining employment that will lead to self-sufficiency.

An individual in a single-parent family with a child age six or older is engaged in work if s/he participates an average of 30 hours per week.

A single custodial parent or caretaker relative with a child under age six is engaged in core work activities if the individual participates in work activities for at least an average of 20 hours per week.

If the individual is a single custodial parent caring for a child under age six and if the individual has demonstrated the inability to work as determined by the Family Support, the Family Support Division

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shall not reduce assistance because of the individual's refusal to engage in required work because of one or more of the following reasons:

1) **Unavailability of appropriate child care within reasonable distance from the individual's home or work site;**
2) **Unavailability or unsuitability of informal child care by a relative or under other arrangements; or**
3) **Unavailability of appropriate and affordable child care arrangements.**

(c) Ensure that parents and caretakers receiving assistance engage in work in accordance with section 407 (section 402(a)(1)(A)(iii) of the Social Security Act). Consistent with the required strategic elements discussed in section II (a)(2) herein, provide a specific analysis of how the State's workforce development activities are addressing employment and training services for parents or caretakers receiving assistance.

Work participation services will include, but are not limited to:

- **Development of service/employability plan;**
- **Job readiness workshop activities;**
- **Skills training;**
- **Job Search assistance;**
- **Vocational skill assessments;**
- **Authorization of work related expenses and/or transportation expenses;**
- **Assistance with locating child care providers;**
- **Job development; and**
- **Development of work experience and transitional job opportunities**

(d) Take such reasonable steps as the State deems necessary to restrict the use and disclosure of information about individuals and families receiving assistance under the program attributable to funds provided by the Federal Government (section 402(a)(1)(A)(iv) of the Social Security Act)

Officers and employees of the state of Missouri are prohibited, except as described below, from disclosing any information obtained by them in the discharge of their official duties relative to the identity of applicants for or recipients of benefits or the contents of any records, files and communication except in proceedings where the eligibility for benefit level of a recipient is called into question. The Family Support Division maintains a monthly report showing name and address of all recipients in each resource center and customer service center of the Family Support Division.

No person, association, firm, corporation, or other agency shall make use of any name or list of names of recipients of cash assistance.

Information can be released for the administration of any Federal or federally assisted program which provides assistance in cash, in-kind, or services directly to individuals on the basis of need.

(e) Establish goals and take action to prevent and reduce out-of-wedlock pregnancies, with special emphasis on teenage pregnancies (section 402(a)(1)(A)(v) of the Social Security Act)

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The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services administer the Abstinence Education Grant Program (AEGP) to support teen pregnancy prevention strategies to reduce out-of-wedlock births. AEGP funds a media campaign that includes Talk with Me radio and television spots to encourage parents to talk with their kids about sex, abstinence, and other healthy decisions.

(f) Conduct a program designed to reach State and local law enforcement officials, the education system, and relevant counseling services, that provides education and training on the problem of statutory rape so that teenage pregnancy prevention programs may be expanded to include men (section 402(a)(1)(A)(vi) of the Social Security Act)

Law enforcement officers in the State of Missouri are mandated to receive 1,000 hours of training regarding sex crimes that includes extensive coverage of statutory rape. Because of their knowledge and training, the Department of Social Services (DSS) encourages the use of law enforcement to educate teen fathers, non-custodial fathers and young males participating in state sponsored or state supported programs. This resource is most beneficial to the programs established to address the reduction of out-of-wedlock births in Missouri that are wide spread throughout the state. This includes, but is not limited to, programs within the education system, Caring Communities, programs within DSS directed toward teens, and other DSS programs such as Child Support.

(g) Implement policies and procedures as necessary to prevent access to assistance provided under the State program funded under this part through any electronic fund transaction in an automated teller machine or point-of-sale device located in a place described in section 408(a)(12), including a plan to ensure that recipients of the assistance have adequate access to their cash assistance (section 402(a)(1)(A)(vii) of the Social Security Act)

Transactions using Temporary Assistance benefits issued by Electronic Benefit Transfer are prohibited in the following locations:

1) **Any liquor store;**
2) **Casino, gambling casino, gaming establishment;**
3) **Retail establishment providing adult-oriented entertainment in which performers disrobe or perform in an unclothed state for entertainment purposes; and**
4) **Any place mainly for or used by adults 18 or older and/or not in the best interest of the child or household.**

Transactions using Temporary Assistance benefits issued by Electronic Benefit Transfer are prohibited for the following items:

1) **Alcoholic beverages;**
2) **Lottery tickets, gambling, bingo;**
3) **Tobacco products;**
4) **Controlled drugs without a valid prescription; and**
5) **Any item mainly for or used by adults 18 or older and/or not in the best interest of the child or household.**

Temporary Assistance Electronic Benefit Transfer transactions are blocked at the locations listed above based upon Merchant Category Codes (MCC) and Terminal ID. The MCC describes the type of business, and for businesses that provide multiple goods and services it reflects the greater percentage of the business. The MCC is assigned by the bank or financial institution that processed the business'

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application to start accepting bankcard payments. Terminal ID's have been identified to block specific ATM's that are placed in prohibited locations. Additional MCCs and Terminal ID's may be added or deleted at any time. The types of transactions blocked include:

1) **Credit or debit card service;**
2) **Automated teller machine;**
3) **Point-of-sale terminals; or**
4) **Any online system for the withdrawal of funds or processing of payment for merchandise or a service.**

Reports and individual transactions are reviewed using Fraud Navigator, a product of the Electronic Benefit Transfer vendor that recognizes patterns for fraud detection.

(h) Ensure that recipients of assistance provided under the State program funded under this part have the ability to use or withdraw assistance with minimal fees or charges, including an opportunity to access assistance with no fee or charges, and are provided information on applicable fees and surcharges that apply to electronic fund transactions involving the assistance, and that such information is made publicly available (section 402(a)(1)(A)(viii) of the Social Security Act)

Temporary Assistance recipients using Electronic Benefit Transfer transactions have access to use or withdraw assistance with minimal fees or charges. Access is available in any store that displays the QUEST Mark, or automated teller machine that displays the Quest Mark, Honor, or Shazam logos. Temporary Assistance Electronic Benefit Transfer transactions are not blocked at any retailer authorized as a vendor by the Food and Nutrition Service. Information regarding accessing benefits with no fees and when fees may apply are provided to each Temporary Assistance applicant and recipient, which includes the following information:

1) **No fee is charged for the first withdrawal at an automated teller machine. There is an $.85 charge for each additional withdrawal;**
2) **No fee is charged for purchases at a point-of-sale terminal. There is an $.85 charge for each cash withdrawal; and**
3) **There may be additional surcharges by the retailer.**

Information regarding accessing Temporary Assistance benefits is publicly available in the form of a brochure at each agency office and on the Internet at

http://dss.mo.gov/fsd/fstamp/pdf/im4ebt.pdf in English and
http://dss.mo.gov/fsd/fstamp/pdf/im4ebt.pdf in Spanish.

The agency will review on a case by case basis any participant report of inability to access their cash assistance due to the restriction of use at these locations.

(i) Indicate whether it intends to treat families moving from another State differently from other families under the program, and if so how (section 402(a)(1)(B)(i) of the Social Security Act)

Families moving into the State from another state will be eligible for assistance in the same manner as any other resident of the State except that the State will not grant assistance for any month for which

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another state pays the family assistance under its Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

(j) Indicate whether it intends to provide assistance to non-citizens, and if so include an overview of the assistance (section 402(a)(1)(B)(ii) of the Social Security Act)

The eligibility requirements for the Temporary Assistance cash program shall include:

- **a) Requiring an applicant for or recipient of cash assistance to participate in work activities as defined in this plan with exclusions as provided;**
- **b) Requiring a recipient of assistance and each dependent child to be:**
  - **1) a resident of the State of Missouri; and**
  - **2) a citizen of the United States; or**
  - **3) a qualified alien defined in 8 United States Code section 1641 residing in the United States for a period of five (5) years on or after August 22, 1996, except as provided in 8 United States Code section 1622(b).**
  - **4) Public Law 111-118 enacted on December 19, 2009 provides that Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrants are eligible for benefits to the same extent and for the same period as refugees pursuant to Section 207 of the Immigrations and Nationality Act. The new legislation supersedes Public Law 110-161 and Public Law 110-181, which granted certain Iraqi and Afghan immigrants special immigrant status under section 101(a)(27) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) effective December 26, 2007 and was time limited. Provided that other eligibility requirements are met, Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrants are eligible for benefits indefinitely.**

(k) Set forth objective criteria for the delivery of benefits and the determination of eligibility and for fair and equitable treatment, including an explanation of how it will provide opportunities for recipients who have been adversely affected to be heard in a State administrative or appeal process (section 402(a)(1)(B)(iii) of the Social Security Act)

If a Temporary Assistance application is not acted upon within thirty calendar days after the filing of the application or is denied in whole or in part, or if any benefits are canceled or modified and concurrently with each reinvestigation, the applicant or program participant shall be notified in writing by the Family Support Division of his/her right to appeal to the Director. However, those program participants receiving the maximum payment allowed by law will not be notified of their right to appeal on the basis of the amount of grant following the completion of a reinvestigation of their case. Procedure for the conduct of the hearings shall be simple, informal, and summary, but the rules of evidence as applied to civil cases in Missouri shall be applied.

Within a reasonable time after the conclusion of a hearing the Director will render a decision, which will include a statement of the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law. A copy of the decision will be sent to the appellant by registered United States mail. A copy will also be mailed to the county Family Support Division office and to any duly authorized representative of the appellant.

There is established the position of state hearing officer within the Division of Legal Services in order to comply with all pertinent federal and state laws and regulations. State hearing officers shall have authority to conduct state level hearings of a pre-determination or appeal nature; they shall serve as direct representatives of the Director. All decisions issued as a result of the hearing so conducted by

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the hearing officers shall be in the name of the Director. Although the hearing officers may be assigned to a certain area, this authority to conduct hearings shall be statewide. The authority of the hearing officers to conduct hearings shall apply to all programs administered by the Director.

(l) Indicate whether the State intends to assist individuals to train for, seek, and maintain employment (Section 402(a)(1)(B)(v) of the Social Security Act)—

(1) providing direct care in a long-term care facility (as such terms are defined under section 1397j of this title); or

(2) in other occupations related to elder care, high-demand occupations, or occupations expected to experience labor shortages as, determined appropriate by the State for which the State identifies an unmet need for service personnel, and, if so, shall include an overview of such assistance.

The Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG) is a 5 year, 15 million dollar grant which will provide training opportunities to low-income individuals, specifically TANF recipients, in the high demand healthcare industry field which would include Certified Nurse Assistant (CAN) or other job classifications that are consistent with the Eldercare Workforce.

(m) Provide for all MOE-funded services the following information: the name of the program benefit or service, and the financial eligibility criteria that families must meet in order to receive that benefit or service. In addition, for TANF MOE-funded services (co-mingled or segregated MOE) describe the program benefit provided to eligible families (SSP services do not have to include a description but the Department of Health and Human Services encourages it) (§263.2(b)(3) & §263.2(c) preamble pages 17826-7)

<u>Basic Assistance</u> – same as Temporary Assistance.

<u>Child Care</u> – Income eligibility for child care exists when the adjusted gross income does not exceed the 138% poverty maximum based on the household size. Temporary Assistance households are automatically eligible for child care. For households who show a need for child care will include a statement to show how Child Care Assistance supports the family's employability plan. If participants are in educational components, they must be attending at least half time as defined by the facility. The participant must make satisfactory progress in the educational component and be able to document this progress. The course of study must be consistent with a reasonable goal as reflected in an individual employment plan. A reasonable goal is one that leads to employment and/or increases the family's self-reliance. Additionally, early childhood programs increase licensed child care slots and provide early learning opportunities for eligible families with children up to the age when the child is eligible to enter kindergarten. These programs include Home Visitation (185% of the federal poverty level), and Early Head Start Programs (185% of the federal poverty level).

<u>Summer Food Service Program:</u> Eligible participants include: children 0 through 18 years of age whose family incomes are less than or equal to 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) helps assure that eligible populations have access to nutritious meals during the summer months. When school is not in session, SFSP provides reimbursement to community agencies offering the required continuum of meals. SFSP contracts with schools and other community-based organizations to sponsor the local programs and provide meals that meet established guidelines. By increasing the nutrient intake of program participants, SFSP reduces their

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risk for health problems and enhances their learning capacities. The program also improves the quality of the summer programs offered in areas of economic need.

<u>Food Bank(s):</u> Eligible participants include families with children 0 through 18 years of age whose family incomes are less than or equal to 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. The Food Banks provide food to emergency food programs, which include local food pantries, soup kitchens, and short-term emergency shelters.

<u>Domestic Violence Crisis Services:</u> Eligible participants include families with children 0 through 18 years of age whose family incomes are less than or equal to 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Services include both shelter and non-residential domestic violence services: meeting the needs of families in a crisis by providing housing, counseling, health supplies, clothing, and related crisis services. All services are less than 120 days in duration.

<u>Homeless Shelters:</u> Eligible participants include families with children 0 through 18 years of age whose family incomes are less than or equal to 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Services include: shelter services for less than 120 days, serving families facing an immediate homelessness crisis.

<u>After-School Programs.</u> Eligible participants include: children 0 through 18 years of age whose family incomes are less than or equal to 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. The general purpose of the Boys & Girls Club is to promote the health, social educational, vocational, and character development of youth. It provides constructive leisure time activities and guidance under trained leadership. Traditionally the Boys & Girls Club focuses on assisting youth from low-income families. Many Boys & Girls Clubs serve youth from other economic levels making certain to include the poorer youth. Boys & Girls Clubs generally are located in low-income areas, where cost of membership is low so that it is within the reach of every youth on an equal basis so the least interested youth will be encouraged to try membership.

<u>Caring Communities – Out of School Support</u>. Eligible participants include: children 0 through 18 years of age whose family incomes are less than or equal to 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. The Local Investment Commission (LINC) is a neighborhood-based community governance body that seeks to provide opportunity and services to low-income families. One of the services LINC provides is support for school and neighborhood services in multiple school districts. LINC operates out-of-school programs in area districts and charter schools, implementing federal 21st Century Community Learning Center grants. LINC provides referrals to the families in its community that are in need of emergency assistance, utility assistance, health services support, and access to food, to agencies and community programs that can provide the appropriate assistance. The Out of School Support provides after-school activities, homework help, and general mentorship to school-age children.

<u>Caring Communities- Community Support:</u> Eligible participants include: children 0 through 18 years of age whose family incomes are less than or equal to 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. The Local Investment Commission (LINC) is a neighborhood-based community governance body that seeks to provide opportunity and services to low-income families. Services include emergency assistance, parental engagement activities, utility assistance, and food assistance.

<u>Community Partnerships – Community Initiatives:</u> The portion of funding serving families claimed for purposes of TANF MOE are those with family income not above 185% of the federal poverty level with

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children less than 18 years of age. Capable Kids and Families (CKF) programs promote early intervention for families who have a child with a developmental delay or disability. Services provided connect families to community resources and focus on children's potential for development. Families feel less isolated, build coping skills, and are able to help their child learn and develop. By participating in this program, parents are able to provide a safe, secure, structured home environment that promotes the family and responsible parenting so that children may be cared for in their own homes. This program meets TANF purpose #1.

Alternatives to Abortion: The portion of funding serving families claimed for purposes of TANF MOE are those with family income not above 185% of the federal poverty level, and only allowable services for TANF funding. The goals of the Alternative to Abortion (A2A) program include: improving pregnancy outcomes by helping women practice sound health-related behaviors; improving child health and development by helping parents provide more responsible and competent care for their children so that children may be cared for in their own homes; and improving families' economic self-sufficiency by helping parents continue their education and find employment which will end their dependence on government benefits. Services are provided to pregnant women and families for up to one year following childbirth. This program meets TANF purpose #1 and #2.

Program Administration: Program administration costs are used to support basic assistance program, which is the same as Temporary Assistance.

Missouri Work Assistance (MWA): The MWA program provides services to families receiving Temporary Assistance (TA) to assist them in engaging in job preparation and work activities. The goal is for families to become independent of the need for cash assistance. Services include the provision of training, education, and employment preparation that will lead to employment within the shortest time possible. An assessment is completed to identify strengths and resources, identify and remove barriers, and prepare and assist them in securing and maintaining employment and self sufficiency.

Utilicare Program: The portion of funding serving families with children under 18 years of age are claimed for purposes of TANF MOE. The Utilicare program helps families with income below 135% of the federal poverty level meet their immediate energy needs. Priority is given to families with disabled household members and children under 5 years of age. The program provides utility assistance to needy families. These families have limited resources for living expenses and may be at risk of termination of utility service and/or eviction. Utilicare helps ensure these children may be cared for in their own homes, providing parents with assistance that will help them to become self-sufficient.

Data Processing: Data processing costs include the cost are used to support basic assistance program, which is the same as Temporary Assistance.

Activities Promoting Responsible Fatherhood:

Character Education: This program is offered to all interested teachers, school personnel, and parents with no income or resource restrictions. This program provides professional development for teachers, school personnel, and parents to enable them to meet Show-Me Standards for schools. By providing a good learning base and promoting and supporting children's learning, teachers, school personnel and parents encourage a delay in sexual activity, raise self-esteem, improve problem-solving and coping abilities, and promote goal setting and career choices.

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<u>Parents as Teachers:</u> This program is available to all parents, regardless of income and/or resources. This program focuses on teaching parents about child development and how to promote learning by their children. It provides activities they can do with their child, and provides resources to the parent not otherwise available. By participating in this program, parents are able to provide a safe, secure, structured home environment that promotes the family and responsible parenting.

<u>Missouri Pre-School Program:</u> This program is available to all pre-school age children, regardless of income and/or resources. This program provides funding for high quality early childcare programs to prepare children to enter school. Having quality early childhood education improves brain development and cognitive capacity in children, as well as improving language skills. This means the child is able to communicate his/her needs better, and the child will feel less frustration. Children will develop improved problem-solving skills and coping strategies. The child(ren) also thrive in a setting that provides safety and security and ensures they enter school ready to learn. Increased education also enhances the chances for healthy outcomes for all children. Active parental involvement is a criterion for the pre-school program, which includes participation in Parents as Teachers program and/or parental advisory committee.

<u>Missouri Customer Service Partnership:</u> Eligible participants are young individual's age 17 – 24 living in their home or a relative's home with family income under 185% FPL. The Departments of Social Services and Economic Development provide career coaching to young people who are aging out of foster care and transitioning into independence in select customer service occupations. The selected occupations are growing and include employers committed to continuous employee learning and development that ensures they are on a career track. These youth are aging out of foster care, are not on a post-secondary or career path, and volunteer for the program. Participants will have/obtain their high school diploma / GED and are ready to earn career-readiness certifications. These jobs teach responsibility, resourcefulness, decisiveness and confidence, while also providing opportunities to learn self-sufficiency. Studies have indicated that educational attainment increases the likelihood that a person will become a supportive member of a two-parent household. Participation in the program decreases the likelihood of dependence on public assistance while preventing and reducing the number of non-marital births for these young adults.

<u>State Park Youth Corps (SPYC):</u> Eligible participants are between the ages of 17 – 24 with family income not above 185% of the federal poverty level. Missouri's Workforce Development Boards in partnership with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Division of State Parks, and the Missouri Department of Economic Development's Division of Workforce Development administers the program that provides Missouri youth the opportunity to work outdoors improving Missouri's state parks and historic sites from May 1 through Dec. 31. SPYC employs eligible Missourians at state parks, historic sites and natural areas across Missouri. Participation in the program decreases the likelihood of dependence on public assistance while preventing and reducing the number of non-marital births for these young adults.

<u>Summer Jobs for Youth:</u> The portion of funding serving youth claimed for purposes of TANF MOE are those with family income not above 185% of the federal poverty level. The youth participating are between the ages of 16 – 24, or are parents of young children themselves. Missouri's Department of Economic Development's Division of Workforce Development in partnership with local businesses and community groups provides jobs for low income youth during summer months. Participation in the program provides work and supportive services so that children can be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives. Participation in the program also decreases the likelihood of dependence on

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public assistance while preventing and reducing the number of non-marital births for these young adults. This program meets TANF purpose #1 and #3.

<u>Access Missouri Scholarship Program:</u> The portion of funding serving students claimed for purposes of TANF MOE are those with family income not above 185% of the federal poverty level. The students are between the ages of 17 – 24, or are parents of any age with children less than 18 years of age. Missouri's Department of Higher Education, Coordinating Board for Higher Education administers this need-based financial assistance award program for low income undergraduate students. Participation in higher education decreases the likelihood of dependence on public assistance by building marketable skills, promoting job preparation, and work, and reduces the number of non-marital births for young adults. This program meets TANF purpose #2 and #3.

<u>Activities Promoting Healthy Marriage:</u> The portion of funding claimed for purposes of TANF MOE are those families served with income not above 185% of the federal poverty level. The activities funded may include: public awareness campaigns on the value of healthy marriages; programs that enhance relationship and parenting skills; marriage preparation programs and counseling; financial planning classes; divorce reduction and conflict resolution programs; providing job training to improve economic stability. Participation in these programs reduces dependence on government assistance by promoting job preparation and work, and encourages the formation and maintenance of two parent families. This program meets TANF purpose #2 and #4.

<u>Activities Promoting Responsible Fatherhood:</u> The portion of funding claimed for purposes of TANF MOE are those families with income not above 185% of the federal poverty level. The activities funded may include: involving fathers in the lives of their children; improving fathers economic stability through subsidized employment; financial counseling and planning; reconnecting with their children when returning home from incarceration; and skill-based parenting education. Participation in these programs reduces dependence on government assistance by promoting job preparation and work, and encourages the formation and maintenance of two parent families. This program meets TANF purpose #2 and #4.

TANF CERTIFICATIONS

States that include TANF in the Combined State Plan must provide a certification by the chief executive officer of that State, that during the fiscal year, the State will:	
1.	Operate a child support enforcement program under the State Plan approved under part D. (section 402(a)(2) of the Social Security Act); (#3)
2.	Operate a foster care and adoption assistance program under the State Plan approved under part E, and that the State will take such actions as are necessary to ensure that children receiving assistance under such part are eligible for medical assistance under the State Plan under title XIX. (section 402(a)(3) of the Social Security Act); (#4)
3.	Specify which State agency or agencies will administer and supervise the program referred to in paragraph (1) for the fiscal year, which shall include assurances that local governments and private sector organizations (section 402(a)(4) of the Social Security Act)— (A) have been consulted regarding the plan and design of welfare services in the State so that services are provided in a manner appropriate to local populations; and

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	(B) have had at least 45 days to submit comments on the plan and the design of such services; (#1 and #2)
4.	Provide each member of an Indian tribe, who is domiciled in the State and is not eligible for assistance under a tribal family assistance plan approved under section 412, with equitable access to assistance under the State program funded under this part attributable to funds provided by the Federal Government. (section 402(a)(5) of the Social Security Act); (#5)
5.	Establish and enforce standards and procedures to ensure against program fraud and abuse, including standards and procedures concerning nepotism, conflicts of interest among individuals responsible for the administration and supervision of the State program, kickbacks, and the use of political patronage. (section 402(a)(6) of the Social Security Act); (#6)
6.	(optional) Establish and Enforcing standards and procedures to (section 402(a)(7) of the Social Security Act).— (i) screen and identify individuals receiving assistance under this part with a history of domestic violence while maintaining the confidentiality of such individuals; (ii) refer such individuals to counseling and supportive services; and (iii) waive, pursuant to a determination of good cause, other program requirements such as time limits (for so long as necessary) for individuals receiving assistance, residency requirements, child support cooperation requirements, and family cap provisions, in cases where compliance with such requirements would make it more difficult for individuals receiving assistance under this part to escape domestic violence or unfairly penalize such individuals who are or have been victimized by such violence, or individuals who are at risk of further domestic violence. (included)

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COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

(OMB Control Number: 0970-0382)

Note: Below is information about the employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) that is included in the WIOA Combined State Plan. The complete CSBG State Plan is submitted directly to the Federal agency that administers that program and is collected under OMB Control Number: 0970-0382.

Where CSBG is included in the Combined State Plan, the State CSBG Lead Agency (as designated by the chief executive of the State under the requirements of section 676(a) of the CSBG Act (42 U.S.C. 9908(a)) will coordinate plans for employment and training activities under CSBG as part of a larger antipoverty and workforce development strategy. As part of the Combined State Plan, the State CSBG Lead Agency must:

(a) Describe how the State and the eligible entities will coordinate the provision of employment and training activities through Statewide and local WIOA workforce development systems; and may

Missouri's nineteen (19) Community Action Agencies (CAA's) provide assistance to individuals, families, and communities to reduce or eradicate poverty. CAA's act as a catalyst for community coordination to bring about changes in their communities and to better the lives of the families they serve on a daily basis. CAA's address the 'whole family' through a strengths based, family development approach to supporting individuals and families attain self-sufficiency which includes:

- **Intake, assessment and referral - individuals are guided through a process to identify their strengths and needs.**
- **Family support and case management services – an intensive one on one relationship to empower individuals and families set goals toward achieving self-sufficiency.**
- **Life skills classes to assist individuals in learning better ways to handle basic living skills, such as budgeting, employment readiness, etc…**
- **Coordination and referral for services to address barriers to achieving self-sufficiency, including: education; transportation; housing; child care; and other issues.**

Several CAA's also have employment and training units within their organizational structure, including Missouri Works Assistance (MWA) programs, Missouri Job Centers (hosted by the CAA, or co-located with the CAA), WIA Youth Employment programs, Adult/Dislocated Worker Services, career preparation, internships, on-the-job training, mentoring, HiSET, and other supportive services. Community Action Agencies collaborate in the governance of the workforce development system by serving on Workforce Development Boards (WDBS), administering employment and training programs, sharing referrals with workforce partners, and coordinating services at the local level.
Missouri's State CSBG office will work collaboratively with other state agency partners and with Community Action Agencies to nurture and extend the existing collaborative partnerships and develop new partnerships to enhance the effectiveness of the workforce system throughout the state.

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(b) Provide examples of innovative employment and training programs and activities conducted by eligible entities or other neighborhood-based organizations as part of a community antipoverty strategy.

In addition to the above noted services offered by Community Action Agencies, the programs listed below were developed in partnership with Community Action, or are CAA programs that employ innovative or collaborative approaches to helping individuals attain self-sufficiency:

Ozarks Small Business Incubator

The Ozarks Small Business Incubator (OzSBI) encourages new business development in their seven county area. OzSBI is a one-stop location created for anyone wanting to start a business or expand an existing enterprise within our Ozark regional boundaries. Every company or individual accepted into the incubator program has the opportunity to receive discounted rent on office space in the downtown West Plains OzSBI facility for up to five years. Clients are also offered many useful perks, additional discounts on a variety of facility services, and most importantly, access to a network of mentors, advisors, and investors. Since opening the doors in 2012, OzSBI has helped 13 tenant businesses and 25 affiliate businesses, helped create over 85 new jobs, hosted 64 business trainings attended by almost 800 people, generated 50 graduates of Operation JumpStart, and completed over 1,000 mentoring hours with our clients.

Microenterprise Initiative

Central Missouri Community Action Agency (CMCA) developed their microenterprise initiative for low-income persons looking to develop small businesses in their eight county service area. CMCA's Microenterprise Initiative loan fund provides borrowers access to capital they might not otherwise be able to access. Classroom training, business planning, one-on-one consultation, group technical assistance, coaching, and post-loan technical assistance are offered to assist the entrepreneur to determine the feasibility of their idea and help them develop plans to get their start-up business off the ground. Funds for the program are provided through donations from Commerce Bank, Bank of Missouri, Callaway Bank, Community Foundation of Central Missouri, USDA-Rural Development, and private individuals.

Individual Development Accounts (IDA)

The SEMO Assets Program through the East Missouri Action Agency (EMAA) is one example of an individual development account (IDA) that helps low-income families save money to be used in one of three ways: for the down payment on a first home; post-secondary education; or to start a small business. Families deposit their savings into local financial institutions, and their savings are matched at a 2 to 1 ratio. Participants must be in the program a minimum of six months, but can remain in the program for the life of the grant program (…in this case, six years). One adult must be working from the household. The family must make deposits monthly into their savings accounts, and they must attend financial literacy programs covering such topics as home ownership, economic education, career guidance, micro-enterprise development, etc… Successful IDA's provide a great 'return on investment' by transforming a small contribution and hard work into a much larger payoff. Participants invest their IDA funds into their local communities, increase their incomes and become more self-sufficient.

Youth Entrepreneurship

The Missouri Alliance for the Development of Entrepreneurship (MADE) sponsors the MADE in Missouri State Entrepreneurship Competition. Participants under the age of nineteen that aspire to start or own their own business enter the youth competition, where they present their ideas to a panel of judges for consideration.

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Participants complete a preliminary round, where judges determine whether the proposed business idea should move into a final round of competition. Participants receive feedback and suggestions on their proposals, and are referred for technical assistance to help them polish their proposal for the final competition. Certificates and business investment awards are given to the top three youth businesses.

Reality Enrichment and Life Lessons (REALL)

The Reality Enrichment and Life Lessons (REALL) project is a simulation designed to challenge youth to think critically about how choices and decisions made in adolescence may have consequences in adulthood. Participating youth are given the life of someone who has made reactive or negative choices (all have dropped out of high school, some have past legal histories, some have low paying jobs, etc). Following this, they are given the life of someone who has made proactive or positive choices (all have graduated from high school and obtained some type of higher education, all are employed at a living wage, all have affordable child care, etc.). Youth are challenged to live those two lives and compare and contrast the experiences to draw conclusions in their own lives. It is the expectation that youth will draw on their experiences at the Reality Enrichment and Life Lessons simulation to make proactive choices in their own lives, so they may know self-sufficiency in adulthood.

The SELF Program (Strengthening, Empowering, Lifting Families)

The Jefferson Franklin Community Action Corporation (JFCAC) developed the SELF program as a six week course to provide education and practical tools to help families make positive changes in their lives and attain self-sufficiency. The target population for this project is low-income families participating in the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8), Head Start Program, and those living in homeless shelters. Families attended the course together once a week. Parents and their children enjoyed a meal together before each session. Childcare was provided by local CASA volunteers while parents attended the sessions. The course included: Setting goals, exploring career paths, budgeting, gaining employment, parenting skills, and importance of nutrition & health. The adults gained skills and knowledge to help lift them from poverty, children benefited from seeing their parents in a positive learning environment, reinforcing the value of education. The local Mayor and Police Chief were guest presenters that offered hope and inspirational stories of their own life struggles.

Bank On, Save Up St. Louis

The Bank-On, Save-UP St. Louis initiative brought together partners from the human services with financial institutions to encourage low-income residents to open bank accounts and become more financially literate. The St. Louis model was modeled after Bank On initiatives in other cities, and is designed to increase access to mainstream financial products and services among low-and-moderate income (LMI) individuals. The Community Development department at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis partnered with the Regional Unbanked Task Force to collect data and report findings on the program.

Social Enterprise

In 2014, Central Missouri Community Action (CMCA) purchased Cafe' Via Roma in Jefferson City as the agency's first social enterprise. One agency goal is to have two MWA participants actively working at the Cafe' at all times. These work assignments begin strictly on a volunteer basis. As participants prove their commitment to the work place opportunity they are moved into a subsidized status and are paid minimum wage for their work through the MWA program. Participants can be subsidized up to 240 hours with the goal of moving into a

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permanent paid position with the Cafe' or another employment opportunity within the community using their transferable skills gained through the work experience.

Participants learn the restaurant business including how to use the equipment, running a Point of Sale system, developing menus, designing new menus, opening and closing duties and customer service. The ultimate goal of the Cafe' is to move people through the system quickly so they can find jobs that can pay higher salaries and provide more opportunities to grow.

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CERTIFICATIONS

The State will operate a program to provide Temporary Assistance for needy families so that the children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives; to end dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage; to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies; and encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

This program is known as Temporary Assistance.

In administering and operating a program which provides Temporary Assistance for families with minor children under title IV-A of the Social Security Act, the State will:

1. Specify which State agency or agencies will administer and supervise the program under part A in all political subdivisions of the state:

   Department of Social Services is the agency responsible for administering the program;

2. Assure that local governments and private sector organizations:

   a) Have been consulted regarding the plan and design of welfare services in the State so that services are provided in a manner appropriate to local populations; and

   b) Have had at least 45 days to submit comments on the plan and the design of such services;

3. Operate a Child Support Enforcement program under the State plan approved under part D;

4. Operate a Foster Care and Adoption Assistance program in accordance with part E, and certify that the State will take all necessary actions to ensure that children receiving assistance are eligible for medical assistance;

5. Provide each member of an Indian tribe, who is domiciled in the State and is not eligible for assistance under a Tribal Family Assistance plan approved under Section 412, with equitable access to assistance under the State program funded under this part attributable to funds provided by the Federal Government;

6. Establish and enforce standards and procedures to ensure against program fraud and abuse, including standards and procedures concerning nepotism, conflicts of interest among individuals responsible for the administration and supervision of the State program, kickbacks, and the use of political patronage; and

7. Make available to the public a summary of the State plan.

OPTIONAL CERTIFICATION

[X] The State has established and is enforcing standards and procedures to:

1) Screen and identify individuals receiving assistance under this part with a history of domestic violence while maintaining the confidentiality of such individuals;

2) Refer such individuals to counseling and supportive services; and

3) Waive, pursuant to a determination of good cause, other program requirements such as time limits (for as long as necessary) for individuals receiving assistance, residency requirements, child support cooperation requirements, and family cap provisions, in case where compliance with such requirements would make it more difficult for individuals receiving assistance under this part to escape domestic violence or unfairly penalize such individuals who are or have been victimized by such violence, or individuals who are at risk of further domestic violence.

CERTIFIED BY THE DESIGNEE FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

12/18/14
Date

Brian Kinkade, Designee

AVAILABILITY OF STATE PLAN SUMMARY

Missouri recognizes September 22, 2014 as the begin date of a 45 day comment period. Copies of the State Plan have been distributed to the following entities:

Mr. Patrick Luebbering, Director
Missouri Division of Finance and Administrative Services
Mr. Joel Anderson, Director
Missouri Division of Legal Services
Mr. Joel Ferber, Director of Advocacy
Legal Services of Eastern Missouri, Health and Welfare
Mr. Douglas B. Kays, Executive Director
Legal Services of Southern Missouri
Mr. Gregg Lombardi, Executive Director
Legal Aid of Western Missouri
Ms. Susan Lutton, Executive Director
Mid-Missouri Legal Services Corporation
Ms. Elain West, Executive Director
Missouri Association for Community Action
Ms. Sara Vanderfeltz
Federal Assistance Clearinghouse

It is the intention of the state to continue to seek input from local governments and private sector organizations regarding the plan and design of Temporary Assistance services on an on-going basis. Posters and flyers have been produced to inform the public of changes in the Temporary Assistance program. A copy of the state plan is posted on the Department of Social Services website and is being distributed to Missouri's Family Support resource centers, customer service centers, and local offices for public access.

PRA BURDENS TABLE

OMB Control Number	Topic	Estimated Total Burden	Citation for Requirement to Respond
Common Form Elements			
1205-0NEW	Common Requirements and Program-Specific requirements for: The Adult Program, the Dislocated Worker Program, the Youth Program, the Wagner-Peyser Act Program, the Adult Education and Literacy Program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Program	3,268 hours	WIOA sec. 102 and 103
1205-0NEW	Two Special Combined State Plan Questions: Section I of document "WIOA State Plan Type" and Section IV of document "Coordination."	10 hours	WIOA sec. 102(b)(2)(C)(viii)
Supplemental Collections for Combined Plan Partners' Program-Specific Elements			
1830-0029	Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-270) State Plan Guide	2,240 hours	Sections 122(a)(1) and 201(c) of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Act), 20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq. as amended by P.L. 109-270, and WIOA sec. 103
0970-0145	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) State Plan Guidance	594 hours	42 U.S.C. 602, and WIOA sec. 103
0584-0083	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Operating Guidelines, Forms, and Waivers, Program and Budget Summary Statement	1431 hours[37]	7 CFR 271-274.1, and WIOA sec. 103
1205-0NEW	Trade Adjustment Assistance	50 hours	WIOA sec. 103
1225-0086	Grant Application Requirements for the Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program	1620 hours	38 U.S.C. § 4102A(c) , and WIOA sec. 103.
1205-0132	Unemployment Insurance State Quality Service Plan Planning and Reporting Guidelines	1530 hours	29 CFR 97.40 ET Handbook No. 336 18th Edition, and WIOA sec. 103.
1205-0040	Senior Community Service Employment Program Performance Measurement System	406 hours	20 CFR Part 641, and WIOA sec. 103
1205-0NEW	HUD Employment and Training Activities	tbd[38]	, and WIOA sec. 103
0970-0382	Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Model Plan Applications	112 hours[39]	Section 676(b) of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9908(b)), and WIOA sec. 103.
1205-0NEW	Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program	40 hours	WIOA sec. 103

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[37] This number represents estimated average burden for the portion of the SNAP plan that covers programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 only.
[38] This number represents estimated average burden for the portion of HUD program plans that cover employment and training activities only.
[39] This number represents estimated average burden for the portion of the CSBG plan that covers employment and training activities only.

Appendix 1: Performance Goals for the Core Programs

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.

	Projected Baseline	PY 2016 / FY 2017			PY 2017 / FY 2018		
		Proposed	Negotiated	Proposed Final Change in Performance	Proposed	Negotiated	Proposed Final Change in Performance
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)							
Adults		70%			72%		
Dislocated Workers		70%			71%		
Youth		60%			60%		
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education	52%	52%			53%		
Rehabilitative Services	51.9%	50%			51%		
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)							
Adults		64%			65%		
Dislocated Workers		66%			66%		
Youth		66%			66%		
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education	53%	53%			54%		
Rehabilitative Services	49.73%	48%			49%		
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit							
Adults		$4454			$4458		
Dislocated Workers		$5036			$5042		
Youth		$3123			$3132		
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education	$3100	$3100			$3100		
Rehabilitative Services	$2856	$2500			$2600		
Credential Attainment Rate							
Adults		39%			39%		

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Dislocated Workers		34%			34%		
Youth		83%			84%		
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education	40%	40%			41%		
Rehabilitative Services	28.04%	28%			29%		
Measureable Skill Gains							
Adults							
Dislocated Workers							
Youth							
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education	63%	63%			63%		
Rehabilitative Services	25.3%	25%			26%		
Effectiveness in Serving Employers							
Adults							
Dislocated Workers							
Youth							
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education	TBD	TBD			TBD		
Rehabilitative Services		50%			51%		
Combined Federal Partner Measures							
1							
2							
3							
etc.							
State / Governor Education and Workforce Measures							
1							
2							
3							
etc.							

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