KANSASWORKS STATE BOARD

AGENDA

Wednesday, February 10, 2021

9:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Microsoft Teams Meeting
Click here to join the meeting
Or call in (audio only)
+1 785-414-8630,,579334059#
Phone Conference ID: 579 334 059#

I. Welcome, Call to Order and Introductions: David Harwood, Chair

II. Public Comment Period

III. Chair Report: David Harwood

IV. Consent Agenda: David Harwood
a. November 4, 2020 KWSB Meeting Minutes
Recommended Action: Approve consent agenda as presented.

V. 2021-2023 Draft Strategic Plan Update: David Harwood

KWSB Team Leads, Goal Area Updates:
Virtual Services – Dan Decker
Upskilling – Neelima Parasker
Kansas One – Darrell Pankratz

VI. Legislative Update: David Soffer, Legislative & Policy Director, Kansas Department of Commerce

VII. Employment First Oversight Commission's 2020 Annual Report: Rocky Nichols, EFOC Chair And Steve Geiber

VIII. Title IV (VR), Dan Decker, Director of Rehabilitation Services

IX. Labor Market Report: Emilie Doerksen, Labor Economist, Kansas Department of Labor

X. Upcoming KWSB Meetings:
May 19, 2021
August 4, 2021
November 3, 2021

XI. Adjournment

KANSASWORKS STATE BOARD

DRAFT MINUTES/MOTIONS

Wednesday, November 4, 2020
8:30 AM – 9:00 AM
MS Teams Meeting

David Harwood, **KANSAS**WORKS State Board Chair

Consent Agenda and Actions Approved as Follows:

Consent Agenda:
a. November 4, 2020 KWSB Meeting Minutes
Darrell Pankratz moved to approve, Neelima Parasker seconded, motion passed.

KWSB Meeting Adjourned – 8:55 AM
Darrell Pankratz moved to approve, Dan Decker seconded, motion passed.

DRAFT

NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION

WORKFORCE UPDATE | January 25, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Let me start by wishing you all a Happy New Year! With 2020 now officially behind us, it is important that we look forward and move forward. 2020 taught us many lessons, lessons we are still learning. Through these valuable lessons comes growth, and through growth comes change. I am confident that with these changes, we will see major shifts and strategic opportunities in the workforce development world in 2021.

I would like to congratulate President Biden and Vice President Harris on a historic inauguration and peaceful transition of power. I look forward to working with the new administration to prioritize workforce development so that all Minnesotans have equitable opportunities and to ensure our businesses have a skilled workforce to strengthen our economic recovery.

Here in Minnesota, we have seen a major shift in the health care workforce. The pandemic has thrust the importance of a skilled health care workforce into the spotlight. Dedicated health care workers have saved thousands of lives, while sacrificing and working shift after shift. For years, we have seen an upward trend in the health care job market, and despite the setbacks that COVID may have caused for some, the industry is still projected to grow.

In dedication and honor of our health care workers, our Governor, Tim Walz, has **proclaimed January as Health Care Month**. In MN, health care is the largest workforce by sector, employing nearly 500,000 people. Between 2018-2028, the sector is anticipated to grow an additional 16.5 percent. To meet this demand, the team at CareerForce MN has been **highlighting the transferrable skills** needed for a healthcare job with a series of virtual events.

As we bring people back to work, closing the unemployment gap, and upskill our existing workforce, to adapt to changes brought about by the pandemic, we are going to be looking for new opportunities that enable employers' greater access to a skilled workforce through competency-based, learn-and-earn training models. We will want to work closely with our local partners to find opportunities to scale these efforts and build on our

state's strategic vision as a unified workforce development system. The challenge is how we market these opportunities to job seekers, so they see the value in lifelong learning and quality employment opportunities.

I am grateful for every day that I get to work and partner with each of you and build innovative workforce solutions that will impact generations to come.

This month we have the **KANSAS**WORKS Workforce Development Board Chair, David Harwood as a guest contributor to tell us about what is happening in the great state of Kansas to help businesses and workers be resilient and competitive through the pandemic.

Please continue to remain strong and safe as we lead our workforce and economic recovery efforts.

In gratitude for your partnership and friendship.
Laura

Laura Beeth
Chair, National Association of State Workforce Board Chairs
Chair, Minnesota Governors Workforce Development Board
Vice President, Talent Acquisition M Health Fairview

Chairs' Corner State Highlight: Kansas

Kansas saw unprecedented economic development success in 2020, even in the face of a pandemic. But challenges were significant, with the fallout of COVID-19 creating problems for workforce development unlike any other in recent memory.

KANSASWORKS didn't waste any time in seeking ways to continue connecting prospective employees with employers statewide. Creativity and innovation were instrumental in keeping Kansas working.

Kansas has a diverse range of communities, including many smaller, rural towns. These places need

workforce assistance, just as in bigger cities, but they don't have the resources of full-time workforce centers within their communities. With this in mind, the newest member of the Mobile Workforce Center fleet was unveiled in January 2020.

The newest Mobile Workforce Center allows **KANSAS**WORKS to provide services in regions of the state that lack permanent Workforce Centers or face unusually high demand for workforce assistance. The mobile center includes six internet-ready computer stations to assist job seekers and employers, along with appropriate staff resources based on event volume, all while providing ADA-compliant access in a comfortable and convenient setting.

For the start of 2020, the Mobile Workforce Center was an effective solution to help people in the smallest towns in Kansas find assistance entering the workforce. However, as time went on and the pandemic gained momentum, the public health crisis could not be ignored. In-person workforce assistance had become too dangerous, and our workforce team needed to find another solution. To maintain their responsibility to the Kansas workforce, the **KANSAS**WORKS Statewide Board made the decision to move operations almost entirely online.

This presented a unique challenge: Kansas workforce services didn't have the infrastructure for immediate online function. In incredibly little time, the team created and launched a new series of online services to promote workforce services across the state. In perfect timing, as a part of the **KANSAS**WORKS State Board Strategic Plan, **KANSAS**WORKS had launched a Live Chat feature on **KANSAS**WORKS.com in January 2020 – a critical tool during the pandemic.

Since its launch, the Live Chat function has assisted with 9,949 chats. So far, some 90 percent of chat customers have reported that they were satisfied with the outcome of their session – even at a time of intense difficulties and uncertainty. That positive result was a credit to the **KANSAS**WORKS team's commitment and dedication to answering questions and directing people to the proper resources. The chat function continues to assist with a myriad of workforce questions, including assistance with uploading resumes, locating workforce centers, creating job openings/job orders, applying for jobs and more.

In total, **KANSAS**WORKS.com has been a major asset to Kansas job seekers during the pandemic – with more than 992,000 individual interactions on the site in 2020. Of those visiting the site, more than 70,000 customers were served, along with 9,500 employees.

Continuing the move to online connectivity as a primary means of workforce service delivery, the Job Search Mobile App was launched. In 2020, the app was downloaded nearly 3,000 times, with more than 15,000 unique visits to the app.

A resource specifically tailored to Kansas veterans -- the new *KanVet.org* website – was launched in July 2020. The site provides direct access to State of Kansas veteran-specific resources and benefits without the need to navigate multiple state agency websites. Resources available to veterans on the site include employment resources, veteran and family assistance, education resources and mental health support.

Another significant development in 2020 was the ability to host Virtual Job Fairs. Historically, **KANSAS**WORKS has hosted a series of in-person job fairs across the state, with several different fairs happening at the same time in different counties. However, due to public health concerns, the Statewide Job Fair system also was moved entirely online – which ultimately has allowed these events to be more accessible

for job seekers and employers.

During 2020, five statewide virtual job fairs were hosted by **KANSAS**WORKS, with more than 400 employers setting up booths on the virtual fair platform. An average of 185 employers participated in the five virtual monthly events, with more than 4,000 job seekers registered since May 2020.

Another important 2020 update to the Kansas workforce system was addition of several new Registered Apprenticeship programs.

Peaslee Tech in Lawrence started a Registered Apprenticeship program with one occupation working with one business. As of today, Peaslee Tech has nine registered occupations serving several employers with a total of 89 registered apprentices.

Crossland Construction in Columbus, Kansas, lowered its turnover rate and increased the caliber of new, qualified employees through the Registered Apprenticeship program. And Garden City's school district employed Registered Elementary Teacher Apprenticeship to help paraprofessionals obtain teaching certificates, when they otherwise may not have had the opportunity. At the end of 2020, 24 apprentices were enrolled in the school district's Elementary Teacher Apprenticeship.

During the latter half of 2020, under Governor Kelly's Leadership, the **KANSAS**WORKS State Board has started a new strategic planning process that will include three primary areas of focus. These include virtual services, up-skilling and one Kansas Workforce System.

The past year delivered extreme challenges on many fronts. Thanks to the creativity and dedication of the **KANSAS**WORKS team, Kansans can rely on consistent, quality service during such trying times.

David Harwood
Chair, KANSASWORKS State Board
Senior Vice President of Terracon Consultants

Kansas Employment First Oversight Commission
2020 Recommendations to the Governor and
Members of the Kansas Legislature

The Kansas Employment First Oversight Commission was created by the same state law that requires competitive and integrated employment to be the first option when serving people with disabilities (KSA 44-1136 to 44-1138, also called the Employment First Initiative Act).

Under this law, the focus of the Commission is on making recommendations to increase the number of Kansans with disabilities in competitive integrated employment. The Commission issues an annual report making recommendations to the Governor, Legislature and state agencies on strategies to increase the number of Kansans with disabilities in competitive integrated employment.

Kansas Employment First Oversight Commission

2020 Report & Recommendations

The Kansas Employment First Oversight Commission was established as part of the Employment First Initiative Act in 2011 and amended in 2013 (K.S.A. 44-1136 et seq., as amended). The law establishes Employment First as the official policy of the State of Kansas. The purpose is to increase the number of Kansas residents with disabilities employed in competitive and integrated settings. All state agencies, their programs, and services must ensure that competitive and integrated employment is the **first** option when serving people with disabilities.

As part of the law, the Kansas Legislature established a seven-member "oversight" commission. Unfortunately, the term "oversight" is merely in the Commission's title. The Commission does not currently have any "oversight" function regarding implementation of the Employment First law. See our recommendations to fix this problem.

Three Sections of the Commission's 2021 Report:

- **Section #1 – Top Four Recommendations for 2021 – These are the Commission's Top Four 2021 Priorities for the Legislature & Governor.**

- **Section #2 – Master Compilation of the First 10 years of Commission Recommendations (2011-2020) – The Commission additionally fully supports these recommendations and strongly encourages implementation by the Legislature and Governor.**

- **Section #3 – Reports from Key State Agencies Regarding Progress Towards the Employment First law, The First 10 years – These are narrative reports submitted directly by State Agencies regarding any progress towards implementation of the law.**

Section #1 – Top Four Recommendations of the Employment First Oversight Commission for 2021.

Below are the Commission's Top 4 Recommendations. Additionally, the Commission supports all of the recommendations detailed in this report, including both this Section and Section #2 (Master Compilation of the First 10 years of Commission Recommendations, 2011-2020).

1. **Provide the Employment First Oversight Commission proper "oversight" functions by either tweaking the existing law or having the Governor create an Executive Order. Both will better ensure oversight, accountability, and transparency.**
   - Kansas was the first State in the nation to pass an Employment First law in 2011. Since then, nearly 40 states have followed Kansas' lead. Unfortunately, even after 10 long years, the promise of Employment First has still not become an everyday reality in Kansas. "Oversight" is in the title of the Commission. However, there are no actual oversight functions provided to the Commission.
     - This lack of oversight has prevented effective implementation of the Kansas Legislature's 2011 Employment First law. Fewer Kansans with disabilities are obtaining competitive integrated employment, and taxpayers are footing the bill.
     - When Kansans with disabilities obtain competitive integrated employment, they are less reliant on expensive government programs, they pay more taxes, and are more independent.
   - Create an Office of Employment First within the Governor's Office based on the Colorado model, ensuring Employment First is a top priority. This Office would also staff the Employment First Commission to help ensure appropriate oversight. Currently, both Legislative leaders and the Governor appoint the members of the Commission. This should continue.
     - Assign to the Office of Employment First the study topic of how Kansas can best craft a certification process for individuals who provide employment supports and services (job coaches, job developers, employees of Vocational Rehabilitation contractors,

etc.). Several states do this now (South Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Iowa, etc.).

- As part of this, Kansas would have to ensure adequate employment support provider rates are provided to enable this certification.

2. **Focus on local, private sector solutions to help many more Kansans with disabilities obtain competitive integrated employment and fix the broken Supportive Employment HCBS Medicaid Waiver rate.** The current rate makes it nearly impossible for the private sector to deliver on the promise of Employment First for Kansans with disabilities. These steps will fix this:

- Incentivize the Supported Employment rate for the private sector in order to get individuals with disabilities jobs in competitive integrated settings, which reduces reliance on government programs.
- Kansas has the lowest Supported Employment reimbursement rate in the nation at an abysmal $12 per hour (source: Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities).
- There are many Paths to Fix this Problem in a Cost Neutral Manner:
  - Kansas already spends between $10,000 and $28,000 per person, per year on Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) day services , depending on the individual's Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver Tier rate. If Kansas caps its Supported Employment rate by setting an acceptable rate and then allows private sector providers to bill up to the same annual amounts charged by HCBS Waiver day services or sheltered workshops, that would allow the flexibility to obtain jobs for Kansans with disabilities. Capping the overall cost and maintaining flexibility for the private-sector providers are paramount. This will also prevent the need for additional management or interventions by Managed Care Organizations (MCO). Over the long-term, this change would easily be cost-neutral and would most likely save substantial taxpayer dollars.
  - The State is also examining setting the Supported Employment rate at approximately the same rate as Vocational Rehabilitation Services. This would also be a positive step in the right direction.

- Nationally, States that have adopted a Supported Employment model, like we are proposing, spend on average only around $7,000 to $10,000 per year on such services. Kansas is already spending between $10,000 to $28,000 per year on HCBS day services, proving this is at the very least cost neutral and will most likely save money.

3. **Support private sector solutions by dramatically increasing benefits planning services, which will dispel myths, get Kansans with disabilities employed in competitive integrated jobs, and reduce reliance on other expensive government programs.** The proposals below, which change some aspect of Medicaid, have the added benefit that they will reduce costs for Kansas taxpayers by ensuring the federal government will pay for at least 60% of any Medicaid costs. Over time, the reduced reliance on government programs brought about by benefits planning will also pay for these initiatives. The following are various options to accomplish this goal:
    - Support private sector capacity by, at a minimum, making benefits planning an HCBS Medicaid Waiver service for all Kansans with disabilities who want to work and are served by HCBS programs. Those receiving HCBS Waiver services have the most severe disabilities. They often experience the most significant barriers to competitive integrated employment. Investing in benefits planning for these individuals also can save the most taxpayer dollars, because those on HCBS Waiver services often utilize more government supports to accommodate their significant disabilities. Additionally, because Kansas does not have an adult mental health Medicaid Waiver program, this proposal includes a component to serve those not served by a Waiver program who have Severely Persistently Mentally Illness – SPMI.
    - Include benefits planning in the per member, per month rate for Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) for KanCare (which is Kansas' Medicaid program). This private-sector solution would enable MCOs to subcontract with other private sector Kansas employers with highly-trained benefits planning specialists under Kansas' Medicaid program.
    - Make benefits planning a Kansas State Plan Medicaid service, which would allow all Kansans who receive Medicaid (not just those enrolled in

HCBS Waiver programs) to receive benefits planning from the private sector entity of their choice.

- If the State of Kansas wanted more direct control over the provision of these services, benefits planning could be an administrative match Medicaid service where the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) would employ additional numbers of highly trained benefits planners to dispel myths and help Kansans navigate the tricky topic of benefits and employment. Although this last option is not a private sector response, the current benefits planners at KDHE do awe-inspiring work. The problem is there are nowhere near enough staff to fill the need – there are only six KDHE benefits planning counselors for 105 counties and tens of thousands of Kansans who need their services.
    - Along with the above solutions to increase access to benefits specialists, Kansas needs to have every person-centered plan or other employment support plan include a goal and specific strategies to support the person with a disability to obtain competitive integrated employment, including providing benefits planning.
    - One of the largest barriers to disability employment is that people with disabilities do not understand how employment can make them more independent. All of the above options to increase access to benefits planners will dispel myths, increase employment for Kansans with disabilities, and reduce taxpayers' costs in the long run.
        - 76.4% of Kansans with disabilities receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) mistakenly believe if they earn income from a job that they will have less money in the end or they “will never come out ahead” (source: ESC Coalition survey of 1,700 Kansans with disabilities and their families). Both those myths are entirely wrong and they prevent Kansans with disabilities from obtaining employment, which would reduce dependence on programs. These myths can be dispelled by effective benefits planning services. In fact, Kansans

with disabilities will have more money in the end if they have a job while receiving SSI or SSDI.

4. **Make Collaboration Across State Agencies and Disability Stakeholder Engagement on Employment First a Top Goal for State Agencies Serving Kansans with Disabilities.** Action steps include:
    - Bring in a nationally known consultant on disability employment to improve competitive integrated employment of Kansans with disabilities.
        - Federal dollars may be available to cover most, if not all, of these costs. The federal Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) has funded the State of Kansas for these exact types of initiatives numerous times.
        - Ensure that the chosen consultant has experience working with states and disability providers to make the shift to competitive integrated employment.
        - There are minimal (if any) up-front cost due to federal grants. In the long run, it will save much more money by speeding up the shift to Employment First, which will save taxpayer dollars, promote independence, and reduce reliance on government programs.
    - Make significant improvements in collaboration across agencies and with disability stakeholders – starting with the implementation of the Employment First law.
        - Under the prior Administration, as part of this interagency collaboration, the Disability Subcabinet and decision makers from the highest levels of state government were engaged in this process. Achieving Cabinet-level buy-in is critical to improving the employment outcomes for Kansans with disabilities
            - Previously this initiative was called the Disability Subcabinet and the Disability Employment Working Group. Whatever the Administration of Governor Laura Kelly calls it, this interagency collaboration and stakeholder engagement are absolutely needed to make

the promise of the Employment First law an everyday reality in Kansas.

- The Commission is encouraged that Laura Howard, who is both the Secretary of the Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) and the Secretary of the Department for Children and Families (DCF), has pledged to the Commission that she will work on this cross agency and disability stakeholder engagement in the upcoming year, with the first assignment being better delivery on the promise of the Employment First law.
    - Additionally, the Commission would note that such a collaboration effort could be further coordinated under the Kansas Office of Employment First (if it is established).

Section #2 – Employment First Oversight Commission Recommendations – Master Compilation of the first 10 years of Commission Recommendations (2011-2020).

The Employment First Oversight Commission fully supports each of these recommendations detailed below. We strongly encourage the Governor and Kansas Legislature to implement them.

How to Read the Recommendations Below in this Master Compilation: Most of the 17 enumerated recommendations below were actually recommended multiple times over the past ten years by the Commission. You can tell what year(s) the recommendation was made by the year(s) listed in parenthesis. A year that is listed in **bold type** means that the exact report language from that year is used verbatim in this compilation document. Listed after each enumerated recommendation are additional "supporting" recommendations made by the Commission that support that main recommendation. This compilation document typically only lists one year in which these "supporting" recommendations were made; however, these were typically also recommended multiple times. **A key takeaway is that the Employment First Commission has made many of these recommendations multiple times over the past ten years. Unfortunately, few of these recommendations have been fully implemented. To finally move the needle and deliver on the awesome promise of the Employment First law, the Governor, state agencies, and the Legislature will have to follow-through and implement these recommendations.**

1. ***"The Promise of the Employment First law must become an everyday reality for Kansans with disabilities".*** What is meant by this statement is that every Kansan with a disability has the opportunity to prepare for, pursue, obtain and maintain competitive integrated employment. A central part of all disability employment policy in Kansas should be

incentivizing services and supports towards competitive integrated employment and away from non-competitive, non-integrated employment. (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, **2019**). Additional points that support this recommendation includes:

- To incentivize the Goal of Employment First, the state needs to adjust the way employment and support services are funded to incentivize the outcome of increasing numbers of Kansans with disabilities in quality competitive and integrated employment. **(2014)**
  - The state should coordinate and adjust funding to dramatically increase the numbers of Kansans in integrated and competitive employment **(2014).**
  - Reward vendors that keep people employed in competitive and integrated settings **(2014)**
  - Ensure timely adequate funding in order to obtain effective outcomes
  - Work with stakeholders to change incentives and design a more effective outcomes-based business model, focused on competitive and integrated employment. (**2014,** 2015, 2019)

2. ***Implement Strong & Effective Employment First Policy***. Each state agency will develop a strong and effective policy outlining how it will implement the Employment First law and secure that competitive integrated employment is the first option with all its programs, supports and services (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: **2011**, 2013). Additional points that support this recommendation includes:
   - State agencies will conduct a comprehensive assessment of their policies, procedures, programs and services and obtain input from the disability community on ways to make adjustments and changes to fully implement and integrate Employment First **(2013)**
   - State agencies will have a written policy and plan publically available detailing exactly how they have changed policies, procedures, programs and services to

effectively implement the Employment First policy. Copies of these plans/policies will be provided to the Commission. **(2013)**

- In the examination of normal agency operation and day-to-day programmatic decisions, each state agency will develop specific strategies of how it can better integrate and implement Employment First into its operations, programs and services. When reporting to the Commission their written Employment First plans, state agencies will report how they integrated and implemented Employment First in this regard. (**2013**)

3. ***Collect Comprehensive Data on Employment First***. The state must have a comprehensive data collection system to show improvement in the Employment First requirement (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: 2013, **2014**, 2015, 2019). Additional points that support this recommendation includes:
    - The state must track data specifically detailing the numbers and percentages of Kansans' with disabilities in competitive and integrated employment **(2014)**.
    - Most state agencies are not sufficiently tracking data specifically about the numbers of Kansas with disabilities in competitive and integrated employment. Some examples: **(2014)**
        - KSDE should track the cost of and numbers of students being transitioned to a sheltered workshop or other non-competitive, non-integrated settings. **(2014)**
        - State programs needs to track numbers of people who end up in competitive and integrated employment settings and those who do not. **(2014)**
    - Because Employment First is not an everyday reality, Kansas needs to follow the lead of States such as Ohio by hiring a consultant to assist the state with determining a data plan and conducting a study to measure performance and cost effectiveness of Employment First. **(2014)**

4. ***Prove Measurable Progress on Employment First***. State agencies need to issue a yearly report to the people of Kansas proving measurable progress and full implementation of the Employment First law by detailing specific strategies and changes that the agencies have made at the program, policy, procedure, funding and systemic levels. (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019). Additional points that support this recommendation includes:
    - Employment First Oversight Commission would like to receive a copy of that yearly report and pledges to help the State promote and distribute it to Kansas stakeholders. Doing this is an important step to ensuring that Employment First becomes the everyday reality in Kansas. (2011, **2014**, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019).

5. ***Expand Medicaid*.** That State of Kansas should pass a Medicaid Expansion law that ensures people with disabilities not otherwise eligible for Medicaid can benefit from this needed health care program **(**This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: **2019).** Additional points that support this recommendation includes:
    - Medicaid Expansion can be a potential tool to ensure many people with disabilities access competitive integrated employment. Lack of access to effective healthcare can be a barrier to individuals with disabilities obtaining competitive integrated employment. Additionally, access to effective health care can help direct-care workers continue to work in the disability field, which is important to providing the supports Kansans with disabilities need to obtain or maintain competitive integrated employment. The longer a person with a disability is denied effective health care the less likely they are to ever be employed. (**2019)**
    - An Effective and streamlined Medicaid Expansion Law would help address these underlying issues and better support Kansans with disabilities in obtaining competitive integrated employment. Such a law should contain measures that have been successful in supporting persons with disabilities in other states and should not contain requests for waivers or exemptions that would delay implementation of Medicaid Expansion. (**2019)**

6. ***Improve Transition Services***. The state should ensure better funding and services that support the transition from school to work. (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: 2011, **2014**, 2019)
    - Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) must better assist with job training and development to better ensure that students can transition from school to an adult career that is both competitive and integrated **(2014).** Additional points that support this recommendation includes:
    - KRS needs to ensure that its transition services are robust and ensure active engagement by KRS, starting at age 14, based on meeting specific benchmarks **(2014).**
    - Braiding of funding and resources must occur between the school system, KRS and adult long term care services, with the goal of employment before the student exists school **(2014).**
    - KRS fund contractors to work with students in school work programs, like Project SEARCH **(2014).**
    - KSDE needs to work with stakeholders to develop easy to use tools and materials for transition-aged students with disabilities and their parents **(2014).**

7. ***Change Rates to Incentivize Employment First***. The current system is insufficient to obtain effective outcomes. Rates need to incentivize the outcome of competitive, integrated employment (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: **2014,** 2019). Additional points that support this recommendation includes:
    - The current pay for performance rates are not sufficient to pay for the series costs needed to obtain competitive and integrated employment (**2014**, 2019).
    - KRS payments should be more reflective of the costs to achieve each milestone (**2014**, 2019).
    - KRS must make it easier to obtain job coaching (**2014**, 2019).

- KRS needs to better fund and support an in-depth, effective discovery process (**2014**, 2019).

8. ***Increase Benefits Planning.*** Benefits planning should be available to all Kansans with disabilities. (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, **2019**). Additional points that support this recommendation includes:
    - There are currently fewer than 10 certified benefits planners for 105 counties, which is nowhere near sufficient. There are at least 110,000 potential customers of benefits planning who are SSI of SSDI recipients. (**2019)**
    - To empower these Kansans to pursue meaningful employment, Kansas must greatly expand benefits planning services by making benefits planning a Medicaid state plan service and fund and embed many more benefits planners in regional DCF and other state agencies (**2019)**
    - KSDE needs to increase the number of benefits planners to at least two for each Kansas workforce area, and direct them to work with both active and non-active job seekers. (**2014**)
    - KDHE and KDADS need to create both policy and procedural safeguards to ensure that when services are provided to members with disabilities that they cover basic benefits planning and ensure certified benefits planning to all members who want it. (**2014**)
    - KRS, through the VR program, needs to ensure benefits counseling is part of the employment plan for all customers seeking employment and make benefits counseling a requirement within all fee-for-service and contract employment services. (**2014**)
    - The Department of Commerce needs to ensure all its KANSASWORKS employment counselors stress the importance of effective benefits counseling. (**2014**)
    - The State of Kansas should reinvest 50% if the State's share of Medicaid savings due to Managed Care towards reducing HCBS waiting lists in order to better ensure that Kansans with disabilities can obtain competitive and integrated employment. Doing

this will ensure that individuals waiting for HCBS services have the supports they need to be able to choose competitive integrated employment. (**2011)**

- Every individual person centered plan and other employment support plans developed by state agency programs, contractors or service providers will include a goal for competitive integrated employment. (**2011)**

9. ***Support Innovation in Employment Services –*** State of Kansas agencies need to aggressively pursue resources to support innovation in employment services to better advance and implement the Employment First initiative (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, **2019**). Additional points that support this recommendation includes:
    - The state of Kansas needs to apply for a 1915i State Plan Option to provide employment services, focused on competitive and integrated employment, for persons with disabilities not otherwise eligible for the 1915c HCBS Waiver. (**2019**)
    - Build on to the Successful WORK program. There should be an examination of whether the WORK program requirement could be adjusted so that a person with a disability who meets the SSI definition of disability and is employed could still qualify for and receive services from this program. If this is possible, then this policy should change (2011, **2014,** 2015).
    - State agencies will promote the use of the Working Healthy Program, which allows for participants to buy into Medicaid on a sliding scale based on earnings. (**2011)**
    - Make Project Search more successful- KSDE should make adjustments to allow rural communities to benefit more from Project SEARCH. (**2014**)
        - Project Search is an education and employment skills program for high school youth and adults with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities in their last year of high school eligibility, or are currently eligible for day services at a participating provider. (**2015**)
        - Kansas currently has 12 Project SEARCH sites in 10 different communities, including 2 adult sites. Project Search is currently in its fourth year of

implementation in Kansas with technical support funded by the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities. (**2015**)

10. ***Create Systems Change to Enable Employment First –*** the Commission recommends state government embrace an effective systems change planning process regarding Employment First, where disability stakeholders are key partners in driving positive changes (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: **2015**, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019). Additional points that support this recommendation includes:
    - The state must do this by adopting policies and a specific plan to support disability stakeholders to adapt to many changes. These changes include, but are not limited to: WIOA (Workforce Investment Opportunity Act), the Final Settings HCBS Rule, Medicaid, other programmatic guidance, closing sheltered workshops, elimination/phase out of the use of subminimum wage by several states (including but not limited to Alaska, Maryland, New Hampshire, Oregon, Nevada) **(2019).**
    - It is important that as these changes take shape that this does not result in simply moving more Kansans with disabilities to congregate day services. The state must closely follow the Employment First mandate and ensure that competitive integrated employment is truly the first and preferred option for all Kansans with disabilities **(2019).**

11. ***Implement HCBS Final Setting Rule in Compliance with Employment First Law –*** the state must implement the HCBS Final Setting Rule in a manner that ensures settings are truly the most integrated. To the Commission the most integrated employment settings are those that comply with the Employment First Law regarding competitive integrated employment (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: 2015, 2017, 2018, **2019**). Additional points that support this recommendation includes:
    - When Kansas implements federal policy changes (HCBS Final Settings Rules, etc.), it needs to ensure that it looks at and adheres to the Kansas Employment First Law as an additional requirement and overlay to these federal requirements. (**2019**)

12. ***Kansas should become a model employer of people with disabilities*** (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: 2014, **2019**). Additional points that support this recommendation includes:
    - State agencies should establish a baseline of how many people with disabilities Kansas currently employs and establish goals to increase those numbers across all departments of state government. (**2019**).
    - The current application process for state employment is a barrier to employment for many Kansans, especially those with disabilities. Kansas should remove the barriers in its recruitment and application process to ensure it is universally accessible to all Kansans, including those with disabilities (**2019**).
    - The commission recommends that the Governor implement the existing Governor's Executive Order 15-02, providing a preference to employ Kansans with disabilities within state government **(2019).**
        - There is existing training and technical assistance provided by the US Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy showing employers how they can implement such hiring preferences (**2019**).
        - States that have a commitment to training and technical assistance regarding the delivery of quality employment services obtain better outcomes. Kansas needs to establish a formal mechanism for statewide training and technical assistance on implementation of Employment First and quality employment. This is an important component that has been demonstrated to result in better outcomes by other states, such as Washington (**2014**).

13. ***Engage Stakeholders & Rebuild Relationships*** – The state of Kansas needs to rebuild its relationships with disability stakeholders (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, **2019**). Additional points that support this recommendation includes:

- The term disability stakeholders includes but is not limited to: Kansans with disabilities, disability advocates, self-advocates, providers, parents/family members. (**2019)**
- When the state shifted to a managed care system for the provision of Medicaid services, it shifted it engagement and focus away from the disability stakeholders and towards the managed care corporations. The state of Kansas must actively repair these relationships through intensive and effective engagement. (**2019)**
    - The recommendation is to ensure that the conversation and engagement is robust and that it includes all stakeholders. (**2019)**
- The Commission recommends that the State bring in a national expert to engage disability stakeholders and develop reimbursement rates that incentivize the desired outcomes of competitive integrated employment, including but not limited to addressing the crisis with the lack of utilization with Supported Employment rates on the Intellectual/Developmental Disability HCBS Waiver. (**2019)**
- The Commission recommends that all HCBS Waivers and disability specific services contain an option for employment services and supports necessary to obtain competitive integrated employment. (**2019)**

14. ***Busting Myths*** – The survey results from the Employment Systems Change Coalition report provide specific data and details of how the vast majority of Kansans with disabilities fundamentally misunderstand working and how it impacts their benefits (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, **2019**).
    - The state should closely examine feedback from stakeholders and its state agencies concerning the many pervasive myths regarding working and keeping one's benefits. The state must bust these myths. (**2019**)
    - Survey results show that nearly 80% of Kansans with disabilities and their decision-makers wrongly believe the incorrect myths that either: 1) they will "never come out ahead" when their paycheck is combined with their SSI of SSDI check, 2) they will

lose their entire disability check and benefits if they work at all, regardless of the number of hours they work. (**2019**)

- There are many myths about ABLE accounts, misunderstandings regarding saving money through these accounts and how it impacts disability benefits. (**2019**)
- There is a myth that people in congregate work settings are somehow safer than competitive integrated employment. (**2019**)
    - Collectively these myths are rampant and they are a huge barrier to Kansans with disabilities engaging in competitive integrated employment. (**2019**)
- The state needs to work with stakeholders to develop universally accessible materials to address these myths and educate Kansans about the many opportunities to engage in competitive integrated employment and how they can work and maintain needed services and supports. (**2019**)
    - Example: a Kansans can even be working full time and access Working Healthy and the WORK program to maintain needed services and supports that empower them to be gainfully employed. (**2019**)

15. ***Engage and Support Businesses*** – The State needs to make the business case for employing people with disabilities in competitive and integrated settings, including the following: (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: **2014,** 2015, 2019). Additional points that support this recommendation includes:
    - Approaching business's about employing people with disabilities with a proposition on the value they will bring, not an appeal to their corporate responsibility (**2014)**
    - Anticipating questions from businesses about their concerns for employing people with disabilities. (**2014)**
    - Develop materials for employers to answer these questions (**2014)**
    - Continuing support for the development of local Business Leadership Network (**2014)**
    - Find and engage business to help promote the employment of people with disabilities in competitive and integrated settings (**2014)**

        - The state should find businesses that want to employ people with disabilities and support them with a dedicated state employee who can discuss the benefits of doing so. (**2014)**
        - Develop the appropriate level of expertise and designated staff of state agencies
        - Gather input from employers to determine what Kansas can do to assist with accommodations that empower persons with disabilities to be employed. (**2014)**
    - The state need to support business in employed people with disabilities. (**2014)**
        - Provide one point of contact to interact with business, and encourage that contact to communicate regularly (**2014)**
        - Ensure that people with disabilities have the skills businesses need (**2014)**
        - Provide job coaches when appropriate for individuals who otherwise would not be able to work in an integrated setting (**2014)**
        - Maximize funding sources that support people with disabilities toward job training (example: New Hampshire's revolving sector-based training fund) (**2014)**
    - The state needs to support self-employment for people with disabilities. (**2014)**
        - People with disabilities are twice as likely as people without disabilities to own their own business. The state needs to develop specific strategies to maximize this opportunity. (**2014)**

16. ***Accountability and Gatekeeping –*** To ensure that Employment First consistently occurs, the state should establish proper accountability measures and gate keeping to help ensure that competitive and integrated employment is truly the first options (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission report: 2014). Additional points that support this recommendation includes:
    - Establish gatekeepers to focus on competitive and integrated employment.

- KSDE to offer technical assistance detailing that schools that only fund placements or supports in competitive and integrated setting will be in compliance with Employment First. (**2014**)

17. ***Form Interagency Agreements*** – State agencies will enter into formal interagency agreements to successfully implement, support and track the Employment First policy and the goals and objectives established by the Commission. (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: **2011**, 2012, 2016, 2017, 2018, **2019).** Additional points that support this recommendation includes:
    - State agencies should obtain stakeholder input specifically to identify issues, gaps and coordination issues where an interagency agreement would prove helpful towards implementation of Employment First. State agencies present a summary of this information to the Commission. (**2011**)
    - Formal interagency agreements are in place between agencies involved with employment services or supports to outline cross-agency implementation issues, such as shared services delivery, service coordination and data sharing across all systems. At a minimum these interagency agreements should include the agencies that operate the following programs: Special Education, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, HCBS Waivers serving individuals who are employment age, Workforce Services, mental health, TANF, and others that may apply. (**2011,** 2016)
    - The Governor must ensure the Secretaries and leaders of all state agencies take a leadership role in successfully implementing the Employment First Mandate. **(2019**)
    - Because K-12 education is under the purview of the State Board of Education, there should be effective engagement between the leadership of state cabinet-level agencies and the leadership of the Kansas State Department of Education/ State Board of Education. **(2019**)
    - The Kansas Board of Regents needs to be engaged with this process given their key role in preparing Kansans for employment. **(2019**)

Section #3 – Reports from Key State Agencies Regarding Progress Towards the Employment First law, The First 10 years

Below are the narrative reports submitted directly to the Employment First Oversight Commission by State Agencies regarding any progress the agencies believe they have made towards implementation of the law. The reports below have not been edited or changed by the Commission. The State Agencies note what they believe to be their progress under some of the different "goals" established by the Commissions. The "goals" are detailed in Section 2 of this report (Master Compilation of the first 10 years of Commission Recommendations). Although State Agencies are clearly doing some things regarding Employment First, the promise of Employment First has never become an everyday reality in Kansas. Kansas State Government must build on the activities below and ensure the 2011 Employment First law is finally, fully, and effectively implemented in all of its programs, services, and funding.

Report from the Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services (KDADS)

Goal 2. Implement Strong & Effective Employment First Policy

KDADS has a provision in its Intellectual/Developmental Disability (I/DD) Crisis Exception policy which provides for an exception for persons transitioning from Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) which require ongoing support to maintain employment and self-sufficiency.

KDADS also provides a safety net for persons in the Working Healthy/Work Program to transition between Waiver and WORK Services seamlessly. This is designed to encourage participation in the WORK Program without out concern for what happens if a person loses their employment. They can also easily transition onto the Work Program from a Waiver Program.

KDADS will continue to review policies to increase employment opportunities.

Goal 3. Collect Comprehensive Data on Employment First

KDADS reviewed our data collection and reporting methodologies for our State of the State reports and Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) National Survey of State I/DD Agencies; Employment and Day Services for I/DD Services. We reviewed our data to show how many waiver participants utilized the Supported Employment Code and those diagnosed with I/DD that Rehabilitation showed as being competitively employed. These numbers were reviewed with the I/DD Council staff.

Goal 7. Change Rates to Incentivize Employment First

KDADS is currently working on a model to incentivize employment in the I/DD System.

We are in the early stages of this process but have made provision to significantly increase the rate for Supported Employment should funding be approved. We will be rolling this plan out to stakeholders for review in the new year.

Goal 9. Support Innovation in Employment Services

As stated above KDADS is looking at an I/DD Employment model that will incentivize Supported Employment. Additionally, KDADS serves on the KDHE Employment Pilot to assist 500 persons obtain and maintain employment.

Goal 11. Implement Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Final Setting Rule in Compliance with Employment First Law –

KDADS has worked to implement the Final Settings Rule. To date we have completed the provider self-assessment desk review and are currently in the remediation process for Providers to come into compliance with the Final Settings Rule. KDADS will work with the Commission to braid Employment First goals into our State Transition Plan. KDADS looks forward to working with the Commission for input on the Final Settings Rule.

Goal 13. Engage Stakeholders & Rebuild Relationships

KDADS has engaged stakeholders regularly regarding waiver renewals, amendments and initiatives always promoting the most integrated settings for supports and services for persons with disabilities.

Report from the Kansas State Department of Education

Goal 1. Improve Transition Services

The state should ensure better funding and services that support the transition from school to work. (This recommendation appeared in the following Commission reports: 2011, **2014**, 2019)

Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) must better assist with job training and development to better ensure that students can transition from school to an adult career that is both competitive and integrated **(2014).**

2019: KSDE and KRS are in the process of revising the MOU for transition. It is anticipated that the MOU will be signed off in 2021. Revisions have been made to better reflect Pre-ETS and collaboration between the two agencies.
KRS needs to ensure that its transition services are robust and ensure active engagement by KRS, starting at age 14, based on meeting specific benchmarks **(2014).**

Braiding of funding and resources must occur between the school system, KRS and adult long term care services, with the goal of employment before the student exists school **(2014).**

KRS fund contractors to work with students in school work programs, like Project SEARCH **(2014).**

KSDE needs to work with stakeholders to develop easy to use tools and materials for transition-aged students with disabilities and their parents **(2014).**

2019: KSDE SEAC is finalizing a parent/student guide for transition that will be available for districts to share with parents and students with disabilities before the student turns age 14. The document will be available on the KSDE website along with training on what the guide includes and recommendations on how it can be used. In addition, KSDE created a secondary transition website with relevant resources, including information on Employment First. KSDE is hosting

monthly webinars on transition-related topics and has created a transition listserv to assist with networking and sharing information to stakeholders.

Report from the Department of Commerce – Workforce Services

Goal 6. Improve Transition Services

Goal 10. Create Systems Change to Enable Employment First

Goal 13. Engage Stakeholders & Rebuild Relationships

Commerce staff supported KU Center on Developmental Disabilities' grant proposal through the Administration on Community Living to form the Kansas Self-Determined Transition Taskforce. Upon grant award in late 2020, Commerce became a member of the Steering Committee for the grant and a member of the Task Force. Commerce also participated in completing the efforts of the State Board of Education Employment Workgroup policy recommendations for supporting students transitioning from secondary school to postsecondary education and/or careers. Finally, Commerce continued to staff the Transition Transformers Coalition.

Goal 8. Increase Benefits Planning

In mid-2020, the Commerce Employment Network Coordinator completed coursework and practical experience through the Virginia Commonwealth University to be certified as a Community Partner Work Incentives Counselor. The Commerce Benefits Specialist partners with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment Benefits Specialist to coordinate services and increase the state's capacity to provide work incentive counselling to Kansans.

Goal 15. Engage and Support Businesses

For the program year 2019 (July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020) Commerce programs funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Labor Exchange (Wagner-Peyser), **individuals with disabilities achieved the following outcomes**:

Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth (WIOA Title I) Case Management and education/training services resulting in certifications and/or credentials; employer support and engagement

69.16% of participants achieved employment by the 2nd quarter after exit from their participation

Median (not average) earnings were $4,777.98 for the 2nd quarter after exit
71.7% of participants achieved a measurable skill gain

69.81% achieved an industry-recognized credential or education certification

Labor Exchange (Wagner-Peyser – WIOA Title III) Clearinghouse matching participant job skills with available jobs; includes limited job-readiness skills development; employer engagement

55.9% of participants achieved employment by the 2nd quarter after exit from their participation
Median (not average) earnings were $4,345.89 for the 2nd quarter after exit

<u>Report from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) – Working Healthy Program</u>

Goal 1. The Promise of the Employment First law must become an everyday reality for Kansans with disabilities

KDHE supports innovations developed by Managed Care Organizations to increase the number of Kansans in integrated and competitive employment.

Working Healthy also does this but additionally provides outreach to many individuals, their representatives and state and community partners. This outreach includes information regarding the many benefits of employment including income and the positive impact on social determinants of health.

Goal 2. Implement Strong and Effective Employment First Policy

The current Working Healthy and Work Opportunities Reward Kansans (WORK) programs incentivize competitive and integrated employment for Kansans with disabilities. Competitive and integrated employment is an eligibility policy requirement for enrollment in Working Healthy. Working Healthy participants are required to have earnings at or above the federal minimum wage, to pay FICA or SECA (if self-employed), and not be employed in sheltered workshop settings.

These programs provide opportunities for employment and information through benefits planning. Working Healthy coordinates with other agencies to enhance and support their initiatives.

The new 1115 Employment Support Pilot was written and will be implemented by Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Success of this initiative will be dependent upon the support of other agencies to develop and implement. Partnerships with State Vocational Rehabilitation and Education will be imperative toward assuring successful outcomes for Kansans with disabilities who are interested in pursuing employment. Program policies, processes, rules and regulations will be developed and implemented to offer opportunities as well as track progress of program participants toward competitive and integrated employment. It is hoped that this pilot will demonstrate that competitive and integrated employment will be reached by program participants if they have supports and training available.

Goal 5. Expand Medicaid

KDHE leadership is fully prepared to implement the Medicaid expansion plan when approved by the Kansas Legislature. The benefits of health care access will support many Kansans with disabilities to obtain competitive integrated employment.

Goal 6. Improve Transition Services

KDHE supports the current Working Healthy program and the new employment support pilot. These supports, and services are for members age 16-64 years of age. It is hoped that the new pilot will provide support and training for students to transition to competitive integrated employment instead of waiver services or no employment. It is imperative that KDHE develop and maintain a collaborative

relationship with Vocational Rehabilitation and Education transition services so that these services and supports are successful.

Goals 7. Change Rates to Incentivize Employment First

KDHE has included competitive provider rates within the employment support pilot. It is hoped that these rates will attract quality providers and incentive employment. These rates are included within the 2022 budget proposal to the legislature and are in line with planning approved by Center for Medicaid and Medicare (CMS).

At this time there are no rate increases for current WORK services although the pilot rates may provide support for this need. KDHE would welcome the opportunity to increase rates for this important program but would require an appropriation to do so.

Goal 8. Increase Benefits Planning

KDHE currently has six Working Healthy Benefits Specialists who provide benefits counseling in regional areas across the entire state. Although they are a small group, they are active and well know. The team is well trained, respected, and well known in Kansas. They provide accurate information on how earnings will impact current benefits by breaking down very complex information, so it can be understood. Benefits Specialists provide individualized benefits counseling so that a person can make an informed decision about employment.

KDHE has approved the program to hire two new Working Healthy Benefits Specialists which will give us more capacity to do this important work.

KDHE also works closely with Department of Commerce as they have a Benefits Specialist on staff. This person works closely with our team and we provide whatever support to her that is needed. This additional support from Commerce has allowed us greater capacity for outreach and benefits counseling.

Goal 13. Engage Stakeholders and Rebuild Relationships

KDHE will provide an opportunity to offer Community Support Services as a case management service within the Employment Support Pilot. This case management service was approved in KanCare 2.0 and has not yet been implemented within the waivers. We believe it is a good match for the pilot as it gives case managers the ability to provide a broader range of billable services to the individuals. This service provision offers community agencies the ability to provide service and for state and local disability groups to more clearly hear the voices of people with disabilities in how services are provided, what is needed, and how things should change. It is hoped that implementing this service for the pilot will be successful and may lead to a wider expansion within waivers.

Goal 14. Busting Myths

KDHE's Working Healthy Benefits Specialists are actively encountering and busting myths in their work. Providing benefits counseling to members and their representatives is the best way to demonstrate how earnings will impact their current benefits and that they can earn more, keep more of their earnings, and still maintain needed benefits.

Accurate information about employment of people with disabilities needs to be shared more broadly with educators, medical professionals, and individuals and families through expanded outreach.

Report from the Department for Children and Families – Economic Support

Goal 1. The Promise of Employment First law must become an everyday reality for Kansans with disabilities

Department for Children and Families (DCF) Employment Services (ES) purchases individualized job placement and retention services from numerous providers. They are hired to assist the individual in obtaining and maintaining competitive integrated employment. ES also supports clients in gaining skills and education in high demand occupations, thus increasing their earning potential.

Goal 3. Collect Comprehensive Data on Employment First

DCF ES does track individuals receiving the following valuable services but are generally not countable toward meeting the Federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) work participation rates. The activities identify partners who are working with mutual clients: Alcohol and Other Drug Assessment and Treatment, Disability Employment Services (RS), Mental Health Care, Early Head Start, Head Start, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, and Workforce Investment Opportunity Act. In addition, ES supports clients in the Kansas Health Profession Opportunity Program (KHPOP) and Accelerating Opportunity Kansas (A-OK).

6. Improve Transition Services

DCF ES has been working to identify mutual clients with Kansas Vocational Rehabilitation (also under DCF), especially those transitioning from high school to higher education and/or employment. Discussions continue with Independent Living (under Prevention and Protection Services within DCF) regarding independent youth and those aging out of foster care.
The key to success is early engagement with the youth whether they have a disability or not.

7. Change Rates to Incentivize Employment First

Placement providers with ES have pay for performance agreements. The provider receives $500 to develop an action plan with the individual, $500 at ten days of employment, $500 at 45 days of employment, and $1,000 at 90 days of employment (90 days being consistent with RS successful closure mark). This results in a possible $2,500 paid to the provider. For the individual who's TANF case has closed due to employment, he/she receives a $100 support payment the first month after closure. When the individual can document they have worked 90 days, they are issued a $300 support payment. These work retention payments do not count against any food assistance benefits nor count as TANF months on the client's case. The individual may also receive a Work Incentive payment of $50 for five months. These payments do count as TANF months on the client's case.

Goal 8. Increase Benefits Planning

ES does have internal financial literacy classes in some locations, as well as purchasing from external resources or referring to other partners. One example in Topeka is Housing and Credit Counseling, Inc. For clients on Economic and Employment Support (EES) benefits who decide he/she wants to pursue disability benefits, we have a few staff certified as SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) advocates to assist the individual in applying. We have had success in reducing the amount of time it takes for someone to be approved through this service. Some staff have also been certified as Offender Workforce Development Specialists (OWDS) through the Kansas Department of Corrections.

DCF clients (whether mandatory or volunteer participants) receive intensive case management and have a written Self-Sufficiency Agreement between the agency and the client detailing the activities and services utilized to accomplish short and long-term goals leading to obtaining employment. Once employed, a TANF recipient may receive up to 12 months of transitional services following the loss of cash assistance due to employment. The philosophy (as stated in the Economic and Employment Services manual) is that participants will:

1. Retain their jobs for longer periods of time,
2. Avoid exhausting their lifetime TANF limit on assistance,
3. Improve their wage levels, and
4. Identify new personal skills and potential ways to pursue the move toward self-sufficiency.

A more concerned focus on job retention has reduced the percentage of those closed who came back on the TANF caseloads within twelve months of case closure (recidivism).

Goal 9. Support Innovation in Employment Services

Kansas DCF was fortunate to be one of ten states who received a three-year United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant designed to develop and test innovative employment and training strategies for individuals receiving food assistance. The Kansas program (GOALS – Generating Opportunities to Attain Lifelong Success) was an employer and labor marker driven program, tailoring

services to meet real-time employment opportunities. The program was designed to assist food assistance recipients on the path to successful careers which pay living wages, offer advancement opportunities, and restore their sense of value to themselves, their families and communities. The success of the pilot in a limited number of counties, has had sustained funding identified and services are now available statewide.

Kansas DCF then received a three-year Process and Technology Grant (PTIG) from USDA to develop a communication tool to improve communication between Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients and ES staff using a human-centered design approach. The project is now ready to pursue the design of a prototype.

In addition, recent program changes allow more individuals to be eligible for services thru Employment Services Programs. Families that have Child Protection Services involvement might be in need and unaware of the services provided. As a result, a collaborative effort between the programs has started in the Southeast Region, to be able to connect families with those services. When a social worker is meeting with a family and an educational, employment, or training need is identified: 1) the family is provided information for Employment Service Programs, 2) followed with a referral to that program, and 3) if the family is scheduled to have a Team Decision Meeting, Employment Services is included if services would be of value and benefit to the household. Since September 2020, in the Southeast Region, 38 referrals have been received resulting in 11 households accessing services. This is 28.9% engagement based on the referrals for this voluntary program.

Goal 10. Create Systems Change to Enable Employment First.

Several years ago, EES discontinued a grant with Kansas Legal Services to assist individuals in applying for SSI/SSDI benefits. It was thought this was counter to our goal of assisting EES benefit recipients to prepare for, obtain, and maintain competitive employment. As mentioned earlier, we do have a few staff certified as SOAR advocates when that seems to be the clients preferred path.

Goal 13. Engage Stakeholders and Rebuild Relationships.

DCF Employment Services has had several activities over the years to engage stakeholders and rebuild relationships. A few of them include:

- All Employment Services staff were trained in customer-centered design. This started with a team of four attending a conference in Washington, D.C. and focusing on how to better engage clients. The group designed different versions of our TANF appointment letter and actually sat in their respective lobbies asking clients waiting which they preferred. Interestingly enough, one location preferred one wording and another location preferred another. Both are now available for staff to use across the state, giving them the ability to tailor the message by client. Several small groups at the ES training came up with ideas of tool to enhance communication with clients. The result was a proposal for the federal technology grant, which the state ultimately received.
- The annual Kansas Conference on Poverty brings together direct service workers, agency/department management, agency Board of Directors, volunteers and anti-poverty advocates from Kansas's non-profit organizations, faith-based agencies, and government offices. ES has had several staff attend, has presented on ES, and has been a vendor during the conference. While attendees take issue with our agency, several commented that they respected us for even being there.
- After receiving the USDA P-TIG grant, grant staff began convening client and staff groups across the state to learn first-hand what kind of communication enhancements would be helpful. They have returned to the same groups to update them on the status of the design, obtaining and utilizing their feedback as the project moves forward. The feedback has constantly been synthesized and incorporated in the design and process elements of the client and staff-side prototype mock-ups.
- ES was an active participant (along with RS) in both attending and presenting at the Workforce Investment Fund cross-training events across the state.
- One aspect of the GOALS pilot was to implement a Collective Impact model in pilot communities across the state. These quarterly meetings had a consistent core of attendees and were open to any and all partners.
- Ten staff were certified to conduct Poverty Simulations. Plans were being developed to conduct this training for staff and partners in various locations across the state, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The DCF Director of Employment Services is a part of a Kansas 2Gen team, which also consists of representatives from Community Action, Inc., the Topeka Community Foundation, and the United Way of Greater Topeka.

Goal 15. Engage and Support Businesses

DCF ES has Regional Resource Coordinators across the state who reach out to area employers to learn about vacancies, skill requirements, and expansion plans. ES has partnered with Johnson County Community College to develop a short-term training program in warehousing, based on the needs of employers within that region. Employers have been engaged in combined hiring events with Food Safety Inspection Services (FSIS) staff, and employers are an integral part of such ES supported training programs as Partners4Success and Bridges Out of Poverty.

Report from the Department for Children and Families – Kansas Rehabilitation Services

Goal 3. Collect Comprehensive Data on Employment First

Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) utilizes our KMIS system to collect data across the state for the purposes of tracking employment, training enrollments, and service delivery. The agency also has an interagency agreement to collect wage data from the Department of Labor and the SWIS system to gather employment information on consumers. The data collection allows us to capture not only current wage data, but to calculate employment numbers and wages for consumers up to four quarters after case closure which is mandated by the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

Goal 9. Support Innovation in Employment Services

During 2020, KRS expanded our Job Preparation Course service code to new providers across the state to continue to focus on employment outcomes even during the COVID-19 pandemic. The expansion allowed consumers to be more engaged with customizable plans to help gain employment

Goal 13. Engage Stakeholders & Rebuild Relationships

2020 was a year of transition for KRS. In March, a new director, Dan Decker, was named and the process of rebuilding relationships began. This process will continue in 2021. Outreach to contracted providers began in the summer of 2020 and quarterly roundtables will be the norm moving into 2021. The process of signing Memoranda of Understanding (MOU's) with the WIOA partners that had gone incomplete in previous years was initiated and the MOUs and IFAs for the upcoming state plan expect to come to completion across all five Local Workforce Boards for the first time since the inception of the WIOA law.

Goal 6. Improve Transition Services

KRS and KSDE are in the process of revising the MOU for transition. It is anticipated that the MOU will be signed off in 2021. Revisions have been made to better reflect Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) and collaboration between the two agencies.

Partnerships across the state are expanding and our relationship with KSDE has provided more opportunities for our Pre-ETS specialists to work with more school districts to provide transition services.

KRS is actively participating in with the University of Kansas, Local Workforce Board Area 1, and other entities on a transition grant pilot project that will be introduced in 2021 in the Saline County area.

Labor Market Conditions

KANSASWORKS State Board Meeting - February 2021

Emilie Doerksen, Labor Economist

Kansas Department of Labor

Payroll Survey Data

Jobs, Hours, and Earnings

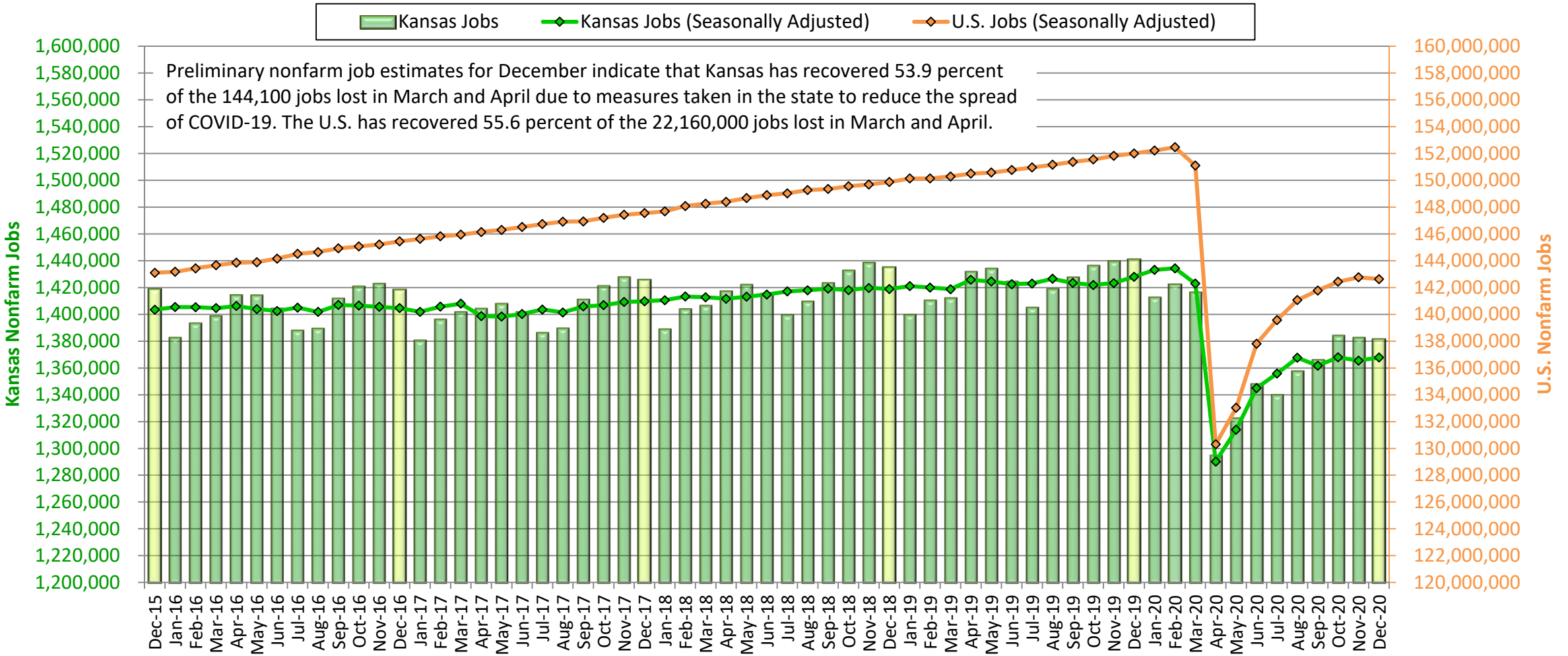
Current Employment Statistics (CES Program)

Kansas
Department of Labor

Payroll Survey

- Survey of Employers – how many people on the payroll?
- Concepts:
  - A job is a person on payroll who received pay for any part of the pay period that includes the 12th of the month
  - Not included: self employed, volunteer, family workers (not paid), farm workers, military

Nonfarm Jobs
Kansas and U.S.
December 2015 to December 2020



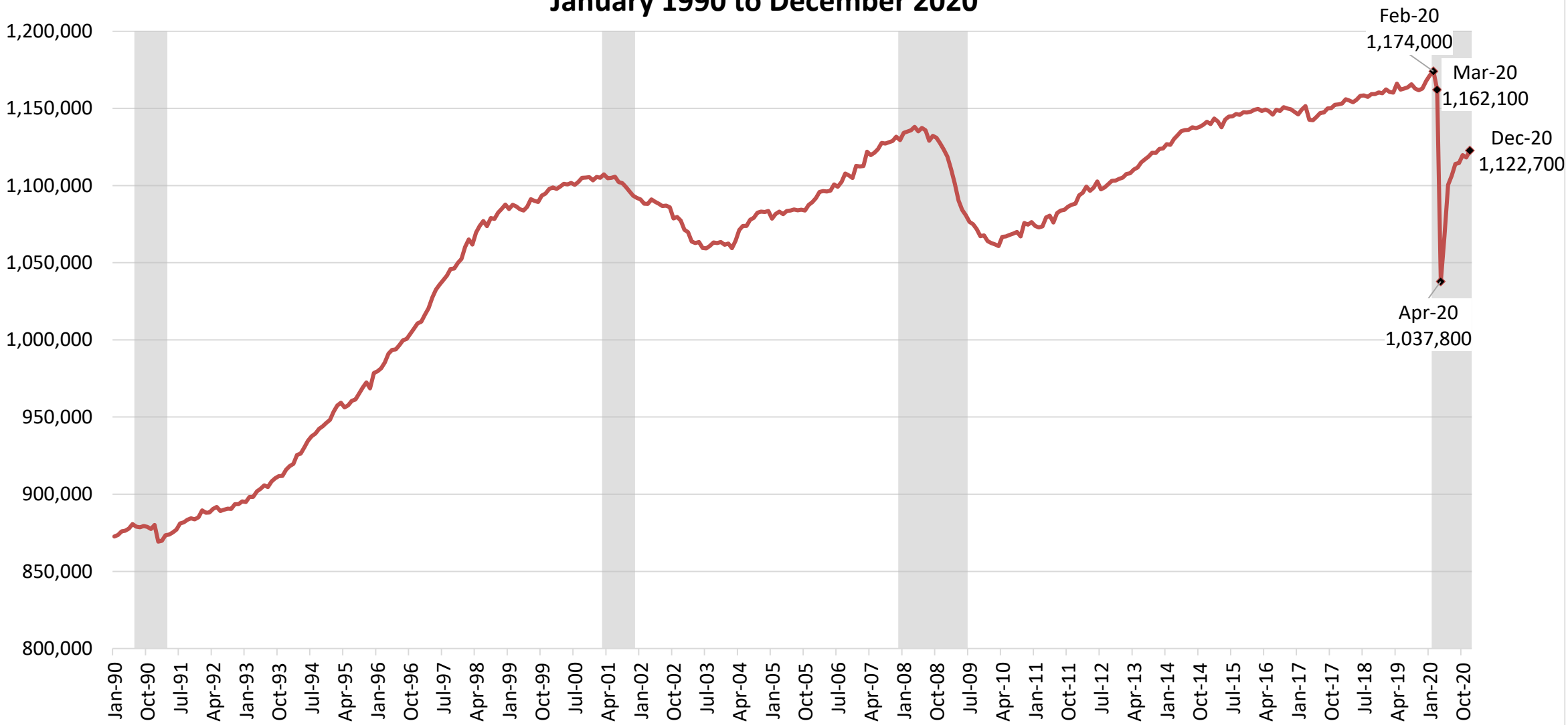
Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services and the Bureau of Labor Statistics; Current Employment Statistics (CES)

Over-the-Year Percent Change in Jobs, Not Seasonally Adjusted (KS) -4.1%
Over-the-Year Percent Change in Jobs, Not Seasonally Adjusted (US) -6.0%

Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Jobs Kansas							
	Employment Level			February to April loss		April to December recovery	
	Feb-20	Apr-20	Dec-20	Jobs lost	% lost	Jobs recovered	% recovered
Total Nonfarm	1,434,300	1,290,200	1,367,800	-144,100	-10.0%	77,600	53.9%
Total Private	1,174,000	1,037,800	1,122,700	-136,200	-11.6%	84,900	62.3%
Mining and Logging	6,700	6,200	6,300	-500	-7.5%	100	20.0%
Construction	66,600	61,400	66,600	-5,200	-7.8%	5,200	100.0%
Manufacturing	168,300	156,200	157,000	-12,100	-7.2%	800	6.6%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	267,700	254,000	271,700	-13,700	-5.1%	17,700	129.2%
Information	17,700	15,900	16,300	-1,800	-10.2%	400	22.2%
Financial Activities	78,500	76,600	74,200	-1,900	-2.4%	-2,400	N/A
Professional and Business Services	179,100	167,200	176,300	-11,900	-6.6%	9,100	76.5%
Education and Health Services	204,400	180,600	195,000	-23,800	-11.6%	14,400	60.5%
Leisure and Hospitality	132,900	79,000	111,800	-53,900	-40.6%	32,800	60.9%
Other Services	52,100	40,700	47,500	-11,400	-21.9%	6,800	59.6%
Government	260,300	252,400	245,100	-7,900	-3.0%	-7,300	N/A

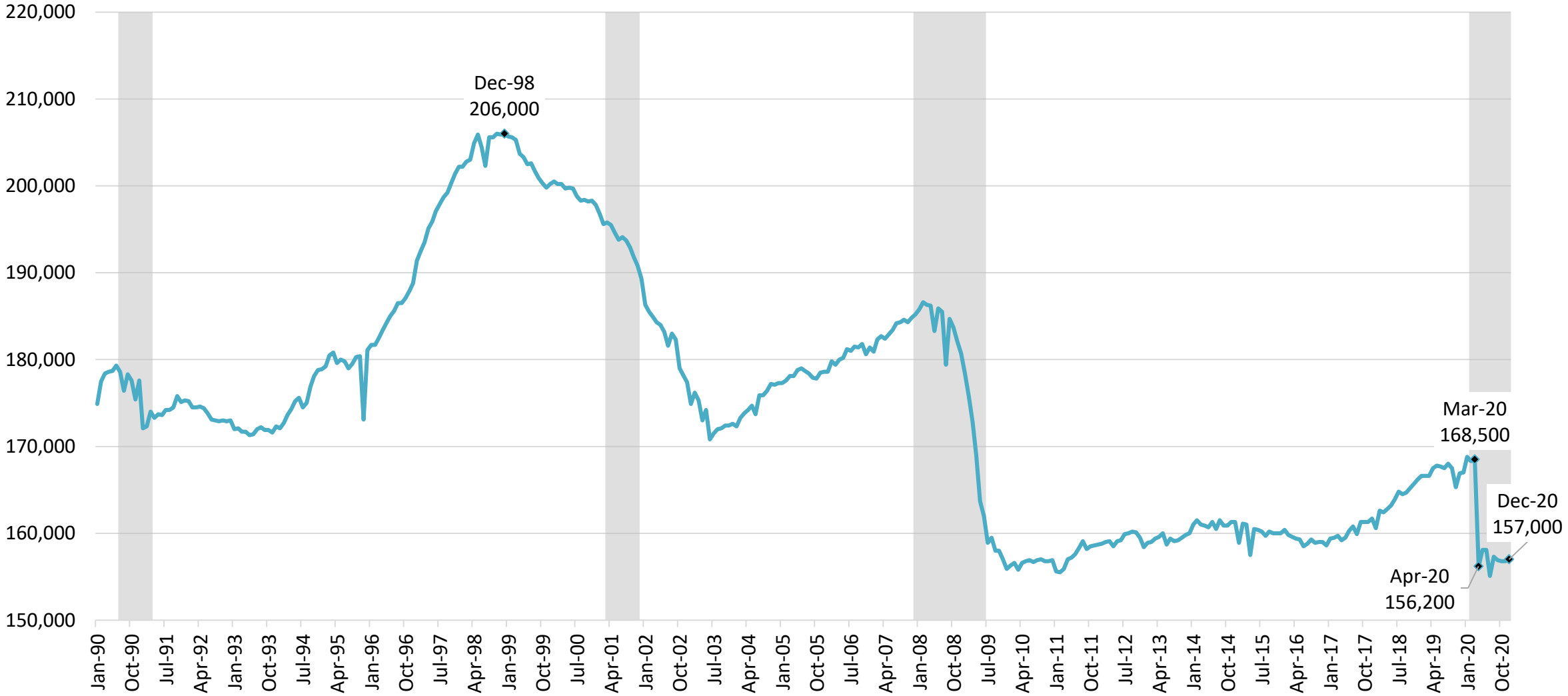
Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services and the Bureau of Labor Statistics; Current Employment Statistics (CES)

Total Private Jobs
Kansas
January 1990 to December 2020



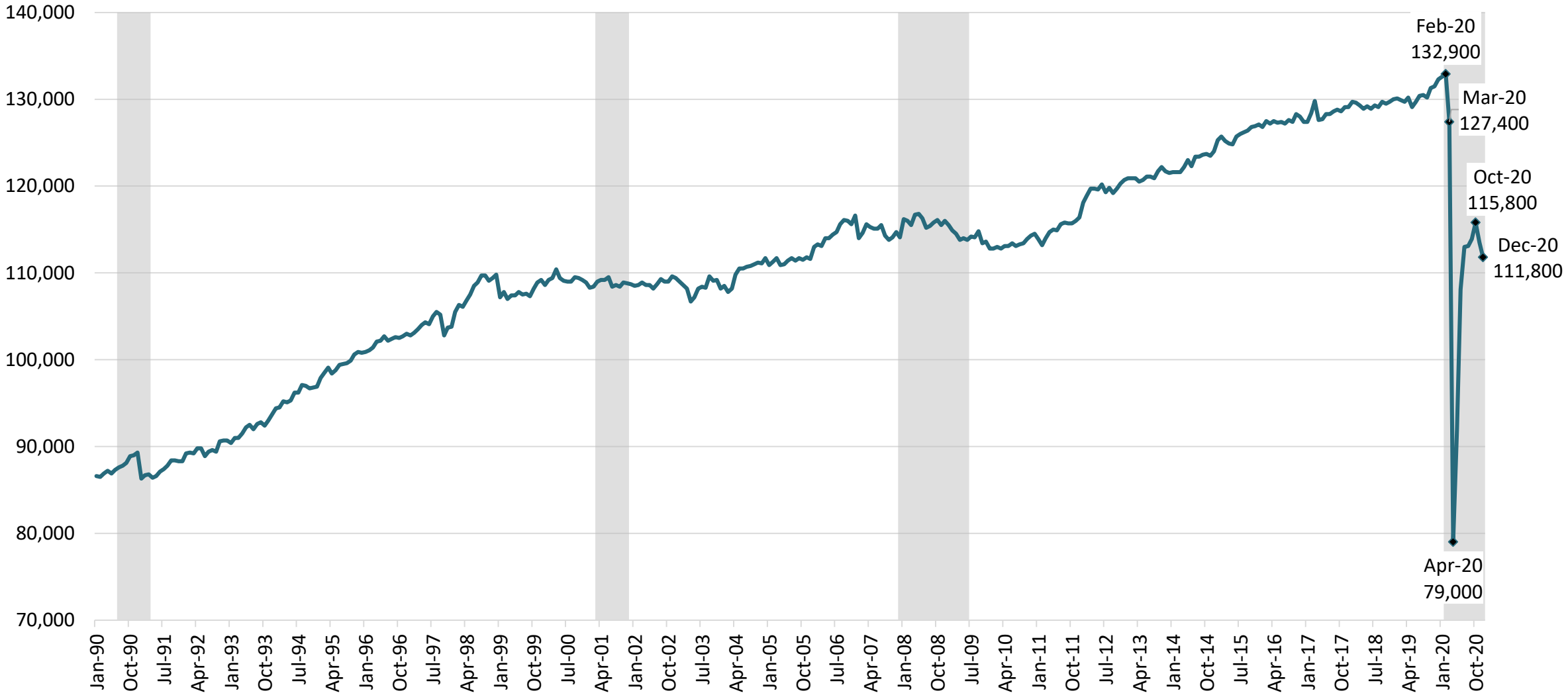
Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services and the Bureau of Labor Statistics; Current Employment Statistics (CES)

Manufacturing Jobs
Kansas
January 1990 to December 2020



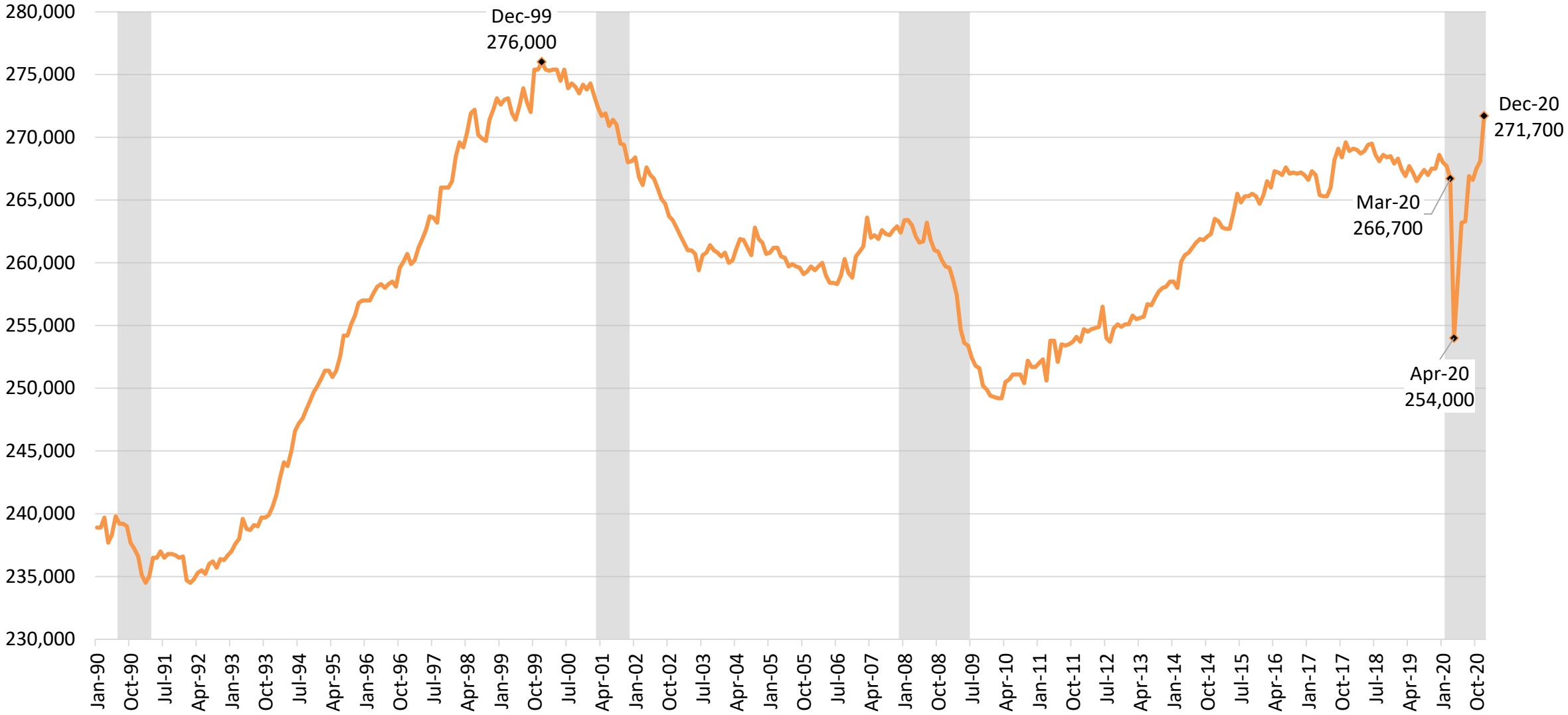
Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services and the Bureau of Labor Statistics; Current Employment Statistics (CES)

Leisure and Hospitality Jobs
Kansas
January 1990 to December 2020



Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services and the Bureau of Labor Statistics; Current Employment Statistics (CES)

Trade, Transportation, and Utilities Jobs
Kansas
January 1990 to December 2020



Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services and the Bureau of Labor Statistics; Current Employment Statistics (CES)

Household Survey Data

Unemployment, Employment, and Labor Force

Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS Program)

Kansas Department of Labor

Household Survey

- Survey of people at home – are you employed, unemployed, not looking for work?
- Concepts:
  - Includes only people 16 and over who are not institutionalized or on active military duty
  - Employed includes full and part-time workers as well as self employed workers
  - Reference week – the calendar week that includes the 12th day of the month

Civilian Noninstitutional Population 16+

Excludes people <16 years, institutionalized, and active duty military

Labor Force

Sum of employed and unemployed

Employed

- Worked at all as a paid employee
- Worked 15 hours or more as an unpaid worker in a family business
- Had a job or business from which they were temporarily absent
- Self employed

Unemployed

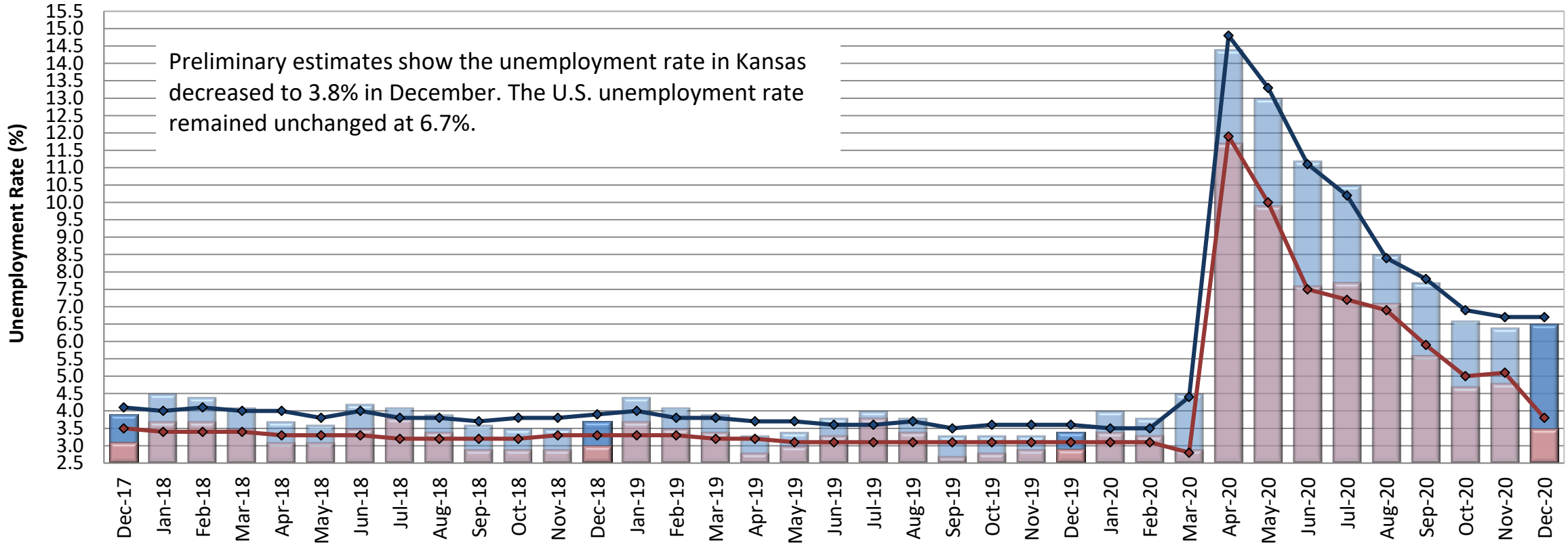
- Did not meet criteria for employed
- Made specific efforts to find employment during 4 week period ending in the reference week
- Waiting to be recalled to a job they are temporarily laid off from
- Were available for work

Not in the Labor Force

Examples:

- Retirees not working
- Students not working
- Disabled persons who cannot work
- Persons not working and discouraged from seeking work
- Volunteers working for religious/charitable organizations

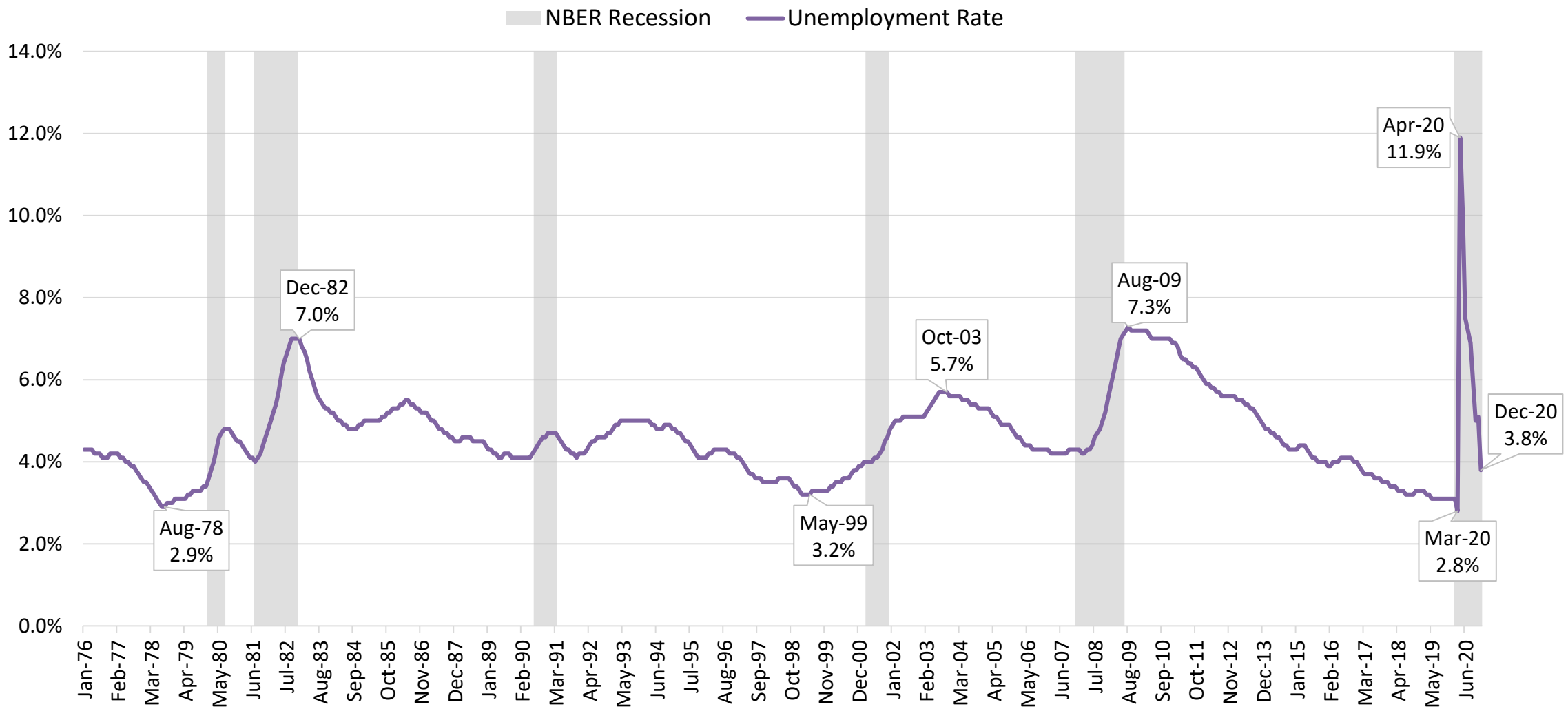
Unemployment Rate
Kansas and U.S.
December 2017 - December 2020



	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20
U.S.	3.9	4.5	4.4	4.1	3.7	3.6	4.2	4.1	3.9	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.7	4.4	4.1	3.9	3.3	3.4	3.8	4.0	3.8	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4	4.0	3.8	4.5	14.4	13.0	11.2	10.5	8.5	7.7	6.6	6.4	6.5
Kansas	3.1	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.1	3.1	3.5	3.8	3.4	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.7	3.5	3.4	2.8	3.0	3.3	3.8	3.4	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.9	3.4	3.3	2.9	11.7	9.9	7.6	7.7	7.1	5.6	4.7	4.8	3.5
U.S. SA	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.0	3.8	4.0	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.9	4.0	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.5	4.4	14.8	13.3	11.1	10.2	8.4	7.8	6.9	6.7	6.7
Kansas SA	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	2.8	11.9	10.0	7.5	7.2	6.9	5.9	5.0	5.1	3.8

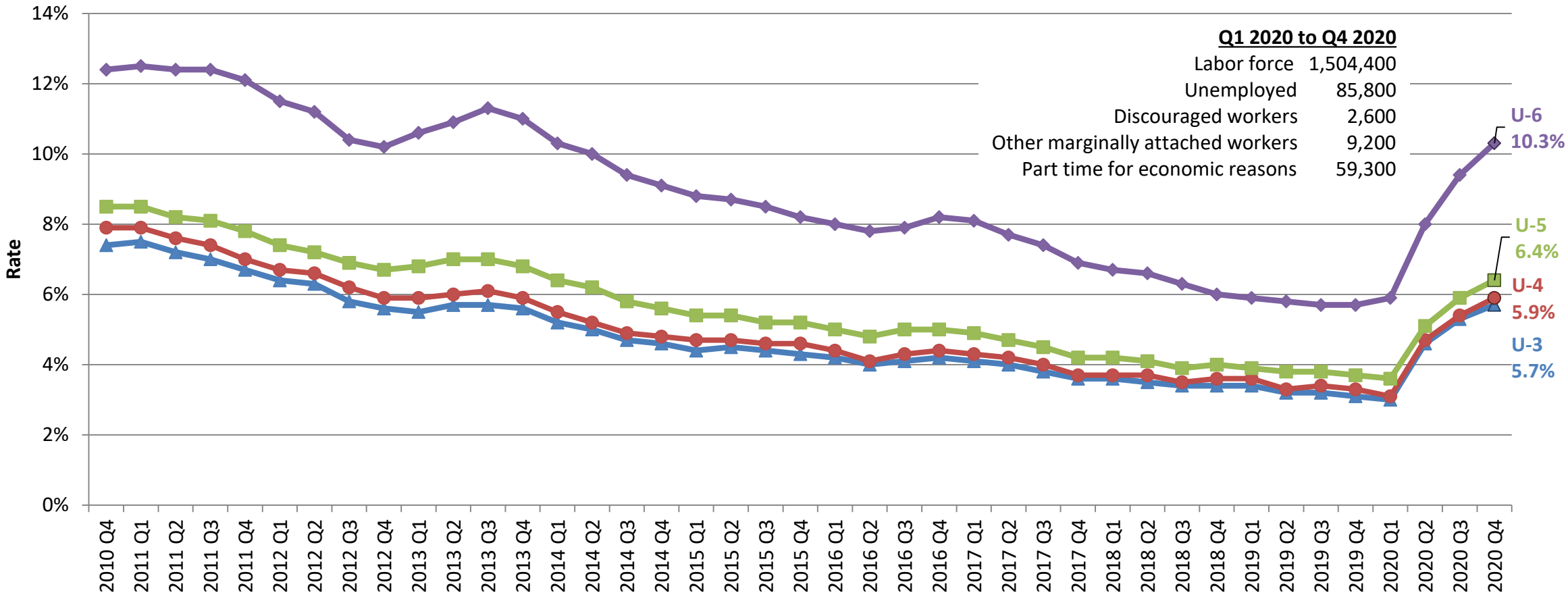
Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services and the Bureau of Labor Statistics; Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

Unemployment Rate
Kansas
January 1976 to December 2020



Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services and the Bureau of Labor Statistics; Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

Kansas Labor Underutilization (4 qtr Rolling Average)



U-3, Total unemployed, as a percent of the civilian labor force (this is the definition used for the official unemployment rate).

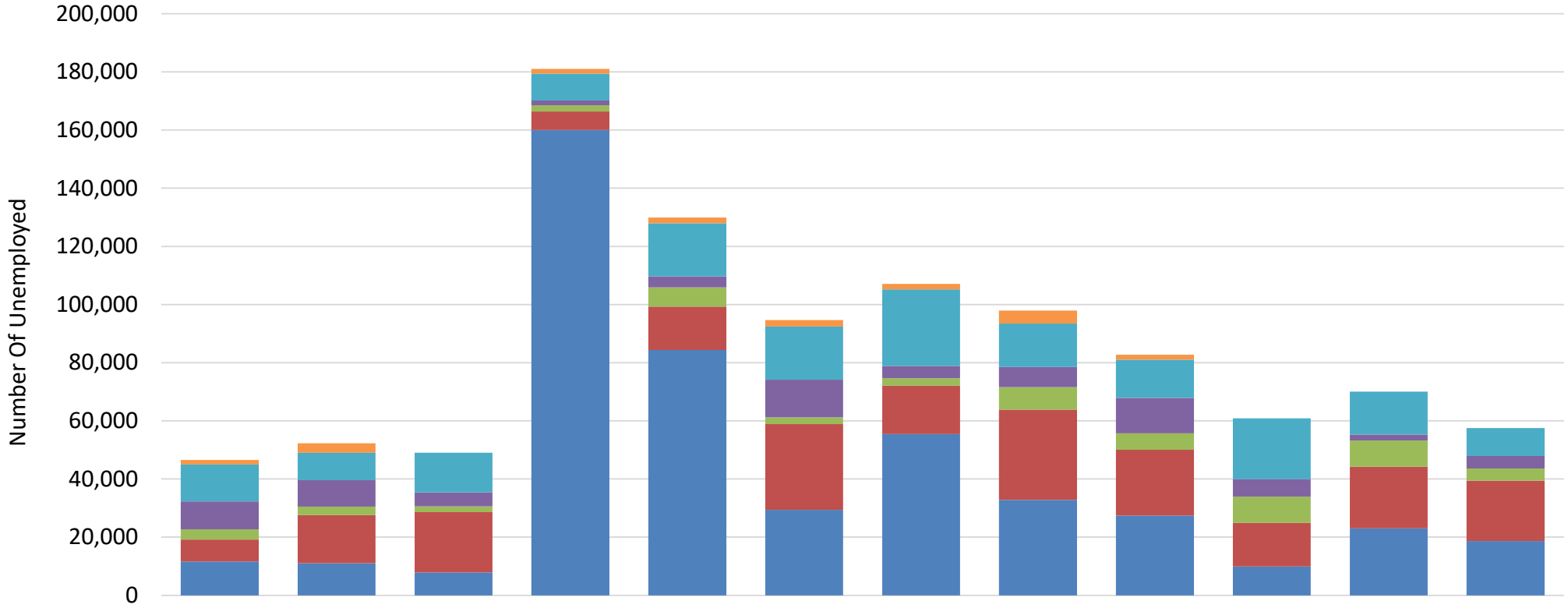
U-4, Total unemployed plus discouraged workers, as a percent of the civilian labor force plus discouraged workers.

U-5, Total unemployed, plus discouraged workers, plus all other marginally attached workers, as a percent of the civilian labor force plus all marginally attached workers.

U-6, Total unemployed, plus all marginally attached workers, plus total employed part time for economic reasons, as a percent of the civilian labor force plus all marginally attached workers.

Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services and the Bureau of Labor Statistics; Current Population Survey (CPS)

Unemployed Persons by Reason for Unemployment
Kansas
January 2020 - December 2020



	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20
New entrants	1,500	3,300	0	1,600	2,000	2,300	1,900	4,400	1,700	0	0	0
Reentrants	12,700	9,400	13,600	9,300	18,200	18,200	26,300	15,000	13,100	21,000	14,700	9,600
Job leavers	9,600	9,100	4,800	1,600	3,800	13,000	4,200	6,900	12,200	6,000	2,100	4,300
Persons who completed temporary jobs	3,500	2,900	2,000	2,100	6,600	2,300	2,600	7,700	5,600	9,000	9,000	4,200
Permanent job losers	7,600	16,600	20,700	6,400	14,900	29,500	16,600	31,100	22,700	15,000	21,200	20,700
On temporary layoff	11,600	11,000	7,900	160,000	84,400	29,400	55,500	32,800	27,400	9,900	23,000	18,700

Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services and the Bureau of Labor Statistics; Current Population Survey (CPS)

Unemployment Insurance Data

UI Claimants, CARES Act

Kansas Department of Labor Administrative Data

Kansas
Department of Labor

Regular UI

- Filing for Unemployment Insurance (UI) is the first step for affected workers
- Available for up to 26 weeks

PEUC

- Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) is a federal extension of benefits for those who have exhausted UI
- The CARES Act extension increases PEUC weekly benefits from 13 to 24 weeks
- Expires on March 13, 2021

PUA

- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) expands access to unemployment by including those who are affected by COVID-19 and not eligible for UI or PEUC *(such as self-employed, independent contractors, gig workers, employees of religious organizations and those who lack sufficient work history or have been disqualified for state benefits)*
- The extension provides an additional 11 weeks of PUA unemployment benefits for claimants, up to a maximum of 50 weeks. If a claimant exhausted their PUA benefits prior to Jan. 2, 2021 they are only eligible for weeks starting after that time
- Apply online at www.PUA.GetKansasBenefits.gov

PHASE OUT

PEUC and PUA now include a phase out period. This means if you are receiving benefits and have not used all benefit weeks as of March 14, 2021, you can continue receiving benefits until either you have used all remaining weeks or reach the week ending April 11, 2021, whichever comes first.

MEUC

Weekly **$100**

- Mixed Earner Unemployment Compensation (MEUC) is only available for claimants filing in either the UI or PEUC programs
- Claimants must have earned more than $5,000 in self-employment income in the most recent taxable year, prior to the individual's application for regular UI benefits
- Eligible claimants will receive an additional $100 weekly benefit on top of their weekly benefit amount and the $300 FPUC benefit
- MEUC runs from week ending Jan. 2, 2021, through March 13, 2021
- This program will require a separate application; details to come

FPUC

Weekly **$300**

- Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) provides a $300 per week benefit for any claimant that is eligible for an underlying unemployment compensation program
- FPUC runs from week ending Jan. 2, 2021, through March 13, 2021
- Previously FPUC was available from March 29, 2020 through July 25, 2020 and payments were for $600, but this extension only provides $300 weekly benefits
- No application is necessary

Expired Programs

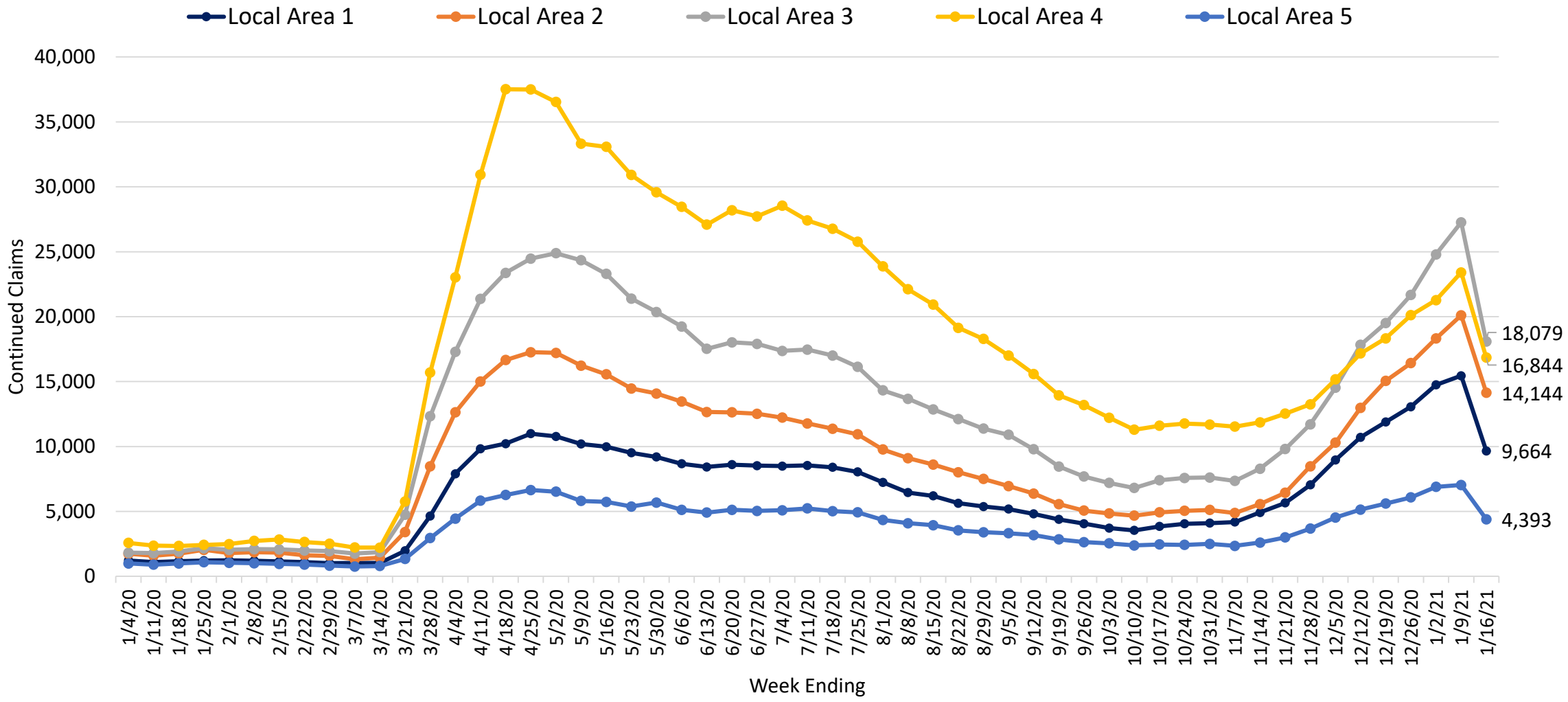
LWA

- Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) was funded by FEMA to provide $300 per week to supplement unemployment benefits to eligible claimants
- Available for any claims for the weeks ending Aug. 1, 2020, through Sept. 5, 2020; payments will be retroactive

Extended Benefits (EB)

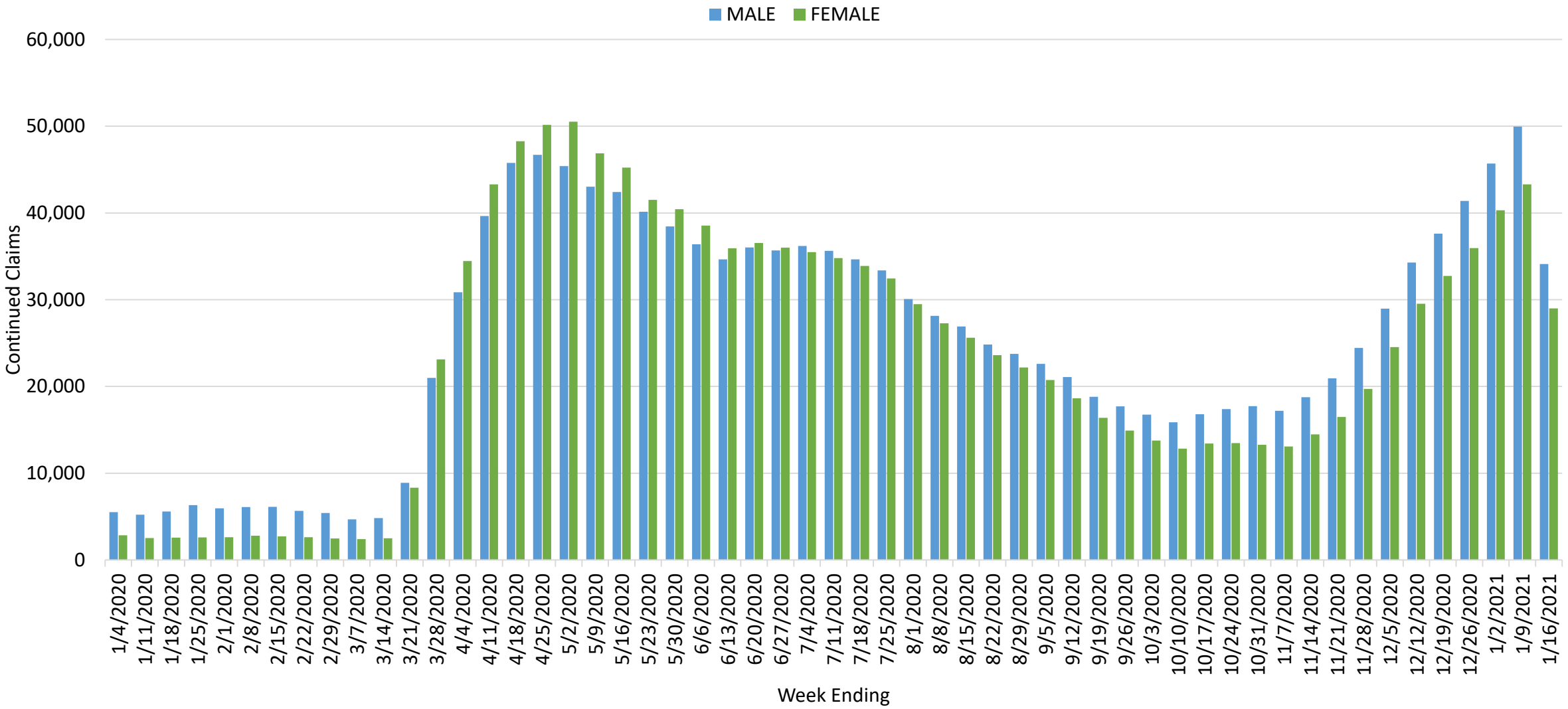
- Extended Benefits (EB) was available after PEUC is exhausted for claims filed after June 7, 2020
- USDOL notified the state that Kansas has officially “triggered off” of the EB program
- KDOL is prohibited from making any additional payments, regardless of any remaining balance of EB entitlement
- The last payable week on the EB program was the week ending Dec. 12, 2020

Continued Claims by Local Area
Unique Claimants by Week Claimed
Week Ending 1/4/20 - Week Ending 1/16/21



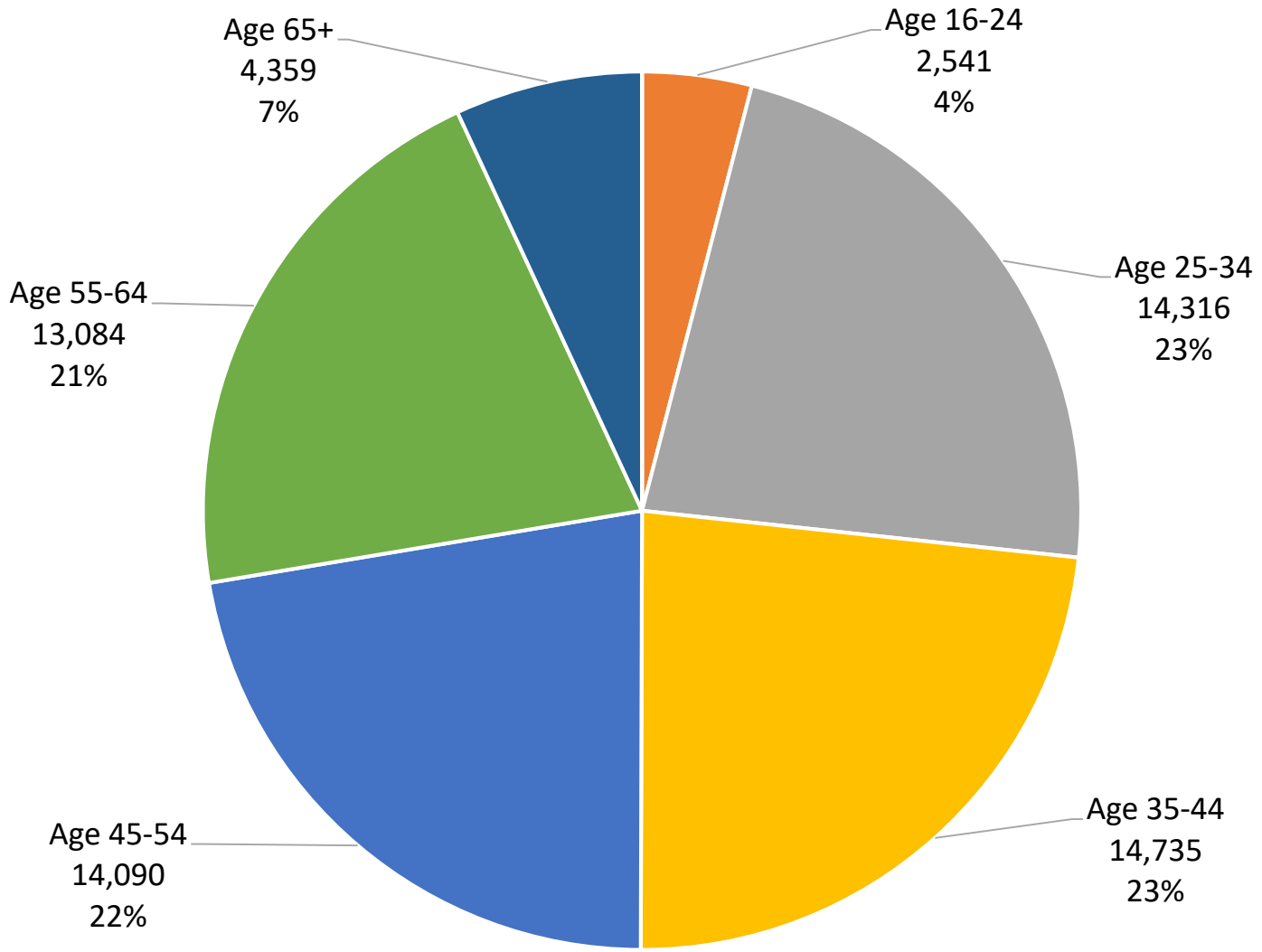
Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services; Unemployment Insurance Statistics Program

Continued Claims by Gender
Unique Claimants by Week Claimed
Week Ending 1/4/20 - Week Ending 1/16/21



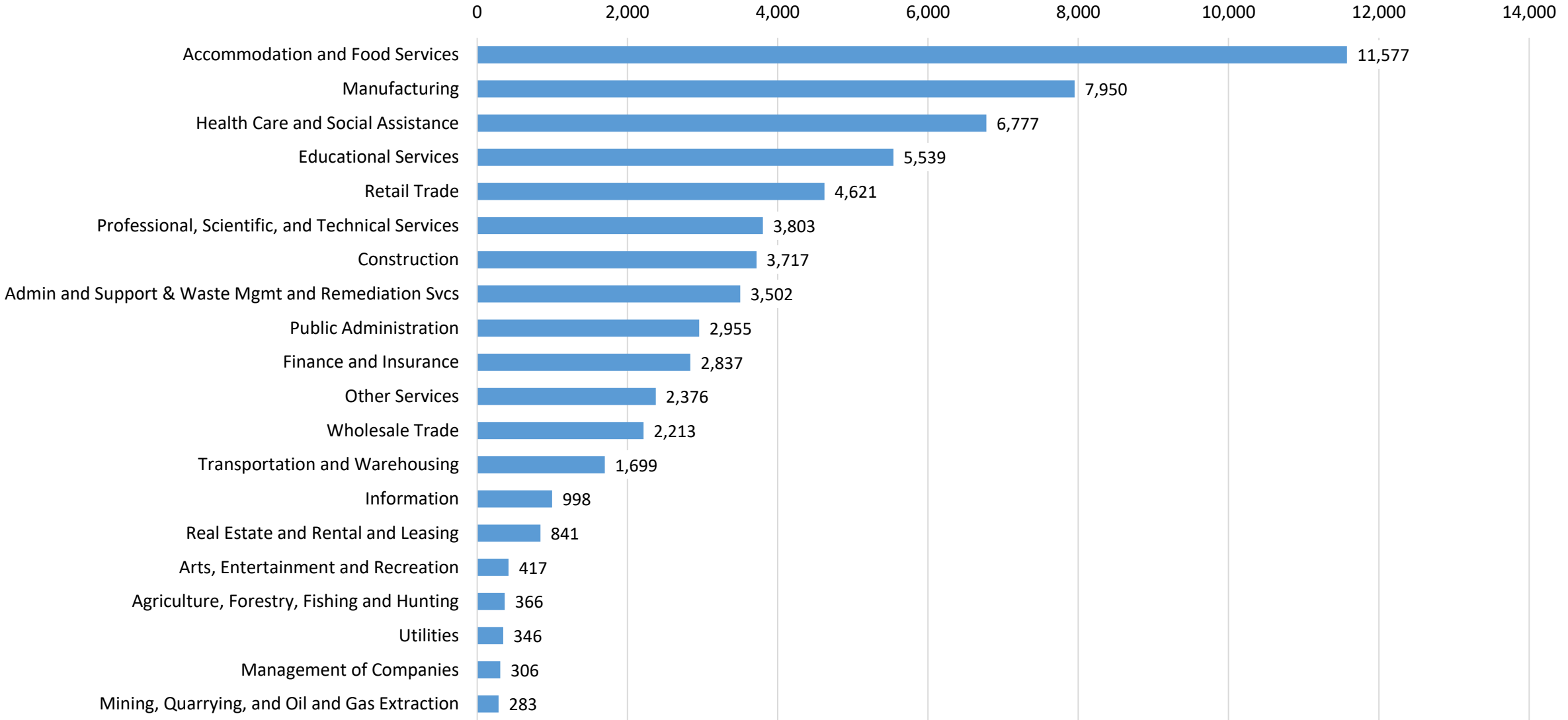
Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services; Unemployment Insurance Statistics Program

Regular UI Continued Claims by Age Group
Kansans Claiming Benefits for the Week Ending 1/16/2021



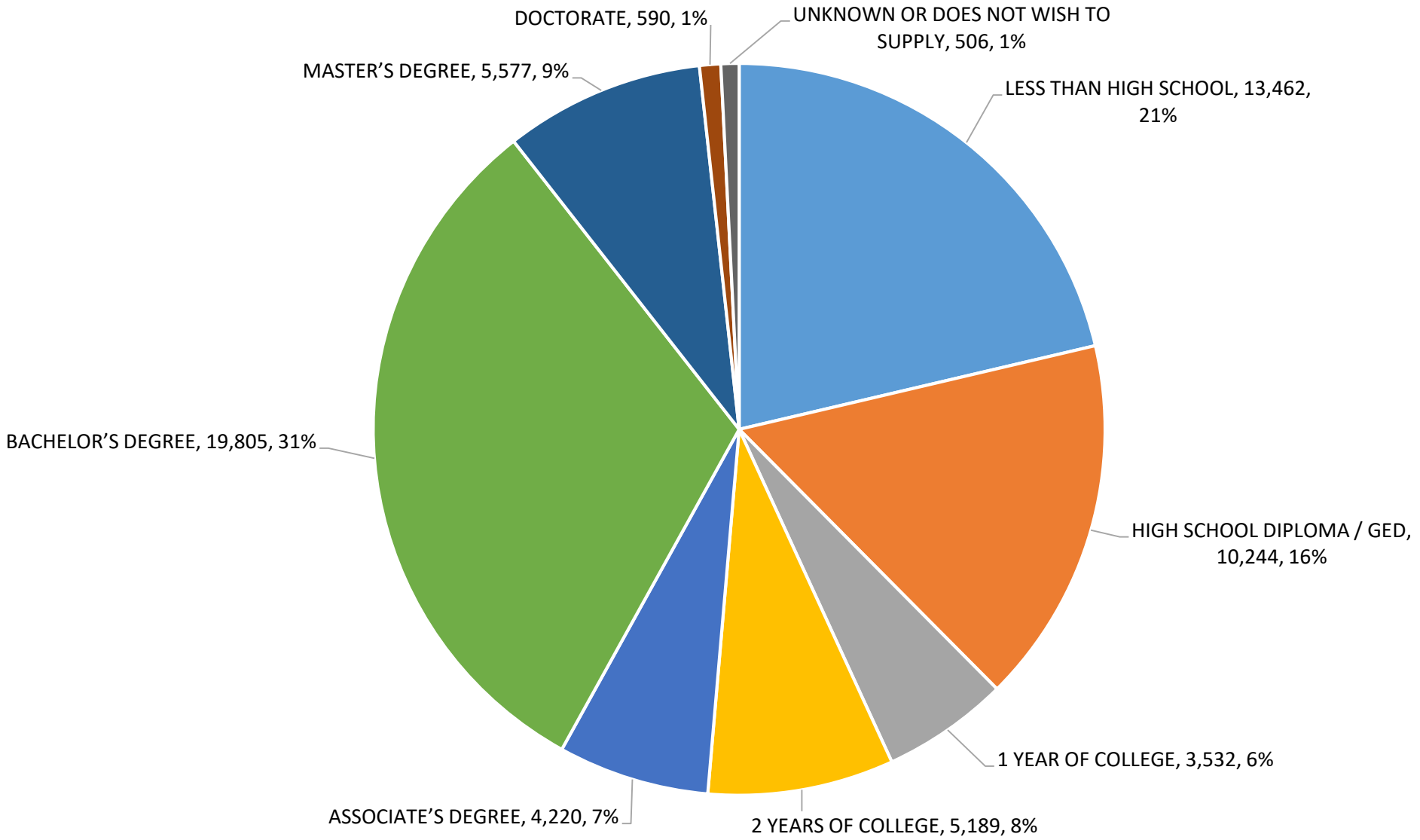
Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services; Unemployment Insurance Statistics Program

Regular UI Continued Claims by Industry
Kansans Claiming Benefts for the Week Ending 1/16/2021



Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services; Unemployment Insurance Statistics Program

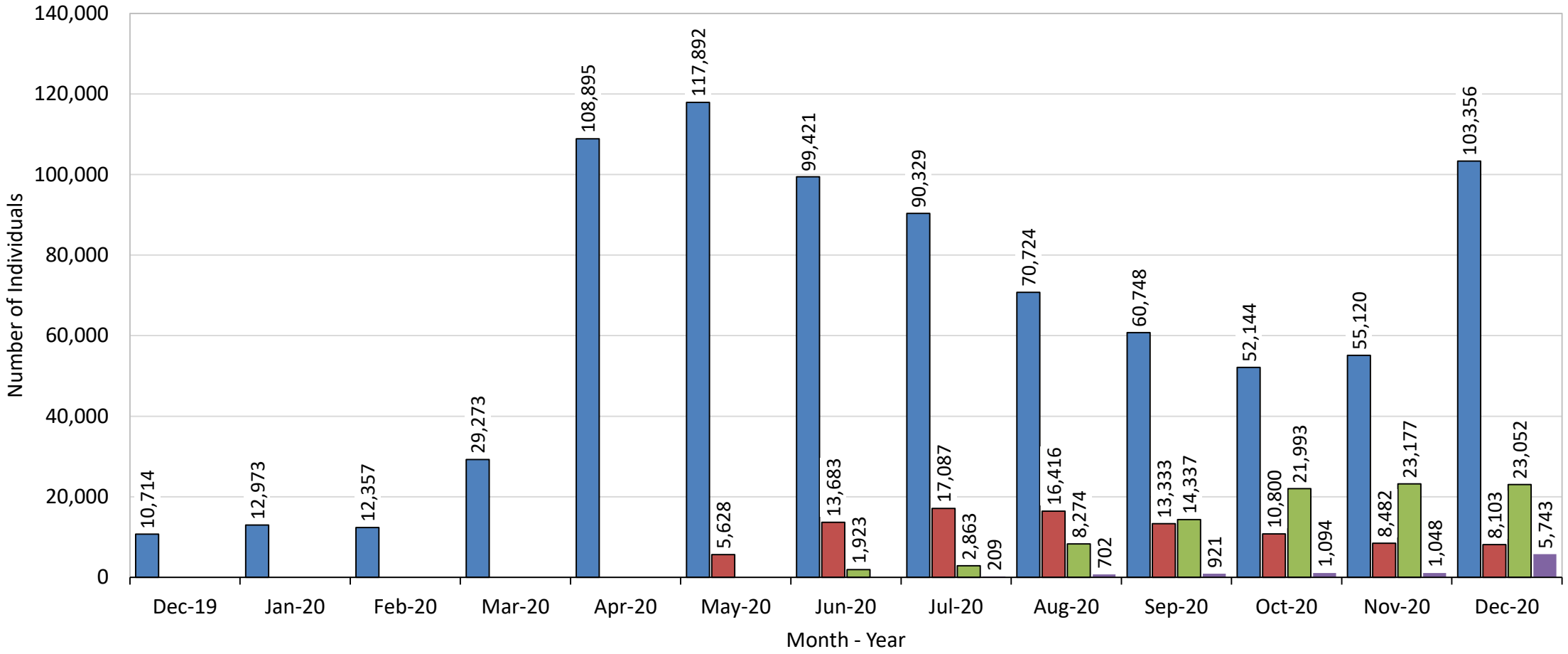
Regular UI Continued Claims by Educational Attainment
Kansans Claiming Benefts for the Week Ending 1/16/2021



Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services; Unemployment Insurance Statistics Program

Number of Individuals Receiving Unemployment Insurance Benefits
Kansas
December 2019 to December 2020

The number of people receiving unemployment insurance benefits increased in December to 136,729. This total includes data from all active unemployment programs: regular UI, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC), and Extended Benefits (EB).



Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services; Unemployment Insurance Statistics

Questions?

Kansas
Department of Labor

Labor Market Information Services

401 SW Topeka Blvd. Topeka Ks 66603

Email: KDOL.Laborstats@ks.gov

Web: www.dol.ks.gov

Kansas Department of Labor

KANSASWORKS State Board
February 10, 2021
FY21 / Quarter 2
Workforce Services Program Initiatives Summary

KANSASWORKS STATE BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal 1: Customer Service

1. Empowering Employees to Succeed

- Focus groups – In the early months of 2019, WSU traveled to each of the local areas and met with staff as part of focus groups, targeting frontline employees and partners. The purpose of these sessions was to gain additional information on customer service, empowerment, support in the workplace, and what success looks like for Workforce Professionals. The focus groups also identified the top barriers to customer service as well as best practices.
- Supervisor feedback – As a follow-up to the frontline staff focus groups, WSU conducted phone interviews with Workforce Center Supervisors to get their perspective on customer service. They were asked the same questions as their staff were during the focus groups. The results meetings were included in the overall local and state reports.
- Based on these meetings, WSU recently released a statewide report with overall strengths, opportunities, recommendations and best practices as well as a report mirroring this for each local area. These reports have been shared with each local area. During the last few months of 2019, WSU travelled to the local areas to meet with the Regional Operations Managers, the Executive Directors and the State Operations Director to review the report and discuss next steps for each local area. Each local area determined actions items and a timeline associated with these items. For the past several months, the local areas have been working together on these action items.
- On February 11, 2020 WSU facilitated a meeting with all of the local area Executive Directors, Regional Operation Managers and One-Stop Operators in Emporia to discuss what Excellent Customer Service looks like and to begin the conversation about consistent customer service standards. On June 9th, WSU facilitated an additional meeting with this group to discuss the impacts of COVID-19, what challenges were being faced and how everyone could best work together to address these challenges to service our customers with the best customer service.
- During this past quarter, it was established that due to the nature of the circumstances, the following would be beneficial for Workforce Center staff: (1) Support for Supervisors Supervising in a Virtual World. This will include Chat Sessions and e-mail tips and tricks. The initial session will be a discussion around successes and challenges with working and supervising remotely. The overall goal is to ensure productivity, accountability, and maintain engagement; (2) Diversity and Inclusion Training for all staff. The first session will focus on developing awareness and self-growth in diversity and inclusion in providing customer service in workforce centers. Topics may include creating a culture supportive of diversity and inclusion; understanding the multiple aspects of diversity and inclusion; and how diversity and inclusion impacts customer service. This session will be preceded by a survey of staff regarding this topic and followed by a post survey to determine what additional training may be needed. Also, there will be a post training meeting held with supervisors to talk through next steps; and (3) Wellness and Resiliency information for Workforce Services Staff
  This will be provided in a two-hour session that will provide practical tips on personal mental health tips, everyday wellness practices and resiliency tools for our workforce services staff. The session will be taught by people who have struggled themselves and learned to take care of themselves better to continue to serve others. A toolkit will also be provided.

2. Obtain Customer Service Input

- Secret Shoppers – The final draft of the 2nd Secret Shopper report is available on the state board website.
- Customer Surveys – Utilizing the Workforce Center kiosk surveys, WSU has been analyzing the results and developing a follow-up survey. This survey will ask questions that complement the 11 common questions, to dive deeper into their experiences at Workforce Centers. They also analyzed all employer surveys, met with a taskforce made up of key staff and stake holders from each local area, and developed a common employer survey.

- Focus Groups - WSU conducted regional focus groups of job seekers in each local area that are co-enrolled in multiple Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs. The information gathered from these groups is available in a report.

3. Determine Best Practices

- WSU will provide research on how other local areas, states and regions are approaching customer service, professional development of staff, and other challenges to identify best practices relevant to the State of Kansas.
- Over the past quarter a meeting was held with the Executive Directors, it was determined that it would be a good idea to gather and share best practices from across the state that have been developed during these challenging and unusual times. Best practices could include tools for staff, virtual workshops for customers, or any additional new practices such as these. WSU will contact each local area to collect this information, organize it and then share it statewide.

Goal 2: Performance Accountability and Transparency

Objective 2.1: Reports with Meaningful Outcomes: Obtain and report meaningful outcomes that are evaluated on a continuous quarterly basis.

- Quarterly Dashboard Reports are posted on the State Board website for review by State Board members.

Objective 2.2: Reporting Compliance and Value: SWB will review reports that show WIOA performance compliance as well as overall value of the workforce system

- WIOA performance reports for PY 2020 only have 1 quarter of data.
- Compliance with WIOA measures are shown on page 2 of the Dashboard Report.
- Workforce system value is shown on page 7 of the Dashboard Report.

Objective 2.3: Examining Local Area and State-Wide Outcomes: Examine both local and state outcomes that include effective stewardship of all funds on a continuous basis

- Both program data and expenditure data are included in the Dashboard Report.
- Training and Participant expenditure data is listed by local area on page 4 of the Dashboard Report.
- Local area expenditure information is also included.

Objective 2.4: Excellent Customer Service Across All Core Partners: Establish customer service excellence across all core partners

- Customer Service Kiosk data is now being collected at all workforce centers across the State.
- Customer Service Kiosk data is shown on page 6 of the Dashboard report.

Objective 2.5: Measuring KWSB Performance and Effectiveness: Measure SWB performance and effectiveness

- SWB members are encouraged to explore opportunities for self-evaluation of the SWB, and evaluate how SWB decisions impact the workforce programs in Kansas.

Goal 3: System Messaging and Awareness

Objective 3.1 Roll-out of Common Brand across the System:

- Alex Rice, Kansas Department of Commerce Director of Marketing, presented information regarding the need for a common brand and messaging to the Local Area Board Chairs in September and during the **KANSAS**WORKS State Board meeting on November 6, 2019. It was discussed that the Common Identifier Workgroup would convene to begin the process of policy revisions and a new brand standards manual.

- The Workgroup met in January and made significant progress in decisions regarding goals and next steps that was presented by Mike Beene during the January 23 State Board Meeting.

- The Workgroup convened again prior to the May 6 State Board Meeting and again made significant progress to this effort. The Workgroup will be sharing sample logos, typography and color palettes with the State Board

during the May 6 State Board Meeting. All of the materials still must be shared with the Local Board Committees during the coming months for approval as well.

- The Workgroup has convened a couple additional times since the last State Board Meeting. The Workgroup is currently discussing budgeting and working to obtain quotes and pricing for signage to determine the needs and budget of this goal.

- The workgroup is gathering costs of office and roadside signage, including highway signage and billboards to develop a plan for rollout.

Objective 3.2 Obtain understanding of KS Awareness about the system: Put together a state-wide workgroup to develop messaging in conjunction with the roll-out of common brand, which will be helpful to the Common Identifier Workgroup as they continue their work to brand the system and **KANSAS**WORKS.

Objective 3.3 Align & Strengthen State & Local Partners' Communication: This work to coincide with each of the objectives to ensure messaging and outreach is cohesive.
• Partners are asked to contribute to the quarterly **KANSAS**WORKS Newsletter

Objective 3.4 Effectively message system performance to display value of system: in January 2019, staff began to research how other states share performance information.

Goal 4: Technology Integration
Objective 4.1 The **KANSAS**WORKS.com feedback survey went live at the end of February,2020. The survey is targeted to job seekers, employers and eligible training providers, and gathers feedback on the individual's experience with the website. From October to December 2020, 2,896 responses were received.

The state's case management system vendor, America's Job Link has undertaken a deep dive into the user experience by visiting consortium states and meeting with users from across the spectrum – case managers, job seekers, employers, and eligible training providers. The feedback they have gathered is being incorporated into the **KANSAS**WORKS.com redesign scheduled to launch in early 2021.

Objective 4.1 In mid-May, the kiosk survey was updated to allow for increased location tracking and the ability for staff to send out an email/text link to an online version of the survey.

Objective 4.2 Modifications to ReEmployKS have gone through testing and have been deployed to the live ReEmployKS site. Staff training to begin in Q2 2021.

Objective 4.4 Local Area IV has released an RFP on behalf of Local Area's II, III, IV and V for adaptive equipment (including installation and training). They are currently awaiting responses.

KANSASWORKS State Board
February 10, 2021
FY21 / Quarter 2
Workforce Program Initiatives Summary

PROGRAM SUMMARY UPDATES

KANSAS HEALTH PROFESSION OPPORTUNITY PROJECT (KHPOP)

The Kansas Health Profession Opportunity Project's (KHPOP) mission is to provide healthcare training and employment opportunities for individuals facing barriers to finding well-paying jobs, leading to self-sufficiency. It is administered through the workforce centers in Kansas.

The Office of Family Assistance has awarded Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC) an additional $3 million, Supplement and Extension, to extend Year 5 of the grant for an additional year. This was funded through the CARES Act.

For the full five-year grant period, the total projected participants are 2,000. KHPOP is in Year 5 Extension of the grant and currently has 1,950 participants enrolled. There have been 1,584 Healthcare Training Completions and 763 participants have been employed in healthcare. We are at 98% of our enrollment goal, 100% of our healthcare training completions and at 100% employed in healthcare goals.

WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT (WOTC)

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program is a Federal tax credit available to employers for hiring individuals from certain target groups who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment. This allows the individual to move from economic dependency into self-sufficiency as they earn a steady income and become contributing taxpayers. An employer can receive a federal tax credit that varies between the amounts of $2,400 to $9,600 per applicant.

In the first quarter of FY2021, 15,134 **new** certification requests were received, resulting in 151 eligible for tax credits. 514 requests were denied. This is a federal tax savings to Kansas businesses of almost $445,400. The largest numbers of workers certified as eligible were recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), followed by Ex-felons, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Unemployed Veterans and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

The average tax credit per certification to the employer is $2,949.67.

FEDERAL BONDING

The Federal Bonding program provides individual fidelity bonds to employers for job applicants who are or may be denied coverage by commercial carriers. The Federal Bonding program is a unique hiring incentive tool that targets individuals whose backgrounds can pose significant barriers to securing or retaining employment. Job candidates benefit because they are provided a second chance to prove themselves as valuable employees. Employers benefit because they provide an avenue to hire skilled job candidates who might not be hired due to their ineligibility for bond coverage.

In the first quarter of FY2021, no employer inquired about information on the Federal Bonding program.

REEMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT (RESEA)

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) is a collaboration between the Kansas Department of Commerce and the Kansas Department of Labor. The goals of RESEA are to shorten the number of weeks Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits are claimed, prevent and detect UI overpayments, decrease the likelihood of claimants exhausting UI benefits, cost savings to the UI trust fund and rapid reemployment for UI claimants.

RESEA is provided in sixteen Job Centers around the state. There are fifteen grant-funded positions located at five Job Centers. Wagner-Peyser funded staff provides RESEA services in offices that do not have dedicated staff. Claimants scheduled for RESEA are required to report to a workforce center as a condition to receiving UI benefits. Due to COVID-19 related capacity constraints at the Kansas Department of Labor, RESEA is on hiatus.

MY (RE)EMPLOYMENT
Beginning April 2018, a new collaboration between the Kansas Departments of Commerce and Department of Labor and **KANSAS**WORKS Workforce System began providing enhanced reemployment services to Kansans who are unemployed and looking for work. The program, called "My (Re)Employment Plan" connects unemployment recipients at the midpoint of their claim with workforce service professionals in their area.

Individuals scheduled for My (Re)Employment Plan are provided, free of charge, personalized job search assistance, including:

- Creation of a "My (Re)Employment" Plan that focuses on goals and accountability.
- Skills assessment to match interests and skills with occupations.
- Resume, interview, and networking assistance.
- Labor market information highlighting current in-demand jobs.

Studies have shown that the longer a person is unemployed, the harder it is to get back to work. Instead of waiting until the end of their entitlement to benefits, recipients will be guided to make a planned approach toward getting a new job that emphasizes personal responsibility.

My (Re)Employment utilizes existing funding received from the United States Department of Labor and is provided in 21 locations across the state. Due to COVID-19 related capacity constraints at the Kansas Department of Labor, My (Re)employment is on hiatus.

TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAA)
The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program is a federal entitlement program that assists U.S. workers who have lost or may lose their job because of foreign trade. TAA seeks to provide adversely affected workers opportunities to obtain the skills, credentials, resources, and support necessary to become reemployed.

Petitions are filed with United States Department of Labor (USDOL) on behalf of a group of workers. If certified, the petition identifies the eligible worker group within a specific firm or subdivision. Benefits and services are then provided to the workers. These benefits include reemployment and case management services. Additional funded benefits include paid classroom training, income support while attending full time training, sponsored on-the-job training, customized training, and apprenticeship programs. Funding is available for out of area job search, relocation, Health Coverage Tax Credit and a wage subsidy, for older workers. The TAA unit works closely with Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) in determining initial eligibility and throughout their enrollment in services.

Working in coordination with the rapid response team and case managers in identifying impacted companies, petitions were field. Kansas had 13 petitions certified this quarter. These petitions identified an estimated additional 785 impacted workers. The total number of eligible workers, identified by USDOL, in Kansas, during the 2020 calendar year, was a total of 9,994.

The TAA enrollment process, using the **KansasCommerce.gov/TAA** as the first step of enrollment and the quick ability to provide details regarding benefits continues to be successful. Rapid Response meetings continue to be provided.

With the assistance of partner staff and a few additional TAA staff, meeting the needs of the workers has improved. Adjustments with the paperless process continues to improve as we continue with the coronavirus pandemic. Web sites, social media and virtual meetings are commonplace but cannot replace the need for face to face interaction and assistance. TAA continues to enroll workers using the **KansasCommerce.gov/TAA** as the first step to enrolling in services and providing details regarding benefits. Rapid Response meetings continue to be provided.

During FY21/Q2, 334 new enrollments were completed, 5 waivers were issued, 102 workers of these new enrollments were approved for TAA training, with most plans scheduled to begin in January. During this quarter there were 990 total workers enrolled to receive services.

The following companies were certified during this quarter: IQVIA Inc., (Overland Park), ThyssenKrupp Materials, LLC (Hutchinson), GKN Aerospace Precision Machining, Inc. (Wellington), Boeing Distribution Services, Inc. (Wichita), TECT Aerospace Wellington, Inc (Wellington), TEXT Hypervelocity, Inc (Park City), TECT Aerospace, LLC (Wichita), Aero-Tech Engineering, Inc. (Maize), Premier Processing, LLC (Wichita), Textron Aviation Inc, (Independence), MAX Aerostructures, LLC, (Wichita), Prime Healthcare Service (Leavenworth) and Signify North America Corporation (Salina).

FOREIGN LABOR CERTIFICATION
H-2A Temporary Agricultural Program
H-2B Temporary Non-Agricultural Program

H-2A is the temporary agricultural program which allows agricultural employers who anticipate a shortage of domestic workers to bring nonimmigrant foreign works to the U.S. to perform agricultural labor or services of temporary or seasonal nature. Employment is of a seasonal nature where it is tied to certain times of year by an event or pattern, such as a short annual growing cycle, and requires labor levels above what is necessary for ongoing operations. Employment is of a temporary nature when the employer's need to fill the position with a temporary worker will, except in extraordinary circumstances, last no longer than one year.

H-2A enrollments per local area:

Local Area I	147 Enrollments
Local Area II	7 Enrollments
Local Area III	2 Enrollments
Local Area IV	0 Enrollments
Local Area V	6 Enrollments
Total	162 Enrollments

Housing Inspections for the year is 124.

H-2B is the temporary non-agricultural program which allows U.S. employers who meet specific regulatory requirements to bring foreign nonimmigrant workers to the United States to fill temporary nonagricultural jobs. Before requesting H-2B classification from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), the employer must apply for and receive a temporary labor certification for H-2B workers from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) or (Guam DOL if the employment will be in Guam).

H-2B / 6 enrollments for this quarter.

JOBS FOR VETERANS GRANT (JVSG)
The Jobs for Veterans Grant (JVSG) works directly with the military installations of Fort Leavenworth, Fort Riley, McConnell Air Force Base and Forbes Field. This overview provides a snapshot of **KANSAS**WORKS veteran employment representative outreach across Kansas. JVSG staff continue to attend SHRM, Chamber of Commerce meetings, Veterans attending Colleges, Universities', Technical colleges, Native American Indian Reservations and other non-profit entities targeting veterans within Kansas to promote Workforce Center Services across Kansas ensuring that veterans, transitioning service members and military spouses are aware of services providing them **"Priority of Service"** at one of the workforce center locations.

Veterans served in the Workforce Centers During the quarter, **1,106** veterans were served within the workforce centers with **766** receiving further assistance by Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialists (DVOP) based on significant barriers to employment. This assistance consisted of customized resume assistance and/or review, workshops, and basic employable skills needed for each individual veteran's needs. Additionally, for the quarter **728** Employer contacts were made by Veteran Employment Representatives, with **303** veterans gaining employment. Due to the current restrictions Veteran Employment Representatives across the state conducted email outreach to **4,697** Veterans and Transitioning Service Members throughout the quarter to offer DVOP services, advertise Virtual job fairs and workshops, and to disseminate resource information, and free training opportunities as well as Veteran news.

KANVET.org provides direct access to State of Kansas veteran-specific resources and benefits without having to navigate multiple state and federal agency websites. Over the past quarter, **714-**page views with the most popular being employers page, support page and college/universities page. Please take a few minutes to view the site and see what the new site brings to our Kansas Veterans, and those still serving. www.kanvet.org

Partnership between Veterans Administration (Vocational Rehabilitation& Education) and KANSASWORKS (Pilot Project)

(JVSG) Staff within Workforce Services (**KANSASWORKS**) are partnering with the Veterans Administration, Vocational Rehabilitation & Education (VR&E) Program. This pilot project was initiated on June 1st, 2020, with veterans that are in the final phases of completing their degrees and/or certifications with six (6) states participating in the pilot project with the veterans requesting to relocate to one of the six states including Kansas for employment and residency. JVSG staff (both Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Consultants and Local Veteran Employment Representatives) embedded within the workforce centers have an established partnership with VA VR&E program, providing veteran clients with Labor Market Information and Employment. Since the beginning of this pilot project, which is expected to continue into 2021, during that time focus groups consisting of the six participating State Veterans Employment Managers and the Veteran Administration (VR &E) Administrators will verify the success or suggest ways to improve the VA VR&E program and their partnerships with each state. During the quarter, Kansas has assisted three (3) veterans from the participating states wishing to relocate to Kansas in the fields of CDL certifications.

Department Of Defense Skillsbridge and the Army Career Skills Program (CSP) is a component of the Transition Soldier Life Cycle. Military Installations across Kansas in partnership with the local communities have recognized this program which encourages military servicemembers to capitalize on training and development opportunities throughout their military careers so that they grow and develop as soldiers and employability skills after leaving the service. Currently, the State Veteran's Employment Manager is working with all three military installations, staff and Kansas employers to meet the needs of both the servicemembers based on their knowledge, skills and abilities(KSA's) obtained while serving our nation and to meet the employer's occupational demands. Currently, there are **70** programs in and around Wichita, **22** in the Fort Riley and surrounding area and **5** located in the Leavenworth area.

Heroes Make America a Manufacturing Institute pilot program which is a full-time, 10-week career skills program, that launched in partnership with the U.S. Army Soldier for Life – Transition Assistance Program at Fort Riley, **KANSAS**WORKS, K-State University and the USO Pathfinder Program at Fort Riley. The Manufacturing Institute created the Heroes Make America program to build a pipeline from military to manufacturing careers for transitioning service members. Participants earn many certifications to include 14 college credits, 9 industry-specific certifications, a CPT Plus Certificate, and a Certificate of Competition from the Manufacturing Institute. Individual military members and family members that complete the course will receive a Production Technician Certification The students also complete a personal finance course, Strengths Finder Assessment, resume and cover letter review, and receive interview prep. A major advantage of the program is several manufacturing plants tours, networking opportunities, and live interviews.

KANSASWORKS **Partnership with Fort Leavenworth and Military OneSource Directive** During the quarter the State Veterans Employment Manager, Regional Operations Manager for LWDB III met with the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS), Soldier-for-Life, Army Community Services and Fort Leavenworth Public Affairs Office. The discussion revolved around Transitioning Service Members and military spouses' employment with the area, a directive from the Army Chief of Staff directed Fort Leavenworth to participate in a pilot program with the assistance of **KANSAS**WORKS staff and the installation. Commerce has posted a position to fill this gap and assist with this program and Soldier for Life Transition Assistance Program (SFL-TAP).
For the quarter, Veteran Employment Representatives assisted **17** Transitioning Service Members and **9** military spouses, located in the Army Community Service Center.

Hilton Honors Military Program is aimed at giving back to Veterans, military service personnel and their spouses. In partnership with the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) and the Kansas Department of Commerce/JVSG, Hilton Honors is donating points to eligible transitioning service members, Veterans, and military spouses. By becoming an Honors Military member, the Veteran and eligible individuals will receive a 100,000-point donation to support travel related to their job-search activities.

Kansas enrolled **8** eligible clients to take advantage of this program so that may be able to stay free or a reduced rate throughout Hiltons across the country. Workforce Staff also promote this program for the entire state of Kansas based on the locality and employment opportunities in Kansas, of the **8** eligible clients **4** are remaining in Kansas. Additionally, with this program we have seen an influx of more servicemembers and families remaining in Kansas.

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP (RA)

CLOSE OF STATE APPRENTICESHIP EXPANSION (SAE) GRANT
During the quarter the State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) Grant closed on October 31st, 2020. Kansas Department of Commerce has been working this quarter to prepare all of the required close out grant activities for our final close out report to US Department of Labor.

State Apprenticeship Expansion 2020 Grant
The "Building State Capacity to Expand Apprenticeship through Innovation" otherwise referred to as State Apprenticeship Expansion 2020 (SAE 2020) grant has proven to be beneficial. The award amount is $449,600.00 and the Period of Performance is from July 1, 2020 thru June 30, 2023. The goal of these funds is to expand the national Registered Apprenticeship system by funding baseline activities that improve States' ability to serve, improve, and strategically scale the Registered Apprenticeship Program model. During the quarter Kansas Department of Commerce worked on the development and execution of various trainings with Registered Apprenticeship Program Specialist, Peers such as Kansas Department of Commerce Business Service Teams and Veteran staff. Registered Apprenticeship training and materials include Standards Development Training and Aids, New Desk Aids, Business Strategy and Communication training and flyers for supporting Business Outreach.

Registered Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) Grant
During the quarter activities on the RASEG (ASE) grant have continued, Registered Apprenticeship Specialists continue their work to expand the recruitment of new sponsors, development of new programs, new occupations, screening and enrollment of registered apprentices. Registered Apprenticeship Sponsors continue working with Registered Apprenticeship staff to enroll their apprentices in **KANSAS**WORKS.com for reimbursement of a portion of the cost of the Related Technical Instruction for each apprentice enrolled through this project. During the quarter a new occupation was registered for a Water Treatment Plant Operator with a new sponsor. The Registered Apprenticeship Program Specialist participate in Bi-weekly Registered Apprenticeship Team calls to provide updates, share best practices and discuss and training needs.

NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK
Governor Kelly signed a proclamation during National Apprenticeship week November 8th – 14th, 2020. Registered Apprenticeship was promoted and celebrated throughout the state through various social media platforms. Registered Apprenticeship success stories were also share, please see a few below.

Registered Apprenticeship SUCCESS STORIES

CROSSLAND CONSTRUCTION
Charles Smith started with Crossland Construction as an apprentice and successfully completed his program, upon completion Charles became a mentor for future apprentices, and was recently promoted to Assistant Superintendent. His peers describe him as a "learner" and identified him as a good fit for the program. Charles accredits his success to hard work and effort and to Crossland for "giving me the opportunity to learn and challenge myself and better myself". Crossland Construction has utilized Registered Apprenticeship in Kansas, as a result it has lowered their

turnover rate, increase the caliber of employees and made them better apt to find new, qualified employees for a successful future.

PEASLEE TECH
Peaslee Tech has experience increased business participation serving as an "Intermediary" Registered Sponsor. Peaslee Tech started their registered program with one occupation, working with one business. As of today, Peaslee Tech has 9 registered occupations serving several employers with a total of 89 registered apprentices.

USD 457
USD 457 in Garden City has a Registered Elementary Teacher Apprenticeship. This Registered Apprenticeship has given a lot of opportunity to paras to be able to obtain a teaching certificate upon program completion when they otherwise may not have had this opportunity. As of today, 24 apprentices have been enrolled into USD 457's Elementary Teacher Apprenticeship.

Registered Apprenticeship continues to provide an opportunity to build a structured training system that allows employers to grow their own, a system that helps meet workforce and retention needs. The related technical instruction for these programs may be provided through community or technical colleges, correspondence, online, distance learning, contract vendors and/or apprenticeship training centers.

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SCSEP)
The entirety of the first and second quarter saw participants on paid break due to the agency-imposed quarantine orders based on the pandemic, the nature of participants as 'high-risk, as well as most host agencies closing their doors. No participants were able to return to work. We continue to monitor the situation monthly to determine when normal operations can occur.

SCSEP staff were able to assure six participants obtained unsubsidized employment in the latest quarter. The fact that SCSEP works with participants who have multiple barriers, this is considered a significant success.

OLDER KANSANS EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (OKEP)
OKEP providers are seeing a continual slowing of services during the 2nd quarter of FY2021. Case managers are actively reaching out by phone to participants to continue limited follow-up services and are conducting one-on-one interviews as requested. Laptops are available in many offices throughout the state and participants are encouraged to attend training and ZOOM meetings. OKEP providers anticipate a slow reopening of offices in the third quarter as the pandemic slows and the COVID vaccine is administered.

The Older Workers Task Force has been meeting and will elect a new slate of officers. Commerce has also begun hosting quarterly meetings with OKEP providers to learn best practices from each other and receive training from Commerce staff.

Kansas RETAIN – Retaining Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network
In September 2018, the Kansas Department of Commerce, in partnership with the Workforce Alliance of South-Central Kansas, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and the Susan B. Allen (SBA) Memorial Hospital in Butler County, was awarded $1,877,823 for a RETAIN Phase I planning grant from the US Department of Labor. This demonstration project will test the impact of early intervention strategies that improve stay-at-work/return-to-work (SAW/RTW) outcomes of individuals, living or working in Butler County, who experience a debilitating injury or illness while employed. The project will address both on-the-job and off-the-job injuries and illnesses. Central to this project is the early coordination of health care and employment-related supports and services to help injured or ill workers remain in the workforce. The Kansas RETAIN Project has been branded **RETAINWOR*KS***.

- The Kansas Department of Commerce has received a one-year grant extension from USDOL/ODEP, extending the period of performance through March 30, 2021, with additional funding of $425,934 for a total of $2,303,757.
- There are currently 62 participants enrolled (54 Treatment, 8 control) with referrals from more than 30 medical providers. 30 participants have returned to work.
- The RETAIN Medical System Partner has changed from Susan B. Allen Memorial Hospital, ending March 30, 2020, to Ascension Via Christi – Wichita, effective April 1, 2020 through March 30, 2021.
- A no-cost extension request has been submitted to USDOL requesting a 9-month extended period of performance through December 31, 2021.

A Phase 2 Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) was published in October 2020 with applications due February 16, 2021. The awards are expected to be announced in April 2021. Funding will be competitively awarded to five of the eight Phase 1 participating states, for 42 months from April 1, 2021 through March 31, 2025. If awarded, Kansas will expand the demonstration project Statewide, collaborating with all five Local Workforce Areas and five Regional Medical Systems.

WORKFORCE/CORRECTIONS INITIATIVES

Alternative Workforce Specialist serves as the liaison between Kansas Dept. of Commerce and Kansas Dept. of Corrections to work Statewide at increasing opportunities for individuals involved in the criminal justice system to rejoin the workforce in sustainable living wage employment. Statewide involvement in initiatives this quarter includes:

1) Career planning with Certified graduates of the Washburn Tech program at Kansas Juvenile Correctional Facility (KJCC);
2) Serving as co-chair of a subcommittee of the Community Health Improvement Plan in Wyandotte County through the Wyandotte Economic Development Council to strategize on decreasing barriers for individuals with criminal history to rejoin the workforce;
3) Regular meetings with Dept. of Corrections Job Specialist Manager to discuss goals and connections needed to foster employment for individuals exiting the correctional facilities;
4) Providing training for workforce professionals and partner agencies on employment support specific to individuals involved in the justice system;
5) Providing training to Dept. of Commerce Business Retention and Expansion team and Olathe Chamber of Commerce about the benefits to businesses for including justice-involved individuals into their workforce;
6) Reviewed Kansas Statutes Annotated and Kansas Administrative Regulations for statutes/regulations that limit employment/licensure of justice-involved individuals in Kansas;
7) Conducting research to identify emerging opportunities for employment and assistance for individuals with justice system involvement to reenter the workforce.

See below for data from the Washburn Tech Program at KJCC. COVID-19 caused the classroom training to shut down resulting in a reduced number of participants in Spring 2020. Due to COVID-19, administration limited individuals entering KJCC and restricted movement within the facility resulting in no earned credentials during the Fall 2020 session.

	Unique Students	Credit Hours Enrolled	Credit Hours Completed	Credentials Earned	OJT Students
Summer 2018	44	355	334	47	7
Fall 2018	100	1,307	1,257	145	9
Spring 2019	120	1,098	1,059	213	6
Summer 2019	89	436	424	37	7
Fall 2019	117	1,261	1,174	141	7
Spring 2020	94	780	379	5	11
Summer 2020	10	60	60	89	0
Fall 2020	52	448	8	0	2

KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

Tyson Foods selected the Garden City Career Connections Academy to participate in their Upward Pathways Pilot. This pilot will introduce students/Tyson employees to an Integrated Education and Training program focused on Industrial Maintenance, resulting in skill attainment and professional advancement for participants as well as a workplace credential. The U.S. Department of Education selected Hutchinson Community College and Kansas City Kansas Community College as finalists in the Rethink Adult Education Challenge. Both programs focus their efforts on pre-apprenticeships in the Advanced Manufacturing sector, with KCKCC working specifically with offenders at Lansing Correctional Facility.

VIRTUAL JOB FAIRS

- February 23, 24 & 25, 2021
- March 23, 24 & 25, 2021

1

REINTRODUCTIONS FROM 2020:

STAR Bonds – HB 2529

- Five-year extension of the program
- Conduct a third-party feasibility study
- Implement mandatory visitor tracking
- Mandatory ROI and cannibalization study
- Secretary must approve land acquisition
- Increase overall threshold of projects to $75 million in both capital investment and annual sales
- Adding headquarters as an eligible attraction
- Make the program more useful to rural communities

Angel Investor Program – HB 2045

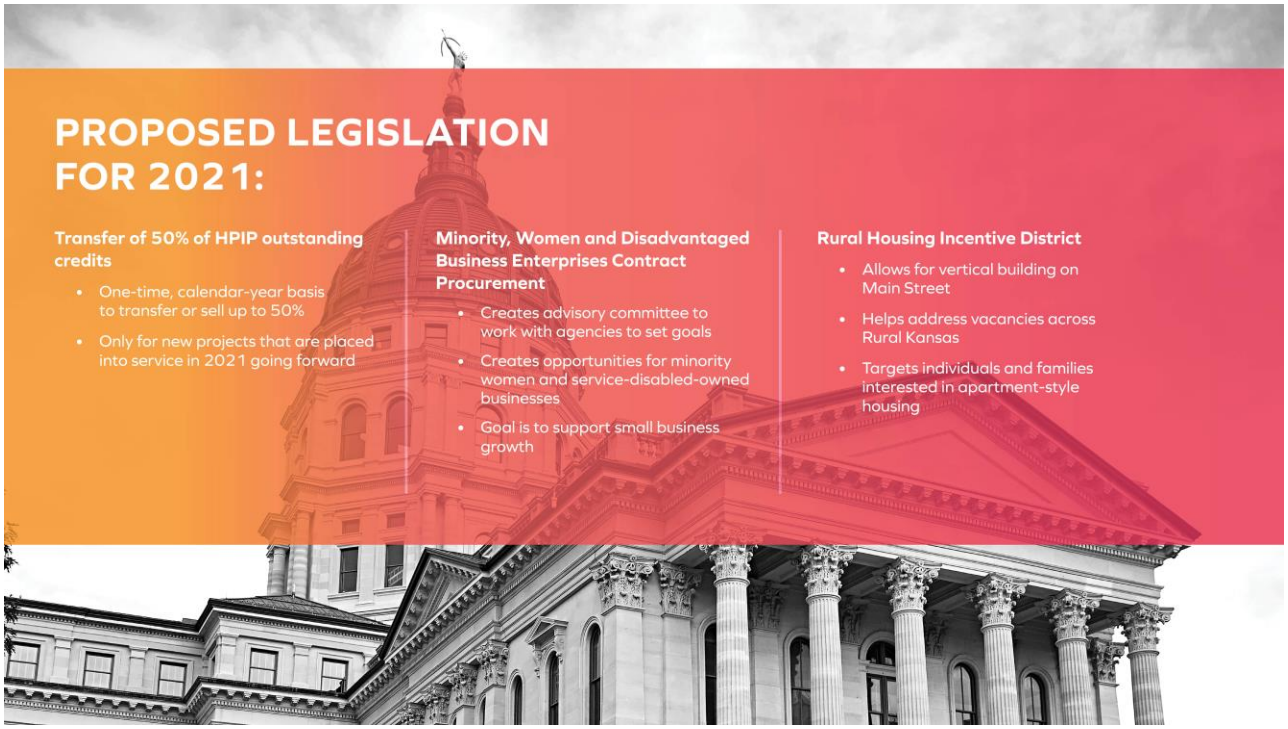
- Five-year extension of the program
- Grow appropriation of program from $6 million to $8 million
- Allow companies to negotiate with investors how much percentage in credit they receive for their investment (up to 50%)
- Allow investors to cap out at $100,000 in credits per company and $350,000 per year
- Changing the standard for credit transfers based on Tax Clearance
- Reduce clawback of non-bioscience companies down to five years

KIT/KIR and HPIP – HB 2702

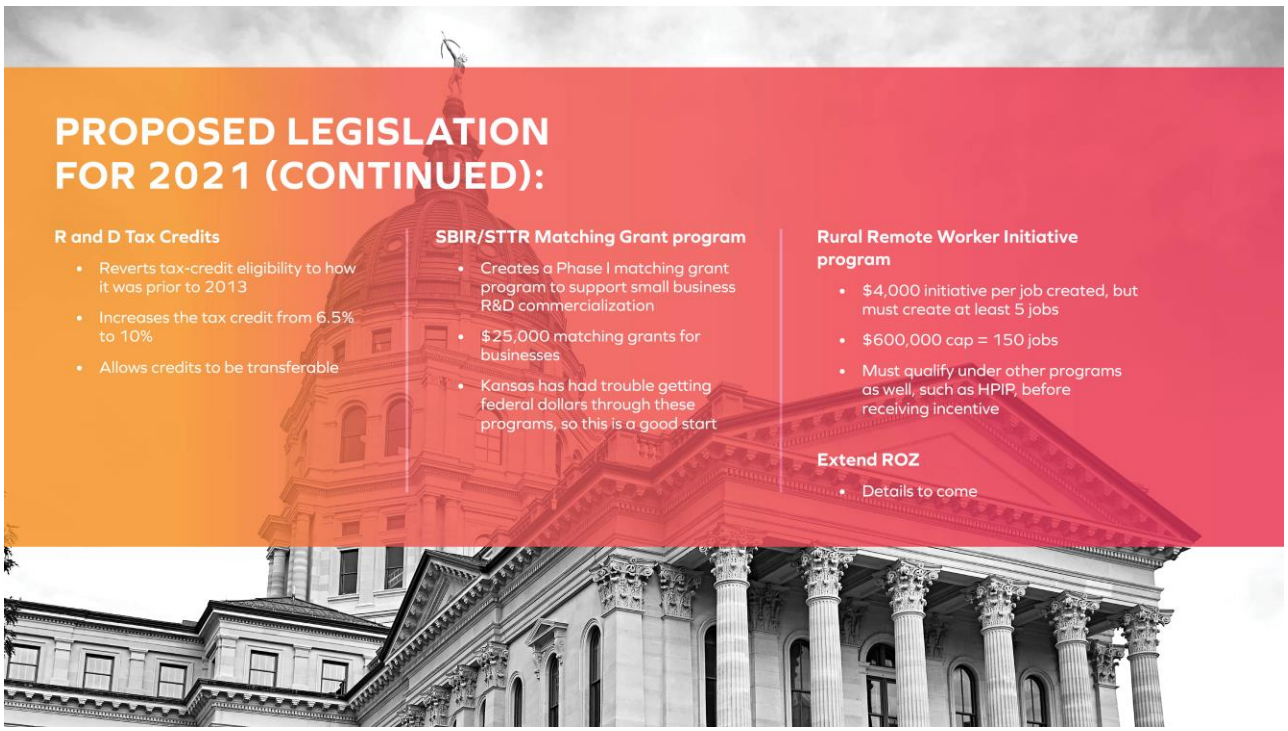
(removing the linkage between HPIP and KIT/KIR)

- KIT and KIR will no longer be used to help companies qualify for HPIP
- Eliminate the 2% training requirement for HPIP certification and recertification

2


PROPOSED LEGISLATION FOR 2021:
Transfer of 50% of HPIP outstanding credits
• One-time, calendar-year basis to transfer or sell up to 50%
• Only for new projects that are placed into service in 2021 going forward
Minority, Women and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises Contract Procurement
• Creates advisory committee to work with agencies to set goals
• Creates opportunities for minority women and service-disabled-owned businesses
• Goal is to support small business growth
Rural Housing Incentive District
• Allows for vertical building on Main Street
• Helps address vacancies across Rural Kansas
• Targets individuals and families interested in apartment-style housing

3


PROPOSED LEGISLATION FOR 2021 (CONTINUED):
R and D Tax Credits
• Reverts tax-credit eligibility to how it was prior to 2013
• Increases the tax credit from 6.5% to 10%
• Allows credits to be transferable
SBIR/STTR Matching Grant program
• Creates a Phase I matching grant program to support small business R&D commercialization
• $25,000 matching grants for businesses
• Kansas has had trouble getting federal dollars through these programs, so this is a good start
Rural Remote Worker Initiative program
• $4,000 initiative per job created, but must create at least 5 jobs
• $600,000 cap = 150 jobs
• Must qualify under other programs as well, such as HPIP, before receiving incentive
Extend ROZ
• Details to come

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KANSASWORKS State Board

February 10, 2021

2021-2023 Strategic Plan Goal Team Updates

KANSAS ONE

1

Goal Area: Kansas One
Goal Team Lead: Darrell Pankratz

Draft Goal Statement: Advance one KANSASWORKS system

- Currently working to refine the following strategies:
  - Develop website standards in order to provide consistent state-level program and service information for job seeker and business customers
  - Align and integrate state-level employment and training programs to improve job seeker and business customer experience and reduce duplication
- Planning third meeting in late February / early March to finalize strategies and identify action areas and potential progress indicators

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KANSASWORKS State Board

February 10, 2021

2021-2023 Strategic Plan Goal Team Updates

Upskilling

1

Goal Area: Upskilling
Goal Team Lead: Neelima Parasker

Draft Goal Statement: Coordinate workforce planning, investments, and operations to build Kansans' knowledge, skills and abilities to meet industry needs and advance in a career in their home state.

Developing strategies for three priority areas:

- Improved labor market information access and quality to inform service delivery
  - Plan to ensure comprehensive access to and analysis of LMI
- Strategic business engagement
  - Plan for local capacity building on strategic and integrated, cross-partner business engagement
- Understanding of and access to career pathways
  - Mapping of career pathways
  - Ensure local customers and staff have knowledge of and access to existing and future career pathways tools

Planning third meeting to finalize strategies and identify action areas and potential progress indicators

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KANSASWORKS State Board

February 10, 2021

2021-2023 Strategic Plan Goal Team Updates

Virtual Services

1

Goal Area: Virtual Services
Goal Team Lead: Daniel Decker

Draft Goal Statement: Coordinate and integrate efforts to build virtual service delivery capacity and outcomes for system staff and customers

- Currently working to refine the following strategies:
  - Assess the current KS landscape around virtual workforce service delivery
  - Conduct research on best-practice virtual services tools and models from around the country
  - Implement cross-partner staff training on virtual service delivery
  - Lead efforts to build customers' digital/technology literacy skills
  - Enhance virtual customer outreach, communications, and engagement strategies/tools
  - Lead efforts to assist business customers with finding and managing virtual workers
- Planning third meeting in late February / early March to finalize strategies and identify action areas and potential progress indicators

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