KANSAS PYS 2024-2027

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OVERVIEW

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

OPTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A STATE PLAN

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

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

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

- Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
- Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))
- Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)
- Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)
- Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))
- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.)) [1]

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

HOW STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS ARE ORGANIZED

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

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

ongoing program development and coordination. Operational planning elements include:

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

When responding to Unified or Combined State Plan requirements, States must identify specific strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations.[2] States must develop strategies that look beyond strategies for the general population and develop approaches that also address the needs of target populations. Use of links to external websites and documents is permitted within the State Plan narrative submission, if such links remain active and adhere to Section 508 accessibility requirements.

Paperwork Reduction Act: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) provides that an agency may not conduct, and no person is required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated to be 86 hours per state; including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Responding to this collection is required to obtain or retain the Federal grant benefit. In addition, responses to this information collection are public, and the agencies offer no assurances of confidentiality. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Workforce Investment, and reference OMB control number 1205-0522. Note: Please do not return the completed plan to this address.

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

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

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

Unified State Plan. This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs.

Combined State Plan. This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs, as well as one or more of the optional Combined State Plan partner programs identified below.

This is a combined plan

COMBINED PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM(S)

Indicate which Combined Plan partner program(s) the state is electing to include in the plan.

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

No

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)

No

Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))

No

Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))

No

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))

Yes

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)

Yes

Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)

No

Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))

Yes

Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development

No

Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))

No

B. PLAN INTRODUCTION OR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Unified or Combined State Plan may include an introduction or executive summary. This element is optional.

WIOA Core Programs are administered by Kansas Department of Commerce (Commerce), Kansas Department for Children and Families (KDCF) and Kansas Board of Regents KBOR). WIOA Titles I and III, in addition to Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers, Jobs for

Veterans State Grant Program and the Senior Community Services Program are overseen, monitored and/or implemented by Commerce staff.

The **KANSAS**WORKS State Board (KWSB) developed a four-year Strategic Plan, which is included in this document, and which is reflected throughout the 2024-2027 Kansas WIOA State Plan. While the previous KWSB strategic plan was successfully implemented, the state's workforce development system will continue to implement those existing strategies in addition to new strategies developed in the new KWSB Strategic Plan.

Since the original submission of the Kansas PYS 2024-2027 WIOA State Plan, the structure of the Local Workforce Development Areas has changed. At the request of the Chief Elected Officials Board of former Local Areas I and II, the two LWDAs merged effective January 1, 2025, as approved by the Governor after consultation with the KWSB. The merger plan was posted for public comment, all of which were considered before the merger was complete. Later in 2025, at the request of the Chief Elected Officials Boards of the newly formed Local Area and the Local Area of Southeast Kansas, the Governor approved, again after consultation with the KWSB and public comment, a second merger effective October 1, 2025, reducing the number of Local Workforce development Areas from five to three. The new Local Area Designation Map is included **on page** of this modified plan. The three Local Workforce Development Boards are now Kansas WorkforceONE, Workforce Partnership and Workforce Alliance.

The Kansas State Plan Management Team (SPMT), comprised of staff from Commerce, KDCF, KBOR and Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) Labor Market Information, meet on a regular basis to craft the goals, strategies and planned outcomes found in this plan. Traditionally, the WIOA State Plan incorporates input from customers and evaluations based on customers. For this modified State Plan, the SPMT surveyed state and partner staff for additional points of view and have included those impressions in forming the plan. Further, the SPMT has begun to determine how to implement the significant guidance and opportunities provided in *America's Talent Strategy: Building the Workforce for the Golden Age* and Waivers found in TEGL No. 05-25. The SPMT has also involved the Career Technical Education/Perkins V State Director in the update of the state plan, coordinating details of ongoing and planned collaboration between agencies and programs.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a Strategic Planning Elements section that analyzes the State's current economic environment and identifies the State's overall vision for its workforce development system. The required elements in this section allow the State to develop data-driven goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce and to identify successful strategies for aligning workforce development programs to support economic growth. Unless otherwise noted, all Strategic Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs. Where requirements identify the term "populations", these must include individuals with barriers to employment as defined at WIOA Section 3. This includes displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals. Additional

populations include veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions, economic development strategies, and labor market in which the State's workforce system and programs will operate.

1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

A. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

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

I. EXISTING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

II. EMERGING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

III. EMPLOYERS' EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

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

Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis

Economic Analysis

This section will include analysis of trends in Kansas, including it's three Local Workforce Development Areas. Due to the limited time between Plan Guidance and its due date, analysis is updated for the state as a whole rather than by LWDA. A description of each LWDA is provided as context for the broader statewide analysis.

1.

a. Kansas WorkforceONE consists of 96 counties in western, north central, north east, and southeast Kansas. Most of this LWDA is rural. The largest cities in this region are Salina, Hutchinson, Garden City, Dodge City, Hays, Topeka, Lawrence, Manhattan, Junction City, Emporia and Pittsburg.

b. Workforce Partnership contains the three largest counties on the Kansas side of the Kansas City Metropolitan Statistical Area: Johnson, Leavenworth, and Wyandotte counties. The largest cities in this region are Overland Park, Kansas City, Olathe, Shawnee, and Lenexa.

c. Workforce Alliance contains six counties in south central Kansas and contains most of the Wichita Metropolitan Statistical Area. Wichita, the largest city in Kansas, is the primary urban area in this local area. There are six other cities in

Local Area IV with at least 10,000 residents. Four are located within the Wichita metro area: Derby, Andover, El Dorado, and Haysville; and two are in Cowley County: Winfield and Arkansas City.

(i) Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Current labor demand by Kansas employers is reflected in job openings data. The following information is based on online job postings collected and summarized by Geographic Solutions, Inc.

Industry

Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services; Online Job Advertisements Compiled by Geographic Solutions, Inc

Statewide

The health care and social assistance sector recorded the most job openings by far in 2025, with 63,002 job openings. General medical and surgical hospitals accounted for 30,773 of these openings, while continuing care retirement communities accounted for 4,750, and homes for the elderly accounted for 2,906.

The educational services sector recorded 28,617 job openings, with the elementary and secondary schools subsector accounting for 17,786. Colleges, universities, and professional schools had 6,459 job openings.

Retail trade recorded the third highest number of job openings in 2025, with 26,748. Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores had 4,404 openings, and department stores had 2,663 openings.

The manufacturing sector recorded 26,637 job openings.

The professional, scientific, and technical services sector recorded 25,136 job openings. Engineering services had 6,636 openings, custom computer programming services had 4,263 openings, and marketing consulting services had 3,596 openings.

Three additional industry sectors recorded more than 10,000 job openings in 2025: administrative and support and waste management and remediation services, public administration, and accommodation and food services.

Occupational

Source: Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services; Online Job Advertisements Compiled by Geographic Solutions, Inc

Statewide

The healthcare practitioners and technical occupational group had the most job openings by far in Kansas, with 79,601 job openings advertised in 2025.

The management occupational group had 27,957 job openings, while the office and administrative support occupational group had 18,348.

Seven additional occupational groups had over 10,000 job openings in 2025: sales and related; educational instruction and library; transportation and material moving; healthcare support; production; business and financial operations; installation, maintenance, and repair occupations.

Registered nurses topped the list of job openings by occupation in Kansas, with 42,397 job openings. This was followed by customer service representatives with 6,049 job openings, and retail salespersons with 5,018.

(ii) Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Industries and occupations with the highest projected growth rates can be an indicator of emerging demand. The following analysis is based on data from the long-term projections program, which assumes full employment in the projection year. This means that the projections are forecasting structural changes in the economy rather than predicting changes in the business cycle. Projections use 2022 as the base year and project employment for 2032.

Industry

Source: Labor Market Information Division of the Kansas Department of Labor and USDOL Employment & Training Administration; Employment Projections

Statewide

Statewide, the health care and social assistance industry sector is projected to grow the fastest, adding 16,847 jobs and growing by 8.2% over the 2022-2032 projection period. This major industry sector consists of four underlying subsectors: ambulatory health care services; hospitals; nursing and residential care facilities; and social assistance. Of these subsectors, the fastest rate of growth is projected to be in social assistance, growing 13.2%, and adding 4,790 jobs over the 10-year period. However, most of the numerical growth in the health care and social assistance industry sector is projected to be in the ambulatory health care services subsector, which is expected to grow by 11.6%, adding 7,190 jobs.

The second fastest growing industry sector is projected to be agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; this industry sector is expected to grow by 8.0% and add 1,005 jobs over the 10-year period. This sector is comprised of five underlying subsectors; of these, crop production is projected to grow the fastest, growing 9.3% and adding 363 jobs. The most numerical growth for this sector comes from the animal production and aquaculture subsector, growing 7.3% and adding 542 jobs.

The third fastest growing industry sector is projected to be professional, scientific, and technical services; this industry sector is expected to grow by 7.8% and add 5,860 jobs over the 10-year period.

There are four subsectors that are expected to add at least 100 jobs and grow by more than 20.0% over the 2022-2032 projection period: electrical equipment, appliance, and component manufacturing (2,033 jobs, 57.9%); support activities for transportation (1,658 jobs, 22.9%); computing infrastructure providers, data processing, web hosting, and related services (604 jobs, 24.4%); and beverage and tobacco product manufacturing (470 jobs, 25.7%).

Kansas WorkforceONE

In the Kansas WorkforceONE region, the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting sector is projected to grow the fastest, adding 969 jobs and growing by 8.2% over the 2022-2032 projection period. The fastest growing subsector, crop production, is expected to grow by 9.5% and add 337 jobs over the 10-year projection period, while the subsector with the largest numerical change, animal production and aquaculture, is expected to grow 7.6% and add 542 jobs.

The second fastest growing industry sector is projected to be professional, scientific, and technical services; this industry sector is expected to grow by 5.6% and add 1,149 jobs over the 10-year period.

The third fastest growing industry sector is projected to be health care and social assistance; this industry sector is expected to grow by 4.3% and add 3,718 jobs over the 10-year period.

There are six subsectors that are expected to add at least 50 jobs and grow by more than 10.0% over the 2022-2032 projection period: social assistance (1,834 jobs, 10.9%); fabricated metal product manufacturing (1,115 jobs, 12.7%); securities, commodity contracts, and other financial investments and related activities (200 jobs, 13.4%); support activities for transportation (177 jobs, 12.4%); beverage and tobacco product manufacturing (147 jobs, 24.0%); and computing infrastructure providers, data processing, web hosting, and related services (70 jobs, 13.8%).

Workforce Alliance

In the Workforce Alliance region, the health care and social assistance industry sector is projected to grow the fastest, adding 4,407 jobs and growing by 9.7% over the 2022-2032 projection period. The health care and social assistance industry sector is made up of four underlying subsectors; of these, the ambulatory health care services subsector is expected to grow the fastest and add the most jobs, growing by 13.9% and adding 2,367 jobs over the 10-year projection period. This is followed by the social assistance subsector, which is expected to grow by 12.9% and add 1,182 jobs.

The second fastest growing industry sector is projected to be professional, scientific, and technical services; this industry sector is expected to grow by 8.7% and add 1,184 jobs over the 2022-2032 projection period.

The third fastest growing industry sector is projected to be transportation and warehousing; this industry sector is expected to grow by 8.1% and add 958 jobs over the 10-year period.

There are seven subsectors that are expected to add at least 100 jobs and grow by more than 10.0% over the 2022-2032 projection period: ambulatory health care services (2,367 jobs, 13.9%); social assistance (1,182 jobs, 12.9%); nursing and residential care facilities (779 jobs, 10.2%); support activities for transportation (558 jobs, 25.3%); chemical manufacturing (159 jobs, 10.7%); transit and ground passenger transportation (131 jobs, 13.2%); and waste management and remediation services (128 jobs, 14.5%).

Workforce Partnership

In the Workforce Partnership region, the health care and social assistance industry sector is projected to grow the fastest, adding 8,719 jobs and growing by 11.9% over the 2022-2032 projection period. The health care and social assistance industry sector is made up of four underlying subsectors; of these, the social assistance subsector is expected to grow the fastest, with a projected increase of 17.3%, or 1,774 jobs. The ambulatory health care services subsector is expected to have the largest numerical change, adding 3,826 jobs, or 15.6%.

The second fastest growing industry sector is projected to be accommodation and food services; this industry sector is projected to grow by 9.4% and add 3,366 jobs over the 2022-2032 projection period. The fastest growing subsector is expected to be accommodation, including hotels and motels, which is expected to grow by 10.9% and add 274 jobs over the 10-year projection period. However, most of the numerical growth comes from food services and drinking places, growing 9.2% and adding 3,092 jobs.

The third fastest growing industry sector is projected to be manufacturing; this industry sector is expected to grow by 9.2% and add 3,253 jobs over the 10-year period. The manufacturing sector is comprised of twenty underlying subsectors: electrical equipment, appliance, and component manufacturing is expected to grow the fastest and add the most jobs over the 10-year period, growing by 194.4% and adding 1,958 jobs.

There are seven subsectors that are expected to add at least 100 jobs and grow by at least 15.0% over the 2022-2032 projection period: ambulatory health care services (3,826 jobs, 15.6%); electrical equipment, appliance, and component manufacturing (1,958 jobs, 194.4%); social assistance (1,774 jobs, 17.3%); support activities for transportation (923 jobs, 25.7%); securities, commodity contracts, and other financial investments and related activities (784 jobs,

17.1%); computing infrastructure providers, data processing, web hosting, and related services (491 jobs, 27.6%); and beverage and tobacco product manufacturing (279 jobs, 35.5%).

Occupational

Source: Labor Market Information Division of the Kansas Department of Labor and USDOL Employment & Training Administration; Employment Projections

Statewide

Statewide, the fastest growing occupational group from 2022 through 2032 is projected to be the healthcare and support occupational group. This group is projected to gain 8,717 jobs and grow by 13.3% over the 10-year period. The healthcare and support occupational group is made up of 17 detailed occupations; of these, home health and personal care aides is expected to grow the fastest and add the most jobs, growing by 21.6% and gaining 5,856 jobs over the 10-year period.

The second fastest growing occupational group is projected to be the computer and mathematical occupational group; this group is projected to grow by 10.9% and add 4,533 jobs over the 2022-2032 projection period. The computer and mathematical occupational group is made up of 20 detailed occupations; of these, data scientists is expected to grow the fastest over the 10-year period, growing 34.1% and adding 108 jobs. The occupation expected to add the most jobs in this occupational group is software developers, growing 23.1% and adding 2,902 jobs.

The third fastest growing occupational group is projected to be the community and social service occupational group; this group is projected to grow by 8.5% and add 1,692 jobs over the 2022-2032 projection period. The community and social service occupational group is made up of 17 detailed occupations; of these substance, abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors is expected to grow the fastest, adding 381 jobs and growing by 18.8%. The occupation expected to add the most jobs in this occupational group is social and human services assistants, growing 8.0% and adding 447 jobs.

There are 11 detailed occupations that are expected to add at least 200 jobs and grow by more than 20.0% over the 2022-2032 projection period: home health and personal care aides (5,856 jobs, 21.6%); cooks, restaurant (3,047 jobs, 25.8%); software developers (2,902 jobs, 23.1%); medical and health services managers (1,434 jobs, 28.1%); nurse practitioners (1,393 jobs, 43.1%); electrical, electronic, and electromechanical assemblers, except coil winders, tapers, and finishers (829 jobs, 24.5%); logisticians (660 jobs, 29.7%); information security analysts (308 jobs, 24.1%); taxi drivers (293 jobs, 28.8%); physician assistants (242 jobs, 27.0%); and wind turbine service technicians (214 jobs, 34.8%).

Kansas WorkforceONE

In the Kansas WorkforceONE region, the fastest growing occupational group from 2022 through 2032 is projected to be the computer and mathematical occupational group. This group is projected to gain 981 jobs and grow by 9.3% over the 10-year period. The computer and mathematical occupational group is made up of 20 detailed occupations; of these, software developers is expected to grow the fastest and add the most jobs, growing by 23.5% and gaining 674 jobs over the 10-year period.

The second fastest growing occupational group is projected to be the healthcare support occupational group; this group is projected to grow by 9.2% and add 2,720 jobs over the 2022-2032 projection period. The healthcare support occupational group is made up of 16 detailed occupations; of these, home health and personal care aides is expected to grow the fastest and

add the most jobs over the 10-year period, with a projected growth rate of 17.4% and gaining 2,210 jobs by 2032.

The third fastest growing occupational group is projected to be the community and social service occupational group; this group is projected to grow by 6.3% and add 619 jobs over the 2022-2032 projection period. The community and social service occupational group is made up of 17 detailed occupations; of these substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors is expected to grow the fastest, adding 143 jobs and growing by 15.5%. Social and human service assistants is the detailed occupation from this group projected to gain the most jobs, growing by 6.0% and adding 168 jobs.

There are seven detailed occupations that are expected to add at least 50 jobs and grow by more than 20.0% over the 2022-2032 projection period: cooks, restaurant (1,089 jobs, 23.0%); software developers (674 jobs, 23.5%); medical and health services managers (473 jobs, 23.5%); nurse practitioners (457 jobs, 36.2%); wind turbine service technicians (149 jobs, 33.9%); physician assistants (84 jobs, 21.5%); and health specialties teachers, postsecondary (73 jobs, 21.7%).

Workforce Alliance

In the Workforce Alliance region, the fastest growing occupational group from 2022 through 2032 is projected to be the healthcare support occupational group. This group is projected to gain 2,252 jobs and grow by 14.8% over the 10-year period. The healthcare support occupational group is made up of 16 detailed occupations; of these, occupational therapy assistants is expected to grow the fastest over the 10-year period, with a projected growth rate of 26.7% and a gain of 35 jobs by 2032. However, the occupation with the largest projected job gains over the period is home health and personal care aides, growing 22.2% and adding 1,452.

The second fastest growing occupational group is projected to be the architecture and engineering occupational group; this group is projected to grow by 10.7% and add 900 jobs over the 2022-2032 projection period. The architecture and engineering occupational group is made up of 34 detailed occupations; of these, material engineers is expected to grow the fastest over the 10-year period, with a projected growth rate of 21.9% and a gain of 37 jobs. Aerospace engineers are expected to add the most jobs, growing 15.0% with 265 jobs.

The third fastest growing occupational group is projected to be the computer and mathematical occupational group; this group is projected to grow by 9.7% and add 712 jobs over the 2022-2032 projection period. The computer and mathematical occupational group is made up of 18 detailed occupations; of these, data scientists is expected to grow the fastest, adding 30 jobs and growing by 44.1%. Software developers is expected to have the largest number of jobs added, growing 21.7% and adding 439 jobs.

There are 7 detailed occupations that are expected to add at least 150 jobs and grow by more than 20.0% over the 2022-2032 projection period: home health and personal care aides (1,452 jobs, 22.2%); cooks, restaurant (781 jobs, 26.5%); industrial machinery mechanics (456 jobs, 22.2%); software developers (439 jobs, 21.7%); nurse practitioners (387 jobs, 47.3%); medical and health services managers (282 jobs, 28.0%); and logisticians (158 jobs, 27.3%).

Workforce Partnership

In the Workforce Partnership region, the fastest growing occupational group from 2022 through 2032 is projected to be the healthcare support occupational group. This group is projected to gain 3,406 jobs and grow by 17.3% over the 10-year period. The healthcare support occupational group is made up of 17 detailed occupations; of these, home health and personal care aides is expected to grow the fastest and gain the most jobs at 28.1% and 1,956.

The second fastest growing occupational group is projected to be the community and social service occupational group; this group is projected to grow by 12.7% and add 726 jobs over the 2022-2032 projection period. The community and social service occupational group is made up of 17 detailed occupations; of these, substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors is expected to grow the fastest over the 10-year period at 20.9%, adding 173 jobs. The detailed occupation expected to add the most jobs by 2032 is social and human service assistants, adding 174 jobs and growing by 12.4%.

The third fastest growing occupational group is projected to be the computer and mathematical occupational group; this group is projected to grow by 12.1% and add 2,860 jobs over the 2022-2032 projection period. The computer and mathematical occupational group is made up of 19 detailed occupations. The fastest growing occupation is data scientists at 33.3%, adding 67 jobs. The detailed occupation expected to add the most jobs by 2032 is software developers, adding 1,806 jobs and growing by 23.5%.

There are 12 detailed occupations that are expected to add at least 150 jobs and grow by more than 20.0% over the 2022-2032 projection period: home health and personal care aides (1,956 jobs, 28.1%); software developers (1,806 jobs, 23.5%); cooks, restaurant (1,191 jobs, 28.9%); electrical, electronic, and electromechanical assemblers, except coil winders, tapers, and finishers (932 jobs, 60.4%); medical and health services managers (669 jobs, 32.3%); nurse practitioners (567 jobs, 48.3%); personal financial advisors (530 jobs, 21.0%); logisticians (403 jobs, 34.8%); industrial engineers (246 jobs, 22.5%); industrial machinery mechanics (234 jobs, 21.5%); information security analysts (191 jobs, 26.0%); and substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors (173 jobs, 20.9%).

(iii) Employers' Employment Needs

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

Skills, tools and technology, certifications, and educational requirements are based on online job postings collected and summarized by Geographic Solutions, Inc. The skills, tools and technology, certifications and educational requirements reported in this section are associated with all jobs advertised in 2025 for Kansas.

Source: Labor Market Information Division of the Kansas Department of Labor; Online Job Advertisements Compiled by Geographic Solutions, Inc.

Across all industries and occupations

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were customer service, record keeping, developing new business, preventative maintenance, and inventory management.

The top advertised tools and technologies were Microsoft Office, Microsoft PowerPoint, motor vehicles, forklift, and personal protective equipment.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Registered Nurse (RN), Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS), Commercial Driver's License (CDL), and Basic Life Support (BLS).

High school diploma or equivalent was the most common educational level required, followed by bachelor's degree, and associate degree.

Industry

Accommodation and Food Services

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were customer service, flexibility, verbal communication skills, attention to detail, and leadership development.

The top advertised tools and technologies were cash registers, fryers, steam tables, Point of Sale (POS) systems, and gauges.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), ServSafe Alcohol certification, Registered Dietitian or Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN), Commercial Driver's License (CDL), and ServSafe Food Protection Manager Certification.

Administrative Support And Waste Management And Remediation Services

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were customer service, problem solving, attention to detail, interpersonal skills, and flexibility.

The top advertised tools and technologies were Microsoft Office, Microsoft PowerPoint, artificial intelligence software, personal protective equipment, and smart phones.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Registered Nurse (RN), Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS), Commercial Driver's License (CDL), Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), and Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN).

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, And Hunting

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were customer service, problem solving, organizational skills, working independently, and attention to detail.

The top advertised tools and technologies were Microsoft Office, forklifts, Microsoft PowerPoint, hand truck, and Microsoft Word.

Finally, the most commonly reported certification listed was Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

Educational Services

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were problem solving, flexibility, customer service, record keeping, and interpersonal skills.

The top advertised tools and technologies were Microsoft Office, fax machines, wheelchairs, Microsoft Word, and motor vehicles.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Commercial Driver's License (CDL), Registered Nurse (RN), First Aid Certification, and Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN).

Health Care And Social Assistance

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were customer service, flexibility, problem solving, decision making, and interpersonal skills.

The top advertised tools and technologies were Microsoft Office, foot controls, motor vehicles, personal protective equipment, and electronic medical record (EMR) systems.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Registered Nurse (RN), Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS), and Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA).

Manufacturing

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were problem solving, customer service, attention to detail, flexibility, and decision making.

The top advertised tools and technologies were Microsoft Office, personal protective equipment, forklifts, Microsoft PowerPoint, and safety glasses.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Commercial Driver's License (CDL), Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Certified Accounts Payable Specialist (CAPS), and Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

Professional, Scientific, And Technical Services

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were customer service, problem solving, attention to detail, working independently, and flexibility.

The top advertised tools and technologies were Microsoft Office, artificial intelligence software, motor vehicles, Microsoft PowerPoint, and Structured Query Language (SQL).

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Enrolled Agent, Certified Accounts Payable Specialist (CAPS), Registered Nurse (RN), and Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

Retail Trade

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were customer service, attention to detail, problem solving, inventory management, and flexibility.

The top advertised tools and technologies were cash registers, Microsoft Office, Point of Sale (POS) systems, forklifts, and cell phones.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Commercial Driver's License (CDL), Pharmacy Technician Certification (CPhT), ASE Parts Specialist – Automobile Parts Specialist (ASE P2), Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), and Certified Accounts Payable Specialist (CAPS).

Occupational

Business And Financial Operations

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were customer service, problem solving, attention to detail, interpersonal skills, and organizational skills.

The top advertised tools and technologies were Microsoft Office, Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word, and artificial intelligence software.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Enrolled Agent, Series 7 - General Securities Representative, SHRM Certified Professional (SHRM-CP), and Series 66 - Uniform Combined State Law.

Bachelor's degree was the most common educational level required, followed by high school diploma or equivalent, then associate degree.

Community And Social Service

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were problem solving, customer service, crisis intervention, flexibility, and interpersonal skills.

The top advertised tools and technologies were Microsoft Office, motor vehicles, Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, and wheelchairs.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW), Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Registered Nurse (RN), Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), and Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC).

Bachelor's degree was the most common educational level required, followed by high school diploma or equivalent, then master's degree.

Computer And Mathematical

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were problem solving, customer service, attention to detail, work independently, and conflict management.

The top advertised tools and technologies were Structured Query Language (SQL), artificial intelligence software, Microsoft Office, Python, and C#.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA), CompTIA A+ Certification, Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), CompTIA Security+ Certification, and CompTIA Network+ Certification.

Bachelor's degree was the most common educational level required, followed by high school diploma or equivalent, then associate degree.

Educational Instruction And Library

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were problem solving, interpersonal skills, flexibility, record keeping, and effectively present information.

The top advertised tools and technologies were Microsoft Office, wheelchair, fax machine, Microsoft PowerPoint, and protective clothing.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Registered Nurse (RN), Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential, First Aid Certification, and Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA).

Bachelor's degree was the most common educational level required, followed by high school diploma or equivalent, then master's degree.

Health Care Practitioners And Technical

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were customer service, flexibility, decision making, problem solving, and discharge planning.

The top advertised tools and technologies were Microsoft Office, electronic medical record (EMR) systems, foot controls, artificial intelligence software, and personal protective equipment.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Registered Nurse (RN), Advanced Cardiac Life Support Certification (ACLS), Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification, and Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN).

High school diploma or equivalent was the most common educational level required, followed by associate degree, and bachelor's degree.

Health Care Support

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were customer service, flexibility, problem solving, positive attitude, and medication administration.

The top advertised tools and technologies were personal protective equipment, Microsoft Office, crash carts, motor vehicles, and foot controls.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Registered Nurse (RN), Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification, and Certified Medical Assistant.

High school diploma or equivalent was the most common educational level required, followed by vocational school certificate, and associate degree.

Installation, Maintenance, And Repair

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were preventative maintenance, customer service, problem solving, welding, and work independently.

The top advertised tools and technologies were Microsoft Office, motor vehicles, personal protective equipment, forklift, and generators.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Commercial Driver's License (CDL), Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), and Journeyman Lineman.

High school diploma or equivalent was the most common educational level required, followed by associate degree, then bachelor's degree.

Management

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were customer service, problem solving, interpersonal skills, decision making, and attention to detail.

The top advertised tools and technologies were Microsoft Office, Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Word, motor vehicles, and artificial intelligence software.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Registered Nurse (RN), Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Commercial Driver's License (CDL), and Advanced Cardiac Life Support Certification (ACLS).

High school diploma or equivalent was the most common educational level required, followed by bachelor's degree, and associate degree.

Production

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were attention to detail, customer service, problem solving, welding, and work independently.

The top advertised tools and technologies were Microsoft Office, personal protective equipment, forklift, calipers, and gauges.

Finally, the most commonly reported certifications listed were Commercial Driver's License (CDL), Certified Welder, Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), and Certified Accounts Payable Specialist (CAPS).

High school diploma or equivalent was the most common educational level required, followed by bachelor's degree, then associate degree.

Sales And Related

The most commonly reported skills required of advertised jobs were customer service, problem solving, interpersonal skills, flexibility, and attention to detail.

The top advertised tools and technologies were cash registers, Microsoft Office, Point of Sale (POS) systems, forklifts, and Microsoft PowerPoint.

The most commonly reported certifications listed were Certified Accounts Payable Specialist (CAPS), ASE Parts Specialist – Automobile Parts Specialist (ASE P2), Certified Trust and Financial Advisor (CTFA), Commercial Driver's License (CDL), and Certified Insurance Service Representative (CISR).

High school diploma or equivalent was the most common educational level required, followed by bachelor's degree.

B. WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce in the State and within various state regions. Provide key analytical conclusions in aggregate as well as disaggregated among populations to identify potential disparities in employment and educational attainment and understand labor force conditions for items (i)-(iii) below. Populations analyzed must include individuals with barriers to employment described in the first paragraph of Section II. Analysis must include—

(i) Employment and Unemployment

Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the State.

(ii) Labor Market Trends

Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

(iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

This section will include an analysis of trends in Kansas. and it's three Local Workforce Development Areas.

Workforce Analysis

(I) Employment And Unemployment

Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the State.

Labor Force Statistics

Source: Labor Market Information Division of the Kansas Department of Labor and the Bureau of Labor Statistics; Local Area Unemployment Statistics and Current Population Survey

Statewide

There were 1,560,244 people in the Kansas labor force in 2025, an increase of 0.9% from 2024. The number of people working increased by 9,913, or 0.7%, to 1,500,466 in 2025. This level is the highest number of Kansans working since records began in 1976. The number of unemployed people in Kansas increased by 4,541, or 8.2%, to 59,778 in 2025. The number of unemployed has been increasing over the last three years, increasing by 18,524 since 2022. The unemployment rate increased 0.2 percentage points to 3.8% in 2025.

When compared to the U.S., growth in the Kansas labor force has fallen behind. The Kansas labor force has increased by 4.2% since 2016, lagging gains made in the U.S., which increased by 7.3%. During that same time, the Plains Region which includes Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota, experienced labor force growth of 4.0%.

Kansas has experienced an overall increasing trend in its labor force participation rate since 2022, recording small increases of 0.1 percentage points in 2022 and 2025, and 0.2 percentage points in 2023 and 2024. The labor force participation rate in Kansas increased to 67.2% in 2025. The Kansas labor force participation rate sits slightly above the 66.9% rate for the Plains Region, and well above the national rate of 62.4%.

Kansas saw an increase of 0.2 percentage points in its unemployment rate, increasing from 3.6% in 2024 to 3.8% in 2025. The 2025 rate is 0.7 percentage points lower than the historical average annual unemployment rate of 4.5%. Kansas' unemployment rate is slightly above the Plains Region's 3.6%, but lower than the national rate of 4.3%.

Kanas WorkforceONE

There were 730,347 people in the Kansas WorkforceONE region labor force in 2025, an increase of 0.8% from 2024. The number of people working increased by 4,124, or 0.6%, to 703,226, while the number of unemployed people in Kansas WorkforceONE increased by 1,885, or 7.5%, to 27,120 in 2025. The unemployment rate increased by 0.2 percentage points to 3.7% in 2025.

The Kansas WorkforceONE labor force saw decreases in the late 2010s and early 2020s. Starting in 2022, the labor force saw annual increases ranging from 0.3% to 1.4%. Despite these recent gains, the Kansas WorkforceONE labor force is still below its peak of 783,798 people in 2009. Since that time, the labor force has declined by 53,451 people, or 6.8%.

The Kansas WorkforceONE unemployment rate continues to trend upward after reaching a historic low of 2.6% in 2022, increasing to 3.7% in 2025. This rate is 0.1 percentage points lower than the statewide rate. The 2025 rate is 0.6 percentage points lower than the historical annual average of 4.3%.

Workforce Alliance

There were 344,795 people in the Workforce Alliance labor force in 2025, an increase of 3,772 people, or 1.1% from 2024. The number of people working increased by 3,001, or 0.9%, to 330,728 in 2025, and the number of unemployed people increased by 771, or 5.8%, to 14,067 in 2025. This is the highest number of employed residents on record for Workforce Alliance. The unemployment rate increased by 0.2 percentage points to 4.1% in 2025.

With the exception of decreases in 2021 and 2017, the labor force for Workforce Alliance has seen growth since 2013. Overall, the labor force in the Workforce Alliance region has increased by 30,362, or 9.7%, since 2013.

The Workforce Alliance unemployment rate continued to increase, reaching 4.1% in 2025. This rate is 0.3 percentage points higher than the statewide rate and 0.9 percentage points lower than the historical annual average of 5.0%.

Workforce Partnership

There were 485,104 people in the Workforce Partnership labor force in 2025, an increase of 1.0% from 2024. The number of people working increased by 2,787, or 0.6%, to 466,512 in 2025, and the number of unemployed people in the Workforce Partnership region increased by 1,882, or 11.3%, to 18,592 in 2025. The unemployment rate increased 0.3 percentage points to 3.8% in 2025.

The labor force in the Workforce Partnership region has increased every year since 2009, even in 2020 when labor markets were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Since 2009 the labor force has increased by 82,514, or 20.5%.

The Workforce Partnership unemployment rate continues to trend upward after reaching a historic low of 2.6% in 2022, increasing to 3.8% in 2025. This rate is the same as the statewide rate and 0.7 percentage points lower than the historical annual average of 4.5%.

Population and Labor Force Statistics by Disability Status

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020-2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Statewide

Statewide, it was estimated that 11.7% of Kansans aged 18-64 were living with a disability in 2024. The most common disability reported was cognitive difficulty (5.8%), followed by ambulatory difficulty (4.4%) and independent living difficulty (4.1%).

Estimates indicate that there were 107,964 Kansans aged 18-64 participating in the labor force in 2024 who had at least one disability. Of these, 98,622 were employed, while 9,342 were unemployed. Kansans with one or more disabilities experienced much higher rates of unemployment than those without, recording a rate of 8.7%, compared to 3.5% for those without a disability.

Kansas WorkforceONE

In Kansas WorkforceONE, it was estimated that 12.7% of residents aged 18-64 were living with a disability in 2024. The most common disability reported was cognitive difficulty (6.4%), followed by ambulatory difficulty (4.9%) and independent living difficulty (4.3%).

Estimates indicate that there were 55,321 Kansas WorkforceONE residents aged 18-64 participating in the labor force in 2024 who had at least one disability. Of these, 50,371 were employed, while 4,950 were unemployed. Kansas WorkforceONE residents with one or more disabilities experienced much higher rates of unemployment than those without, recording a rate of 8.9%, compared to 3.2% for those without a disability.

Workforce Alliance

In Workforce Alliance, it was estimated that 13.5% of residents aged 18-64 were living with a disability in 2024. The most common disabilities reported were cognitive difficulty (6.4%), followed by ambulatory difficulty (5.2%) and independent living difficulty (5.0%).

Estimates indicate that there were 26,417 Workforce Alliance residents aged 18-64 participating in the labor in 2024 who had at least one disability. Of these, 24,028 were employed, while 2,389 were unemployed. Workforce Alliance residents with one or more disabilities experienced much higher rates of unemployment than those without, recording a rate of 9.0%, compared to 4.3% for those without a disability.

Workforce Partnership

In Workforce Partnership, it was estimated that 8.7% of residents aged 18-64 were living with a disability in 2024. The most common disability reported was cognitive difficulty (4.3%), followed by ambulatory difficulty (3.0%) and independent living difficulty (3.0%).

Estimates indicate that there were 26,226 Workforce Partnership residents aged 18-64 participating in the labor force in 2024 who had at least one disability. Of these, 24,223 were employed, while 2,003 were unemployed. Workforce Partnership residents with one or more disabilities experienced much higher rates of unemployment than those without, recording a rate of 7.6%, compared to 3.3% for those without a disability.

Employment by Occupational Group for Disabled Kansans

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020-2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

When comparing employment by occupation, Kansans who have a disability are most commonly employed in management, business, science, and arts occupations. However, they are employed in these occupations at a much lower rate than Kansans without a disability, at 32.3% compared to 42.8% for those who do not have a disability. When comparing employment by service occupations, 20.9% of Kansans with a disability are employed in these occupations, compared to 14.9% for Kansans without a disability. Kansans with a disability are also employed in production, transportation, and material moving occupations at a higher rate of 18.4%, compared to 14.2% of Kansans without a disability.

Employment by Industry Sector for Disabled Kansans

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020-2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

When comparing employment by industry, disability status did not change the distribution significantly. Kansans with a disability were more commonly employed in retail trade; and arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services sectors than Kansans without a disability. Conversely, Kansans with a disability were less likely to be employed in professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services; and finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing sectors than Kansans without a disability.

(Ii) Labor Market Trends

Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

Population

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates

Statewide

The Kansas population was estimated at 2,970,606 in 2024. This represents an increase of 19,106 people. According to Census Bureau estimates, there were approximately 33,963 people born in Kansas during 2024, and there were approximately 28,731 deaths. Net migration in and out of Kansas indicated a population increase of 13,829 people. However, initial estimates for 2025 indicate a slowdown in population growth for Kansas and the U.S. largely due to a significant decline in net international migration.

From 2015 to 2024, Kansas' population has only increased 1.6%, amounting to average annual growth of 0.2%. Over this same time period, the Plains Region, which includes Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota, recorded population growth of 3.8%, while the U.S. recorded population growth of 5.7%.

The population pyramid for Kansas shows that there are two major peaks in the population, one centering on the 20-24 year-old age group, representing older members of Generation Z, and one centering on the 60-64 year-old age group, representing younger members of the baby boomer generation. The 20-24 year-old age group makes up the largest population in Kansas, accounting for 7.5% of the total population. The median age for Kansas was 37.7 years old in 2024.

For economic purposes, the two main age groups studied are the 16 and over population and the 25-54 population. The 16 and over population includes everyone who is eligible to be in the labor force, while 25-54 year-olds are considered prime age workers. The 16 and over population in Kansas increased by 24,862, or 1.1%, to 2,364,237 in 2024. The 25-54 year-old population also increased in 2024, growing by 9,680, or 0.9%, to 1,101,479.

Future labor force growth may be in jeopardy as the population under 25 experienced relatively slow growth, increasing by 1,088, or 0.1%. Declines were seen in all age groups under 15 years old. The 20-24 year-old age group, which would include recent college graduates, grew by 1.9%, or 4,045 people from 2023 to 2024.

Kansas WorkforceONE

The Kansas WorkforceONE population was estimated to be 1,410,122 in 2024. This represents an increase of 2,746 people, or 0.2%, over the year. With the exception of 2023 and 2024, the population in this region has seen a declining trend over the last ten years, losing 33,020 people since 2015, a decline of 2.3%.

The population pyramid for the Kansas WorkforceONE region shows that there are two major peaks in the population, one centering on the 20-24 year-old age group, representing members of Generation Z, and the other centering on the 60-64 year-old age group, representing younger members of the baby boomer generation. The 20-24 year-old age group has the largest population in this region, making up 8.6% of the total population; this was followed by the 15-19 year-old age group, which accounted for 7.6% of the Kansas WorkforceONE population. The 60-64 year-old age group represents 6.3% of the population.

For economic purposes, the two main age groups studied are the 16 and over population and the 25-54 population. The 16 and over population includes everyone who is eligible to be in the labor force, while 25-54 year-olds are considered prime age workers. The 16 and over population in this region increased by 5,963 people, or 0.5%, to 1,129,815 in 2024. The 25-54 year-old population also increased in 2024, increasing by 1,998 people, or 0.4%, to 489,187.

Future labor force growth may be in jeopardy as the population under 25 decreased by 203, or 0.0%. Declines were seen in all age groups under 15 years old. The 20-24 year-old age group, which would include recent college graduates, increased by 1,599 people, or 1.3%, to 121,458 from 2023 to 2024.

Workforce Alliance

The Workforce Alliance population was estimated to be 674,120 in 2024. This represents an increase of 6,107, or 0.9%, over the year. The population of this region has grown by 21,352 since 2015, or 3.3%.

The population pyramid for the Workforce Alliance region is the most pyramid-like of the workforce development areas with a few exceptions. There are two peaks in population, with the larger centered on the 10-14 and 15-19 year-old age groups, and a smaller peak centered on the 60-64 year-old age group. The largest age groups in this local area are the 10-14 and 15-19 year-olds, each representing 7.1% of the population. The 60-64 year-old age group accounts for 6.0% of the Workforce Alliance population.

For economic purposes, the two main age groups studied are the 16 and over population and the 25-54 population. The 16 and over population includes everyone who is eligible to be in the labor force, while 25-54 year-olds are considered prime age workers. The 16 and over population in this region increased by 7,475 people, or 1.4%, to 531,524 in 2024. The 25-54 year-old population also rose in 2024, increasing by 3,457 people, or 1.4%, to 255,631 in 2024.

Future labor force growth may be in jeopardy since the population under 25 only increased by 368, or 0.2%. Declines were seen in the 5-9 and 10-14 year-old age groups. The 20-24 year-old age group, which would include recent college graduates, recorded an increase of 2.0%, or 898 people, over the year.

Workforce Partnership

The Workforce Partnership population was estimated to be 886,364 in 2024. This represents an increase of 10,253, or 1.2%, over the year. The population of this region has grown by 59,571 since 2015, or 7.2%.

The population pyramid for the Workforce Partnership region indicates that there are two peaks in population, one centering on 40-44 year-olds, representing the older members of the millennial generation, and one centered on the 10-14 year-old age group, most likely representing the children of the other population peak. The 40-44 year-old age group is the largest in this region, representing 7.2% of the population. This group was closely followed by the 35-39 and 30-34 year-old age groups, who each represent 7.0% of the population. The 10-14 year-old age group accounts for 6.8% of the Workforce Partnership population.

For economic purposes, the two main age groups studied are the 16 and over population and the 25-54 population. The 16 and over population includes everyone who is eligible to be in the

labor force, while 25-54 year-olds are considered prime age workers. The 16 and over population in this region increased by 11,424 people, or 1.7%, to 702,898 in 2024. The 25-54 year-old population also rose in 2024, increasing by 4,225 people, or 1.2%, to 356,661.

Future labor force growth may be in jeopardy since the population under 25 experienced relatively slow growth, increasing by 923, or 0.3%. Declines were seen in all age groups under 10 years old. The 20-24 year-old age group, which would include recent college graduates, recorded an increase of 2.9%, or 1,548 people, over the year.

Poverty Status

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2020-2024 5-year Estimates

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, it is estimated that 322,842, or 11.3%, of Kansans were living below the poverty line in 2024. This is 0.7 percentage points lower than the 2019 rate of 12.0%.

When looking at poverty status by age group, 189,938, or 11.2% of Kansans age 18-64 were living below the poverty level. When broken out into smaller groups, 102,855, or 16.2% of Kansans age 18-34 were living below the poverty level, while 87,083, or 8.3% of Kansans age 35-64 were living below the poverty level.

Looking broadly by gender, females were more likely to be living below the poverty level than males; with 12.4% of females, compared 10.1% of males living below the poverty level.

When looking at poverty status by race and ethnicity, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Kansans were most likely to be living below the poverty level, with 772 Kansans, or 28.1% falling into this category. This was followed by Black or African American with 31,952 Kansans, or 22.0%, and some other race alone with 22,724, or 18.5% of their population living at or below poverty level. White alone (not Hispanic or Latino) experienced the lowest rates of poverty with 191,605 Kansans, or 9.2% living below the poverty line. It is estimated that 64,655, or 16.5% of Hispanic and Latino Kansans live below the poverty line.

When looking at poverty status by educational attainment, 33,848, 22.7% of adults 25 years and over who do not have a high school diploma or equivalent fell below the poverty level, while 61,565, or 12.9% of those with a high school diploma or equivalent fell below the poverty level. For adults with some college or associate degree and higher, 76,960, or 6.0% fell below the poverty level.

For employed workers age 16 years and over, 6.1% fell below the poverty line, compared to 29.8% of those who were unemployed. For both employed and unemployed Kansans, females experienced higher rates of poverty than males.

Veteran Population

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2020-2024 5-year Estimates

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 6.8% of Kansas' civilian population age 18 and over were veterans in 2024. This was a decrease of 1.3 percentage points from 2019.

The percentage of Kansas veterans who had at least a high school diploma is higher than non-veterans; 96.8% compared to 91.5%. However, there is a smaller percentage of Kansas veterans who have a bachelor's degree or higher level of educational attainment; 31.7%, compared to 35.9% for non-veterans.

Kansas veterans aged 18 to 64 participated in the labor force at a slightly lower rate than non-veterans in 2024; 78.3%, compared to 80.1% for non-veterans. However, they experienced a lower unemployment rate of 3.6%, compared to 3.9% for non-veterans.

When looking at poverty status, there were fewer Kansas veterans with an income below the poverty level than non-veterans; 7.1% compared to 11.0% for non-veterans.

Kansas veterans report disabilities at approximately double the rate of non-veterans; 15.3% of non-veterans report having a disability, while 31.6% of veterans report having a disability.

High Demand Occupations

Source: Labor Market Information Division of the Kansas Department of Labor, 2025 Occupational Employment Demand

High-demand occupations are identified in LMI's Occupational Employment Demand list. High-demand occupations are jobs expected to be in greatest demand by employers in Kansas. The Occupational Employment Demand list also includes indicators for occupations with emerging demand and high wages, median and mean wage estimates, and education and training information to give a complete picture of each occupation.

Statewide

The 2025 Occupational Employment Demand list includes 250 high-demand occupations. The top 10 high-demand occupations in 2025 are: fast food and counter workers; cashiers; home health and personal care aides; stockers and order fillers; retail salespersons; customer service representatives; waiters and waitresses; registered nurses; nursing assistants; and laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand. Eight of the top 10 occupations require only a high school diploma or have no educational requirements and typically require one month or less of on-the-job training, which indicates they are attainable for workers with little to no education or training. The median wages of these eight occupations are all below the statewide median wage of $46,850, as occupations requiring little training or education typically have lower wages. There is a high level of turnover in these occupations, which helps explain the high demand score. Many of the openings in these occupations are the result of people leaving the occupation to move to another, rather than the result of occupational growth. Furthermore, many of the occupations with the highest transfer rate are those that require only a high school education or less and little or no training.

In Kansas, there are 137 high-demand occupations that also qualified as high wage in 2025. The top 10 high demand high wage occupations are: registered nurses; heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers; general and operations managers; sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing, except technical and scientific products; sales representatives of services, except advertising, insurance, financial services, and travel; accountants and auditors; first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers; elementary school teachers, except special education; software developers; and business operations specialists, all other. A majority of the top 10 typically require a bachelor's degree, moderate-term on-the-job training, and/or work experience.

Kansas WorkforceONE

The Kansas WorkforceONE region is broken out into five separate lists for Occupational Employment Demand. Regional lists are available for north central, northeast, northwest, southeast, and southwest Kansas.

North Central Kansas

The top 10 high-demand occupations in north central Kansas include: fast food and counter workers; cashiers; retail salespersons; nursing assistants; home health and personal care aides; waiters and waitresses; registered nurses; stockers and order fillers; heavy and tractor-trailer

truck drivers; teaching assistants, except postsecondary. Six of the top 10 occupations require only a high school diploma or have no educational requirements and typically require one month or less of on-the-job training, which indicates they are attainable for workers with little to no education or training.

In north central Kansas, there are 147 high-demand occupations that also qualified as high wage in 2025. The top 10 high demand high wage occupations are: registered nurses; heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers; bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks; general and operations managers; miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators; welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers; first-line supervisors of retail sales workers; first-line supervisors of production and operating workers; maintenance and repair workers, general; and farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers. A majority of the top 10 typically require a bachelor's degree, moderate-term on-the-job training, and/or work experience.

Northeast Kansas

The top 10 high-demand occupations in northeast Kansas include: fast food and counter workers; cashiers; home health and personal care aides; stockers and order fillers; customer service representatives; retail salespersons; waiters and waitresses; registered nurses; nursing assistants; janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners. Eight of the top 10 occupations require only a high school diploma or have no educational requirements and typically require one month or less of on-the-job training, which indicates they are attainable for workers with little to no education or training.

In northeast Kansas, there are 142 high-demand occupations that also qualified as high wage in 2025. The top 10 high demand high wage occupations are: registered nurses; heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers; general and operations managers; first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers; elementary school teachers, except special education; accountants and auditors; business operations specialists, all other; software developers; executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants; and coaches and scouts. A majority of the top 10 typically require a bachelor's degree, moderate-term on-the-job training, and/or work experience.

Northwest Kansas

The top 10 high-demand occupations in northwest Kansas include: cashiers; fast food and counter workers; home health and personal care aides; nursing assistants; farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers; waiters and waitresses; registered nurses; retail salespersons; heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers; and stockers and order fillers. Seven of the top 10 occupations require only a high school diploma or have no educational requirements and typically require one month or less of on-the-job training, which indicates they are attainable for workers with little to no education or training.

In northwest Kansas, there are 133 high-demand occupations that also qualified as high wage in 2025. The top 10 high demand high wage occupations are: farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers; registered nurses; heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers; bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks; general and operations managers; first-line supervisors of retail sales workers; sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing, except technical and scientific products; elementary school teachers, except special education; coaches and scouts; and construction laborers. A majority of the top 10 typically require a bachelor's degree, moderate-term on-the-job training, and/or work experience.

Southeast Kansas

The top 10 high-demand occupations in southeast Kansas include: fast food and counter workers; home health and personal care aides; cashiers; stockers and order fillers; retail salespersons; nursing assistants; teaching assistants, except postsecondary; registered nurses; waiters and waitresses; and janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners.

Seven of the top 10 occupations require only a high school diploma or have no educational requirements and typically require one month or less of on-the-job training, which indicates they are attainable for workers with little to no education or training.

In southeast Kansas there are 143 high demand occupations that also qualified as high wage in 2025. The top 10 high demand high wage occupations are: registered nurses; heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers; general and operations managers; bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks; elementary school teachers, except special education; packaging and filling machine operators and tenders; first-line supervisors of production and operating workers; maintenance and repair workers, general; first-line supervisors of retail sales workers; and construction laborers. A majority of the top 10 typically require a bachelor's degree, moderate-term on-the-job training, and/or work experience.

Southwest Kansas

The top 10 high demand occupations in north central Kansas include: meat, poultry, and fish cutters and trimmers; farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers; fast food and counter workers; cashiers; janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners; laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand; farmworkers, farm, ranch, and aquacultural animals; retail salespersons; heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers; and stockers and order fillers. Nine of the top 10 occupations require only a high school diploma or have no educational requirements and typically require one month or less of on-the-job training, which indicates they are attainable for workers with little to no education or training.

In southwest Kansas, there are 128 high-demand occupations that also qualified as high wage in 2025. The top 10 high demand high wage occupations are: meat, poultry, and fish cutters and trimmers; farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers; heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers; registered nurses; slaughterers and meat packers; general and operations managers; maintenance and repair workers, general; elementary school teachers, except special education; first-line supervisors of production and operating workers; and secondary school teachers, except special and career/technical education. A majority of the top 10 typically require a bachelor's degree, moderate-term on-the-job training, and/or work experience.

Workforce Alliance

The top 10 high-demand occupations in the Workforce Alliance region include: fast food and counter workers; cashiers; home health and personal care aides; retail salespersons; stockers and order fillers; customer service representatives; waiters and waitresses; registered nurses; nursing assistants; and janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners. Eight of the top 10 occupations require only a high school diploma or have no educational requirements and typically require one month or less of on-the-job training, which indicates they are attainable for workers with little to no education or training.

In the Workforce Alliance region, there are 134 high-demand occupations that also qualified as high wage in 2025. The top 10 high demand high wage occupations are: registered nurses; aircraft structure, surfaces, rigging, and systems assemblers; heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers; general and operations managers; inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers; sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing, except technical and scientific products; sales representatives of services, except advertising, insurance, financial services, and travel; first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers; accountants and auditors; and elementary school teachers, except special education. A majority of the top 10 typically require a bachelor's degree, moderate-term on-the-job training, and/or work experience.

Workforce Partnership

The top 10 high demand occupations in the Workforce Partnership region include: fast food and counter workers; stockers and order fillers; customer service representatives; retail salespersons; cashiers; laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand; waiters and

waitresses; registered nurses; home health and personal care aides; and heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers. Eight of the top 10 occupations require only a high school diploma or have no educational requirements and typically require one month or less of on-the-job training, which indicates they are attainable for workers with little to no education or training.

In the Workforce Partnership region there are 138 high demand occupations that also qualified as high wage in 2025. The top 10 high demand high wage occupations are: registered nurses; heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers; general and operations managers; sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing, except technical and scientific products; software developers; sales representatives of services, except advertising, insurance, financial services, and travel; market research analysts and marketing specialists; accountants and auditors; business operations specialists, all other; and first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers. A majority of the top 10 typically require a bachelor's degree, moderate-term on-the-job training, and/or work experience.

Nonfarm Jobs

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

In 2025 Kansas recorded 1,459,700 total nonfarm jobs, of which 1,201,300 were private sector jobs. Total nonfarm jobs increased by 3,800 jobs, or 0.3%, over the year. This was due to an increase of 3,000 private sector jobs and an increase of 700 government sector jobs. Nationally, nonfarm jobs increased by 1.4 million, or 0.9%, to 159.4 million. In the Plains Region, nonfarm jobs increased by 86,100, or 0.8%.

Job growth was experienced in 6 of the 11 industry supersectors in Kansas during 2025. The supersector that added the most jobs over the year was private education and health services with a gain of 3,700 jobs, or 1,7%; all of these gains were due to health care and social assistance, which increased by 3,700 jobs, or 1.9%. Financial activities recorded job gains of 2,700, or 3.5%, in 2025. This growth can be attributed to the finance and insurance sector, which saw an increase of 2,700 jobs, or 4.3%. Construction saw an increase of 1,800 jobs, or 2.5%, in 2025. Government; trade, transportation, and utilities, and other services also increased over the year.

The supersector that lost the most jobs over the years was leisure and hospitality, declining by 3,200 jobs, or 2.4%. This was due to reported decreases for both the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector and the accommodation and food services sector. Professional and business services declined by 1,900 jobs, or 1.1%, over the year. The majority of this decline was due to administrative and support and waste management and remediation services, which decreased by 3,300, or 4.5%. Federal government declined by 1,000 jobs in 2025, a 3.7% decrease.

(iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

Degrees and Certificates by Gender

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)

According to the U.S. Department of Education, 55,251 degrees and certificates were awarded in Kansas during the 2023-2024 academic year. Of these, 58.2% were awarded to women, while 41.8% were awarded to men. The largest gap in completions by gender was for certificates of less than 1 year. Men were awarded 3,704, or 37.6%, of these certificates, while women were awarded 6,140, or 62.4%. The category in which men received the highest share of degrees or certificates relative to women was the certificate of 1 year to less than 4 years category. Men were awarded 2,828, or 49.4%, of these certificates, while women were awarded 2,898, or 50.6%.

Degrees Issued by Field of Study

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)

The most common field of study in Kansas was health professions and related programs, accounting for 21.7% of all degrees or certificates issued during the 2023-2024 academic year. Liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities was the second most common field of study, accounting for 13.8%, while the third most common field of study was business, management, marketing, and related support services, accounting for 12.8%.

When accounting for gender, the most common field of study for women was health professions and related programs; these degrees and certificates accounted for 31.0%. The second most common field of study for women was liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities, which accounted for 14.0% of degrees issued to women.

Men were most commonly issued degrees in the business, management, marketing, and related support field of study; these degrees accounted for 16.7%. The second most common field of study for men was liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities, which accounted for 13.5% of degrees issued to men.

Educational Attainment

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2020-2024 5-year Estimates

Note: Data is for the civilian population ages 25-64

Statewide

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020-2024 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year Estimates, 92.0% of Kansans have at least a high school diploma or equivalent: this is 2.4 percentage points higher than the national rate of 89.6%. This is due to a higher share of Kansans with some college or an associate degree, 30.9% compared to 27.9% nationally. The share of Kansans with a bachelor's degree or higher is similar to the national rate, 35.6% and 35.7% respectively.

When compared to the 2015-2019 ACS 5-year estimates, the percentage of Kansans reporting an educational attainment of at least a high school diploma or equivalent increased by 1.0 percentage points, while the percentage of Kansans reporting a bachelor’s degree or higher increased by 2.2 percentage points.

The most commonly reported educational attainment level in Kansas was some college or associate degree at 30.9%; this was followed by high school graduate or equivalent at 25.4%, and bachelor’s degree at 22.2%.

Educational Attainment for Disabled Kansans

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2020-2024 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year Estimates, 87.9% of Kansans reporting a disability have at least a high school diploma or equivalent; this is 5.1 percentage points lower than the rate of 93.0% for Kansans without a disability. It is estimated that 20.9% of Kansans reporting a disability have a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to 39.2% for those who do not have a disability.

The most commonly reported level of education for Kansans with a disability was high school graduate or equivalent, accounting for 34.0% of the population; this was followed by some college or associate degree accounting for 33.0% of the population.

The most commonly reported level of education for Kansans with a disability was high school

graduate or equivalent, accounting for 35.3% of the population; this was followed by some college or associate degree accounting for 32.1% of the population.

Kansas WorkforceONE

Educational attainment in the Kansas WorkforceONE region is similar to statewide estimates for residents with a high school diploma or higher, but region has a smaller share of individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020-2024 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year Estimates, 91.6% of Kansas WorkforceONE residents have at least a high school diploma or equivalent; this is 0.4 percentage points lower than the statewide rate of 92.0%, but 2.0 percentage points higher than the national rate of 89.6%. It is estimated that 29.1% of Kansas WorkforceONE residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 35.6% statewide and 35.7% nationally.

When compared to the 2015-2019 ACS 5-year estimates, the percentage of Kansas WorkforceONE residents reporting an educational attainment of at least a high school diploma or equivalent increased by 1.1 percentage points, while the percentage of Kansas WorkforceONE residents reporting a bachelor's degree or higher increased by 2.0 percentage points.

The most commonly reported educational attainment level in the Kansas WorkforceONE region was some college or associate degree at 33.3%; this was followed by high school graduate or equivalent at 29.2%, and bachelor's degree at 18.5%.

Workforce Alliance

Educational attainment in the Workforce Alliance region is below the statewide average but higher than the national average. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020-2024 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year Estimates, 90.3% of Workforce Alliance residents have at least a high school diploma or equivalent; this is 1.7 percentage points lower than the statewide rate of 92.0% and 0.7 percentage points higher than the national rate of 89.6%. It is estimated that 31.3% of Workforce Alliance residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 35.6% statewide and 35.7% nationally.

When compared to the 2015-2019 ACS 5-year estimates, the percentage of Workforce Alliance residents reporting an educational attainment of at least a high school diploma or equivalent increased by 0.2 percentage points, while the percentage of Workforce Alliance residents reporting a bachelor's degree or higher increased by 1.5 percentage points.

The most commonly reported educational attainment level in the Workforce Alliance region was some college or associate degree at 32.2%; this was followed by high school graduate or equivalent at 26.8%, and bachelor's degree at 20.1%.

Workforce Partnership

Educational attainment in the Workforce Partnership region is well above the statewide and national average. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020-2024 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year Estimates, 93.7% of Workforce Partnership residents have at least a high school diploma or equivalent; this is 1.7 percentage points higher than the statewide rate of 92.0% and 4.1 percentage points higher than the national rate of 89.6%. It is estimated that 48.9% of Workforce Partnership residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 35.6% statewide and 35.7% nationally.

When compared to the 2015-2019 ACS 5-year estimates, the percentage of Workforce Partnership residents reporting an educational attainment of at least a high school diploma or equivalent increased by 1.3 percentage points, while the percentage of Workforce Partnership residents reporting a bachelor's degree or higher increased by 2.4 percentage points.

The most commonly reported educational attainment level in the Workforce Partnership region was bachelor's degree at 29.5%; this was followed by some college or associate degree at 26.2%, and graduate or professional degree at 19.4%.

(iv) Comparison of Economic and Workforce Analytical Conclusion (Skill Gaps)

Adult Literacy and Numeracy

The data presented in this section comes from the U.S. Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). The state and county estimates are based on the combined PIAAC data collected in 2012, 2014, and 2017 and the data from the 2013–2017 American Community Survey (ACS).

Literacy

When comparing average literacy scores, Kansas ranks 19th out of all 50 states. When compared to the U.S., Kansas literacy levels are overall above the national average. It is estimated that 52.6% of Kansas adults can be considered proficient at working with information and ideas in texts; meaning that their higher literacy skills range from the ability to understand, interpret, and synthesize information across multiple, complex texts to the ability to evaluate the reliability of sources and infer sophisticated meanings and complex ideas from written sources.

Estimates indicate that 30.5% of Kansas adults have a literacy level of 2. Adults at this level can be considered nearing proficiency but still struggling to perform tasks with text-based information. Such adults may be able to read print and digital texts, relate multiple pieces of information within or across a couple of documents, compare and contrast, and draw simple inferences. They can navigate in a digital environment to access key information, such as finding two main benefits of one product over another. However, more complex inferencing and evaluation may be too difficult.

Finally, it is estimated that 16.9% of Kansas adults have a literacy level at or below 1. Adults at this level can be considered at risk for difficulties using or comprehending print material. Adults at the upper end of this level can read short texts, in print or online, and understand the meaning well enough to perform simple tasks, such as filling out a short form, but drawing inferences or combining multiple sources of text may be too difficult. Adults who are below Level 1 may only be able to understand very basic vocabulary or find very specific information on a familiar topic. Some adults below Level 1 may struggle even to do this and may be functionally illiterate.

Numeracy

When comparing average numeracy scores, Kansas ranks 19th out of all 50 states. When compared to the U.S., Kansas numeracy levels are overall above the national average. It is estimated that 41.7% of Kansas adults can be considered working with mathematical information and ideas; meaning their higher numeracy skills range from the ability to recognize mathematical relationships and apply proportions to the ability to understand abstract representations of mathematical concepts and engage in complex reasoning about quantities and data.

Estimates indicate that 33.3% of Kansas adults have a numeracy level of 2. Adults at this level can be considered nearing proficiency but still struggling to perform numeracy tasks. Such adults can successfully perform tasks requiring two or three steps involving calculations with whole numbers and common decimals, percentages, and fractions. They can conduct simple measurement and interpret relatively simple data and statistics in texts, tables, and graphs. However, more complicated problem solving (where the information is not explicit or is in an unfamiliar context) may be too difficult.

Finally, it is estimated that 25.0% of Kansas adults have a numeracy level at or below 1. Adults at this level can be considered at risk for difficulties with numeracy. Adults at the upper end of this level can understand how to add, subtract, multiply, and divide and can perform basic one-step mathematical operations with given values or common spatial representations (e.g., calculate how many bottles of soda are in a full box with two levels when only the top level can be seen). Adults who are below Level 1 may only be able to count, sort, and do basic arithmetic operations with simple whole numbers and may be functionally innumerate.

C. COMPARISON OF ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYTICAL CONCLUSION. DESCRIBE AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR MEETING HIRING, EDUCATION, AND SKILLS NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN THE ECONOMY COMPARED TO THE ASSETS AVAILABLE IN THE LABOR FORCE IN THE STATE.

Kansas does not maintain a complete skill gap analysis. Employer demand for skilled workers is reflected in the current openings, short-term, and long-term demand projections described in the Economic Analysis section of this report. Additionally, for all the occupations highlighted in this plan, detailed information on the tasks, knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to do the job are available through the O*NET site.

2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

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

A. THE STATE'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required [6] and optional one-stop delivery system partners.[7]

[6] Required one-stop partners: In addition to the core programs, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the one-stops: Career Technical Education (Perkins V), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, HUD Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs program, Senior Community Service Employment program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (unless the Governor determines TANF will not be a required partner), Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Compensation programs, and YouthBuild.

[7] Workforce development activities may include a wide variety of programs and partners, including educational institutions, faith- and community-based organizations, and human services.

B. THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A), directly above.

C. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

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

Core Workforce Development Activities

1. **KANSAS**WORKS *(Adult, Dislocated Worker & Youth {Title I}; Wagner-Peyser {Wagner- Peyser Act, as amended by Title III))*

KANSASWORKS includes Titles IB and III of WIOA, as carried out by the Kansas Department of Commerce (Commerce) and local workforce development operators.

Workforce training and case management services are provided through **KANSAS**WORKS. Services to individuals based on their eligibility for services, priority of services and available resources. Labor Exchange and other Wagner-Peyser services are provided by state staff, co-located in workforce centers and in conjunction with Veteran's programs, community services and other state services. Services are also available through virtual connection, established to better serve customers during the pandemic, and maintained as an enhancement to meet customers "where they are.".

2. Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Program (Title II)

Kansas WIOA Title II programs provide instruction and support services to eligible individuals. Eligible individuals are defined as individuals who are 16 years of age or older; not currently enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law; lack a high school diploma or equivalent, need to learn English as a non-native language, and/or need to increase basic skills; and are eligible for federal benefits, including adult education. WIOA Title II programs assist learners in building literacy and numeracy skills, increasing English language skills, achieving high school equivalency diplomas, obtaining workforce skills to increase workforce readiness, accessing occupational training, transitioning to postsecondary education, and entering employment or advancing in careers for economic self-sufficiency.

3. *Vocational Rehabilitation (Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV)*

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program in Kansas provides a comprehensive array of services designed to empower individuals with disabilities to achieve their goals for employment, independent living, and self-reliance. Our program is committed to delivering high-quality services that meet the unique needs of each individual we serve.

Our service delivery model is based on individualized planning, collaboration with community partners, and a focus on consumer choice and empowerment. We offer a wide range of services, including vocational counseling and guidance, job placement assistance, skills assessment and development, training and education programs, assistive technology and accommodations, transition services for youth with disabilities, supported employment services, and post-employment services and follow-up support.

One of the key components of our program is our education and training activities. We provide comprehensive education and training services to help individuals with disabilities prepare for and succeed in the workforce. These activities include career exploration and planning, job readiness training, work-based learning experiences, skill-building workshops and classes, academic and vocational training programs, and continuing education and lifelong learning opportunities.

Our program is closely aligned with other Core programs, and we work collaboratively with partners in the workforce development system to ensure that our services are complementary and integrated. Through these partnerships, we are able to enhance the delivery of VR services and improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

Overall, the VR program in Kansas is dedicated to empowering individuals with disabilities to achieve their employment and independent living goals. We are committed to providing high-

quality services that support individuals in their journey to self-sufficiency and improved quality of life.

Combined State Plan Partner Programs Workforce Development Activities

1. *Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))*

Workforce development activities for TAA are managed at the state level in the Kansas Department of Commerce with services disseminated through **KANSAS**WORKS American Job Centers. Although the TAA program was not reauthorized, Kansas state staff continue to provide services as required to those already in the program. Additionally, because TAA services are available for life, the state will continue to provide services to eligible workers who have not yet accessed TAA services. **KANSAS**WORKS continues to promote TAA services throughout its social media platforms and continues to reach out to the public, especially in areas where US DOL-certified TAA layoffs or closings have occurred.

2. *Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (Programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)*

The primary objective of the JVSG is to develop and support activities to increase employment and job training opportunities for veterans and eligible persons. Native American veterans who may be living on a reservation and/or on tribal lands, as well as any other Native American veterans that access the AJC and are determined to have an SBE will be provided DVOP services.

KANSASWORKS staff and State Manager will continue to work with all four military installations to provide a seamless transition for all TSM's, an in-person, or utilization of on-line services for employment and relocation purposes for this population that meets the criteria of VPL-07-14.

Veteran workforce development activities are handled in partnership with Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs and Kansas Board of Regents. Commerce, in partnership with KCVA and Regents operate the KANVET website (KanVet.ks.gov), which provides "real-time" data with direct access to the State of Kansas' veteran-specific resources and benefits without having to navigate multiple state agency websites. The KANVET program assists veterans in finding available civilian jobs and training utilizing occupational specialty codes.

Educational opportunities are promoted through counseling services to veterans. Commerce and Regents coordinate education and training activities to increase post-secondary capacity for job driven training programs. Additionally, local workforce development boards (LWDBs) provide real-time intelligence regarding skill gaps and projected skill needs.

Local workforce development boards provide priority job placement and training activities to veterans. Plans on how services are provided are located in the State Policy narrative and in local workforce board WIOA plans. These plans include: how available resources (WIOA, Wagner-Peyser and others) are pooled to provide basic and individualized career services; processes to accomplish intake, assessment, registration and follow-up services; a description of mediated and non-mediated services; how veterans are provided priority in placement services and activities; and detailed description of how case management services are provided to veterans.

American Job Center staff provide job search and placement services for veterans including counseling, testing, occupational and labor market information, and skill evaluations such as CareerReady 101!, to assist veterans make an educated and up-to-date decisions about their training and employment needs.

Veterans will continue to be introduced to America's Career InfoNet, O-Net, and other local resources that offer career exploration, education and job tools such as the following to help them make career decisions:

- Assess personal marketability;
- Assess skills, skill gaps and related occupations
- Research occupations on a national, state or local level;
- Research occupations, employment trends to national, state and local wage information
- Research employers for job searches;
- Track labor market trends
- Learn how to network in various career fields using professional associations and Career Resource Library links
- Research training options by occupation such as certifications, schools, programs, and licenses
- Explore credentialing options; and
- Find financial aid resources
- Referrals to WIOA for training, i.e. On-the-Job Training, Registered Apprenticeship

3. *Senior Community Service Employment Program (Programs authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))*

Kansas State SCSEP is operates in seven counties in south central Kansas: Butler, Cowley, Harper, Harvey, Kingman, Sumner and Sedgwick. Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas, the local workforce development board, provides SCSEP services through its workforce centers, creating an excellent opportunity for SCSEP participants to access all available **KANSAS**WORKS services. KWSB has codified the inclusion of older workers as a priority population for all **KANSAS**WORKS services. With the implementation of WIOA, strategic coordination of the Core Partners results in an investment in the skill development of SCSEP participants. Services from WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Workforce Development, VR, Adult Education and Wagner-Peyser are utilized to streamline services for SCSEP participants. WIOA as implemented in Kansas, ultimately assures participants are able to access all services for which they are eligible through all WIOA Core Partners.

SCSEP will continue to operate as another integrated program of **KANSAS**WORKS where customers are provided with the same services as any other eligible job seeker.

4. *Career and Technical Education (Perkins V), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, HUD Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, National Farmworker Jobs program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (unless the Governor determines TANF will not be a required partner, Unemployment Compensation programs, and YouthBuild*

Referrals to and from these partners are provided through the core, combined state plan, and required partners of the public workforce system. All participants referred to the public workforce system receive the same range of services for which they are eligible as described in Section VI Requirements for Core Programs.

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

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities: **KANSAS**WORKS

Strengths

- Meet or exceed the common performance measures requirements consistently
- Streamlined service delivery to more efficiently serve jobseekers and workers through strategies developed for the Workforce 2.0 Initiative
- Continue to seek and leverage outside resources to increase and improve services to jobseekers and workers, including youth
- Convene partners for collaboration to better serve specific populations, such as those with disabilities or those who are justice-involved
- Successfully partner with other service providers, including other state agencies, postsecondary education providers, community-based organizations and employers
- Maintain a Management Information System that fulfills the requirements of the US DOL and which is utilized in several other states
- Sustain continuous improvement activities through stakeholder surveys, program evaluation, and staff training

Weaknesses

- Limited success with blending and braiding resources across some core and required partner systems to meet the needs of jobseekers and workers
- Varied success at meeting the workforce needs of all industry sectors, as well as in some geographic areas of the state
- Have not yet been able to forge a broad data sharing standard with other entities with whom we share customers
- Have not yet established a shared Customer Intake accessed by all or most WIOA partners

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities: Adult Education

Strengths

- Kansas WIOA Title II has increased enrollment every year since 2020, demonstrating that the state is serving eligible individuals, including participants with barriers to employment.
- The Kansas WIOA Title II funding formula is heavily weighted toward performance, rewarding high-performing subrecipients and incentivizing local providers to deliver high-quality services.
- All WIOA Title II curricula for Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), English Language Acquisition (ELA), and Integrated Education and Training (IET) are required to be aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) and/or the English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards for Adult Education for English learners.

- Sponsoring institutions, which in the current grant cycle include community colleges, technical colleges, and unified school districts, support WIOA Title II with local match funding and educational transition support. Many college Career Technical Education (CTE) divisions have robust partnerships with WIOA Title II, especially in delivering Accelerating Opportunity: Kansas (AO-K) and other Integrated Education and Training (IET) pathways.
- WIOA Title II and Perkins V programs provide braided funding opportunities to integrate academic and technical instruction, train faculty, offer work-based learning opportunities, and develop industry-standard instructional resources.

Weaknesses

- As is true across the nation, Kansas WIOA Title II needs increased capacity to meet all needs in the state. For example, nearly 200,000 adults in Kansas do not have a high school diploma, according to the American Community Survey (ACS), and at current capacity, local providers could serve less than ten percent of that number.
- WIOA Title II programs continue to offer online classes and services, but many participants, particularly low-income individuals and rural residents, struggle with consistent access to high-speed internet, despite initiatives over the past few years to loan hotspots and electronic devices to learners.
- WIOA Title II and Perkins V partners are pursuing joint opportunities to support registered and youth apprenticeship in collaboration with the Kansas Department of Commerce. While Kansas has many established RA programs, the agencies continue to seek new ways to streamline and modernize systems alignment.

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities: Vocational Rehabilitation

Strengths

- VR services are individualized and person-centered, designed to address each individual's strengths, barriers to employment, and vocational goals. Counselors partner with customers to develop individualized plans for employment that align with informed choice, career pathways, and labor market demand.
- VR counselors receive comprehensive training in disability, employment services, vocational counseling, and cultural competence. Ongoing professional development, structured onboarding, and policy training support consistent service delivery statewide.
- The agency has strengthened its Quality Assurance and training infrastructure by integrating case review findings, data validation, and monitoring activities into staff development initiatives to promote continuous program improvement.
- The VR program maintains a strong emphasis on serving youth and students with disabilities through the expansion of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), including career exploration, work-based learning experiences, and postsecondary transition supports.
- Transition-aged youth represent a significant portion of individuals served, reflecting the agency's commitment to early engagement and preparation for competitive integrated employment.
- Employment outcomes demonstrate increased economic self-sufficiency, with a substantial percentage of individuals achieving successful rehabilitation reporting their own earnings as their primary source of financial support.
- VR services are comprehensive and adaptable, supported through partnerships with community rehabilitation providers, employers, educational systems, and workforce development partners.

- Collaboration with supported employment providers and other specialized service partners enhances the agency's capacity to serve individuals with the most significant disabilities.

Weaknesses:

- Timeliness of eligibility determinations and service engagement continues to be an area of focus, impacted by application volume, staffing capacity, and caseload distribution.
- Delays in moving individuals from application to eligibility and plan development can affect early engagement and service momentum.
- Provider capacity is limited in certain regions and service areas, particularly in rural communities and in specialized services such as supported employment and work-based learning experiences.
- Recruitment and retention of qualified community rehabilitation providers impacts service availability and timeliness.
- Data quality and documentation consistency require continued improvement to support federal reporting requirements, performance accountability, and program evaluation.
- Staff training needs related to case documentation, service coding, and system data entry have been identified through Quality Assurance and monitoring activities.
- A percentage of cases close prior to eligibility determination, often due to challenges maintaining engagement, obtaining records, or communication barriers.
- Workforce capacity, including staff vacancies and turnover, can impact service continuity, timeliness, and institutional knowledge.
- Ongoing training and technical assistance are needed to ensure consistent implementation of policies, procedures, and service delivery expectations statewide.

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities: Trade Act

Strengths

- Exceed performance goals
- Effective collaboration with WIOA Programs, Kansas Department of Labor
- Positive working relationships with Local Training Providers and Local Employers
- Continued dedicated TAA/Commerce Staff including fiscal, admin, support staff etc.

Weaknesses

- Maintaining sufficient TAA staff to serve future TAA customers
- Necessity to rebuild/train staff, if current staff left Commerce
- Determining required TAA outreach activities
- Continual reduction of TAA participant counts may lead to difficulty with maintaining TAA performance goals

***The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities:* JVSG**

Strengths

- Meet and exceed the negotiated performance measures

- Successfully integrate JVSG staff with career one-stops and streamlined services and processes that makes a veteran's transition and referral to partnering services fluent and efficient
- Maintain excellent and active partnerships with military instillations located in Kansas
- Successfully partner with other Veteran Service Organizations, creating an outreach, connection, intake and co-enrollment process that allows us to not only meet the Veterans training and employment needs, but basic fundamental needs such as, housing, medical/ counseling and other interim needs that may be preventing them from entering and maintaining long-term employment.
- Maintain effective outreach to local reservations, tribal organizations identifying the Native American Indian Veterans.

Weaknesses

- Kansas DOL's inabilities to capture accurate veteran data, specifically identifying the veteran population, additionally this anomaly decreases Veteran un-employment rates and an overall decreases the veteran population in the state of Kansas. Measures are currently taking place for tracking un-employed veteran populations through Reemployment Services and kansasworks.com
- Areas of limited accessibility of JVSG staff to serve veterans in remote and/or less populated areas due to limited internet.

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities: SCSEP

Strengths

- Services are provided by a Local Area Workforce Development Board, providing participants direct access to all programs and services offered by the local workforce development system
- The electronic participant file and tracking system developed for SCSEP has made case management and compliance straightforward, resulting in few mistakes or data validation issues
- The metro service area provides suitable opportunities for Host Site recruitment
- LWDB staff with strong history of serving Older Workers in general and SCSEP participants in particular

Weaknesses

- The SCSEP project has a difficult time recruiting eligible participants
- The SCSEP project needs to improve unsubsidized employment outcomes for its participants
- Bridging the gap between need for and access to virtual services has had varying levels of success

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

State Workforce Development Capacity: **KANSAS**WORKS

KANSASWORKS, including JVSG, SCSEP, Trade Act and all other partner programs, has the capacity to continuously improve services to jobseekers and those with more barriers to employment through enhanced partnerships, targeted distribution of resources, virtual service delivery, access to supportive services, and staff training. Technology upgrades and access to multiple data systems would substantially increase capacity to serve more individuals more effectively and efficiently. *Capacity continually changes based on annual reduction in funds, whether caused by an improved economy or cuts in federal appropriations.*

State Workforce Development Capacity: Adult Education

- Kansas WIOA Title II advances the state's workforce development strategy by delivering adult foundational skills instruction (literacy, numeracy, English language acquisition, and digital literacy), high school equivalency preparation and attainment, college and career readiness, and integrated career pathway services. Title II providers coordinate with local workforce system partners to support direct linkage and co-enrollment where appropriate, align instruction with in-demand industry sectors, and expand Integrated Education and Training (IET) opportunities that combine adult education and workforce preparation with occupational training. Through Accelerating Opportunity: Kansas (AO-K) and other IET models, Title II helps participants earn a secondary credential and industry-recognized credentials while accelerating entry into postsecondary training and high-demand, high-wage employment.
- Kansas WIOA Title II averages approximately 250 instructional staff statewide, with about 20% employed full-time in Adult Education. The high reliance on part-time instructional staff constrains statewide capacity, especially for offering consistent class intensity, expanding schedules, providing wraparound persistence supports, and scaling IET models at speed. To expand volume, Kansas is increasing the use of technology-enabled instruction, which can extend access for working adults, rural communities, and learners with barriers to attendance while supporting more flexible delivery models.
- Capacity is further strengthened through partnerships with Career Technical Education, postsecondary institutions, employers, and community organizations; however, these partnerships must grow more rapidly and be more tightly guided by sector and employer demand to meet the state's need for skilled workers. Continued expansion of IET programs, including AO-K, will increase system capacity by streamlining pathways that enable participants to attain a secondary credential and industry-recognized credentials faster, supporting both employer needs and the development of a stronger statewide talent pipeline.

*State Workforce Development Capacity***: Vocational Rehabilitation**

1. Population Coverage

Based on the most recent Annual Disability Statistics Compendium and American Community Survey estimates, Kansas has approximately **174,000 to 198,000 working-age individuals (ages 18–64) with disabilities**.

Kansas VR is currently serving approximately **10,809 individuals**, which represents about **5 to 6 percent of the working-age disability population** in the state. This illustrates both the targeted, individualized nature of VR services and the broader level of unmet need for employment supports among Kansans with disabilities.

2. Resource Allocation Monitoring

The program monitors the allocation and utilization of fiscal and staffing resources to maintain service capacity. This includes oversight of Pre-Employment Transition Services expenditures, caseload size, staffing ratios, service cost trends, and infrastructure contributions within the workforce system. Ongoing monitoring supports strategic planning and informs determinations regarding the potential need for an Order of Selection should demand exceed available resources.

3. Service Provider Network Challenges

Gaps in the community rehabilitation provider network continue to impact service capacity, particularly in rural and frontier areas of Kansas. Limited availability of job development, supported employment, and retention services restricts access to intensive employment supports and affects the timeliness of service delivery for individuals with significant support needs.

4. Youth Employment Focus

Kansas VR maintains a strategic emphasis on youth and students with disabilities to strengthen long-term workforce participation. This includes the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services and the development of paid work-based learning opportunities such as after-school, summer, and part-time employment experiences to support early skill development and career exploration.

Summary

The capacity of the Kansas VR program is shaped by population need, available fiscal and staffing resources, provider network availability, and targeted investments in youth services. These factors collectively influence the program's ability to provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services and support competitive integrated employment outcomes.

b. State Strategic Vision and Goals

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

1. VISION

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

2. GOALS

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

(A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment[8] and other populations.[9]

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

[8] Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities,

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

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

3. PERFORMANCE GOALS

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

4. ASSESSMENT

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

1. The Governor's Framework for Growth provides direction for the state workforce and economic development to leverage our sectors into new opportunities through the development of modern skills and innovation. The Framework for Growth is grounded in four pillars:

TALENT | INNOVATION | COMMUNITY ASSETS | POLICY

KANSAS*WORKS* ***STATE BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN***

VISION: The Kansas Workforce System will be the national leader in meeting business talent needs, growing the economy, and providing access to quality careers for every Kansan through integrated service delivery.

MISSION: The **KANSAS**WORKS mission is to deliver a qualified workforce through training and matching services available to Kansans, supporting businesses, growing regional economies, and improving the prosperity of all.

2. GOALS and STRATEGIES:

1. Enhanced and improved workforce service delivery to disadvantaged youth.

1.1. Assess strategies and outcomes of current programming for disadvantaged youth to identify strengths as well as gaps.

1.1.1. Review and synthesize available outcomes data and information on current programming, initiatives, and resources for disadvantaged youth to identify effective approaches for expansion/scaling and to document gaps and opportunities for enhanced partner and resource alignment. Develop and implement prioritized solutions during the 2024-2026 strategic plan cycle.

1.2. Expand workforce transition services, including work-based learning experiences, for foster care youth through deepened partnership efforts with the Department for Children and Families (DCF).

1.2.1. Collaborate with the Older Youth and Young Adult Services Partnership led by DCF to better define specific workforce transition service needs for foster care youth, identify any barriers to service provision, and design and implement a plan for expanding service delivery for this population during the 2024-2026 strategic plan cycle.

1.3. Expand and better integrate workforce transition services, including work-based learning experiences, for youth with disabilities through enhanced partnership efforts with DCF/Rehabilitation Services and the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE).

1.3.1. Collaborate with the Transition Coalition to determine specific workforce transition service delivery needs for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)-defined youth with disabilities and design and implement a plan for expanding service delivery for this population during the 2024-2026 strategic plan cycle.

2. Increased workforce system and reentry partner capacity to serve justice-involved individuals and other reentry community stakeholders.

    a. With the Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) and other relevant partners, lead implementation efforts to develop workforce system and reentry partners' capacity to:

• Increase career planning and development services and expand work-based learning opportunities for justice-involved individuals;

• Enhance support for reentry-friendly employers looking to hire, upskill, and advance justice-involved individuals; and

• Enhance collaborations with community corrections partners.

2.1.1. Analyze available data on workforce service provision and outcomes for WIOA Titles I and III reentry populations to inform design and implementation of efforts during the 2024-2026 strategic plan cycle.

2.1.2. Use findings from data analysis to develop and implement efforts in the 2024-2026 strategic plan cycle to build workforce system and reentry partners' capacity to serve justice-involved individuals and interested employers and collaborate with community corrections partners more comprehensively.

2.1.3. Examine outcomes data and existing policy and practices to identify and recommend opportunities to streamline pre-release and release procedures for justice-involved youth and adults.

3. Increased business and community awareness of, engagement with, and utilization of the workforce system.

3.1. Commission surveys to gather insights about workforce system awareness, perception, and utilization.

3.1.1. Partner with Local Workforce Development Boards, Universities, Community Colleges, and Technical Colleges in the state to conduct a statewide survey of a sample of residents and

employers to gather baseline data on workforce system awareness, perception, and utilization. Based on survey results, annual or biennial surveys could be considered thereafter.

3.2. Identify and implement efforts to enhance awareness and perceptions of the system and increase utilization of the system by residents and businesses.

3.2.1. Based on survey results, identify and implement (in the 2024-2026 strategic plan cycle) up to three high-priority, high-value outreach, messaging, and communications strategies to enhance awareness and perceptions of the system and increase usage of the system by residents and businesses.

4. Increased and sustained State Board member engagement and workforce system leadership.

4.1. Gather Board member and Board staff input on challenges to and ideas around increasing and sustaining engagement.

4.1.1. Conduct an internal assessment with staff to identify opportunities to enhance Board staff support and activities that advance Board member engagement (e.g., staff serving as "project managers" for Board Committees, overseeing cadences for reporting and information-sharing in between Board meetings, etc.).

4.1.2. Survey Board members for input on improving Board member engagement, member Committee leadership and participation, Board organizational structure and communication, and other relevant areas.

4.2. Review existing Board structures and practices to identify potential opportunities to maximize Board member engagement.

4.2.1. Utilize internal assessment and Board member survey results and insights to review and revise, as necessary, items like onboarding processes and resources, bylaws, Committee structure and activities, and Board meeting protocols to maximize Board member engagement.

4.2.2. Support efforts to develop a knowledgeable pipeline of Board member talent by charging Board members/Committees with identifying employers, community organizations, and others who might serve as effective and impactful future Board members.

4.3. Develop tools and resources to build Board member understanding of expectations, responsibilities, and time commitments.

4.3.1. Utilize internal assessment and Board member survey results and insights to develop tools to support Board member engagement, which might include a role description for Board members that identifies expectations, responsibilities, and time commitments; updated onboarding and onboarding "refresher" materials and processes, etc.

State Plan Management Team Vision and Values for the Workforce Development System

<u>Vision</u>

We seek to grow the economy by investing in Kansans so that every business, worker, and jobseeker has the skills to compete and prosper.

<u>Values</u>

1. We value employment as a path to self–sufficiency and independence for all Kansans.

2. We value the contributions that all individuals, including those with significant barriers to employment, as defined by WIOA, can make to the Kansas economy.
3. We value accountability and continuous improvement of the workforce system.
4. We value collaboration that respects and leverages the unique mission and expertise of all partners to ensure the best possible services to jobseekers, workers, and businesses.
5. We value the power of technology.

3.Performance Goals Title I

PY2025 & PY2026 - ADULT

Employment Second Quarter After Exit 77.0%

Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit 65.4%

Median Earnings $6,790

Credential Attainment Rate 78.0%

Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs) 56.0%

PY2025 & PY2026 – DISLOCATED WORKER

Employment Second Quarter After Exit 76.9%

Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit 64.1%

Median Earnings $9,772

Credential Attainment Rate 78.0%

Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs) 56.0%

PY2025 & PY2026 - YOUTH

Employment Second Quarter After Exit 73.0%

Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit 61.1%

Median Earnings $3,050

Credential Attainment Rate 67.0%

Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs) 46.2%

Title II

PY2026 – Proposed

Employment Second Quarter After Exit 56.0%

Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit 55.0%

Median Earnings $6,750

Credential Attainment Rate 33.0%

Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs) 60.8%

PY2027 – Proposed

Employment Second Quarter After Exit 56.1%

Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit 55.1%

Median Earnings $6,800

Credential Attainment Rate 33.5%

Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs) 61.0%

Title III

PY2025 & PY2026 – WAGNER-PEYSER

Employment Second Quarter After Exit 73.5%

Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit 72.9%

Median Earnings $5,614

Effectiveness in Serving Employers Not Applicable

Title IV Performance

PY2026

Employment Second Quarter After Exit 54.0%

Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit 50.0%

Median Earnings $4,800

Credential Attainment Rate 42.0%

Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs) 38.0%

Effectiveness in Serving Employers Not Applicable

PY2027-Proposed

Employment Second Quarter After Exit 55.0%

Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit 50.9%

Median Earnings $5,000

Credential Attainment Rate 43.0%

Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs) 39.0%

Effectiveness in Serving Employers Not Applicable

3. **Assessment**

The KWSB reviews WIOA performance measures every quarter at both the State level and the local level for each Local Workforce Development Area in Kansas. State Board members can assess program effectiveness and compare WIOA performance levels to the State and Local labor market data that is shared at every State Board meeting. Board members look for trends and suggest areas of continuous programmatic improvement using their knowledge of labor market conditions.

The KWSB also tracks the percentage of local area funds spent on training and training-related activities. The **KANSAS**WORKS State Board has a minimum requirement that each local area spend at least 40% for adult and dislocated worker training. The KWSB has placed a high value on ensuring that WIOA dollars are used for training Kansans in high demand occupations. Any local area that falls below the minimum threshold must provide a written response explaining why the local area was below the minimum in that quarter. Likewise, any local area that is significantly above the threshold must provide an explanation why their training expenditure rate was high as a learning opportunity for other local areas and thus continuously improving the workforce system.

The state strategic vision, goals, and performance measures indicated in this combined state plan are included as part of the ongoing responsibilities for the oversight of federal employment and training activities, the Kansas Department of Commerce (Commerce) conducts both desk and on-site monitoring reviews on a regularly scheduled basis. The Commerce Regulatory Compliance section is primarily responsible for implementing employment and training reviews associated with the Workforce Investment Act using federal and/or state-developed monitoring guides. The primary mission of the Commerce Regulatory Compliance section includes, but is not limited to, working toward ensuring administrative policies, practices, standards, and systems are functioning and operating within the parameters established by federal and state legislation, regulations, and policy directives. To ensure independence from program operations, it will be the policy of Commerce to utilize Regulatory Compliance for monitoring federal employment and training programs as mandated by law or deemed appropriate by the Secretary.

The results of each Commerce Regulatory Compliance (CRC) monitoring effort is documented and compiled in a formal report and disseminated for response and as warranted, corrective action to the appropriate administrative entities. Specific activities subject to state monitoring may include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Allowable activities;

2. Targeting, selection, assessment methodology, and eligibility;

3. EEO and ADA compliance;

4. Fiscal accountability and internal controls, inventory control, and property management;

5. Complaint and grievance policies and procedures;

6. Management Information Systems (MIS), data sharing, maintenance, and validation;

7. Conflict of interest and nepotism;

8. Contracting, certifications (e.g. Local Workforce Investment Boards (Local Boards), service providers, etc.);

9. Customer satisfaction and performance; and

10. Recordkeeping maintenance, security, and retention.

Commerce Compliance staff are also tasked with monitoring each Local Board's adherence to their own Local Area Plan; training expenditure policy implementation; any other service-delivery issue raised by state WIOA staff.

Procedures related to audit, audit resolution and debt collection are contained in the Policy and Procedures Manual and reflect provisions of WIOA, as well as the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. All state financial management policies are contained in a fiscal policy. The fiscal policy contains definitions related to cost allocation, allowable direct/indirect charges, property management and procurement procedures, etc., for all WIOA fiscal activities. During the first two year of this State Plan, policy manuals will be reviewed and updated as needed.

Monitoring Schedule: The state's monitoring efforts encompass both desk and on-site reviews. Each year the CRC develops a preliminary schedule of on-site reviews to be conducted. This schedule will be disseminated to appropriate entities. The schedule will remain flexible to accommodate the operations of the entity being reviewed. A notice of confirmation will be sent indicating when the entrance visit will occur. Findings Upon completion of a monitoring activity conducted by the CRC, a report summarizing the resulting observations, comments, findings and recommendations will be forwarded to the Workforce Services Technical 2 Assistance (TA) Unit and appropriate local and state program administrators. In addition, the CRC report will be disseminated to Local Elected Officials when findings are of a nature that may expose them to potential liability, as noted in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Within 30 days of receipt of Local Area response, the TA Unit will convene a Workforce Solutions Team representative of the appropriate Commerce program and/or Division representatives (including CRC) and local administrators to review the report's contents and discuss options for utilizing the information gained in advancing the workforce system. In order to remain independent of program operations, participation by the CRC shall be limited to providing clarification, information related to the scope and nature of their reviews and resulting findings/observations. The Workforce Solutions Team will jointly develop a Solution Plan to resolve any findings. A Solution Plan should be developed in manner that maximizes the leveraging of resources available through participating team members and realizes efficiencies in achieving resolution. The plan shall include the following:

a. Identification of the issue(s);

b. Desired outcome/goal;

c. Action steps towards a solution, including individual team members' roles and responsibilities;

d. Measurable objectives for each action step; and

e. Time frame for measuring the accomplishment of each action step as well as the final outcome/goal.

The Solution Plan and subsequent progress reports will be distributed to the participating team members and chair of the Corrective Action Board for review. The chair of the Corrective Action Board may take other such actions as deemed appropriate, including convening the Correction Action Board as outlined below:

The Corrective Action Board (CAB) reviews findings requiring corrective action and makes recommendations to the Deputy Secretary of Commerce or the Secretary of

Commerce/Governor for consideration when corrective action is necessary. Prior to making its recommendation, the CAB may request additional information from the local area, and/or conduct a meeting with appropriate officials to ascertain all pertinent facts regarding the finding. Each quarter, or more often, as determined by the chair of the Corrective Action Board, the CRC will canvass members to determine if there are outstanding operational/compliance issues that warrant a CAB meeting. When the CAB determines an issue warrants corrective action, the chair will request a corrective action plan(s) from the Workforce Services Team and/or the local area, as necessary. When warranted, copies of the request will be sent to the local workforce investment board (local board) chair and the chief elected official (CEO) chair. Within 21 days of receipt of the request, the local board chair shall submit a corrective action plan to the chair of the CAB. Corrective action plans shall include, at a minimum, the following:

1. An assessment of the current situation, including a review of action that has already been taken to address the problem;

2. A plan which describes, in detail, the action which will be taken to correct the problem; and

3. A timetable for the action that identifies what steps will be taken through the coming months, benchmarking dates by which certain levels of progress will be accomplished. Upon approval of the correction action plan, the CAB chair will determine if the local area will be required to submit written progress reports to the CAB. When required, each progress report shall describe actions taken, attainment or non-attainment of benchmarks, and any necessary revision to the plan. In the event of failure or non-implementation of corrective action plans, the CAB will make recommendations to the Deputy Secretary of Commerce or the Secretary of Commerce/Governor regarding possible sanctions. Notification of any sanction to be imposed beyond the corrective action plan will be communicated to the local board chair, the CEO chair, the grant recipient and the administrative entity. These local area officials will also be notified of their rights of appeal. The Procedures for State Level Appeals and Hearings are set in State Policy pertaining to WIOA General Complaint Processing Procedures.

When appropriate, a follow-up review may be conducted to ascertain if the corrective action was implemented, and/or to provide technical assistance. Where performance is not in line with the requirements of the program or violations of the Act, federal regulations, and state policies have occurred, Commerce shall impose the corrective actions/sanctions described below.

Corrective Actions/Sanctions: In determining whether to impose a sanction, the frequency, quantity, flagrancy and severity of the finding and whether it was the result of willful disregard of the Act or other applicable laws and regulations will be considered. The frequency, quantity, flagrancy, severity, and willfulness of the finding will also determine the precise sanction imposed. Specific findings, although not all-inclusive, which may result in the imposition of sanctions, are outlined below. The findings may fall into four major categories: Administrative, Fiscal, Participant, and Performance Standards. Administrative Findings Sanctions may be imposed for violations of law, regulations and state policies. Major examples of findings in the administrative area that may result in sanctions are failure to:

1. Maintain local board membership in accordance with the applicable section of WIOA;

2. Maintain a current CEO Agreement that reflects the current elected officials of the local area;

3. Obtain/maintain supporting documentation for grant activities;

4. Maintain an adequate management information system, in accordance with state standards;

5. Maintain an adequate local monitoring system;

6. Submit appropriate updates/modifications and budgets to maintain an up-to-date Local Area Strategic Plan;

7. Submit and implement required corrective action plans within required time frames;

8. Submit accurate required reports within required time frames;

9. Adhere to federal, state and local policies and procedures regarding EEO requirements; and

10. Implement corrective action based on findings contained in the state oversight reports.

Fiscal Findings Sanctions may be imposed for violations of law, regulations and state standards. Major examples of findings in the fiscal area that may result in sanctions are failure to:

1. Operate within minimum cash balance requirements;

2. Comply with program cost limitations;

3. Make procurements according to required policies and procedures, including prior approval where necessary;

4. Maintain adequate systems of fiscal control;

5. Submit accurate required fiscal reports within required time frames (a corrective action plan is required at the end of any three-month interval in which an organization submits two or more late or inaccurate monthly fiscal reports.

6. Maintain property control system;

7. Resolve audit findings or questioned costs; and

8. Implement corrective action based on findings contained in state oversight reports.

Violations of WIOA law, Regulations and State Policies: Sanctions may be imposed for violations of WIOA law, regulations and state policies. Major examples of findings in the participant area that may result in sanctions are failure to:

1. Obtain proper information for eligibility determination resulting in ineligible participants receiving benefits from the program; and

2. Meet required enrollment levels for any group established as priority through state performance standards.

Given the magnitude of WIOA operations, the need for various partners to establish services, build relationships and toward encouraging innovation and team building, considerable latitude will be granted to the local board toward sufficient performance. The CRC section is supportive of technical assistance funds being made available to local areas that consistently demonstrate a lack of performance in meeting their performance goals. Ongoing program evaluation through monitoring efforts will strive to focus on program improvement. Should it become necessary for the state to entertain sanctions for disregard of the Act or other applicable laws and regulations, such sanctions will be handled within the confines of those laws. Local Monitoring Requirements Pursuant to WIOA section 107(d)(8), the local board, in partnership with the chief elected official for the local area must establish written minimum standards which shall include, but are not be limited to, the following:

1. An annual schedule of activities to be reviewed;

2. Operational procedures related to documentation of the reviews;

3. Operational procedures related to resolution of findings; and

4. Operational procedures related to corrective action. Local areas will develop complete monitoring guides for all aspects of WIOA activities to be available for review by Regulatory Compliance.

C. STATE STRATEGY

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

1. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT, INCLUDING INDUSTRY OR SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS RELATED TO IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS AND CAREER PATHWAYS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA SECTION 101(D)(3)(B), (D). "CAREER PATHWAY" IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(7) AND INCLUDES REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP. "IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTOR OR OCCUPATION" IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(23)

2. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE STATE TO ACHIEVE FULLY INTEGRATED CUSTOMER SERVICES CONSISTENT WITH THE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS DESCRIBED ABOVE. ALSO DESCRIBE STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN REGARD TO WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED IN SECTION II(A)(2)

The **KANSAS**WORKS State Board establishes strategies for aligning the Core Programs, as well as other resources available to the state, to achieve its strategic vision and goals. The State Plan Management Team (SPMT), comprised of state representatives of each Core Partner, assists the Governor and the State Workforce Board in upholding an effective WIOA workforce system in Kansas. Considering the results of the analysis of the current workforce, employer needs, stakeholder surveys, partner staff survey, and workforce development assets of Kansas, the SPMT recommends the strategies and operational elements in this Plan to continuously improve WIOA service delivery within a premier, integrated workforce system. In addition, the Operational Planning Elements in the next section will describe in detail how the State Board will implement its functions detailed in Section 101(d) of WIOA.

(1) The State will implement sector strategies regarding identified economic regions found in Title IB, Section VI and career pathways already utilized in multiple workforce programs, including formula and competitive grant programs. Career pathways will prepare individuals to be successful in a full range of secondary or postsecondary options including registered apprenticeships. Career pathways will enable individuals to attain a high school equivalency certificate, where necessary, as well as at least one recognized postsecondary credential. Where practicable, career pathways will integrate education, training, and other services including employment counseling and workforce preparation activities in order to accelerate the educational and career advancement of individuals.

The Kansas Board of Regents has worked with WIOA Title II providers and postsecondary institutions in developing Accelerating Opportunity: Kansas (AO-K) pathways that provide the opportunity for adults to earn a high school equivalency diploma while also obtaining postsecondary credentials. AO-K participants are concurrently enrolled in both Adult Education

and a postsecondary institution, and basic skills and Career Technical Education (CTE) instructors team-teach courses to ensure students have the academic support needed to be successful. Local Workforce Boards may also develop additional career pathways as required by local employers. WIOA Title II collaborates with workforce partners in offering basic skills to registered apprenticeship participants and with colleges in offering concurrent enrollment and team–teaching in Adult Education and CTE programs. Registered apprenticeship programs are initiated by business and industry needs; developed with assistance from CTE programs; approved by the Kansas Office of Registered Apprenticeships, the Kansas Postsecondary Technical Education Authority, and the Kansas Board of Regents; are accounted for in the postsecondary performance data; and are eligible for Perkins V funding.

As described below, VR uses current labor market data and sector intelligence information to counsel VR participants. Career pathways are utilized for participants to reach their expressed education, training and employment goals.

(2)The strategies the State will use to align the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available to the State to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with the strategic vision and goals will be developed and delivered through collaboration and coordination of all partner services available in each Local Workforce Development System and through the continuous improvement process lead by the State Plan Management Team.

The active participation of Titles I, II, III and IV, as well as Kansas Department of Labor staff and resources, SCSEP partners, JVSG staff, Required Partner staff and other representatives from the community in developing local strategies helps to assure these programs are aligned with each other and that these strategies are built on the foundation of integrated service delivery.

The Department of Commerce Workforce Services Division, through its directives in the Local Workforce Development Area Plan instructions, requires Local Workforce Development Boards to describe specifically how they will align with Core and Required partners to **continually develop and expand strategies** for meeting the needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers, particularly through job–driven industry or sector partnerships. Further, Kansas has established two Policies which require local workforce systems to collaborate with partners

https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/56/policies/1665/5-21-00-partner-collaboration.pdf

and a separate policy requiring service delivery integration and functional management of their local AJCs

https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/56/policies/1686/5-22-00-final-integration-and-functional-management-11-1-17.pdf

One example of state resources shared with partners is Commerce, as the state's economic development agency, has information and intelligence regarding emerging sectors long before data sources for traditional labor market information. Commerce Workforce Services can therefore implement sector strategies and influence career pathways to not only meet current demand, but future demand as well. In addition to providing this information to each LWDB, the **KANSAS**WORKS State Board receives a detailed labor market and economic development report during each KWSB meeting.

As another example, when providing vocational counseling and guidance with VR customers, the VR program uses the Kansas Department of Labor's Labor Information Center website for information on high–demand jobs and career pathways. At this website, information is provided about jobs across various industries. Career pathways and potential earnings are provided for

entry–level, intermediate and advanced career options. Educational requirements for each level in the career pathway are provided. This information is useful in facilitating informed decision–making by VR customers regarding services and vocational objectives. It also helps assure that VR customers are prepared to meet the workforce needs of Kansas business and industry.

Additionally, the Kansas WIOA Title II content standards are aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) adopted by the Kansas State Department of Education for K–12. The College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education (CCRS) were adopted in 2014, and the English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards for Adult Education for English learners were adopted in 2024. Title II providers offer instruction in foundational and high school equivalency skills, workforce preparation activities, and assistance in transitioning to postsecondary education and training, including for WIOA out-of-school youth. Youth enrolled in Title II programs may participate in the Accelerating Opportunity: Kansas (AO-K) career pathways program, which offers tuition-free technical courses and high school equivalency preparation instruction concurrently. Therefore, Title II can be a major source of referrals to Title I Youth services, since Title II serves a significant number of people who would be considered out–of–school youth under Title I. Similarly, since a large percentage of out–of–school youth recruited by Title I Youth programs will lack high school diplomas, local Title I providers routinely involve Title II providers in delivery of services to these youth, streamlining services through a coordinated system.

Finally, Core partners conducted a systemwide personnel survey in the fall of 2023. The following goals reflect findings from over 150 responses. The State Plan Management Team (SPMT) will **establish work groups** for each of the following strategies that report to the SPMT not less than quarterly about activities and progress. The State will **use the strategies developed to align Core Programs**, other partner programs and any other resources available to integrate customer service, as described in the specific State Plan Goals listed below:

1. Create effective networking and collaboration among WIOA partners
2. Improve Employer Engagement
3. Increase System Accessibility

The continuous goals and strategies determined by the SPMT guide every aspect of service delivery activity of the WIOA Core programs to strengthen workforce development activities and to address weaknesses detailed above:

<u>Specific Goals and Strategies</u>

- Provide high quality, comprehensive customer–centered career, employment, education, training, and supportive services so jobseekers and workers can succeed in the labor market.
- Provide high quality, comprehensive customer–centered career, employment, education, training, and supportive services so incumbent workers can retain and advance in high quality jobs and high demand careers.
- Develop a qualified labor pool so Kansas businesses can compete in the global economy.
- Improve the skills of jobseekers and workers through access to education and training leading to industry–recognized credentials through the use of career pathways, Registered Apprenticeships, traditional on-the-job training, and other strategies.

- Encourage paid work–based learning experiences for youth and eligible adults so they may explore career options, develop the universal interpersonal and customer service skills needed in the workplace, and become self–reliant through employment as adults.
- Vigorously represent the ability of qualified jobseekers with significant barriers to employment to meet the workforce needs of Kansas employers.
- Ensure the local workforce development systems provide physical and programmatic access to and opportunities for the employment, education, training, and support services for individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment.
- Ensure that performance measures or targets will not be used to exclude an individual from services for which he or she is otherwise eligible.
- Analyze current and proposed policies for their potential impact on services for individuals with barriers to employment to ensure an effective service delivery system.
- Provide employers access to a qualified and diverse labor pool to meet their workforce needs.
- Require each Core Program at the state level to establish a Continuous Improvement process under the oversight and direction of the Programs' designated agency.
- Encourage collaboration and explore opportunities for innovation.
- Ensure that high–quality comprehensive data informed decisions made by policy makers, employers, workers, and jobseekers.
- Assess the levels of participation in the workforce for individuals with barriers to employment.
- Incorporate meaningful stakeholder involvement in planning, policy making, and continuous improvement. Stakeholders include, but are not limited to, youth, jobseekers, workers, businesses, local partners and advocacy organizations.
- Use local area subcommittees, e.g. youth committees and/or partnership councils, to facilitate collaboration.
- Use Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) to establish clear roles and responsibilities which facilitate coordinated delivery of partner services.
- Establish robust, ongoing professional development processes to ensure cross training among partners.
- Promote a "no wrong door" approach to services by providing customers with easy access to information throughout the system.
- Recognize the effort and expertise that dedicated professionals contribute to the workforce system.
- Use technology to ensure an interoperable system, or to ensure data sharing agreements are developed, so that reporting on performance accountability measures is efficient and service delivery is enhanced.
- Enable businesses to readily identify and hire skilled workers.
- Enhance the quality of the customer experience by reducing duplicative information collection.

- Provide user–friendly information to customers about careers, workforce services, and education and training.
- Provide education and training activities that effectively use technology, including distance learning, linked social media, telephone, instant messaging, live chat, smartphone app and other virtual services to increase the amount and quality of learning.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

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

A. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include–

1. STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS

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

The operational planning elements contained herein describe how the Kansas workforce development system will align Core Programs and resources, as well as other resources available to the State, to achieve the strategic vision and goals of the Governor, the **KANSAS**WORKS State Board and Core Partners.

The State Board implements the functions under section 101(d) through its authority granted by Governor Laura Kelly. The Kansas Department of Commerce is the designated state workforce agency and provides the Board Manager and other staff to support the **KANSAS**WORKS State Board (KWSB). The **KANSAS**WORKS State Board meets part of its obligation as described in its Strategic Plan through the development, implementation, and modification of the Combined State Plan. The KWSB serves as a review board and change agent empowered with the responsibility of making recommendations to the Governor and to state agencies to align workforce development with the needs of economic development in the state.

The KWSB strives to transform the state workforce system through:

- Policies to support a continuous improvement process across Core and Required partners
- Performance measures in addition to the Performance Accountability Measures in WIOA, including the rate of training expenditures by local workforce development boards
- Promotion of integrated, coordinated service delivery across all partner programs

The KWSB has one standing committee, the Executive Committee, and implements ad hoc committees as needed. The Executive Committee is empowered to take action on behalf of the KWSB. A majority vote of the Executive Committee is required for all such actions. All actions of the Executive Committee shall be reviewed by the full KWSB at the next regularly scheduled meeting. Ad hoc committees are charged with aligning workforce services with K–12 and postsecondary education, industry needs and job–driven opportunities for customers, other WIOA Core and Required Partner programs, and the Governor's Vision for economic prosperity

in Kansas. The State Plan Management Team and other assigned staff monitor performance of the state and local workforce systems, communicating recommendations to the KWSB regarding the measurement and continuous improvement of local workforce systems.

The Kansas Department of Labor provides labor market information to the KWSB, local boards and the public. This information guides the entire workforce system, including education, VR services, labor exchange and social services agencies, as they coordinate resources to meet the needs of jobseekers, workers and employers. With additional feedback from Core and Required partners, as well as other interested parties, the KWSB develops and reviews policies to align and streamline the workforce development services in the State.

The KWSB has included multiple partners in the development of this plan and solicited comments from other partners, interested parties, and the public during a comment period. The KWSB reviews comments and recommends modifications to the plan as determined necessary or beneficial to the workforce development system. No public comments were received for this modification of the state plan.

The KWSB encourages state and local board members, partners, and staff to promote the workforce system and identifies and disseminates information about evidence–based best practices to be utilized by the workforce system. The KWSB and its staff will continue to participate in national professional workforce associations and regional discussions to share the achievements of the integrated system.

The KWSB expects workforce development partners to continue sharing Infrastructure Costs to strengthen cross-program integration and integrated service delivery. Co–location cost sharing procedures have been established. Additional infrastructure cost–sharing procedures may be established at the discretion of the Governor following consultation with the Core Partners, chief elected officials, the KWSB and local boards as needed.

Kansas workforce services will share infrastructure costs of co–location of participating partners under the following terms:

- Partner co–location is defined as an entity which uses *dedicated* space within a physical location, whether for all hours of operation or a fraction of hours of operation of the location.
- Local workforce development boards and partners will enter into Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) or similar types of agreements to describe infrastructure cost sharing obligations of all partners co–located within a local one–stop center.
- At the time co–location is proposed, the local workforce development board must provide documentation of the previous year's infrastructure cost to the interested partner. The documentation must be presented in line items per cost category provided in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and its Final Rules. The documentation of total infrastructure costs must also be presented in a manner useful for interested partners to calculate the cost of co–location. Any infrastructure cost allocation methodology agreed to by the partners may be utilized.
- Total infrastructure cost obligations must be reconciled at least annually based on actual costs and actual use to assure each co–located partner is paying only its proportionate share of infrastructure costs. Because these terms are pre–determined and established by the WIOA State Plan, co–located partners are required to negotiate only the size of the space and the number of hours per year to be dedicated for co–location.

- Local workforce development boards will annually submit all MOUs/Lease Agreements to the **KANSAS**WORKS State Board Subcommittee tasked with analyzing the data to evaluate increased/improved access to multiple programs.

Strategies for aligning technology and data systems across one–stop partner programs to enhance service delivery and improve efficiencies in reporting on performance accountability measures remains a priority for workforce services. The KWSB continues to work with Core and required partners, the Governor's office and Core Program staff to ease access to multiple program data systems to monitor the effectiveness of the integrated workforce service delivery system and to complete mandatory federal reports.

In its new Strategic Plan, the KWSB has included a goal of increased and sustained State Board member engagement and workforce system leadership. Board members, staff and Governor Kelly's office will actively recruit individuals to serve on the KWSB and will seek feedback from current and former members to determine how to best sustain board member engagement.

Finally, the KWSB has developed allocation formulas for Title IB and policies affecting the coordinated provision of services (Titles IB and III) through the local area's one–stop delivery systems. The KWSB monitoring policy promotes the achievement of statewide objectives for Title IB of the integrated workforce development system.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

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

A. CORE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE'S STRATEGY

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

For Titles IB and III the state workforce agency will fund outreach, employment assistance, case management, and staff supervision through state merit staff funded through Wagner–Peyser labor exchange and career services; Reemployment Assistance programs; Jobs for Veterans State Grant activities, including those for Disabled Veterans; Registered Apprenticeship; Agricultural Outreach; Work Opportunity Tax Credit; and Foreign Labor Wage Certification programs through formula and other funds. The subgrantee for the state's Senior Community Service Employment Program is a local workforce development board and integrates SCSEP activities with WIOA Title I activities, including co-enrollment in the WIOA Adult program. Monitoring, information management, staff training, technical assistance and KWSB support will be provided with the Governor's Reserve portion of WIOA funds and other employment and training formula funds. All of these activities will move Kansas toward the strategic goals described throughout **Section II** of this plan. Further, these activities will be aligned across the Core Programs as described in III. a. 2.B-E in the subsequent sections.

For WIOA Title II, the Kansas Board of Regents will serve as the passthrough entity and will oversee statewide instruction and support services, as described below.

Adult Education and Literacy

Adult education activities are academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual's academic abilities to attain a secondary school diploma equivalent, to transition to postsecondary education and training, and to obtain employment. Literacy activities are services to improve an individual's ability to read, write, compute, and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family, and in society. These activities support current workers in building skills and advancing in careers, and they also support individuals with barriers to employment to achieve the skills necessary to enter the workforce.

Workplace Adult Education and Literacy
Workplace adult education and literacy activities are collaborative services between an educational provider and an employer or employee organization. Instruction is delivered at or connected to the workplace and is designed to improve workforce productivity, skill attainment, and career advancement. These activities are employer-driven, aligned with industry skill needs, and delivered with flexibility to upskill and reskill workers for essential, in-demand roles, strengthening talent pipelines and supporting economic mobility.

Family Literacy
Family literacy activities are services provided in coordination with community partners, in areas in which local providers demonstrate high need for such services. These activities engage parents or adult family members in instruction both to achieve readiness for postsecondary education or training and career advancement and also to become the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children. Community partners support interactive literacy activities between adults and children and provide age-appropriate education for children. The purpose of family literacy activities is to make sustainable improvements in the economic prospects for a family, which not only improves the financial stability of the family but also opens opportunities for the children while they are in school and as they move into the workforce.

English Language Acquisition
English language acquisition activities are designed to help English learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehending the English language for the purpose of attaining a secondary school diploma equivalent, transitioning to postsecondary education, and gaining employment or advancing in careers. These activities strengthen community engagement and expand the talent pipeline for the workforce system.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE)
Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) activities are education services for English learners to achieve competency in the English language, to understand the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and to engage in civic participation, and to attain the skills necessary to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. In Kansas, all IELCE participants engage in Integrated Education and Training (IET), gaining the skills necessary to enter and advance in the workforce.

Workforce Preparation
Workforce preparation activities help individuals acquire academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills. These competencies, which include understanding systems and working with others, are necessary for successful retention in the workplace. Workforce preparation also increases the employability of individuals with barriers to employment, such that new employees are ready to manage time at work appropriately, engage in professional relationships, and persist in finding solutions for better outcomes, strengthening the talent pipeline and supporting economic mobility.

Integrated Education and Training (IET)

Integrated Education and Training (IET) is a service approach that provides academic skills concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and with workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. IET programs are designed in partnership with employers and workforce partners to accelerate skill attainment, credential completion, and entry or re-entry into employment. All local providers in Kansas are required to provide IET services, which streamline education and occupational training so adults can more quickly enter or re-enter the workforce in high-demand, high-wage careers.

Overall Delivery of WIOA Title II Services
All WIOA Title II activities are delivered with a focus on local and regional industry needs, in addition to secondary and postsecondary educational achievement. Academic coursework is aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for adult learners, while workforce preparation and occupational training are guided by employer needs and industry standards. WIOA Title II providers partner with employers and with postsecondary education and training institutions to coordinate delivery of services for flexible, streamlined education and training.

To uphold a robust workforce system that actively addresses the employment needs of individuals with disabilities and other customers facing substantial barriers to employment, Title IV, VR (Vocational Rehabilitation,) will deliver services to eligible customers in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act, implementing regulations for Title IV of WIOA, and state policies.

VR services are designed to assist residents of Kansas with disabilities in achieving their employment objectives through a comprehensive range of accessible services tailored to the individual's distinct needs, skills, interests, abilities, and vocational goals. These services are outlined in an Individual Plan for Employment and may include:

- Vocational assessment
- Counseling
- Physical and mental restoration services
- Training and education
- Rehabilitation technology
- Job preparation and placement services
- Supported and customized employment
- Referrals to other services.

VR collaborates with individuals having various physical or mental disabilities. To receive VR services, customers must meet all three federal eligibility requirements:

1. Have a physical or mental impairment or disability.
2. The disability must significantly impede employment.
3. Require VR services to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment.

Assessment services, vocational counseling, guidance, referral, job placement, supported employment/customized employment, and job coaching will be provided based on individual needs. If comparable services or benefits are available from other agencies or sources, those must be utilized before VR funds, ensuring progress toward employment.

Beyond the specific activities funded by each Core Partner, all partners will align services by:

- Representation on state and local boards.
- Leveraging data-sharing agreements where possible.
- Collaborative case management and co-enrollment when necessary.
- Collaborating on targeted outreach activities.
- Enhancing consumer referrals among Core Partners.
- Participating in evaluation and continuous improvement strategies.
- Strengthening communications among Core Partners.
- Collaborating on business outreach activities.
- Establishing workgroups for the State Plan strategies for the networking and collaboration, employer engagement, and accessibility that will report to the State Plan Management Team.

B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

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

Currently, many programs offered across state agencies are provided in partnerships brought about by state statute:

- The Older Kansans Employment Program provides specialized training, career assessment, job matching, and job search assistance to Kansans aged 55 and older regardless of their income and facilitates the development of job opportunities for older Kansans in private industry.
- Accelerating Opportunity: Kansas (AO-K) is a statewide education and workforce program in Kansas designed to help adult learners improve their foundational skills while earning credentials that lead to high-wage careers. It blends adult education with career and technical training so students can study literacy, math, and high school equivalency preparation while simultaneously completing credit-bearing career pathways. Kansas supports this model through the AO Proviso, which funds tuition at public postsecondary institutions for adults co-enrolled in Career Technical Education (CTE) and WIOA Title II programs. This dual-enrollment approach enables adults to work concurrently toward a high school equivalency diploma and a postsecondary credential, accelerating their pathway to high-wage, high-demand careers. By removing financial barriers and aligning education and training systems, the AO Proviso strengthens talent pipelines, expands workforce participation, and supports long-term economic mobility.
- WIOA Title II activities align closely with Perkins V requirements in supporting learners. For that purpose, Adult Education and Perkins V continue to explore new ways to coordinate services, to co-train and co-teach, and to support projects with braided funding.

In addition, Kansas has been awarded competitive federal grants which will continue to align services offered through collaboration among multiple entities, such as:

- **ReSpECTWOR*KS*** (Reentry Specialized Employment Counselling and Training), a Pathway Home 6 grant to provide workforce services to justice-involved customers for a period while incarcerated in state adult prison facilities through post release, throughout the state; local workforce development boards will provide employment and training services.

- A **PROWD** grant to provide workforce services to justice-involved customers for a period while incarcerated in the Federal Bureau of Prisons through post release throughout the state. Commerce staff will access the services of Core and Required programs and community-based supports to deliver services leading to employment and on-going stability.

- The US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance, recently granted Commerce **Second Chance Act** funds to provide comprehensive workforce services to women incarcerated in Kansas' only female prison facility. The Local Workforce Development Board will provide services to eligible participants both while incarcerated and after release, leading to employment in the participants' releasing community.

- **knectY** (**KANSAS**WORKS Network for Employment and Career Transition for Youth), a project funded by the US Department of Labor's Employment Transition Model grant, uses skills training, work-based learning and partnerships with the Parent Training and Information Center and the State Department of Education to engage families in transition services, prepare students for entrance into career pathways upon high school graduation, and re-engage youth who have left high school and are ready to pursue a career pathway.

- **Ticket to Work** offers career guidance, job placement, and service coordination, along with Certified Community Work Incentives Coordinator services to increase the availability to encourage employment of all citizens.

Kansas utilizes federal formula funds to align the following activities through leveraged resources of all WIOA Titles including training, supportive services, employment preparation expertise, and participant recruitment. While the programs and services described below are not Core programs, they are aligned with the WIOA combined state plan:

- The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs assist workers who have lost their jobs as a result of foreign trade. Benefits from the TAA may include job training, income support, job search and relocation allowances. While the Act was not reauthorized by Congress, Kansas will maintain staff trained in TAA as long as possible to ensure TAA service delivery to any Kansan who remains eligible to receive TAA services.

- Veterans are provided priority in job placement, training activities and placement services. Case management services are provided to qualified veterans and other qualified individuals through the Jobs for Veterans State Grant. The JVSG state plan is included as part of this Combined State Plan.

Finally, Kansas utilizes federal and state funds to coordinate and align the following programs:

- The Manager of Justice-Involved Programs brokers relationships across state agencies, Local Workforce Development Boards, community-based organizations, and employer organizations to increase engagement with the offender population regarding

employment. In addition to managing and supervising all justice-involved projects, this staff person identifies market relevant training opportunities for offenders to obtain industry-recognized credentials which can assist in the development of meaningful portfolios for job interviews and employment. Federal reentry program funds, WIOA Adult and Out-of-School Youth co-enrollment, and approved Second Chance Pell postsecondary education and training programs, are all coordinated to blend resources and eliminate duplication of services.

The Office of Registered Apprenticeship is led by the Department of Commerce, Workforce Services Director of Internships and Apprenticeships. The Office promotes RA as a structured system for training employees in a variety of occupations that require a wide range of skills and knowledge. It combines full–time employment, through on–the–job learning, under the supervision of experienced journey level workers, and related technical instruction. The Kansas Office of Registered Apprenticeship and Kansas Department of Commerce has awarded state issued grants to existing programs. Over $1,500,000 in state funds have been invested in existing Registered Apprenticeship programs to modernize service delivery and expand availability of skilled workforce. Career Technical Education (CTE) partners work closely with the Office of Registered Apprenticeship to meet the needs of industry while maintaining rigorous academic and technical skill standards. The agencies streamlined the registered apprenticeship approval process and set up systems to ensure that student performance data for approved programs is accurately captured for state and federal reporting. In addition, Commerce is the recipient of federal RA grant funds and has, most notably, established the Kansas Department of Education as a statewide, multi-Employer Intermediary. This RAP is a four-year, competency-based apprenticeship where the apprentice will receive training in a classroom while pursuing a bachelor's degree within a teacher preparation program. KSDE is on track to serve 100+ teachers in rural and urban areas during this state plan period.

- The Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program (WOTC) encourages the hiring of targeted employees, so they move from economic dependency into self–sufficiency as they earn a steady income and become contributing taxpayers. Participating employers receive compensation by reducing their federal income tax liability.

- Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) assists UI claimants' efforts with finding new employment. This reemployment service results in shorter claim durations and fewer erroneous payments. Title III staff provide RESEA services across the state, both in person in AJCs and virtually. RESEA is fully integrated in **KANSAS**WORKS, assuring participants access to all workforce development programs for which they are eligible. Kansas Department of Commerce also administers the state funded My (Re)Employment Plan Program which requires anyone receiving three weeks of UI to register with kansasworks.com, upload a resume and complete an Individualized Employment Plan to maintain eligibility for Unemployment Insurance.

- Foreign Labor Certification allows employers to fill job openings with foreign labor when they are unable to fill positions with qualified US workers. **KANSAS**WORKS will continue to provide services to workers and their employers to assist with the process.

- The Federal Bonding program provides individual fidelity bonds to employers who hire job applicants who have been, or may be, denied coverage by commercial carriers. **KANSAS**WORKS advises individuals to use their bond as leverage with business and industry to obtain and secure employment and will continue to promote this benefit during this state plan period.

Collaboration among Titles will assist in identifying opportunities for increasing Title II services to a greater number of employers in each local area. Adult Education can provide instruction in adult education and literacy, English language acquisition, workplace literacy, workforce preparation, and Integrated Education and Training onsite at the employer's location or in another location with coordination from the employer. Adult Education providers and employers will collaborate to develop industry-driven plans for increasing occupational skills and workforce readiness and to identify benchmarks of achievement among participants.

C. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

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

Under this State plan, state agencies which provide WIOA Core Partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high–quality, customer–centered services, including supportive services to individuals including those populations identified in section II(a)(1)(B).

Vocational Rehabilitation employs a Community Engagement and Provider Manager. This manager collaborates closely with direct service providers to support individuals with disabilities within our purview in securing and maintaining employment. Within our network, approximately 100 service providers deliver a diverse range of services to the individuals we serve. These services not only cater to the needs of the individuals we serve but also serve as a bridge connecting employers with potential candidates for employment, job tryouts, and work-based learning opportunities.

Title II, under the direction of the Kansas Board of Regents, provides services to support adults in achieving foundational, secondary, postsecondary, and workforce skills.

For Titles IB and III, Commerce and Local Workforce Development Boards provide career services, as well as access to training services, access to programs and activities carried out by one–stop partners, access to the data, information, and analysis as described in section 15(a) of the Wagner–Peyser Act (29 USC. 49l–2(a)) and all job search, placement, recruitment, and other labor exchange services authorized under the Wagner–Peyser Act. Wagner–Peyser staff are co–located in American Job Centers across the State. Please refer to Section VI Wagner–Peyser Act Program for a description of how these services are coordinated and aligned to meet the needs of individuals.

Kansas American Job Centers operate using a Functional Management model wherein Title IB and III partners are co–located. AJC partners agree to participate in a team approach to meeting the needs of all customers, whether individual jobseekers or local businesses.

The coordination and alignment of WIOA Adult Dislocated Worker and Youth Services to Individuals are described in Section VI.

Trade Adjustment Assistance

Service Delivery

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs are delivered through partnerships between Commerce, WIOA Core and Required partner programs as well as other workforce system

partners to provide seamless services to customers. All staff members approving TAA benefits are merit staff, both at the state administrative and the local level.

Outreach

Since TAA has not been reauthorized, there is very limited funding for any outreach activities. As laid-off workers come into the workforce centers, laid-off workers are notified about TAA services if applicable.

Workforce center staff will continue to work with customers to ensure registration in kansasworks.com, a combined MIS system, which is another element supporting the development of strong linkages between workforce development partners. kansasworks.com is capable of linking multiple state agencies and currently links WIOA Youth, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Wagner-Peyser, Trade Act, RESEA, Unemployment Insurance, the Senior Community Service Employment Program, Reentry programs, and multiple other programs delivered within the Kansas workforce system. The system is capable of cross–programmatic service delivery and maintains case management files for multiple programs and/or agencies. Information on a common customers can be accessed without moving from one agency system to another. Because case managers from different agencies have access to the same participant data, the entire system has become seamless to deliver better services for common customers of programs using kansasworks.com.

Rapid Response

Service Delivery

The Department of Commerce, State Dislocated Worker Unit, is responsible for providing Rapid Response services. The state RR team consists of the Rapid Response Coordinator, the Workforce Services Director, and the Deputy Director of LMIS at KDOL. The state's responsibilities implemented during this state plan period include the following:

- Provide overall grant management to the Rapid Response program;
- Serve as the central point of communication for the AJCs;
- Develop prospective strategies for addressing dislocation events that ensure rapid access to the broad range of allowable assistance in conjunction with other appropriate federal, state, and local service agencies and officials, employer associations, technical or other business councils, and labor organizations;
- Compile information and distribute to the State Board, the USDOL, and others as needed;
- Establish and maintain the WARN online data base;
- Coordinate and provide related staff development activities;
- Establish and maintain dislocated worker and Rapid Response information on the Department of Commerce web site;
- Initiate early intervention services;
- Maintain an official file for all Rapid Response activities, including the surveys;
- Print materials and folders and deliver informational packets;
- Review and make recommendations on requests for Rapid Response services;
- Prepare National Emergency Grants;

- Continually improve customer service, ensuring high-quality, coordinated services; and
- Evaluate customer satisfaction measures and share this information with the State Board.

Commerce designates Local Area Rapid Response Coordinators to provide and oversee Rapid Response activities in their respective Local Workforce Development Areas. The local RR teams vary per area, but each includes at least the local Rapid Response Coordinator and local workforce center staff. The activities they will continue to provide include, but are not limited to:

- Immediate and on–site contact with the employer, representatives of the affected workers, and the local community;
- Assessment of the layoff plans and schedule of the employer;
- Communicate with the Commerce Administrative Office to request statewide materials and folders as well as collection and assimilation of information to be provided at employee meetings;
- Immediate notification of affected AJC Operators, WIOA Core Partners and other workforce system partners of a layoff incident; and
- Hold informational meetings with the affected workers, providing them with re–employment services, UI, WIOA Core Partner programs and community resources information.

RR will administer a customer survey to be completed for each layoff incident in which on–site contact is made. Information relating to follow–up services will be gathered, including assistance needed for training, education, or job search activities. RR staff will be responsible for connecting the affected workers to resources necessary for follow–up services and work with the employers and affected workers on additional services such as Job Fairs, resume writing/interviewing workshops, referral services, etc.

Rapid Response activities are initiated when the State or Local Rapid Response Coordinator becomes aware of an impending layoff of any size. A WARN or non–WARN notice may be initiated from the following:

- Employer – Upon receipt of the official WARN notification from the employer, the State or Local Rapid Response Coordinator will contact the employer within 48 hours of the notice to offer Rapid Response services.
- Kansas Department of Commerce – Any Commerce employee who receives notification of non–WARN information must send that information to the State Rapid Response Coordinator within 24 hours. The State or Local Rapid Response Coordinator contacts the employer within 48 hours from the time they are notified.
- AJC Partner – If a workforce system partner (who is not part of the local Rapid Response delegation) receives or learns of a layoff, they must notify the State or Local Rapid Response Coordinator. The State or Local Rapid Response Coordinator contacts the employer within 48 hours of learning of the layoff.
- Newspaper Articles or Broadcast News – The State or Local Rapid Response Coordinator contacts the employer within 48 hours of receiving information from newspaper articles or broadcast news.

- Other – Other notifications may include WIOA Core Partner information, phoned–in leads, employer contacts, and notification from the USDOL or Trade Act program certifications. The State or Local Rapid Response Coordinator contacts the employer within 48 hours of learning of the impending layoff.

Once the information is received and confirmed, the affected workers are notified through the following strategies:

Employer Contact

The State or Local Rapid Response Coordinator will make immediate contact with the employer to determine the layoff plans and to schedule informational meetings for the affected workers. The goal is to hold pre–layoff meetings at the work–site; however, the details are determined based on the employer's needs and desires. Every effort will be made to best accommodate the employer and promote attendance. Post–layoff informational meetings may also be arranged and held, if necessary.

Union Contact

When the affected workers are organized under a union, the Local Rapid Response Coordinator will notify the local or regional union office of the time, date and location of the pre–layoff informational meeting so the union may promote the meeting to its members. If meetings cannot be held at the work site, the union hall may be a suitable alternative.

The order of preference for meeting location is first, the work site; second, the union facility; and third, another location approved by labor and management.

RR will coordinate reasonable accommodations for effected workers to assist in RR service delivery.

Other

If the employer has already closed the plant, isn't responding to our contact or if there is no Union involvement, there are several different avenues we will try to notify the workers. RR will provide outreach through print ads or radio ads in the area of lay–off and will work with Kansas Department of Labor UI to send out information regarding meetings.

Once the workers are notified and meetings are set up, the workers will be offered the following services:

Rapid Response Services and American Job Center Activities

As part of all Rapid Response meetings, information is presented about services available through **KANSAS**WORKS. Staff that deliver services in the workforce center may provide information during the Rapid Response meetings or this will be covered by the Local Rapid Response Coordinator. Eligible dislocated workers are provided services at the meetings or are referred to the workforce center for further evaluation and services. These services include, but are not limited to:

- WIOA eligibility determination
- Case management
- Skills assessment
- Resume writing and interview techniques
- Labor market information

- Job matching services
- Occupational training

Veterans Priority Service

Service Delivery

Staff will continue to be strategically placed in **KANSAS**WORKS American Job Centers aimed at meeting the needs of all veterans with significant barriers to employment. WIOA partners trained in case management will assess and serve veterans at all local workforce center locations. Kansas has integrated all DVOP specialists into the AJC system through assignment to a local workforce center. Upon entry into the AJC, the client is asked if they've served in the U.S. Military or the spouse of someone who served. If the client identifies as either having served or being the spouse of someone who has served, an assessment is conducted to identify eligibility for DVOP services as per applicable VPLs. Regardless of the person's eligibility for DVOP services, they are entitled to priority of service for receipt of employment services, employment, and training over non- covered persons.

When priority of service has been identified as applicable to eligible persons, these persons are prioritized for such tasks and functions as use of AJC computers for employment related tasks, WIOA related activities with available staff, and access to Wagner-Peyser staff in the case of DVOP ineligible persons.

Local Workforce Development Boards provide priority job placement and training activities to veterans. Plans on how services are provided are located in the State Policy narrative and in local workforce board WIOA plans. These plans include how available resources (WIOA, Wagner–Peyser and others) are pooled to provide core and intensive services; processes to accomplish intake, assessment, registration and follow–up services; a description of mediated and non–mediated services; how veterans are provided priority in placement services and activities; and detailed description of how case management services are provided to veterans.

All workforce centers have an integrated, business services function responsible for connecting local employers to the local One–Stop system. In addition, Kansas has developed a coordinated intake and information system through kansasworks.com, the statewide job search and case management system to facilitate the provision of services to veterans.

Educational opportunities are promoted through counseling services to veterans. Commerce and Regents coordinate education and training activities to increase postsecondary capacity for job driven training programs. Additionally, LWDBs provide real–time intelligence regarding skill gaps and projected skill needs.

American Job Center staff will provide job search and placement services for veterans including counseling, testing, occupational and labor market information, and skill evaluations such as National Career Readiness Certification, to help veterans make educated and up–to–date decisions about their training and employment needs. Veterans will be introduced to *America's Career InfoNet, O–Net,* and other local resources that offer career exploration, education and job tools such as the following to help them make career decisions:

- Assess personal marketability
- Assess skills, skill gaps and related occupations
- Research occupations on a national, state or local level
- Research occupations, employment trends to national, state and local wage information

- Research employers for job searches
- Track labor market trends
- Learn how to network in various career fields using professional associations and Career Resource Library links
- Research training options by occupation such as certifications, schools, programs, and licenses
- Explore credentialing options; and
- Find financial aid resources

Please see attached JVSG modified plan as approved.

SCSEP

Service Delivery

Kansas State SCSEP is operated in seven counties in south central Kansas: Butler, Cowley, Harper, Harvey, Kingman, Sumner and Sedgwick. The local LWIB, Workforce Alliance of South-Central Kansas, provides SCSEP services through its workforce centers, creating an excellent opportunity for SCSEP participants to access all available **KANSAS**WORKS services.

KWSB has codified the inclusion of older workers as a priority population for all **KANSAS**WORKS services. Strategic coordination of the Core Partners will result in an investment in skill development of SCSEP participants. Services from WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker, VR, Adult Education and Wagner– Peyser will be utilized to streamline services for SCSEP participants. WIOA as implemented in Kansas ultimately assures participants will be able to access all services for which they are eligible through all WIOA Core Partners.

SCSEP is truly an integrated program of **KANSAS**WORKS where customers are provided with the same services as any other eligible job seeker.

Kansas will utilize the State Workforce Policy regarding serving minorities and other subpopulations, such as justice-involved individuals. In addition, the SCSEP state subcontractor will continue its practice of engaging community–based organizations serving minorities to recruit eligible participants and coordinate services. Community– based agencies have assisted in recruitment of participants, furnished space for participant meetings, acted as host sites, provided job leads in the Hispanic community and worked with SCSEP staff on participant retention when unsubsidized employment has been secured, and will continue to do so in this state plan period.

Please see attached SCSEP State Plan Modification

Ticket to Work

Service Delivery

KANSASWORKS in a state workforce agency Employment Network and as such, accepts Tickets to Work as determined by eligible individual job seekers. Commerce employs two TTW staff person to cover the state and plans to add at least one additional staff person during this state plan period.

Benefits Counseling

Service Delivery

In conjunction with TTW, Commerce employs two certified Community Work Incentive Coordinators who provide Benefits Counseling to individuals receiving Social Security Disability Benefits and who may not know how employment will affect their benefits. Commerce staff work in collaboration with the Benefits Counselors employed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, the state's Medicaid policy administrator which administers the federal work incentive programs for Social Security Disability and Medicaid recipients.

Manager, Justice-Involved Programs

Service Delivery

Because the offender population includes individuals who can become viable members of the workforce with the proper instruction and training, the Department of Corrections and Commerce created the Manager of Justice-Involved Programs, which serves as a bridge between the Workforce System and correctional institutions and offices across the state. Multiple entities fund this position through the State General Fund, federal workforce development funds and funds from other Reentry programs. The position will continue to supervise individuals who coordinate pre– and post–release services, case management, employment counselling and training, supportive services and community-based supports.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)

Service Delivery

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) encourages the hiring of targeted employees, so they move from economic dependency into self–sufficiency as they earn a steady income and become contributing taxpayers. Participating employers receive compensation by reducing their federal income tax liability. The largest number of workers are recipients of SNAP, followed by community residents, ex–felons, unemployed veterans and TANF recipients. Employers apply to receive WOTC credit through *WOTC LiveFile* at KansasWOTC.com.

Registered Apprenticeship

Service Delivery

Registered Apprenticeship is a structured system for training employees in a variety of occupations that require a wide range of skills and knowledge. It is an ideal way for employers to build and maintain a skilled workforce. It combines full–time employment, through on–the– job learning, under the supervision of experienced journey level workers, and related technical instruction. The related instruction may be provided through community or technical colleges, correspondence, online, distance learning, contract vendors or apprenticeship training centers to both educate and develop business and industries' workforce. Partnerships with WIOA partners include Adult Education, Career Technical Education, and WIOA Adult and Youth programs.

Supportive services

All eligible customers of all workforce development programs will receive consideration for supportive services to help ensure the customer will successfully participate in and complete training, employment services and job placement. Commerce will continue to intentionally develop additional supportive services resources to supplement the limited funds provided by the Kansas WIOA allocation.

In order to create a system of effective networking and collaboration among WIOA partners, the SPMT will ensure the following strategies are established during this state plan period:

- Conduct a partner inventory to identify additional or updated WIOA stakeholders
- Organize regular Core partner meetings
- Facilitate updated cross-training sessions
    - Training sessions will educate partners about each partner's programs, processes, services, and goals
    - Training sessions will foster a deeper understanding of the ways each partner contributes to the overall workforce development effort

D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

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

The State uses the strategies described below to coordinate, align and provide services to employers.

Business Outreach

The Workforce Systems Partners under WIOA seek to implement a collaborative and coordinated business outreach process to streamline employer engagement among partners; share a common procedure for approaching new businesses; and maintain current business relationships. The Partners also wish to explore options to coordinate the collection of employer data and the analysis of outcomes.

To arrive at the goal of coordinated business outreach, the Partners have implemented the following strategies.

Collaborative Communication Across Titles

Titles I and III programs, JVSG staff and local partner staff, along with Registered Apprenticeship, ReSpECTWOR*KS*, PROWD, knectY, Ticket to Work, and other competitive programs, currently conduct direct employer engagement activities through designated business services employees. Depending on the Local Area, Business Services Teams are made up of a variety of staff representing a variety of programs. For example, in a smaller, rural AJC where only a few staff are located, each and every staff person participates on the Business Services Team. In larger metropolitan local areas, Local Board staff may have fewer staff from other programs participate directly as a Business Services Team member. Regardless, through all staff meetings, collaboration activities, Integrated Resource Teams or other activities provide opportunities for coordination, alignment and provision of services to employers.

In contrast, the vocational rehabilitation program utilizes outside competitive contractors with expertise in addressing barriers to employment of jobseekers with disabilities; disability focused work incentive programs, customized and supported employment strategies and assisting employers in identifying and providing reasonable accommodations to employees with disabilities. Additionally, Vocational Rehabilitation employs a Community Engagement and Provider Manager. This manager collaborates closely with direct service providers to support

individuals with disabilities within our purview in securing and maintaining employment. Within our network, approximately 100 service providers deliver a diverse range of services to the individuals we serve. These services not only cater to the needs of the individuals we serve but also serve as a bridge connecting employers with potential candidates for employment, job tryouts, and work-based learning opportunities.

Title II provides instruction in adult education and literacy, English language acquisition, workplace literacy, workforce preparation, and Integrated Education and Training (IET) onsite at an employer's location or at a location selected by the employer. Local providers and employers collaborate to develop goals for attaining occupational skills that will increase the productivity of the workforce.

While each of the Core Programs and other partners programs have different roles and methodologies for serving employers, opening the dialogue between the partners and creating a streamlined approach to business outreach provides the opportunity for key stakeholders to discuss options for creating inclusion and targeted training programs that will enhance employers hiring capabilities, as well as providing people with multiple barriers to employment opportunities to become employed. This improved engagement would also provide additional paid job opportunities for youth while in school or immediately after, up to age 24. This can include, but is not limited to internships, apprenticeships, job shadowing and/or training courses.

Ongoing, collaborative communication among WIOA partners would expand access to employers enabling the workforce system to represent their customers equally and vigorously. Regardless of who interacts with an employer, the employer's needs will be met by including the customers from all programs as potential employees.

Collaboration and communication strategies increased leveraging of services for employers among the partners. Employers previously served by one partner will have access to a larger network of support and work–ready jobseekers. Employers will experience a more focused and collaborated effort between agencies. This collaborative effort increases employer knowledge and maximizes their use of the various employment development programs the state has available for businesses to hire people with disabilities and those with significant barriers to employment.

Establish and Maintain Cross–Training for Employer Development Staff

To strengthen knowledge of Partner services and their customers' employment needs and strengths, and to enhance coordination, the Partners will conduct regular cross–training. Training will include enough relevant information to give trainees the tools necessary to speak to an employer about the other Partner programs/incentives, piquing interest and facilitating the introduction of Partners into the relationship for specialized knowledge. Individuals speaking to employers about other partner programs do not have the authority to commit services or funds without prior approval of the partner. One example of this effort will be integrated into the knectY program. The University Kansas Center on Disabilities (KUCD) is creating short videos that describe transition services available through the various state programs to provide fundamental knowledge to front line staff, teachers, parents, and youth. In addition, KUCD and Commerce will facilitate local partner teams consisting of staff from American Job Centers, Kansas Rehabilitation Services, High Schools, and Centers for Independent Living to develop an on-going plan for cross-system training and implementing integrated resource teams.

kansasworks.com is the web–based, all–in–one labor exchange and case management system currently used by Titles I and III and will continue to provide case management, employer management, fiscal management and reporting during this state plan period.

This MIS enables document upload capabilities to employer accounts so document storage can be maintained within the single system further increasing the ability to share information within the workforce system. kansasworks.com also assures functionality in the system to track the effectiveness of the coordinated contact approach among Partners. The functionality captures information on the progression of an employer with notes, services and/or contact from a single partner to having notes, services and/or contact with multiple partners. This is used to produce a report that includes data points on the number of employers with activity within a user–selected time period (i.e. 6, 9 or 12 months, etc.), a list of the partners that entered a note, service or contact on the employer accounts within the time period selected and the number of job orders that were filled during the period of engagement with a single partner vs. the number of job orders that were filled during the period of engagement with multiple partners.

Employer Engagement

Finally, the Core partners will develop a framework to:

- Learn how other states are approaching coordinated employer engagement
- Evaluate the workforce system to assess current collaborations and identify ways to support further collaboration
- Analyze ways to track and disseminate employers' benefit from the Core partners and partners' benefit from employer engagement

E. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS.

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

KANSASWORKS

Historically, Commerce Workforce Services and VR have had a strong relationship with both Adult Education and postsecondary education institutions, as they are the very entities that provide the skill development opportunities required to meet the needs of Kansas employers. In addition to the projects described earlier, and Excel in CTE (Concurrent High School and Postsecondary Tech Education), the state has also supported AO-K (Advancing Opportunities – Kansas), a program providing jobseekers concurrent training in Adult Education and postsecondary credentials. This program relies on functional relationships between workforce services, adult education and postsecondary education to help jobseekers simultaneously gain the skills needed for successful employment and to meet the needs of employers seeking individuals with particular skill sets. **KANSAS**WORKS has directly partnered with multiple postsecondary education institutions and currently funds more than one postsecondary

education project to target individuals with multiple barriers to employment. These strategies have been very successful and will continue to be over the next planning period.

The Commerce Workforce Services Eligible Training Provider List contains private and other accredited postsecondary education providers. Any education and training provider approved to do business in Kansas by the Kansas Board of Regents is included on the ETPL and are included in the workforce system's strategies for meeting the needs of individual job seekers and employers. All education and training providers are engaged through outreach conducted by Local Workforce Development Boards on behalf of participants, through customer choice and through strategic planning at the local level. The Commerce Workforce Services engages with private and other education and training providers through social media, face-to-face interactions, participation on the Governor's Education Council and other state-level outreach activities. Additionally, the Assistant Secretary for Workforce /services is seated on both the Technical Education Authority and Jobs for America's Graduates – Kansas.

The KWSB and staff monitor demand occupations and the qualifications one must have to successfully compete in these job markets.

State and competitive federal funds are used to identify and fund education and training programs to provide needed credentials for Kansas job seekers, including Registered Apprenticeship programs. Postsecondary partners have competed for and received funding to support tuition assistance for jobseekers including offenders and other individuals with barriers to employment. Kansas WIOA Core Partners, educational institutions and other partners will continue to aggressively seek additional resources to improve access to education, postsecondary credentials and college credit. If state institutions do not provide necessary credential programs, or do not have the capacity to meet need, the state utilizes other institutions on the ETPL to assure job seekers are trained to meet the needs of employers.

Kansas Board of Regents WIOA Title II

At the broadest level, public higher education in Kansas is engaged in the workforce development system through the commitment of the Board of Regents. Pillars of the Board's strategic plan include educational affordability, access, and success; business innovation and an increased talent pipeline; and statewide economic prosperity. WIOA Title II supports these goals by assisting adults who are below the postsecondary level to gain the skills needed to access postsecondary education, to successfully complete credentials and degrees, and to obtain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency. IET pathways such as Accelerating Opportunity: Kansas (AO-K) provide tuition support to make education more affordable. Kansas is actively investigating the routes to eligibility for Ability to Benefit (ATB) to further expand access and affordability for higher education. ATB, combined with opportunities available under Workforce Pell, are expected to result in increased enrollment in postsecondary education and training and increased credential outcomes. WIOA Title II providers have the ability to pivot quickly to meet employer needs, expanding innovative service delivery methods and supporting adults in entering and advancing in the workforce. Higher education designed for employability results in increased economic prosperity for families, communities, and the state of Kansas.

As the U.S. Department of Education and Department of Labor work more closely to unify services, so too does the Kansas Board of Regents in partnering with federal, state, and local initiatives and agencies. The Board administers the Carl D. Perkins Career Technical Education (Perkins V) grant for Kansas. Recipients develop plans to integrate academic and career technical education, provide work-based learning experiences, and enhance career exploration and guidance. CTE programs must meet state statute, criteria set by the Board of Regents, and established metrics that align with WIOA.

Kansas has set the ambitious goal to cease, by fall 2026, all state funding for remedial or developmental education courses at postsecondary institutions that do not award credits that

count toward a degree. Institutions are moving toward a corequisite model to provide the support students need to be successful, in addition to coordinating with WIOA Title II programs to serve learners still needing additional skill-building to be ready for the postsecondary level. Kansas has also advanced the use of multiple placement measures to reduce barriers for adult learners entering postsecondary education. Rather than relying solely on traditional placement exams, institutions are encouraged to use a range of indicators—including GED® scores and other documented academic performance—to determine college readiness. This approach reduces unnecessary remediation and aligns with national best practices for supporting nontraditional learners, especially those served by WIOA Title II. These placement strategies are particularly important as Kansas moves toward full adoption of corequisite models and seeks to increase credential attainment for all learners.

Community and technical colleges were among the eligible entities to compete for the most recent WIOA Title II grant, which was awarded July 1, 2025, and included 16 community and technical colleges as recipients that sponsor WIOA Title II providers. An additional technical college coordinates closely with a WIOA Title II provider sponsored by a school district. Almost all two-year colleges in Kansas participate in AO-K; the AO proviso covers tuition for technical courses for adults without a high school diploma who are co-enrolled in adult education and career technical education, allowing individuals to simultaneously build foundational skills and progress toward postsecondary credentials, streamlining and speeding entry into high-wage careers. Many colleges also award incentive scholarships, worth up to six credit hours, to adults graduating with a high school equivalency diploma.

Coordination in Kansas among WIOA Title II, Perkins V, state legislative funding, and institutional resources serve to expand access, reduce financial barriers, and accelerate credential attainment. This strengthens the talent pipeline, supports employer-driven workforce development, and advances economic development for Kansans.

Vocational Rehabilitation

The Vocational Rehabilitation program enables customers to pursue postsecondary education at various levels, as required to attain their vocational objectives. VR actively aids customers in accessing equivalent benefits, such as PELL Grants, to assist in financing higher education before utilizing VR funds. Formal agreements between VR and all higher education institutions in Kansas, including private non-profit colleges, outline shared responsibilities for costs associated with providing auxiliary aids and services.

F. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

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

Local partners from multiple systems coordinate resources to increase participant access to education. In February 2022 the KWSB updated its Training Expenditure Policy to provide guidance for leveraging resources and increasing educational access. Each strategy described above and implemented daily by **KANSAS**WORKS in each of its programs will improve access to postsecondary credentials through ensuring resources are utilized to fund postsecondary education. Further, the KWSB's emphasis on postsecondary education and training is codified in policy.

Per Policy 5-08-00, "*The State of Kansas Workforce Board has placed a high value on ensuring that WIOA dollars are used for training Kansans for high demand occupations, and as a result, the State Workforce board has set a benchmark for training expenditures and to establish a baseline*

for future expenditure requirements. This policy addresses available funding discrepancies identified in the calculation and establishes the 40% expenditure rate as an additional State identified performance accountability indicator."

Policy Statement

This state policy establishes, as an additional State identified performance accountability measure, a minimum training expenditures rate (excluding obligations) of 40% for adult and dislocated worker training.

Training Expenditures

Costs used in calculating compliance with the minimum 40% expenditure rate must be of direct benefit to the participant and, at a minimum, includes:

• Occupational skills training defined as training to perform actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at any level. Allowable costs include, but are not limited to tuition, fees, books, and other materials and equipment required for participation in the course.

• Basic literacy training, including but not limited to, adult basic education, GED, GED Test fees and English language proficiency.

• Supportive services directly benefiting participants in training such as childcare, transportation, etc.

• Work-based learning, such as on-the-job trainings, paid internships, work experiences, transitional jobs, and registered apprenticeships. Costs may include job coaches and special workplace accommodations when necessary.

• Incumbent Worker training, and customized training designed to meet the special requirements of an employer who commits to employ an individual, or group of individuals, upon successful completion of the training.

• Short-term courses necessary to acquire marketable skills such as computer software training, welder training, etc.

• Short-term prevocational testing, training and services including, but not limited to, development of communication, interviewing, punctuality, personal maintenance, professional conduct, and learning skills to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training. Testing to assess academic or skills ability in preparation for an occupational skill program. The Kansas National Career Readiness Certification and other skill-development and certification products are training related expenditures. NOTE: Interest testing, job matching products, and other non-skills related assessments are not considered training related for the purposes of this policy.

• Needs-based payments and stipends.

The 40% expenditure rate will be reviewed quarterly by the **KANSAS**WORKS State Board. To provide for improvement, a local area performing at or below 35% must submit a brief narrative with the quarterly report explaining why the expenditure rate was not attained. A local Area performing at or below 35% for three consecutive quarters must submit a local board approved Corrective Action Plan providing a detailed analysis of the failure to attain a minimum 40% training expenditure rate, actions approved to correct the failure, a timeline for meeting the 40% training expenditure rate along with measurable benchmarks or indicators the plan is achieving the expected outcome.

Finally, **KANSAS**WORKS only approves training programs which result in industry-recognized credentials and for which there is sufficient demand for those credentials to improve a trainee's success at gaining employment. All Registered Apprenticeship sponsors/employers are included on the ETPL and therefore included in the standard operating procedure of improving access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials.

Kansas Board of Regents Adult Education
The strategies and resources identified in previous sections will improve access to recognized postsecondary credentials, including those that are industry-recognized certificates, licenses, or certifications, and that are portable and stackable. These credentials, which are valued in the local labor market, lead to upward mobility and long-term economic independence and provide opportunities for disconnected workers to receive the education and training needed to enter the workforce and become economically self-sufficient.

Vocational Rehabilitation

The VR program supports customers to pursue postsecondary education at all levels if necessary to achieve their vocational goals. VR assists customers to access comparable benefits, as required by regulation, prior to the expenditure of VR dollars.

G. COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

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

All activities identified in (A) above are completed through coordination with economic development strategies. In Kansas, the most important economic strategy is workforce development: the state must provide a growing number of well-qualified individuals to meet the economic growth that the following several years has brought to Kansas. The Kansas Department of Commerce is not only the state workforce agency, but also the state economic development agency and is therefore uniquely structured to coordinate economic development strategies with the activities provided across the Kansas workforce development system. The Business Services Division of Commerce provides both state-level intelligence regarding industries establishing operations in the state and local-level intelligence regarding growth and expansion of specific industries. Leadership and staff from each of Commerce's Divisions meet regularly to share, coordinate, and align activities. As part of this economic development system, including the local workforce development boards and local economic development organizations, WIOA core partners are at the forefront of up-to-date workforce development activities and will utilize this position to counsel Kansas workforce development system customers and support training and skill development activities to match the employment needs of Kansas industries, thus improving the probability of successful employment placement.

Economic development activities at the local level are coordinated through the work of local workforce development boards, local area executive directors, business outreach staff, and similar staff within **KANSAS**WORKS workforce centers and core and combined partner offices. Regular communication occurs between these staff and economic development entities such as chambers of commerce, rural and county development agencies, economic development district representatives, city government officials, and large employers.

The cross-training, joint planning and structured collaboration activities described above will include Core and other partners in the development and delivery of economic development strategies. Meeting the talent needs of the Kansas economy is an "all hands-on deck" enterprise will all partners serving individuals who can contribute to our foreseeable economic growth.

B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

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

1. THE STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS THAT WILL SUPPORT COORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGIES (E.G., LABOR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEMS, DATA SYSTEMS, COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS, CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS, JOB BANKS, ETC.).

The Commerce workforce system uses the America's Job Link Alliance Management Information System to meet all of the requirements of US Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration for data collection and reporting for WIOA and Wagner-Peyser. The AJLA system in Kansas, kansasworks.com, also provides the public with access to labor market information, connects to postsecondary training programs and performance outcomes by training program. The AJLA system provides case management tools and creates participant records and can be used for payment for services and cost allocation of services. Employers may enter job postings in kansasworks.com in addition to finding qualified applicants for jobs. Data will be extracted for compilation of WIOA-required common accountability measures.

Title II uses Genius Learning's Literacy, Adult, and Community Education System (LACES) for student demographics, program accountability, and reporting. The Kansas Higher Education Data System (KHEDS) collects postsecondary data that, together with LACES, tracks postsecondary education performance for WIOA Title II participants. KBOR, the State Education Agency (SEA) for Title II, also matches participant records with unemployment insurance (UI) records through an agreement with the Kansas Department of Labor and uses the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) for data-matching.

WIOA Title IV, Vocational Rehabilitation, uses the Kansas Management Information Systems (KMIS) for participant reporting. Data from both AESIS and KMIS will be extracted for compilation of WIOA required reporting of performance measures. For WIOA Title II and Title IV partner programs, there is an obligation to collect all data elements necessary to support both federal and state data collection and reporting requirements. The exchange of data, including any data that may be exported to kansasworks.com, will be subject to the terms and conditions of officially executed data use agreements between or among partner entities. Data use agreements will specify conditions or terms for client consent to release Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

The VR data system, the Kansas Management Information System or KMIS, will support implementation of the state's strategies for an effective, efficient and outcome–oriented workforce system. KMIS is used to collect consumer demographic information, to track consumer milestones as they progress through their individual plans for employment, and to compile data necessary for state and federal reports. KMIS is also the fiscal management tool through which consumer services are authorized and paid. Data will be extracted for compilation of WIOA–required common accountability measures. VR is working in partnership with Geographic Solutions, Inc. (GSI) to modernize its case management system, with a targeted go-live in Summer 2027.

Data–collection and reporting processes are consistent throughout each local area; data is validated as required by USDOL. Commerce has policies related to data collection and reporting processes required for each local workforce system, including Data and Information Collection and Maintenance, Record Maintenance and Retention, Eligibility Determination and Documentation, Fiscal Manual, and the State Performance Accountability System.

2. THE STATE POLICIES THAT WILL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S STRATEGIES (FOR EXAMPLE. CO-ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND UNIVERSAL INTAKE PROCESSES WHERE APPROPRIATE). IN ADDITION, PROVIDE THE STATE'S GUIDELINES FOR STATE-ADMINISTERED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO A ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND ANY ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR ONE-STOP PARTNER CONTRIBUTIONS.

The KWSB has established policies and procedures for local areas regarding co–enrollment, cross–program intake processes, referrals and other strategies for maintaining a WIOA workforce system. See Data Collection Policy 5-32-00:

https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/56/policies/2502/5-32-00-data-collection-policy-5-1-24-2.pdf

Confidential Access to Wage Records: To calculate performance measure information, local and state-level officials must access Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records. In accordance with Kansas statute, all wage information must be kept strictly confidential and be used only for the purposes intended, which is to develop information for the performance accountability system. Each organization or entity using wage record information must ensure all staff who have access to, or who compile wage record information, are aware of the Kansas statute regarding confidentiality.

The kansasworks.com (MIS) Manual is the reference for standard data elements that are used for data verification, data validation and data security. These data elements are defined and provided with a standard value in the manual. **KANSAS**WORKS and ServiceLink are the standardized data processing collection and reporting systems of Kansas for WIOA Title I and Title III programs. Each LWDB and statewide program is required to collect and submit information to the Kansas Department of Commerce (Commerce) through the **KANSAS**WORKS and ServiceLink systems. Commerce will continue to oversee maintenance and adaptations to the MIS system to facilitate data entry, reporting, monitoring, evaluation and other such needs of the local areas for the required data. A request for database edits and ad hoc reports generated from **KANSAS**WORKS may be submitted and processed on an area-by-area basis. For other changes, such as application changes or expansion of database collection processes, a joint development meeting with Commerce, local area and vendor staff shall be held within 30 days to define specifications. Meeting results shall include a proposed timeframe and cost estimate.

For those LWDBs electing to use management information systems other than kansasworks.com, there is still an obligation to collect all data elements necessary to support both federal and state data collection and reporting requirements for submission to the state on demand for inclusion in the MIS system. Each local area will be responsible to resolve all data discrepancy issues between their system and the state MIS system. The state MIS system will be the basis for all federal and state outcome reporting, report validation and data validation. Some client status reports generated from the electronic database are to be kept in the participant's file to verify data entered in the electronic database. Commerce shall supply a standardized upload file format for all required MIS data.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records and affords parents and eligible students certain rights with respect to these education records. The general rule is that a parent or eligible student must provide a signed and dated written consent before an educational agency or institution discloses information.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) from the student's education records, unless as an exception, such as FERPA's audit or evaluation exception, applies. Under FERPA's audit or

evaluation exception, an authorized representative of State or local educational authorities may obtain access to PII from education records to audit or evaluate a Federal- or State-supported education program. FERPA'S audit or evaluation exception permits disclosure of PII from education records for WIOA performance accountability purposes.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) regulations govern the protection, use, and release of personal information held by VR agencies. VR agencies, which are not considered educational agencies or institutions under FERPA, must develop policies and procedures to safeguard the confidentiality of all personal information, and to inform applicants and recipients of services, and as appropriate, their representatives, of the VR agency's need to collect personal information and its policies. There is no Federal requirement that a VR agency obtain informed written consent from the individual prior to releasing personal information for purposes directly related to the administration of the VR program, or for audit, evaluation, or research purposes when the audit, evaluation, or research are conducted only for the purposes directly connected with the administration of the VR program or for the purposes that would significantly improve the quality of life for applicants and recipients of services and only if done in accordance with a written agreement. However, if the final audit, evaluation, or research product will contain personal information, written consent is required. Federal unemployment compensation (UC) confidentiality regulations permit disclosure of confidential UC information for WIOA performance accountability purposes.

State policies that will support the implementation of the state strategies described above include 5-21-00 Partner Collaboration

https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/56/policies/1665/5-21-00-partner-collaboration.pdf

This policy makes clear the expectation that Core and Required partners will implement collaboration strategies to best serve customers in the most seamless, efficient manner while also reducing duplication of services. Policy 5-21-00 requires the local workforce development board (LWDB) to make available, through the local workforce development system, services that are provided by core, required, and other partner programs.

Overview
WIOA emphasizes full and effective collaboration between partners responsible for core, required and other
programs to ensure seamless and customer-focused workforce development services within each local
workforce development system.

Definitions
Core Programs – WIOA adult dislocated worker and youth services, adult education and family literacy services, Wagner-Peyser employment services, and vocational rehabilitation services.

Required Programs – Senior Community Service Employment Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance Program,
Veterans Employment Training Services Program, Community Services Block Grant Program, Migrant and
Seasonal Farmworker Programs, Unemployment Insurance, Second Chance Act Corrections Programs,
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Programs (exempted by Governor), Postsecondary Career and
Technical Education programs, Job Corps, YouthBuild, Native American programs, and training and

employment programs offered by Kansas Housing Resource Corporation for families living in public housing.

Additional Programs – Ticket to Work Employment Network Programs, employment and training programs
carried out by the small business administration, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and
Training Programs, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Work Programs, Vocational Rehabilitation
Client Assistance Programs, AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and the Social Innovation Fund

Workforce Development System - a local or statewide system which assures availability to the public including
individuals and employers of adult, dislocated worker and youth employment and training services, labor
exchange, and other programs as required by WIOA Sec. 121.

Policy Requirements for Collaboration
The KWSB requires LWDB to ensure their local workforce systems provide seamless, timely and customer-focused
services to job seekers, employers and other members of the public accessing KANSASWORKS services. To this end, each LWDB must develop policies and procedures directing One-Stop Operators and/or
staff to establish mechanisms and methodologies for partner collaboration. These policies and procedures must
include the following:
1. Establishment of regular meetings with all partners to address service delivery issues, scheduling issues,
MOU modifications and State and Local Policy implementation. Monthly meetings are recommended.
2. Establishment of procedure for recording attendance at Partner meetings.
3. Establishment of procedure for recording minutes of Partner meetings.
4.Establishment of policy and procedure defining roles and responsibilities of local workforce development
system partners to include:
a. Partner's use of its funds identified to maintain the local workforce development system
b. Active participation in the operation of the local workforce development system per WIOA Sec.121(b)(1)(A) and local MOU.
c. Providing representation on the LWDB to the extent provided under WIOA Sec. 107(b)(2).
5. Establishment of policies and procedures for Partner non-compliance of this policy.

Local Plan Requirements
Local areas must establish the policies, procedures and schedule for partner collaboration in their WIOA local
area plans.

Kansas WIOA partners have not yet established universal intake processes or mandatory co-enrollment other than those required by statute or regulation.

Trade Adjustment Assistance Act participants are co-enrolled in WIOA Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser. Veterans and their spouses or covered persons are co-enrolled in Wagner-Peyser and may be enrolled in appropriate Title I programs as appropriate. SCSEP participants

are co-enrolled in the WIOA Adult program by the local workforce development board who serves as the state's SCSEP subgrantee.

Finally, the KWSB developed a comprehensive MOU and Infrastructure Funding Agreement policy with the implementation of WIOA. This policy is scheduled for updates and modification during the first year of this state plan period because it refers to dates and timelines no longer relevant. The processes and policy have consistently been in effect and will continue to describe requirements for one-stop partners, including their role in delivering the strategies described above: 5-20-00:

https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/56/policies/2138/5-20-00-memorandum-of-understanding-mou-4-24-23.pdf

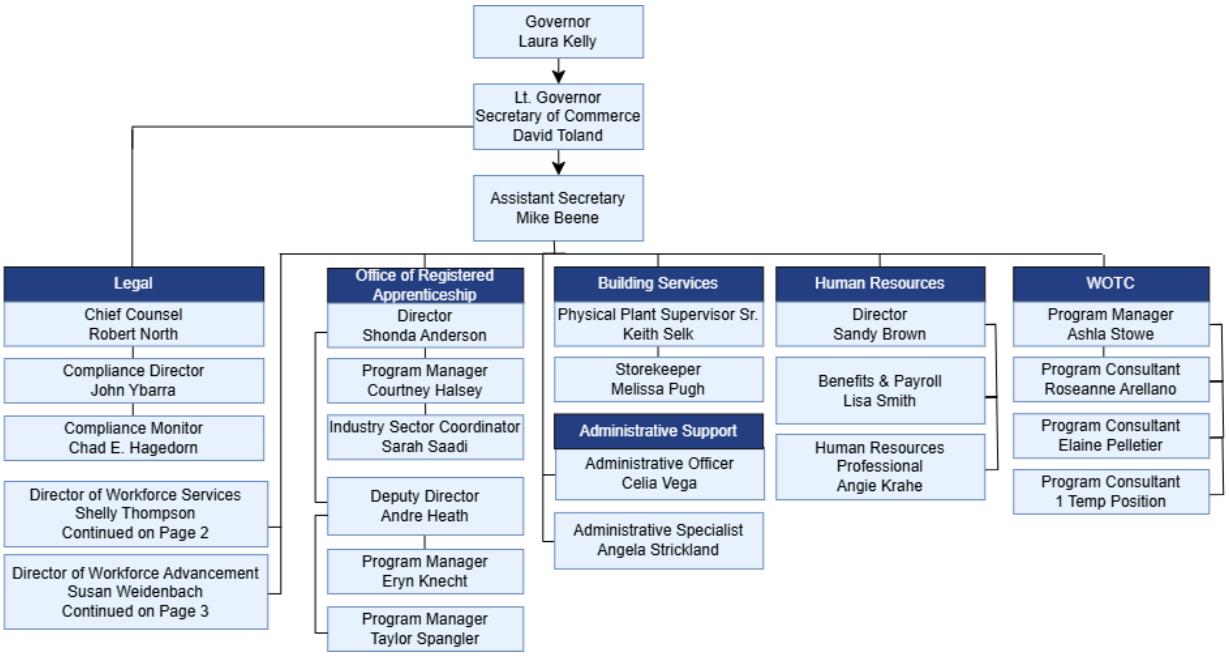
3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

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

Commerce and DCF are cabinet agencies while the Governor-appointed Board of Regents has a President and CEO chosen by the Board. The Secretary of Commerce also serves as Lt. Governor. Agency organization charts are provided below.

Kansas Department of Commerce Organizational Chart



The Department of Commerce organizational charts reflect a structured reporting hierarchy within the State Workforce Agency. At the highest level, the Governor provides executive oversight, followed by the Lieutenant Governor, who also serves as Secretary of Commerce. Reporting to this office is the Assistant Secretary.

Under the Assistant Secretary, division-level leadership includes the Director of Workforce Services, the Director of Workforce Advancement, and other division heads overseeing functional areas such as Legal, Registered Apprenticeship, Human Resources, Building Services,

WOTC, and related programs. Beneath division leadership are program managers, coordinators, consultants, and professional staff, including field and service delivery personnel responsible for day-to-day program operations.

Local Workforce Development Boards: The Kansas public workforce system consists of three Local Workforce Development Areas, each with its own Board of Directors and one Executive Director. While each local system is structured based on its geographical area, population size, resources and capacity; all Local Areas are structured to interact with state agencies on behalf of common customers. The Kansas Department of Commerce and the State Workforce Board provide policy, oversight and technical assistance for Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth funding streams, and provides Wagner-Peyser staff for local American Job Centers. Each local workforce system adheres to Service Delivery Integration and Functional Management per State Board Policy 4-04-01. Local systems designate a multi-disciplinary leadership team to select functional supervisors who oversee and direct daily workforce center service delivery. Any Core, Required or other partner staff may be designated as a multi-disciplinary leadership team member, a functional supervisor or a member of service delivery teams such as Welcome Team, Training Services Team or Employer Services Team. State Plan programs, including TAA, JVSG and SCSEP are each integrated into the functional management of appropriate local systems. As found in the state board policy linked above:

Goals of Functional Management

- To provide a truly seamless workforce system to all customers, both job seekers and employers Improve business and job seeker customers' access to quality services
- Reduce management duplication
- Empower Operators to manage the outcomes on which their performance is based
- Formalize the participation of all workforce system partners

Components of Functional Management: All customers experience workforce centers as seamless, service-driven facilities, served by dedicated staff of **KANSAS**WORKS rather than by staff of individual partner agencies. All partner staff members of each facility understand the function they serve, creating increased responsiveness to customer needs. Each Local Area has a single, identifiable person who is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Local Area One-Stop System. This individual has the authority to direct the function(s) of each staff member. In addition to the structure described above, each Core and Required Partner and other community partners, may refer customers to each other and coordinate service delivery among multiple systems based on the needs of and benefit for individual participants.

Kansas Department of Commerce Office of the Secretary Organizational Chart

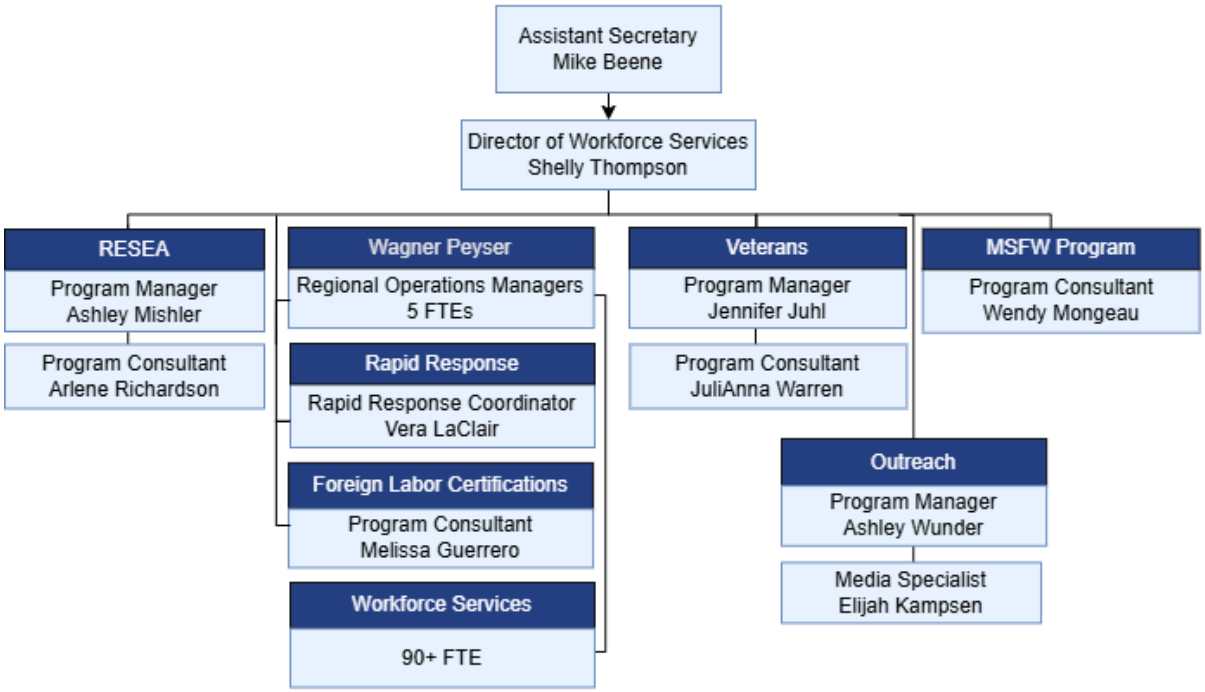
This organizational chart shows the following reporting structure in order: Level 1 Secretary (Lt. Governor), Level 2 Chief of Staff, Level 3 Specialists, Assistants, Directors, and Public Service Executives, Level 4 Agency Grant Writer.

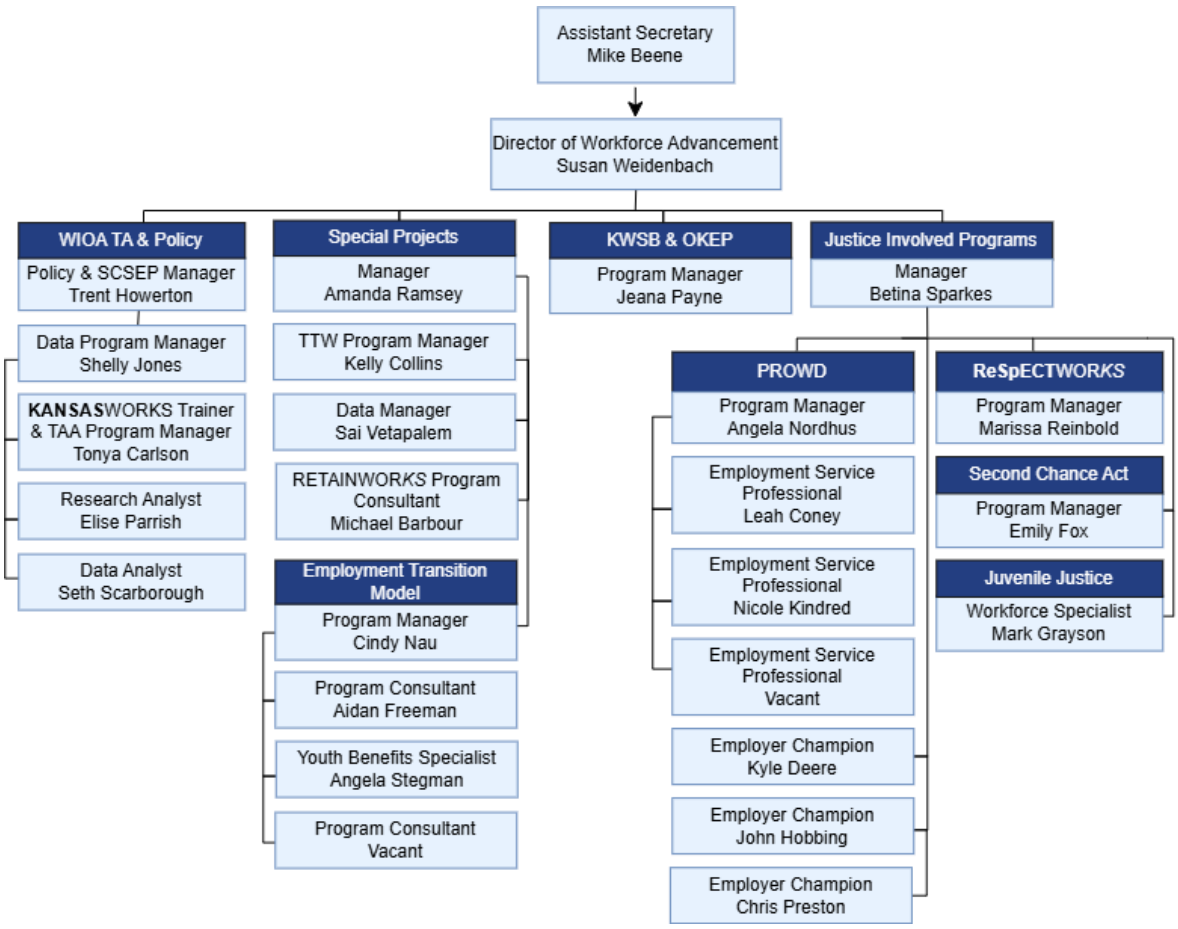
Kansas Department of Commerce Employment Services Organizational Charts

The organizational charts reflect a structured reporting hierarchy within the State Workforce Agency. At the highest level is the Lieutenant Governor, who serves as Secretary of Commerce. Reporting directly to this position is the Assistant Secretary. Beneath the Assistant Secretary are division-level Directors who oversee major functional and programmatic areas, including

Workforce Services, Workforce Advancement, Legal, Registered Apprenticeship, Human Resources, Building Services, WOTC, and related operational units.

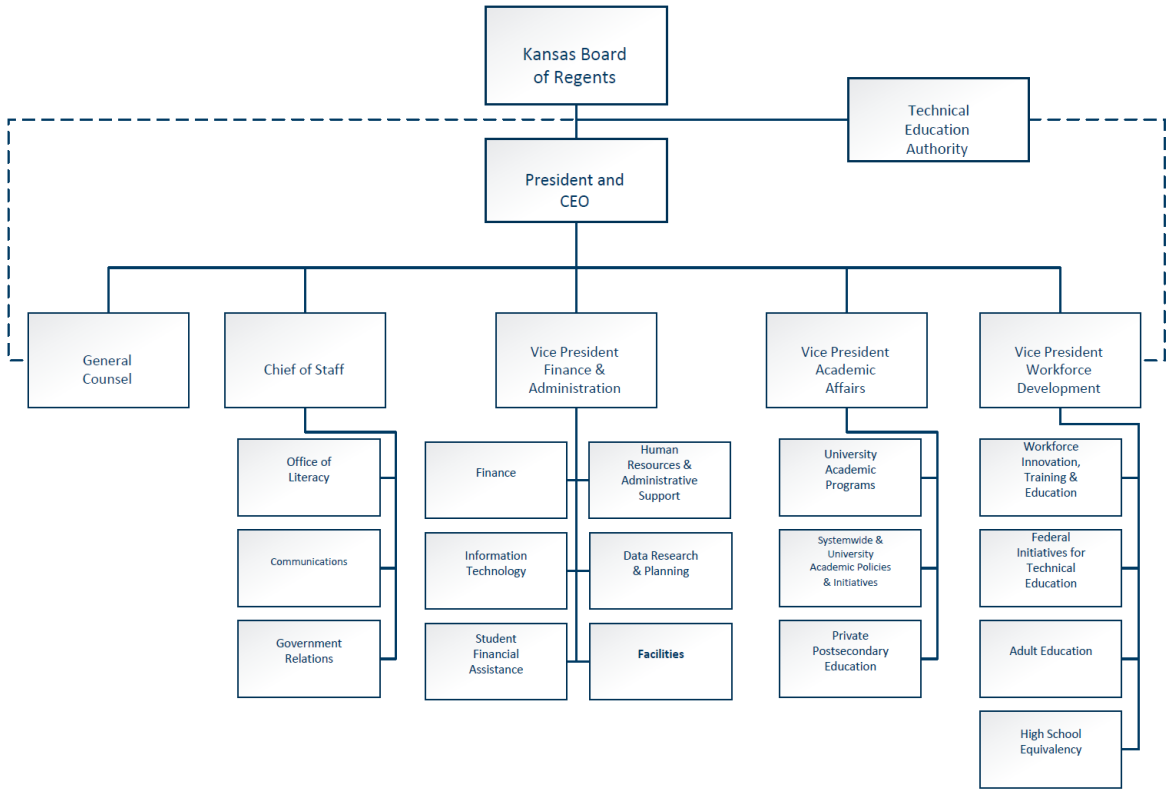
Under the Directors, program-level leadership and operational staff carry out day-to-day responsibilities. These roles include managers, program managers, consultants, coordinators, specialists, analysts, employment service professionals, employer engagement staff, administrative support personnel, and other service delivery positions. Together, these levels illustrate a clear chain of command from executive leadership through division oversight to program implementation and frontline service delivery.




Assistant Secretary
Mike Beene
Director of Workforce Advancement
Susan Weidenbach
WIOA TA & Policy
Policy & SCSEP Manager
Trent Howerton
Data Program Manager
Shelly Jones
KANSASWORKS Trainer & TAA Program Manager
Tonya Carlson
Research Analyst
Elise Parrish
Data Analyst
Seth Scarborough
Special Projects
Manager
Amanda Ramsey
TTW Program Manager
Kelly Collins
Data Manager
Sai Vetapalem
RETAINWORKS Program Consultant
Michael Barbour
Employment Transition Model
Program Manager
Cindy Nau
Program Consultant
Aidan Freeman
Youth Benefits Specialist
Angela Stegman
Program Consultant
Vacant
KWSB & OKEP
Program Manager
Jeana Payne
Justice Involved Programs
Manager
Betina Sparkes
PROWD
Program Manager
Angela Nordhus
Employment Service Professional
Leah Coney
Employment Service Professional
Nicole Kindred
Employment Service Professional
Vacant
Employer Champion
Kyle Deere
Employer Champion
John Hobbing
Employer Champion
Chris Preston
ReSpECTWORKS
Program Manager
Marissa Reinbold
Second Chance Act
Program Manager
Emily Fox
Juvenile Justice
Workforce Specialist
Mark Grayson

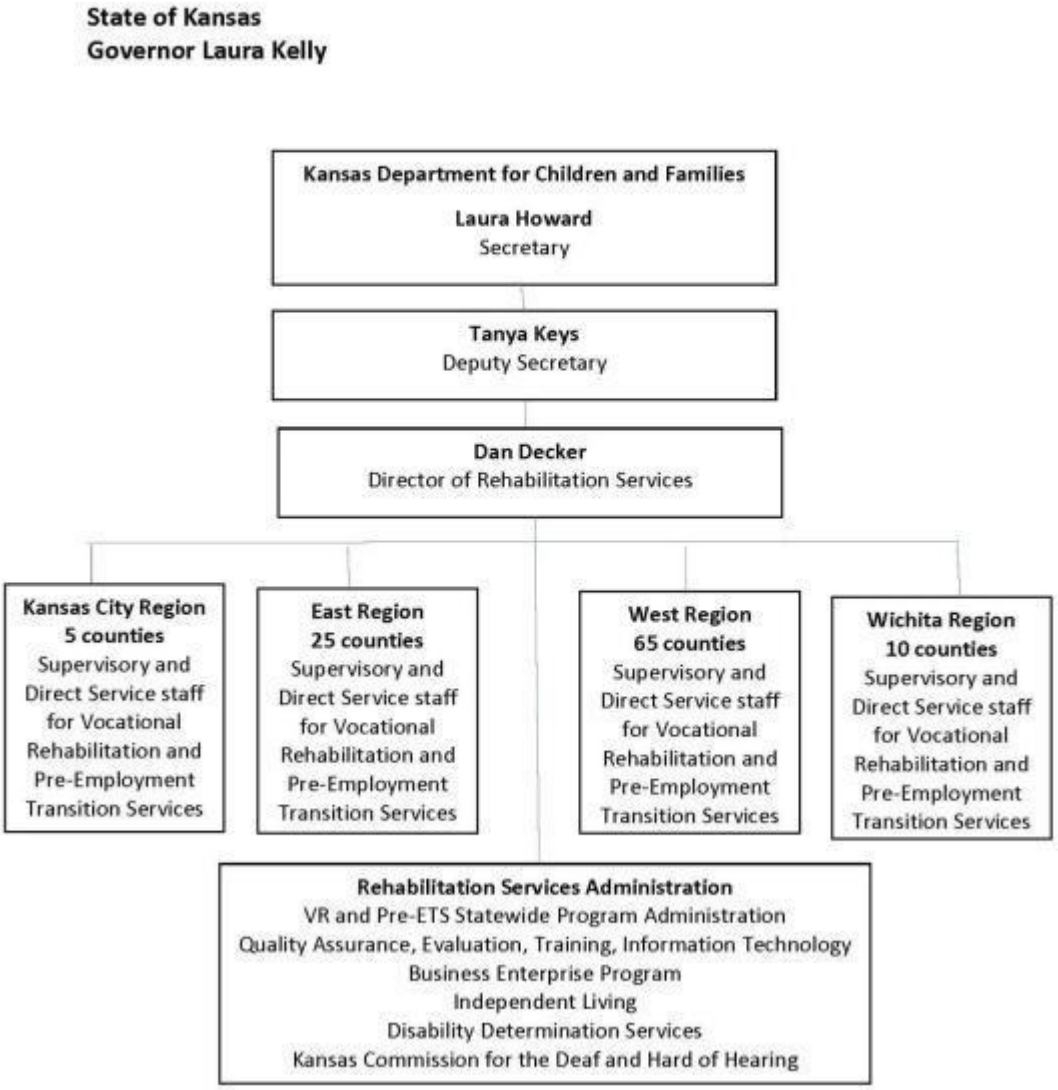
Kansas Board of Regents Organizational Chart

This organizational chart shows the following reporting structure in order: Level 1 Governor (not pictured), Level 2 Kansas Board of Regents, Level 3 President and CEO, Level 4 Vice President for Workforce Development, Level 5 Directors for Adult Education, Workforce Innovation, and Career Technical Education.



Kansas Department for Children and Families Organizational Chart

This organizational chart shows the following reporting structure in order: Level 1: Governor, Level 2: Secretary Level 3: Deputy Secretary, Level 4: Director of Rehabilitation Services, Level 5: Four Regional offices and Rehabilitation Services Administration including VR, Pre-ETS, state administration, Business Enterprise Program, Independent Living, Disability Determination Services, State Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.



B. STATE BOARD

Provide a description of the State Board activities that will assist State Board members and staff in carrying out State Board functions effectively. Also, provide a membership roster for the State Board consistent with 20 CFR 679.110-120, including members' organizational affiliations and position titles.

The **KANSAS**WORKS State Board is structured to meet the requirements of WIOA and ensures Kansas' entire workforce system, covering many programs in multiple departments and agencies, meets employers' needs for skilled workers and meets workers' needs for career and economic advancement. During the next planning period Commerce will likely request a Waiver of the workforce development board membership requirements. The KWSB convenes State, regional and local workforce system partners to enhance the capacity and performance of the workforce system; align and improve the outcomes and effectiveness of public workforce investments and thereby promote economic growth. The board engages workforce system representatives including businesses, K-12 and postsecondary education, economic development, labor and other stakeholders to achieve the strategic and operational vision and goals of the State Plan as well as the purpose of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA).

The KWSB serves as a review board and change agent empowered with the responsibility of making recommendations to the Governor and to state agencies to align workforce development with the needs of economic development in the state.

The KWSB plays an important role in bringing citizen involvement and engagement to the state's workforce development efforts and in providing strategic leadership for workforce development and local/regional leaders throughout the state. The KWSB's strength is less in its statutorily–defined decision–making authority and more as a forum for policymakers, informed citizens and stakeholders to influence public policy for the improvement of the State's workforce. The structure and operations of the KWSB and committees and the active engagement of members are the keys to success.

The primary State Board function is the emphasis on collaboration and regional planning. The Board is tasked with enhancing partnerships to ensure statewide alignment linking employers and workers/job seekers.

As the state workforce development board, the KWSB is expected to provide strategic leadership for a wide range of employment and training programs beginning with those under WIOA, completing activities which reflect each of the KWSB Goals described in Section II.

B. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

The table provides a list of State Board Members, their affiliation with business or government and the names of their organization. Each Title has its own unique representation on the Board and have optimum policy-making authority in their respective organizations. The KWSB meets quarterly at a date and time established by the board. Committees meet as needed on a date and time mutually agreed upon by the majority.

		State Legislature, Agencies, & Organizations						
Member	Counter	Business & Industry 51%	Workforce/Org. Labor 20%	Other/Optional	Kansas Legislature (Required)	Core Partners Lead Agencies (Required)	Elected Official (Required)	Organization & Notes/Comments
Governor, Laura Kelly	1							Governor, State of Kansas (Required but not Gov Appt)
Bachman, Page	1	1				1		Senior Vice President & Chief Experience Officer, Stormont Vail
Grandon, Scott	1		1					Business Manager, Labor-Pipe Fitters Local 533
Harder, Stephanie	1	1						Director, Employee Communications & Engagement, Textron Aviation, Wichita Kansas
Harwood, David	1	1						Senior Vice President, Terracon Consultants ***(KWSB CHAIR)***
Junkins, Shaun	1		1					Workforce/Organized-Intern'l Assoc of Machinist & Aerospace Workers/IAM delegate to State AFL-CIO Council
Vacant	1	1						Vacant
LaFrenz, Sarah	1		1					Kansas Organization of State Employees, President (SOK Employees' labor union
Martinez, Hector	1					1		Kansas Board of Regents, Vice President, Workforce Development/Title 2 Adult Education
Vacant	1	1						Vacant
Vacant	1	1						Vacant
North, Robert	1					1		Kansas Department of Commerce, Chief Council/Titles 1 & 3- Secretary's Designee (Governor Approved)
Vacant (Senator)	1				1			Kansas Legislature - Senator (Required but not Appointed)
Vacant	1	1						Vacant
Parasker, Neelima	1	1						CEO snapIT Solutions
Vacant	1						1	Vacant
Vacant (Representative)	1				1			Kansas Legislature - Representative (Required but not Appointed)
Teran, Devon	1	1						Ad Astra, Kansas City, Kansas
Threadgold, Brian	1		1					Workforce/Organized Labor International/Reg Appr. Representative, Intern'l Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
Decker, Daniel	1					1		Kansas Rehabilitation Services (DCF), Director/Title 4 Voc Rehab-Secretary's Designee (Governor Approved)
Vazquez, Janeth	1	1						Director of Marketing & Business Development, Southwest Medical Ctr, Liberal Kansas
Totals	21	10	4	0	2	4	1	
Less (3 Non-Appts)	*18*					7		
% Required		51%	20%	0%		0%		
Number Required		9.18	4.2	0		0		
Current %		55.6%	22.2%	0.0%		38.9%		

KANSASWORKS **State Board Membership Composition and Category**

Governor Laura Kelly- State of KS Governor, (Req. but not Gov Appt)

Bachman, Page-Stormont Vail, Senior Vice President; **Business and Industry**

Grandon, Scott-Business Manager, Labor-Pipe Fitters Local 553; **Org Labor**

Harder, Stephanie-Director, Employee Communications & Engagement, Textron Aviation, Wichita, KS; **Business and Industry**

Harwood, David-Senior VP, Terracon Consultants (**KWSB Chair**); **Business and Industry**

Junkins, Shaun-International Assoc. of Machinist & Aero Workers/IAM Delegate to state AFL-CIO Council; **Org Labor**

LaFrenz, Sarah-Kansas Organization of State Employees, President SOK Employees Labor Union; **Workforce/Organized Labor**

Martinez, Hector-Kansas Board of Regents, Director of Adult Education; **Title II**

North, Robert-Kansas Department of Commerce, Chief Counsel; **Titles I & III** (Governor Approved)

Vacant-Kansas Legislature - **Senator (Required)**

Parasker, Neelima-CEO snapIT Solutions; **Business and Industry**

Vacant-(Rep.) Kansas Legislature - **Representative (Required)**

Teran, Devon-Ad Astra, Kansas City, Kansas; **Business and Industry**

Threadgold, Brian-International Representative, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; **Workforce/Organized Labor**

Decker, Daniel-KS Rehabilitation Services (DCF), Director; **Title IV Voc Rehab**

Vazquez, Janeth-Director of Marketing & Business Development, Southwest Medical Ctr; **Business and Industry**

Governor's office is currently recruiting Business & Industry members.

Total Board Members- 21

Less (3 Non-Appts)- 18

% Required

51% Business and Industry

20% Workforce/Organized Labor

0% Other

0% State Legislature, Core Partners, Elected Officials

Current %

55.6% Business and Industry

22.2% Workforce/Organized Labor

0% Other

38.9% State Legislature, Core Partners, Elected Officials

 # Required

9.18 Business and Industry

4.2 Workforce/Organized Labor

 # Current

10 Business and Industry

4 Workforce/Organized Labor

0 Other

2 Kansas Legislators

4 Core Partner Leads

0 Elected Officials

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

A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE AND ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNER PROGRAMS.

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

During its regularly scheduled meetings, the KWSB is provided performance outcome reports from each of the Core Partner programs for review, questions and discussion. At least one representative from each Local Area attends the KWSB meetings and is therefore able to explain any report items needing verification or to answer any questions about their own activities or those of their local partners. Because each of the Core Programs are represented on the State Board, appropriate board members are able to further explain any report items needing verification or to answer any questions.

All one-stop system partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the state plan will be assessed based on the negotiated performance targets, as well as the accomplishment of local and regional planning goals.

Commerce staff reviews performance information based on appropriate federal legislation and guidance for WIOA Titles I and III, SCSEP, and JVSG each month and determines if any additional support, corrective action or other action is needed to improve or maintain performance and service delivery efficiency.

The Commerce Compliance Unit conducts annual compliance reviews during which it assesses Local Area and Regional plan goals. If a Local Area or Region is not meeting its stated goals, Technical Assistance staff are alerted through formal written compliance reports and a corrective action plan is developed to help Local staff meet Local/Regional Plan goals.

The State Board uses quarterly performance reports provided by the Kansas Board of Regents and Vocational Rehabilitation to assess these Core partners on a regular basis.

For the federal WIOA performance accountability measures and State measures determined by the KWSB, each Core Program has a monitoring and corrective action process at the state level that assures identified deficiencies, to the extent they occur, are addressed. This process is intended to be based primarily on Local area and Statewide data analysis but may also include other monitoring tools at the discretion of the Core Program. If annual performance targets are not met by any Core Program, in any Local Workforce Development Area, the KWSB may request

that the Core Program submit a corrective action plan. In the event of a corrective action plan being implemented, the Partner will provide regular progress reports to the KWSB and other partners.

Along with WIOA Titles I, II, III, and IV, the KWSB receives a quarterly report on all other programs included in this plan, in addition to competitive grant programs and Special Projects. Performance goals are compared with actual outcomes and customer satisfaction survey results are presented. As occurred during the previous planning period, the KWSB is planning for a continuation of evaluation of Title I, Title III, JVSG and other programs or processes determined during this state plan period.

Assessment of Core Programs Titles I and III:

The KWSB is provided reports reflecting the Accountability Measures established by Section 116 of WIOA. The KWSB and Core Program state agency staff provide both best practices and outcome improvement plans during each state board meeting. If performance of any Core Program fails to meet or exceed performance for more than one program year, a Corrective Action Plan is required.

Assessment of Core Programs Title II:

Kansas Title II performance is assessed each year based on participant outcomes and data quality. The state conducts an annual risk assessment of each local provider to determine the risk of noncompliance, which includes meeting or exceeding state negotiated performance targets. Programs that are determined to be at risk might receive targeted technical assistance, might engage in a formal improvement or corrective action plan, or might be required to complete other remedies as needed. The Title II funding formula is heavily weighted toward program performance, incentivizing participant outcomes and successful program practices.

Assessment of Core Programs Title IV:

VR participates in the workforce system's reporting, assessment and continuous improvement processes for the required common accountability measures. In addition, VR reports on specific state–level indicators as identified in the Performance Indicators section. VR goals and priorities, and related metrics, is overseen by the management of Rehabilitation Services and under the direction of the Department for Children and Families. Performance information is also distributed to the State Rehabilitation Council.

B. Previous Assessment Results

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

Performance Indicator Table-Adult

Performance Indicators	**PY 2024 Expected Level**	**PY 2024 Negotiated Level**	**PY 2025 Expected Level**	**PY 2025 Negotiated Level**
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	71.8%	79.0%	77.0%	76.0%

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	69.1%	78.5%	65.4%	71.9%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$7,642	$8,600	$6,790	$6,784
Credential Attainment Rate	78.3%	76.5%	78.0%	76.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	69.1%	68.0%	56.0%	64.1%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable[1]	Not Applicable[1]	Not Applicable[1]	Not Applicable[1]

[1] The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

Performance Indicator Table-Dislocated Workers

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	78.5%	86.0%	76.9%	77.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	84.4%	87.0%	64.1%	78.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$14,160	$12,000	$9,773	$9,653
Credential Attainment Rate	87.9%	86.9%	78.0%	86.9%
Measurable Skill Gains	88.1%	80.0%	53.1%	58.1%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable[1]	Not Applicable[1]	Not Applicable[1]	Not Applicable[1]

[1] The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

Performance Indicator Table-Youth

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	77.8%	78.0%	73.0%	72.3%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	68.4%	78.0%	61.1%%	69.4%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$4,582	$4,500	$3,050	$3,050
Credential Attainment Rate	43.4%	66.3%	67.0%	66.3%
Measurable Skill Gains	60.9%	51.2%	46.2%	49.2%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable[1]	Not Applicable[1]	Not Applicable[1]	Not Applicable[1]

[1]The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.

Performance Indicator Table-Wagner Peyser

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	69.0%	72.1%	73.5%	66.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	68.7%	69.0%	72.8%	64.9%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$8,144	$8,700	$5,614	$5,653
Credential Attainment Rate	NA	NA	NA	NA
Measurable Skill Gains	NA	NA	NA	NA

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable[1]	Not Applicable[1]	Not Applicable[1]	Not Applicable[1]

[1]*The Departments have not issued the final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As a result, states will not submit expected levels of performance for this indicator and the Departments will not establish negotiated levels of performance for PYs 2024 and 2025.*

Commerce utilizes the specifications provided by USDOL in TEGL 10-16, change 3 (see link below) to calculate the employer effectiveness measures in any given annual reporting period.

https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/tegl-10-16-change-3

Based on the single selection of measure determined by USDOL, Retention with Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarters After Exit, Kansas submitted combined performance in consideration of all WIOA Titles I, II, III, and IV. Employer Effectiveness reporting for PY24 Annual Report aligns with the above listed TEGL and is shown in the table below:

WIOA - EFFECTIVENESS SERVING EMPLOYERS

STATE: Kansas	PROGRAM YEAR: 2024		Certified in WIPS: 9/25/2025 2:45 PM EDT
PERIOD COVERED From (mm/dd/yyyy) : 7/1/2024 8:00 AM EDT		To (mm/dd/yyyy) : 6/30/2025 8:00 AM EDT	
REPORTING AGENCY: Kansas Department of Commerce			
EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS INDICATOR			
Combined Result Across All WIOA Core Programs	**Numerator**	**Denominator**	**Rate**
Number and Percent of Participants Employed with the Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarters After Exit	10,814	23,451	46.1%
REPORT COMMENTS/ CERTIFICATION			
Report Comments:			
Certifying Official **Name:** Shelly Jones **Title:** KANSASWORKS Grants Data Program Manager **Email Address:** shelly.jones@ks.gov **Phone Number:**			

Commerce is the reporting agency for the Title I, II, III, & IV employer measures. Each program year, Commerce collects numerators and denominators from each of the partnering agencies and collectively reports the measures through the annual performance reporting processes. Commerce is actively working with the Title II & IV partners on data sharing to successfully remove duplication from the Employer Effectiveness combined reporting. Commerce will continue the existing processes until the data sharing agreements and processes are implemented fully. Below is detail of how the measure is calculated:

QUARTERLY AND ANNUAL

#1 Retention with Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarters after exit.

NUMERATOR-Count of unique records from denominator where **RETENTION WITH THE SAME EMPLOYER IN THE 2ND QUARTER AND THE 4TH QUARTER=1**

DENOMINATOR-Count of unique records where (**DATE OF PROGRAM ENTRY** is not null) and (**DATE OF EXIT** is within the reporting period) and (**OTHER REASON FOR EXIT=00**)

Calculation of Column **DE1618 RETENTION WITH THE SAME EMPLOYER IN THE 2ND QUARTER AND THE 4TH QUARTER:**

1. Grabs the priid, wgvemployer from the Wage table where wgiwagetype= 1 (After Exit) and wgiquarter= 2

2. Grabs the priid, wgvemployer from the Wage table where wgiwagetype= 1 (After Exit) and wgiquarter= 4

3. Sets DE1618= 1 if wgvemployer matches between the 2 queries

KANSASWORKS has met or exceeded all Common Performance Measures and other required performance measures for the last four years for all programs covered in this state plan.

C. EVALUATION

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

For WIOA Title II, Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs) include increasing literacy or numeracy skills one or more Educational Functioning Levels (EFLs) within a program year, where each EFL approximates to two grade levels; advancing to postsecondary education or training; successfully completing one or more subject tests for the high school equivalency exam; obtaining a high school equivalency diploma; successfully demonstrating progress on a postsecondary transcript; achieving one or more employer-defined milestones; and passing an occupational skills exam. Kansas WIOA Title II participants demonstrate high MSGs, exceeding the state target in both 2023-2024 and 2024-2025.

Employment Second Quarter After Exit and Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit are measured both through data-matching and by follow-up surveys conducted by local providers. Outcomes for these measures have been near the state target over the past two years. Median earnings, also measured with data-matching and follow-up surveys, have consistently exceeded the state target, demonstrating that WIOA Title II participants are entering careers leading to economic self-sufficiency. Credential Attainment has been underreported, and it is expected that in the next two years, the state will see a dramatic increase in this rate as the new data management system (DMS) provides clearer reporting. At the same time, it is possible employment outcomes will fluctuate while the new DMS integrates with the data-matching systems used by the Board of Regents.

The state continues to monitor outcomes and requires local providers to conduct quarterly follow-up surveys of exited participants. Meeting negotiated targets for performance outcomes

is part of the annual risk assessment, which impacts local funding and can trigger targeted technical assistance or other remediation as needed.

The Rehabilitation Services Administration in the US Department of Education established standard national performance indicators for VR programs. The indicators and Kansas performance for PY 2024 are:

Indicator	PY 2024 Negotiated	PY 2024 Actual
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	**51%**	**53.1%**
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	**48%**	**49.8%**
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	**$3,600**	**$4,764**
Credential Attainment Rate	**22%**	**41%**
Measurable Skills Gains	**32%**	**36.7%**

In PY 2024, the number of Kansas' with disabilities that were served was 10,809.

A total of 1,056 persons achieved competitive integrated employment in PY 2024. Their average earnings were $17.12 per hour, and they worked an average of 29 hours per week. A total of 82% of persons successfully employed reported their own income as their primary source of support at VR case closure, representing a significant milestone toward self-sufficiency. Subsequently of those achieving employment, 27% were youth with disabilities who therefore began a lifelong path focused on self-sufficiency rather than reliance on public benefits.

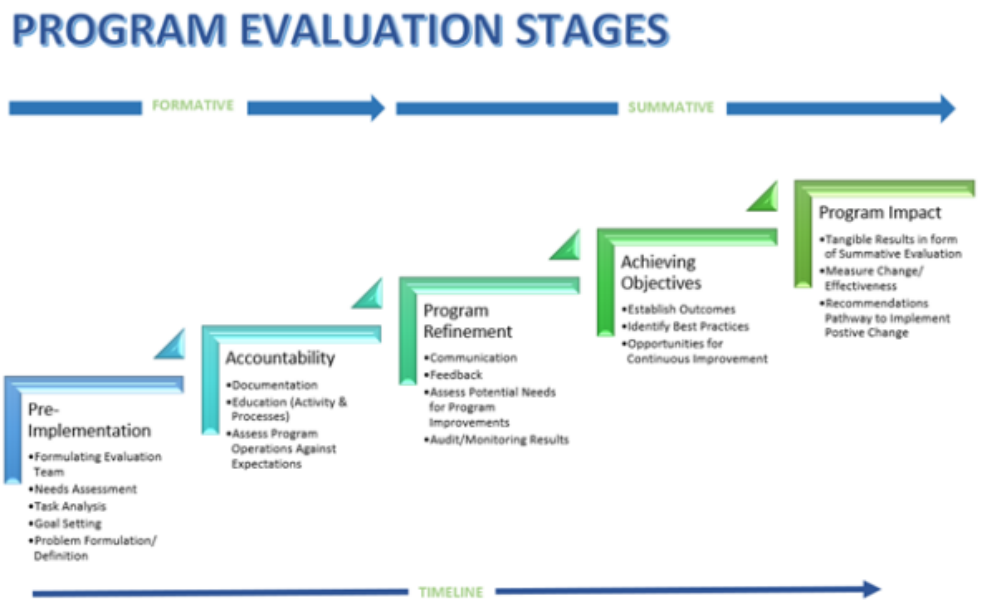
Titles I and III:

Kansas Department of Commerce Workforce Enhancement employs a Technical Research Analyst to conduct evaluations and research projects. Through this staff person, and other consultants who may be available to partners, Kansas will continue to explore opportunities for collaborative evaluation and research functions within the scope of available resources. Such efforts will be designed and coordinated with core programs and their cognizant state agencies, and relevant boards. All human subject research will be reviewed and approved by a third- party Independent Review Board.

Commerce program evaluation processes are focused on two areas: 1) topic/activity specific evaluation and 2) program specific evaluation. Currently, processes and schedules are being developed surrounding these evaluations. This process is intended to create a consistent and meaningful evaluation regardless of focus area within a reasonable amount of time. Evaluations will further support continuous improvement and assist in identifying best practices across programs within the local areas and state. Below is a diagram showing the proposed stages of a program evaluations and the various activities within each stage. This process encompasses activities to be completed from the beginning to the completion with the final summative report being publicized. Each evaluation will vary within the time taken to complete, however the stages noted below are proposed to be applied to all evaluation efforts to ensure integrity and thoroughness with each evaluation. As Commerce completes the evaluations, a published version

of the summative report can be found at the following link: https://ksworksstateboard.org/program-evaluation/

Commerce is in progress with WIOA Title I program evaluation in which a task group of experts will come together and focus on pointed questions in an effort to identify best practices and promote continuous improvement. WIOA Title I task group members have a good understanding of the programs to include Adult, Dislocated Worker (DW) and Youth programs.



This long-term evaluation for WIOA Title I started in the spring of 2024 with the establishment of the task group. This group consists of representatives from all three local areas to include one-stop partner representation, a research analyst, data analyst, program managers, and other key partners as needed. This evaluation is currently in the Accountability stage (noted above). During this stage, activities include focus groups with case managers and youth through surveys and data collection intended to answer the question of *Why do youth disengage from the program?*

During the Accountability stage, the research analyst and data analyst will continue to conduct focus groups to gather data as relates to this evaluation. Based on the question posed, outcomes could result in determination of themes and/or patterns for disengagement, perception of effectiveness of program, and determination of disengagement rate. When the data analysis is complete, the task group will resume meeting to continue with the stages of the program evaluation efforts. While a firm completion date has not been identified, progress continues to be made with evaluation efforts.

Finally, Titles II and IV will review standard performance objectives and modify programs accordingly. Kansas assures that its evaluation and research functions will be coordinated with the evaluations provided by the U.S. Secretary of Labor and the U.S. Secretary of Education under WIOA.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

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

A. FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

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

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

As required by WIOA Sec. 128(b)(2), Commerce distributes WIOA Youth funds among local workforce areas (subject to reservation of the 15 percent limitation for statewide workforce employment and training activities) in keeping with the provisions of WIOA sec. 128 and the approved Combined WIOA State Plan based on three factors described below:

The data factors included are:

1. The relative number of unemployed individuals in Areas of Substantial Unemployment (ASUs) in each local area, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in ASUs in all local areas in the state.
2. The relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each local area, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in all local areas in the state. See the definition of "excess number" below which requires a comparison of the excess unemployed in ASUs with excess unemployed in all areas.
3. The relative number of disadvantaged youth (age 16 to 21, excluding college students not in the workforce and military), in each local area, compared to the total number of disadvantaged youth in all local areas in the state. The number of disadvantaged youth comes from special tabulations of data from the ACS prepared in accordance with the definition provided in WIOA. The Census Bureau collected this data between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2020.

For purposes of identifying ASUs for the Youth Activities sub-state allocation formula, Kansas uses data made available by BLS (as described in Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Technical Memorandum No. S-22-13).

The term "excess number" means, used with respect to the excess number of unemployed individuals within a local area, the higher of (i) the number that represents the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5 percent of the civilian labor force in the local area; or (ii) the number that represents the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5 percent of the civilian labor force in ASUs in such local area.

A weight of 33.3333% is applied to each of the three data factors described above for each Local Area allocation.

HOLD HARMLESS REVIEW

Kansas utilizes a minimum percentage (or stop loss) to ensure that no local area receives an allocation percentage that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage received by the local area for the previous two years. An allocation percentage is the local area's share or percentage of funds allocated to all local areas.

Kansas obtains amounts necessary to increase allocations to local areas to comply with the minimum percentage requirement by proportionately reducing the allocations to be made to other local areas.

Kansas does not use a maximum percentage (or stop gain).

Excel spreadsheets are provided to the Local Areas with calculations.

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

As required in WIOA Sec. 123(b)(2)(A)(i) Commerce distributes WIOA Adult Activities fund allotments among local workforce areas (subject to reservation of the 15 percent limitation for statewide employment and training activities) in accordance with the provisions in WIOA section 133 and the approved State Plan based on three data factors.

The data factors included are:

1. The relative number of unemployed individuals in Areas of Substantial Unemployment (ASUs) in each local area, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in ASUs in all local areas in the state.

2. The relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each local area, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in all local areas in the state. See the definition of "excess number" below which requires a comparison of the excess unemployed in ASUs with excess unemployed in all areas.

3. The relative number of disadvantaged adults (age 22 to 72, excluding college students not in the workforce and military) in each local area, compared to the total number of disadvantaged adults in all local areas in the state. The Census Bureau collected the data used in the special tabulations for disadvantaged adults between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2020.

For purposes of identifying ASUs for the Adult Activities sub-state allocation formula, Kansas uses data made available by BLS (as described in LAUS Technical Memorandum No. S-22-13).

The term "excess number" means, used with respect to the excess number of unemployed individuals within a local area, the higher of (i) the number that represents the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5 percent of the civilian labor force in the local area; or (ii) the number that represents the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5 percent of the civilian labor force in ASUs in such local area.

A weight of 33.3333% is applied to each of the three data factors described above for each Local Area allocation.

HOLD HARMLESS REVIEW

Kansas utilizes a minimum percentage (or stop loss) to ensure that no local area receives an allocation percentage that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the previous two years. An allocation percentage is the local area's share or percentage of funds allocated to all local areas.

Commerce does not use a maximum percentage (or stop gain).

Excel spreadsheets are provided to the Local Areas with calculations.

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

Commerce distributes Dislocated Worker Activities funds among local workforce areas (subject to the Governor's reservation of up to 25 percent for statewide Rapid Response activities under

WIOA sec. 133(a)(2) and the 15 percent limitation for statewide employment and training activities), in accordance with the provisions in WIOA section 133 and the approved State Plan.

The data factors included are:

• insured unemployment data – 19%

• unemployment concentrations – 19%

• plant closing and mass layoff data – 19%

• declining industries data – 19%

• farmer-rancher economic hardship data – 5%

• long-term unemployment data – 19%

The calculation for Percent Distribution is Local Area total divided by state total. THE FINAL ALLOCATION:

All previously described calculations become part of the allocation.

HOLD HARMLESS REVIEW

As required by WIOA sec. 133(b)(2)(B)(iii), Commerce uses a minimum percentage (or stop loss) to ensure local workforce areas receive an allocation percentage that is no less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the two preceding years. In the event of a shortage of funds, Kansas obtains the amounts necessary to increase the allocations to local areas to comply with this provision by proportionately reducing the allocations to other local areas. The minimum percentage methodology Kansas uses for Dislocated Worker funds is the same minimum percentage methodology used in the sub-state Youth and Adult allocation formulas.

Excel spreadsheets are provided to the Local Areas with calculations.

B. FOR TITLE II

I. DESCRIBE THE METHODS AND FACTORS THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL USE TO DISTRIBUTE TITLE II FUNDS.

WIOA Title II funds flow through the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) and are distributed to each WIOA Title II subrecipient based on a funding formula. The funding formula, updated for the most recent grant cycle that began July 1, 2025, prioritizes performance outcomes and supports providers that emphasize pathways into employment through IET programs and those that serve individuals with barriers to employment, such as disabilities or low literacy and numeracy skills. The funding formula also creates space for future measures of effectiveness that do not yet have negotiated targets for WIOA Title II, such as Effectiveness in Serving Employers.

WIOA Section 231 Funding Formula

Base Funding 18%

- Institutional Grant 10%
- Need in Service Area 5%
- System Services 3%

Performance Funding 82%

- Enrollment 40%
    - All Participants
    - IET Participants
    - Low Level Participants
    - Participants Receiving Ongoing Accommodations
- Past Effectiveness 42%
    - Employment Second Quarter After Exit
    - Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit
    - Credential Attainment
    - Measurable Skill Gains
    - Effectiveness in Serving Employes
    - Risk Points
    - Kansas Quality Measures

II. DESCRIBE HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE DIRECT AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS TO APPLY AND COMPETE FOR FUNDS AND HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE THAT IT IS USING THE SAME GRANT OR CONTRACT ANNOUNCEMENT AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS.

A new competitive grant for WIOA Title II was conducted in Kansas for an award period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2030. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was opened in August 2024, with a press release disseminated and an announcement published in the Kansas Register. All grant information was shared on a public-facing webpage on the Kansas Board of Regents website. Three public informational sessions were held virtually on different days and at different times, and all three were recorded and shared on the webpage, along with slides and transcripts. Questions were accepted through a dedicated email address and were answered on the webpage according to a published calendar. Questions were never answered privately and were always shared publicly to ensure all potential applicants had direct and equitable access to apply.

Applications were due in January 2025 and were reviewed by a team of representatives from WIOA core partners to determine eligibility. Eligible applicants were then reviewed individually by multiple reviewers, including state WIOA Title II staff, representatives from WIOA partner agencies, and adult education leadership from other states. Reviewers used a standard rubric which was available to all potential applicants on the public webpage, published at the same time as all other application materials. All eligible applicants were also reviewed by local workforce board representatives to determine alignment with local plans. Reviewers were required to disclose potential conflicts of interest prior to the review. Scores from all reviewers were averaged and comments compiled for each applicant. All applicants received notification of award or non-award on the same day using the same format.

C. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

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

Kansas does not have a separate VR agency for persons who are blind or visually impaired.

6. PROGRAM DATA

A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

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

Describe data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including the State's process to collect and report data on co-enrollment, and for those present in the one-stop centers.

I. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO MAKE THE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR THE CORE PROGRAMS INTEROPERABLE TO MAXIMIZE THE EFFICIENT EXCHANGE OF COMMON DATA ELEMENTS TO SUPPORT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

As per strategy found in Title 1 Subtitle A, Chapter 1, Section 101-102 of Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA), data collection and sharing is vital to the collective partner efforts defined relating to federal common measures reporting. Data collection and sharing will continue to be a collaborative effort between partnering agencies including, but not limited to, Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL), Department of Commerce (Commerce), Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR), and Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) resulting in the development of strategies for further aligning systems. Partner agencies plan to promote the responsible and legal sharing of data to be used in research for program improvement while collaborating on reporting to support continuous workforce development program success. A primary goal continues to be the ability to track students from a young age (PK-12) through workforce training programs, through adult education programs, or postsecondary education, and into the workforce. Wage earnings data will be used to assess program outcomes, and career and technical educational programs will be marketed to workers receiving unemployment insurance, participating in adult education programs or seeking workforce training. Data sharing agreements will be updated as necessary to further support reduction of duplicative data collection as well as provide integrated reporting of accountability measures.

Kansas Core partners have reached our goals of establishing data sharing agreements, including routinized data file interfaces. Future goals will be determined based on the limitations of affordable data systems and each agency's responsibility to secure participant data.

To date, Commerce and Labor have agreed to use a portal with a single customer sign on for Titles I, III and UI participants. The portal is expandable and will be offered to other partners as a single point of entry to multiple systems' participants during this state plan period.

Overall, Core partners have determined the alignment and integration of data systems will benefit individuals seeking training opportunities, potential career and technical education students, and individuals with significant barriers or disabilities. Benefits include:

1. Enhanced service delivery: The data will support program performance and outcome evaluation and drive policy development and program management.
2. Improved outcomes for job seekers: Provides job seekers the ability to use a streamlined system that allows them to select programs based on performance and outcomes. This will generate time savings for the job seekers, potentially impact unemployment benefits

positively, and ultimately allow job seekers a quick response on employment and training opportunities.

3. Improved outcomes for employers: Employers will have the opportunity to view and use performance data through the same dashboard and will be able to access qualified candidates.

4. Economic development: By strengthening data collection and sharing efforts across agencies, business opportunities in the state are enhanced by the indirect development of a qualified workforce.

5. System and program accessibility: Data will be disaggregated by those with significant barriers to employment, including those with disabilities to allow local and state policy makers to evaluate the services provided to those individuals.

i. kansasworks.com will remain the MIS for Titles I and III during this state plan period. Core partners, along with Kansas Department of Labor, have continually worked to make each of the state agencies' data systems interoperable through data sharing agreements, electronic interfaces and common performance measures. As data systems are upgraded and new possibilities are developed for ease of interoperability, state agencies will align and integrate our data systems as much as possible to support the reduction of duplicative data collection, as well as provide an integrated reporting of accountability measures.

II. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO INTEGRATE DATA SYSTEMS TO FACILITATE STREAMLINED INTAKE AND SERVICE DELIVERY TO TRACK PARTICIPATION ACROSS ALL PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN

KRS is working with Geographic Solutions, Inc. in the development stages of a new case management system, with a targeted go-live date of summer 2027. This technology platform will be more compatible with other core partner systems and will improve data-sharing capabilities through system interfaces. KRS is currently operating on a mainframe system, and this transition will create opportunities for shared intake processes, coordinated service delivery, and enhanced collaboration among partners. This effort represents Kansas' movement toward an integrated data system designed to streamline intake and service delivery tracking.

As noted in previous State Plans, Kansas has encountered ongoing challenges navigating FERPA and HIPAA requirements related to data sharing. The State would welcome additional Federal guidance and interpretation regarding data-sharing allowances to support integrated data systems across WIOA Titles I, II, III, and IV.

III. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL ASSIST THE GOVERNOR IN ALIGNING TECHNOLOGY AND DATA SYSTEMS ACROSS REQUIRED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS (INCLUDING DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON INTAKE, DATA COLLECTION, ETC.) AND HOW SUCH ALIGNMENT WILL IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY TO INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

The State Board has consulted leadership staff from WIOA Core partner agencies and has developed two policies to assist the Governor in aligning technology requirements across Partner agencies. This alignment improves service delivery to job seekers by limiting duplication of services and by assuring customers have access to education, training, supports and labor market information services:

Data collection policy 5-32-00

https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/56/policies/2502/5-32-00-data-collection-policy-5-1-24-2.pdf

Data Validation Policy 5-33-00

https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/56/policies/2500/5-33-00-data-validation-policy-5-1-24-2.pdf

As described in the III.b.6.A.ii., VR is working on the development of a new case management system and to retire its mainframe system and adopt a contemporary system that will ease compatibility with Commerce MIS and Board of Regents data system. As all four Titles are represented on the State Board, they will work to support this process as a significant step to help the Governor align the Core and Required Partner data systems.

IV. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S DATA SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES TO PRODUCE THE REPORTS REQUIRED UNDER SECTION 116, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM. (WIOA SECTION 116(D)(2)).

For WIOA Title II and Title IV partner programs, there is an obligation to collect all data elements necessary to support both federal and state data collection and reporting requirements. The exchange of data, including any data that may be exported to kansasworks.com, will be subject to the terms and conditions of officially executed Data use Agreements between or among partner entities. Data use agreements will specify conditions or terms for consumer consent to release personally identifiable information.

Commerce will supply a standardized upload file format for all required MIS data. WIOA Title II, Adult Education, uses the Literacy, Adult, and Community Education System (LACES) for participant reporting. WIOA Title IV, Vocational Rehabilitation, uses the Kansas Management Information Systems (KMIS) for participant reporting. Data from both the AESIS and KMIS will be extracted for compilation of WIOA required reporting of performance measures.

Per the Performance Accountability System: Section 116 of WIOA establishes performance accountability indicators and performance reporting requirements to assess the effectiveness of States and local areas in achieving positive outcomes for individuals served by the workforce development system's six core programs. These six core programs are the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, authorized under WIOA Title I; the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program, authorized under WIOA Title II; the Employment Service program authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by WIOA Title III; and the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA Title IV. The implementation of WIOA provided a historic opportunity to align performance-related definitions, streamline performance indicators, integrate reporting, and ensure comparable data collection and reporting across all six of these core programs, while also implementing program-specific requirements related to data collection and reporting.

Performance Groups and Common Measures Under section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA, describe six primary indicators of performance:

1. Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit: The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program (includes education and training for Title I Youth);

2. Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit: The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program (includes education and training for Title I Youth);

3. Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit: The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

4. Credential Attainment: The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program;

5. Measurable Skill Gains: The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment. Depending on the type of education or training program, documented progress is defined as one of the following:

a) Documented achievement of at least one educational functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary education level;

b) Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;

c) Secondary or postsecondary transcript or report card for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards;

d) Satisfactory or better progress report, towards established milestones, such as completion of OJT or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training; or

e) Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks such as knowledge-based exams.

6. Effectiveness in Serving Employers: As required in WIOA sec. 116(b)(2)(A)(i)(VI) the KWSB has selected "Retention with the Same Employer".

Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation

Agencies administering core programs will submit program-specific reports in line with the relevant Titles under WIOA, adhering to federal guidelines from their respective Departments. Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS), Kansas's State Vocational Rehabilitation Program (Title IV) utilizes a case management system, KMIS, that includes all necessary data fields for required federal reporting as well as mechanisms for producing the reports. KRS also has established processes for reviewing data and correcting errors prior to the submission of federal reports. Kansas is also in the procurement process for a new case management system that will include and enhance all of these features.

Subject to the availability of Performance Year data, KRS collects and reports on the following:

WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance

- Employment Rate - 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit
- Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Credential Attainment
- Measurable Skill Gains

- Effectiveness in Serving Employers (if applicable)

Additional indicators of performance

- Number of persons achieving competitive, integrated employment
- Average hourly wage
- Number of transition youth achieving competitive, integrated employment
- Average hours worked per week
- Percent of persons employed who report their own income as their primary source of support at case closure, a significant milestone toward self sufficiency.

B. ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPANTS' POST-PROGRAM SUCCESS

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

The Commerce Management Information System (MIS) is used to record and track participants enrolled in Titles I and III, other workforce programs such as TAA, JVSG and other competitive programs administered by Commerce as appropriate. The MIS is also used to provide required federal reporting. Program managers in Wagner-Peyser, TAA, JVSG, SCSEP and WIOA Title I use the MIS to report and track individual progress and to make decisions regarding any services needed both during active participation in educational programs and employment and during the periods of performance after exit from services as required. This same system downloads wage information through an agreement with Labor to record wages at required intervals post-release. The State Workforce Board reviews this performance quarterly to monitor system efficiency and effectiveness.

WIOA Title II participants enrolling in postsecondary education will be tracked through the Board of Regents' data collection for universities and community and technical colleges within the state of Kansas. These data will allow the State to follow the progress of participants entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education. WIOA Title II also uses data-matching with Unemployment Insurance (UI) and the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS), along with personal follow-up surveys, to track post-exit progress in postsecondary education or training and in entering or remaining in employment.

Vocational Rehabilitation has obtained access to SWIS for tracking employment and will pursue the necessary data sharing agreements to track progress in postsecondary education within the capacity of its existing 30-year-old legacy system for data collection and reporting.

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

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

All titles have data-sharing agreements with the Kansas Department of Labor to access wage data per participant.

D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

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

Data governance documents have been developed by the Core partners reflective of State Statute, Data Sharing and Data Governance agreements, agency policies, KWSB policy such as the Data Collection Policy. https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/56/policies/2502/5-32-00-data-collection-policy-5-1-24-2.pdf, and annual cyber security training required by all staff.

Privacy safeguards are at the forefront of data governance, which defines how data assets are managed within an organization, agency or collaborative partnership. Data governance also addresses issues of risk management to assure that all appropriate federal and state statutes and regulations related to data security and confidentiality are adhered to strictly.

The partner agencies plan to promote the responsible and legal sharing of data using participant consent to match data at the individual record level. Aggregate data, **without** personally identifiable information, will be shared across workforce programs, providing an integrated report of performance indicators.

7. Priority of Service for Veterans.

A. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT THE PRIORITY OF SERVICE PROVISIONS FOR COVERED PERSONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE JOBS FOR VETERANS ACT, CODIFIED AT SECTION 4215 OF 38 U.S.C., WHICH APPLIES TO ALL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS FUNDED IN WHOLE OR IN PART BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.

B. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MONITOR PRIORITY OF SERVICE PROVISIONS FOR VETERANS.

C. DESCRIBE THE TRIAGE AND REFERRAL PROCESS FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND OTHER POPULATIONS DETERMINED ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE SERVICES FROM THE JOBS FOR VETERANS STATE GRANTS (JVSG) PROGRAM'S DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM (DVOP) SPECIALIST/CONSOLIDATED POSITION.

A. The Department of Commerce State policy (WIOA Guidance Letter: 18-01), states that each Local Board develops and maintains a policy to address how priority of service to veterans and other covered persons will be applied. The Local Board policy ensures all veterans and other covered persons are given priority over program eligible non-veterans for all available services. Individuals meeting both the veterans' and the mandatory priorities or spending requirements for the program obtain the highest preference. In accordance with Jobs for Veterans Act 4215 of U.S.C., **KANSAS**WORKS adheres to all US Department of Labor regulations which govern veteran priority of service.

Veterans and other covered persons are:

- *identified at the point of entry to programs & services*
- *Made aware of priority of service*
- *Made aware of full array of programs and services available to them*
- *Take precedence over non-veterans in accessing and obtaining services*

B. Monitoring Priority of Service

Priority of Service is monitored by the State Veterans Services Manager who examines Local Board policies and procedures, reviews reports produced through kansasworks.com, conducts on-site monitoring, and checks all websites developed with funding from impacted programs or grants to ensure priority of service is provided to veterans. The State Veteran Service Manager and Regional Operational Managers randomly select and contact veterans who have received services at the American Job Center, to survey treatment, activities and the quality of services provided at the American Job Center. Additionally, Kiosks have been placed within the Kansas American Job Centers where veterans can voluntarily provide feedback on services provided by DVOP/LVER, Wagner-Peyser and One stop Staff.

Using the data within kansasworks.com, the state utilizes quarterly cumulative reports to identify selected activities performed by all AJC staff on behalf of veterans and non-veterans. This report allows the State Veterans Services Manager to rapidly identify services provided to veterans by grant-funded staff versus other workforce center staff and any services provided to non-veterans by grant-funded staff.

C. Staff will remain strategically placed in **KANSAS**WORKS American Job Centers aimed at meeting the needs of all veterans. WIOA partners trained in case management will assess and serve veterans at all local workforce center locations. Kansas has integrated all DVOP specialists into the AJC's system through assignment to a Workforce Center. Upon entry into the AJC, the client is asked if they've served in the U.S. Military or the spouse of someone who served. If the client identifies as either having served or being the spouse of someone who has served, an assessment is conducted to identify eligibility for DVOP services as per applicable VPLs. Regardless of the person's eligibility for DVOP services, they are entitled to priority of service for receipt of employment services, employment, and training over non- covered persons.

When priority of service has been identified as applicable to eligible persons, these persons are prioritized for such tasks and functions as use of AJC computers for employment related tasks, WIOA related activities with available staff, and access to Wagner-Peyser staff in the case of DVOP ineligible persons.

Veterans are initially identified by a front desk/reception staff member. An assessment to identify any significant barriers to preventing employment (SBE) is conducted. Veterans with SBE's are referred to a DVOP. Those who do not have SBE's are provided services through the workforce center staff. Despite the determination of SBE status, all veterans remain entitled to and do receive Veteran Priority of Service. In addition, Kansas has developed a coordinated intake and information system through kansasworks.com, the statewide job search and case management system to facilitate the provision of services to veterans

Veterans receive priority access to computers and resources when there is a waiting line to utilize those resources. Veterans receive a special designation on interview sheets and sign in sheets for employer job fairs conducted at AJCs and get first opportunity to interview and/ or speak to employers. When program funds are limited, eligible veterans who qualify for funding assistance are granted priority over non-veterans for non-obligated funding assistance.

Veterans' resumes are searched first when new job orders are created by any workforce center

staff. Qualified vets are then contacted by that staff and informed of the new position.

Each Local Board develops and maintains a policy to ensure other federally funded service providers provide priority of services to veterans and other covered persons.

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

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

Per State Policy #5-28-00, all comprehensive Centers must be physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities, as described in section 188 of WIOA and its implementing regulations at 29 CFR part 38 (Final Rule published at 81 FR 87130 (Dec. 2, 2016)). To ensure meaningful access to all customers, American Job Centers should incorporate the principles of universal and human-centered design. These principles include, for example, flexibility in space usage; the use of pictorial, written, verbal, and tactile modes to present information for customers with disabilities or English language learners; providing clear lines of sight to information for seated or standing users; providing necessary accommodations; and providing adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistants.

Per State Policy #5-28-00 all affiliated sites must be physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities as well.

State and partner staff are regularly trained and informed about the various resources available to serve individuals with disabilities. These resources are regularly discussed at staff meetings and all partner meetings. Additionally, a list of available resources can be found on the Kansas Department of Commerce website:

https://www.kansascommerce.gov/program/workforce-services/disability-resources/

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

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each one-stop center is able to meet the needs of English language learners, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials. Describe how English language learners will be made aware of the opportunity to enroll and/or co-enroll in all the core programs for which they are eligible.

The KWSB has issued guidance and procedures to ensure each AJC staff and operators meet the needs of English language learners. Electronic and personal interpretation services, and printed materials will be offered in other languages. Partnerships with community-based organizations ensure all will cooperate to provide services to those who do not use English.

The Core Partners of the Kansas Workforce Development system ensure accessibility for English Language Learners through the following policies and procedures:

- All service delivery settings must assure that foreign language translation and sign language interpreting services are made readily available for customers.

Frequently such services must be arranged by appointment. Bi-lingual staff are also available in many areas.

- Program information is published in languages other than English.
- Staff are trained to provide an individualized approach to services building on the language and cultural backgrounds of customers.

- Services are provided in integrated settings.

Furthermore, each core program has specific accessibility components as follows:

For Titles I and III, the **KANSAS**WORKS website includes translation software, making information about the workforce system readily available to ELL.

WIOA Title II services for English learners are targeted to areas of the state that have a significant population identified as speaking English "less than very well" through American Community Survey responses. Instructional services are provided for all levels of English acquisition at the majority of local providers. Services are available in person and remotely via online platforms and curricula to provide access to as many eligible individuals as possible.

Title IV, Rehabilitation Services provides a full range of accommodations for vocational rehabilitation clients. The Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing provides technical assistance and information/referral to staff and consumers statewide. Foreign language interpreting is provided as needed through use of interpreting contracts. When accommodations cannot be provided by staff directly, services may be contracted through a private individual or organization, such as a sign language interpreter or foreign language interpreters. When appropriate, family members may assist with communication if that is the customer's informed choice.

IV. Coordination with State Plan Programs

Describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination among the core programs, and with the required one-stop partner programs and other programs and activities included in the Unified or Combined State Plan.

Kansas Department of Commerce (Commerce), the state workforce and economic development agency, convened leadership from the Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL), the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) and the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) to develop this state plan. KDOL administers Unemployment Insurance and generates and analyzes Labor Market Information; KBOR oversees the Adult Education and Family Literacy program and coordinates Kansas public postsecondary community colleges, technical colleges and governs public state universities; DCF is responsible for Rehabilitation Services, TANF, SNAP and multiple other social services. WIOA Core Partner leadership established the State Plan Management Team (SPMT) to work as directed by the State Board to develop the WIOA Combined State Plan. Each modification of the Combined State Plan and any new elements addressed in the State Plan have occurred through the SPMT.

In mid-year 2023, the SPMT developed a series of questions for public workforce system staff and partners to consider regarding how the programs represented in the state plan could improve service delivery across programs and throughout the state. An online survey was emailed to partner staff with the ability to respond anonymously. The SPMT considered the data received from over 150 responses to create our Priority Goals and strategies found within this state plan. Prior to the next four-year planning period, the SPMT will repeat this process.

The proposed state plan has been posted for public comment.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;	Yes
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;	Yes
3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs;	Yes
4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administrating the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;	Yes
5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;	
6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3);	Yes
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;	Yes
8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;	Yes
9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs;	Yes
10. The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);	Yes
11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and	Yes
12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.	Yes

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

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

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

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following with respect to activities carried out under subtitle B—

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

A. IDENTIFY THE REGIONS AND THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS DESIGNATED IN THE STATE

Kansas is separated into three local workforce development areas.

Kansas WorkforceONE - serves 96 counties, mostly rural, in Western Kansas, Noth Central, Northeast and Southeast Kansas: Cheyenne, Rawlins, Decatur, Norton, Phillips, Smith, Jewell, Republic, Sherman, Thomas, Sheridan, Graham, Rooks, Osborne, Mitchell, Cloud, Wallace, Logan, Gove, Trego, Ellis, Russell, Lincoln, Ottawa, Dickinson, Greeley, Wichita, Scott, Lane, Ness, Rush, Barton, Ellsworth, Saline, Morris, Hamilton, Kearny, Finney, Hodgeman, Pawnee, Stafford, Rice, McPherson, Marion, Chase, Reno, Harvey, Stanton, Grant, Haskell, Gray, Ford, Edwards, Morton, Stevens, Seward, Meade, Clark, Comanche, Kiowa, Pratt, Barber, Washington, Marshall, Nemaha, Brown, Doniphan, Clay, Riley, Pottawatomie, Jackson, Atchison, Jefferson, Shawnee, Wabaunsee, Geary, Osage, Douglas, Franklin, Lyon, Coffey, Anderson, Miami, Linn, Greenwood, Woodson, Allen, Bourbon, Elk, Wilson, Neosho, Crawford, Chautauqua, Montgomery, Labette and Cherokee. They have workforce centers located in Garden City, Dodge City, Hays, Great Bend, Hutchinson, Salina, Junction City, Manhattan, Topeka, Lawrence, Emporia, Paola, Independence, Chanute and Pittsburg.

Workforce Partnership serves 3 counties in the Kansas City metro area: Leavenworth, Wyandotte and Johnson. They have workforce centers located in Leavenworth, Kansas City and Overland Park providing Full-Time services.

Workforce Alliance serves 6 counties in the Wichita metro area in South Central Kansas, Kingman, Sedgwick, Butler, Harper, Sumner and Cowley. They have workforce centers providing Full-Time services in Wichita and El Dorado, and Part-Time services in Wellington and Winfield.

Kansas has requested a waiver to allow for a single planning region (see attached).

B. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS AND POLICY USED FOR DESIGNATING LOCAL AREAS, INCLUDING PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING WHETHER THE LOCAL AREA MET THE CRITERIA FOR "PERFORMED SUCCESSFULLY" AND "SUSTAINED FISCAL INTEGRITY" IN ACCORDANCE WITH 106(B)(2) AND (3) OF WIOA. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS USED FOR IDENTIFYING REGIONS AND PLANNING REGIONS UNDER SECTION 106(A) OF WIOA. THIS MUST INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE STATE CONSULTED WITH THE LOCAL BOARDS AND CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS IN IDENTIFYING THE REGIONS

Kansas Department of Commerce issued Guidance Letter 22-02

https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/17/wioa-guidance-letters/2623/gl-22-02-lwda-designation-revised.pdf

which established the process for initial designation for all five local areas within the State of Kansas.

Under Sec. 106(b)(3), after the period for which a local area is initially designated, the Governor shall approve a request for subsequent designation as a local area from such local area, if such area:

1. performed successfully;
2. sustained fiscal integrity; and
3. in the case of a local area in planning region, met the requirements described in Sec. 106(c)(1).

Local areas must request subsequent designation once every four years.

A Local Area is considered to have performed successfully if the local area met or exceeded the levels of performance the Governor negotiated with the Local WDB and chief elected official for core indicators of performance AND that the local area has not failed any individual measure for the last 2 consecutive program years in accordance with a State-established definition, provided in the State Plan, of met or exceeded performance.

Local areas are considered to have maintained fiscal integrity if there were no unresolved audit findings or disallowed costs in either of the two preceding program years, prior to the request.

Local areas may request subsequent designation as a WIOA Local Workforce Development Area by submitting:

1. A Letter of Request requesting subsequent designation signed (jointly) by the Chair of the Chief Elected Official(s) and Chair of the Local Workforce Development Board of the local area requesting subsequent designation, **AND**
2. The Annual Performance Reports for the two (2) Program Years preceding the subsequent designation request, **AND**
3. A copy of the Auditors Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs from the Local Area's Single Audit for the two Program years preceding the subsequent designation request, **AND**
4. A copy, or electronic link, of the most recent Regional Plan that shows the Local Area met the Regional Planning requirements described in Sec. 106(c)(1)

All Requests for Subsequent Designation are to be sent electronically to: workforcesvcs@ks.com. Subject: WIOA Local Area Subsequent Designation

Process for Designating or Redesignating a Local Area

The Governor may designate or redesignate a local area which must include at a minimum consideration of the extent to which the proposed area:

(1) Is consistent with local labor market areas – any local area requesting designation or redesignation must provide local labor market evidence, which may include but not limited to State, regional, and local labor market data; economic development data; State, regional and local commuting patterns; and demographic data.

(2) Has a common economic development area – any local area requesting designation or redesignation must provide evidence of common economic development area by providing information on the major employers in the proposed local area, job vacancies in the proposed local area, and any data that shows worker skills.

(3) Has the Federal and non-Federal resources, including appropriate education and training institutions, to administer activities under WIOA subtitle B – any local area requesting designation or redesignation must provide a list of training institutions in the proposed local area with which may or may not include institutions on the WIOA Eligible Training Provider List.

The Governor may approve a request at any time for designation as a workforce development area from any unit of general local government, including a combination of such units, if the State WDB determines that the area meets the requirements above and recommends designation.

Regardless of whether a local area has been designated under 20 CFR 679.240 or 679.250, the Governor may redesignate a local area if the redesignation has been requested by a local area and the Governor approves the request.

The process will be as follows for the designation or redesignation of workforce development area:

1. The local area or entity requesting the redesignation must notify the Governor of the request in writing by emailing:

workforcesvcs@ks.com.

Subject: WIOA Local Area Redesignation

2. State workforce staff acting as the Governor's designee will then set up a consultation with the staff of local area/areas or entity/entities requesting the redesignation. In order to ensure a newly designated local area has the proper administrative set up, the consultation meeting will include a discussion on various topic such as, but not limited to:

a. Determination of a new Chief Elected Official (CEO) or Chief Elected Officials Board (CEOB)

b. Determination and appointment of a new Local Workforce Development Board

c. Selection process and timeline for One Stop Operator

d. Development of new Memoranda of Understanding

e. Ensure administrative entities are performing the correct functions with the appropriate firewalls in place

f. Development of new sub-recipient agreements for award of Federal Funds

g. Development of process for draw down of Federal Funds

h. Any Federal or State grant awards that need modification

i. Negotiation of local area performance measures

3. State workforce staff acting as the Governor's designee will then set up consultation with the chief elected officials and affected Local WDBs.

4. State workforce staff acting as the Governor's designee will publish for public comment the proposed plan to designate or redesignate the local area and provide an opportunity for comment by representatives of the Local WDB's, chief elected officials, businesses, institutions of higher education, labor organizations, other primary stakeholders, and the general public. Comments can include but are not limited to areas such as geographic locations, programs and services offered, available training opportunities, administrative structure, performance outcomes, and community partnerships.

5. After adequate time for public comment, which will be a minimum of 30 days, comments received through the public comment process will be considered by the State WDB and the Governor.

6. After public comments are received and all factors are considered, the State WDB will meet to make a recommendation to the Governor on the designation or redesignation of workforce development area.

C. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS AND POLICY REFERRED TO IN SECTION 106(B)(5) OF WIOA RELATING TO DESIGNATION OF LOCAL AREAS

The Appeals process is also found in Guidance Letter GL22-02

https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/17/wioa-guidance-letters/2623/gl-22-02-lwda-designation-revised.pdf

Should a unit of general local government (including a combination of such units) or grant recipient that requests but is not granted designation of an area as a local area, that area may submit an appeal to the State Board by submitting a written statement to the Chair of the Kansas Workforce Development Board at WIOAStatePlan@ks.gov. The Chair and the Executive Committee will review the document and provide a recommendation to the Governor for designating the local which meets the requirements in Sec. 106 of WIOA.

If upon the recommendation of the State Workforce Board for such designation the Governor does not designate the local area as recommended, for any reason, a local unit of government or combination of local units of government or grant recipient located in that local area may appeal such decision to the US Department of Labor under Sec. 106 of WIOA.

The Secretary of the US Department of Labor, after receiving a request for review from the unit or grant recipient and on determining that the unit or grant recipient was not accorded procedural rights under the appeals process described in the State Plan, as specified in WIOA Sec. 102(b) (2) (D) (i) (III), or that the area meets the requirements of Sec. 106(2) or (3), may require that the area be designated as a local area under such paragraph. The US Secretary's decision shall be final.

D. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS AND POLICY REFERRED TO IN SECTION 121(H)(2)(E) OF WIOA RELATING TO DETERMINATIONS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

In the event there is disagreement between a local workforce development board and one or more of its co-located partners regarding infrastructure costs, the matter shall be first settled through the State Funding Mechanism described in Policy 5-20-00

https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/56/policies/2138/5-20-00-memorandum-of-understanding-mou-4-24-23.pdf

If the entities wish to dispute the State Funding Mechanism as determined by the Governor, they may do so per CFR Section 678.750:

- Written appeals must be received at the above address within 21 calendar days from the date of the decision in dispute.
- It shall be the responsibility of the Department of Commerce Legal Counsel to convene the Review Panel.
- The Review Panel will be comprised of one legal representative from each of the designated state agencies for the Core Partners (Commerce, KBOR, and DCF.)
- If one of the designated state agencies is the appellant, then that agency shall recuse itself from the Panel to be replaced by an alternate counsel from another state agency. The decision of the Panel will be issued within 30 calendar days in writing and will be final.

2. STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

A. PROVIDE STATE POLICIES OR GUIDANCE FOR THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM AND FOR USE OF STATE FUNDS FOR WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES

KANSASWORKS is required to provide certain statewide activities using WIOA funds reserved for such purposes. In the event there is a surplus of funds after providing the required statewide activities, Commerce may consider additional activities as provided for in Sections 129 and 134 of WIOA. To assure consistent, objective determination for awarding funds reserved for statewide workforce development activities as provided in WIOA Sec. 128(a)(1), the following procedure will be used.

Priority Recipients: The following entities may be granted WIOA funds reserved for statewide workforce development activities and shall be considered by the following rank.

1. Local Workforce Development Boards; 2. WIOA Core Partners; 3. WIOA Required Partners; 4. Community-based 501 (c)(3) organizations serving job seekers having one or more of the barriers defined by WIOA; 5. Other community-based 501 (c)(3) organizations.

Priority Projects: The following types of projects may be granted WIOA reserve funds and shall be considered by the following rank.

1. Service delivery strategies for effectively serving individuals with barriers to employment; 2. Coordinating programs and services among one-stop partners; 3. Projects identified by WIOA Workforce Services as timely, emergent and necessary to improve performance or other outcomes of the state workforce system or local workforce system(s); 4. Innovative service delivery strategies; 5. Demonstration Projects for any WIOA-eligible sub-population; 6. Staff Development and/or Cross-System Staff Training; 7. Capacity-building strategies for Core Partners; 8. Capacity-building strategies for Required Partners; 9. Business services improvement and/or outreach; 10. Other topics determined by system needs.

Other Projects: The following projects may be considered for WIOA Set Aside funding but only if all projects meeting Priority requirements are fully funded.

1. Implementing innovative programs and strategies designed to meet the needs of all employers (including small employers) in the State, including Incumbent Worker training; 2. Career Pathway development with both industry and post-secondary partners; 3. Establishment of credit for prior knowledge, skills, competencies and experience; 4. Development of common intake procedures and related activities; 5. Research specific to certain populations, interventions or Career Services; 6. Development of Pay for Performance models; 7. Other activities as requested by Commerce

Eligible entities must provide a project proposal using the following format: SOLICITATION FOR GRANT APPLICATION (SGA)

TO: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Local Area Workforce Development Boards, Public Not-for-Profit Organizations with 501(c)3 status; public or private schools, unified school districts, community and technical colleges; other interested parties

FROM: Director of Workforce Services Kansas Department of Commerce Workforce Services Division

SUBJECT: Program Year ____(July 1,_____through June 30, _____WIOA Reserve Funds

Grant Application Instructions

Purpose. The purpose of this guidance is to provide all WIOA Reserve Funds Grant applicants with application instructions and procedures for Program Year (PY)_____

Reference. The following references may be used for additional information: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Sec. 129(b) and 134(a); WIOA Reserve Funds Grant Guidance and Procedure; this SGA. Background. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act provides for a percentage of each state's allocation for use for "Statewide Workforce Investment Activities." The Kansas Department of Commerce will grant a portion of these funds as established in this SGA as cost reimbursement grants.

Grant Application Procedures. All WIOA Reserve Funds grant applicants must submit an application package as described in this SGA to be considered for funding. The Department of Commerce will not approve a grant application for funding that fails to provide any of the required information outlined in this SGA. A complete grant application package must contain the following: (a) A project narrative; (b) Programmatic Assurances; (c) A Budget Narrative; (d) A completed, signed Budget Form; and (e) A copy of the applicant's most recent Financial Audit Findings and Recommendations.

Method of Submission. Applicants must also submit electronic copies of their applications to workforcesvcs@ks.gov by the required date and time.

Eligibility Review/Responsibility Review/Grant Application Review. Commerce will conduct a pre-award eligibility review, responsibility review, and grant application review. Commerce will not designate applicants as grantees for PY _if they:

1. Fail to meet the eligibility criteria as a Local Workforce Development Board, USD, community or technical college, 501 (c) 3 or other community-based organization

2. Fail to meet the fiscal/ management responsibility criteria based on the applicant's most recent Independent Audit Findings and Recommendations and described management capacity

3. Fail to submit an application meeting the requirements of this SGA

4. The Kansas Department of Commerce will determine and describe priority activities, considerations and specific targeted populations and/or results.

Please note: any applicant which is not a Local Workforce Development Board must provide written documentation demonstrating the support of and partnership with the Local Workforce Development Board of the area(s) served by the project.

Bonus Points. In addition to the point values described in this SGA, applicants may increase total scores by providing match for the proposed project. Match must be in cash and must support salary, benefits, equipment or contractual line items. Bonus points can be earned as follows: 0. 25% through 50% match -- 3 points 1. 51 through 75% match -- 6 points 2. 76 through 100% match -- 10 points

Schedule. Applicants must comply with the following timetable: Provide required application forms and narratives to the Kansas Department of Commerce no later than 4:00 PM on _____.

1. Pre-Bid Telephone Conference Call is scheduled for _____. Call 1-866-XXXXXXX.

2. Complete application packages must be emailed to:_____.

3. Commerce will announce Grant Awards by _____date.

Inquiries. Questions may be directed to the address above or by contacting _____. Questions and answers will be posted on the Commerce website, www.kansascommerce.com.

Attachments to SGA.

Attachment A: Narrative Instructions; Attachment B: Assurances; Attachment C: Budget Attachment D: Specifications and Definitions

B. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO USE GOVERNOR'S SET ASIDE FUNDING FOR MANDATORY AND DISCRETIONARY ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING HOW THE STATE WILL CONDUCT EVALUATIONS OF TITLE I ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES.

As required by WIOA, intends to use the Governor's set aside funds to support mandatory activities such as monitoring and oversight; maintaining a fiscal management system; maintaining a management information system meeting all reporting and accountability requirements; all other required statewide activities found in the Act. To conduct required program evaluations, **KANSAS**WORKS will support the salary of a Technical Research Analyst, Data Analyst, and Trainer & Reporting Analyst who oversee all data and evaluation efforts for Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth activities.

C. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE RAPID RESPONSE FUNDS TO RESPOND TO LAYOFFS AND PLANT CLOSINGS AND COORDINATE SERVICES TO QUICKLY AID COMPANIES AND THEIR AFFECTED WORKERS. STATES ALSO SHOULD DESCRIBE ANY LAYOFF AVERSION STRATEGIES THEY HAVE IMPLEMENTED TO ADDRESS AT RISK COMPANIES AND WORKERS.

Rapid Response funds and layoff aversion strategies will continue to be provided in partnership with local workforce development boards and state workforce development staff. Rapid Response activities deploy strategies including but not limited to:

- Kansas uses Mobile Centers that have Rapid Response as its priority. The Mobile Centers are deployed for closings or layoffs to assist workers as quickly as possible.
- Kansas has two statewide Workforce Response Coordinators. They are involved with and have constant communication with local Economic Development representatives and groups, Human Resource groups and other statewide organizations to keep their fingers on the pulse of employers, particularly those who may be struggling. They participate in Job Fairs, to communicate with employers needing assistance so the companies do not close or move. These staff members also visit with job seekers who may be able to fill positions with employers struggling to fill certain positions to keep the doors open. They also work closely with our local Rapid Response representatives who may be in contact with any struggling companies to understand the services that may be put in place to help them avert layoffs.
- The State Dislocated Worker Unit partners with the Kansas Department of Labor to promote the Work Share program as a layoff aversion strategy. The Shared Work Program is designed to help both employers and employees. It is an alternative for employers faced with a reduction in workforce and allows an employer to divide the available work or hours of work among a specified group of affected employees in lieu of a layoff. Shared Work allows the employees to receive a portion of their unemployment insurance benefits while working reduced hours.

Rapid Response funds and layoff aversion strategies will continue to be provided in partnership with local workforce development boards and state workforce development staff.

D. DESCRIBE THE STATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO PROVIDE RAPID RESPONSES IN CASES OF NATURAL DISASTERS INCLUDING COORDINATION WITH FEMA AND OTHER ENTITIES.

In addition to the procedures described in Section III of this plan, the state's policy and

procedure for providing Rapid Response services in cases of natural disasters follow:

The first priority for funding applications are those required Rapid Response (RR) activities; including agreements with local boards to provide:

Immediate and onsite contact with the employer, representatives of affected workers, and the local community; which may include an assessment of: . lay-off schedule and plans of the employer and the provision of emergency assistance adapted to a particular closing, layoff or disaster

1. potential for averting the layoff in consultation with state or local economic development agencies
2. background and probable assistance needs of the affected workers
3. reemployment prospects for workers in the local community; including:
4. Job Fairs, resource fairs, and outplacements activities targeted to impacted employees of a specific
5. available resources to meet the short and long-term needs of the affected workers

The provision of information and access to unemployment compensation benefits,

1. comprehensive One-Stop system services, and
2. employment and training activities, including information on Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

The provision of guidance and/or financial assistance in establishing a labor- management committee including provision of training and technical assistance to committee members in their role and mission

1. funding the operation cost of the committee to provide advice and assistance in carrying out rapid response activities and in the design and delivery of WIOA authorized services to affected workers. (typically, no longer than six months)
2. providing a list of potential candidates to serve as a neutral committee chair

After adequate funding has been reserved for required rapid response and rapid response enhancement activities, any remaining funds are used for allowable Rapid Response Additional Assistance (RRAA) activities.

Allowable RRAA activities are limited to provision of direct services (e.g., intensive and training) to individuals affected by natural disasters, workplace closings, mass layoffs or other dislocation events.

A local area must demonstrate:

1. increased numbers of unemployed individuals attributable to a specific dislocation event or events, and
2. insufficient local funds to provide direct services to the identified dislocated workers

State Rapid Response Coordinator responsibilities include the following: o Provide overall grant management of the Rapid Response program;

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    - Serve as the central point of communication for local government officials, FEMA in cases of natural disaster and the Local Rapid Response Coordinator;
    - Provide training and technical assistance to the local areas;
    - Develop prospective strategies for addressing dislocation events that ensure rapid access to the broad range of allowable assistance in conjunction with other appropriate federal, state and local service

o agencies and officials, employer associations, technical or other business councils and labor organizations;

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    - Compile information and distribute it to the **KANSAS**WORKS State Board, the USDOL, and others as needed;
    - Coordinate outreach efforts regarding Rapid Response;
    - Establish and maintain dislocated worker and Rapid Response information on the Department of Commerce and kansasworks.com websites;
    - Monitor participation in all planned activities to ensure appropriate and meaningful activities and programs are being provided;
    - Develop and maintain communication and coordination with the local boards chief elected officials (CEOs), business retention and recruitment organizations, economic development agencies, employer associations, business councils, labor organizations, federal agents such as FEMA personnel and technical councils to ensure all employer needs are met, including those related to Rapid Response.

The State Rapid Response Coordinator may develop additional activities to provide effective Rapid Response services upon notification of a permanent closure, layoff or natural disaster resulting in a mass job dislocation. These services may include the following:

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    - Assistance to local communities, local boards, and CEOs to develop a coordinated response to dislocation events, and, as needed, obtain access to state economic development assistance.

Such coordinated response may include the development of an application for National Emergency Grants for discretionary funds;

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- Linkages with appropriate agencies including FEMA, employer associations, local boards, business councils, and labor organizations for developing a strategy to serve impacted employees and to provide emergency assistance adapted to the particular closing, layoff or natural disaster.

Employer Contact

The State or Local Rapid Response Coordinator makes immediate contact with the employer to determine the layoff plans and to schedule informational meetings for the affected workers. The goal is to hold pre-layoff meetings at the work-site; however, the details are determined based on the employer's needs and desires. Every effort is made to best accommodate the employer and promote attendance. Post-layoff informational meetings may also be arranged and held, if necessary.

Union Contact

When the affected workers are organized under a union, the Local Rapid Response Coordinator notifies the local or regional union office of the time, date and location of the pre-layoff informational meeting so the union may promote the meeting to its members. If meetings cannot be held at the work site, the union hall may be a suitable alternative.

The order of preference for meeting location is first, the work site; second, the union facility; and third, another location approved by labor and management.

Other

If the employer has already closed the plant, isn't responding to our contact or if there is no Union involvement, there are several different avenues we will try in notifying the workers. RR will provide outreach through print ads or radio ads in the area of lay-off and collaborate with KDOL to send out information regarding meetings.

E. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE PROVIDES EARLY INTERVENTION (E.G., RAPID RESPONSE) AND ENSURES THE PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE CAREER SERVICES TO WORKER GROUPS ON WHOSE BEHALF A TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA) PETITION HAS BEEN FILED. (SECTION 134(A)(2)(A) AND TAA SECTION 221(A)(2)(A) .) THIS DESCRIPTION MUST INCLUDE HOW THE STATE DISSEMINATES BENEFIT INFORMATION TO PROVIDE WORKERS IN THE GROUPS IDENTIFIED IN THE TAA PETITIONS WITH AN ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROVISION OF TAA BENEFITS AND SERVICES IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY ARE TRANSPARENT TO THE DISLOCATED WORKER APPLYING FOR THEM (TRADE ACT SEC. 221(A)(2)(A) AND SEC. 225; GOVERNOR-SECRETARY AGREEMENT). DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE FUNDS THAT HAVE BEEN RESERVED FOR RAPID RESPONSE TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR EVERY WORKER GROUP THAT FILES A TAA PETITION AND HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THE PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE CAREER SERVICE TO WORKERS IN THE GROUPS IDENTIFIED IN THE PETITION (TAA SEC. 221(A)(2)(A)).NOTE: UNTIL THE TAA PROGRAM IS REAUTHORIZED, THE REQUIREMENTS TO PROVIDE RAPID RESPONSE AND APPROPRIATE CAREER SERVICES TO WORKER GROUPS ON WHOSE BEHALF A PETITION HAS BEEN FILED IS NOT APPLICABLE.

The Rapid Response Team coordinates informational meetings for individuals affected by a trade-related job loss to provide TAA benefit and service information. It is evident many workers facing layoff are not always able to understand all of the information they are provided during this stressful time. Trade Adjustment Assistance Rapid Response Activities:

Partnerships: Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs continue to be delivered through partnerships between Commerce, WIOA Core and Required partner programs as well as other

workforce system partners, to provide seamless services to customers. All staff members approving TAA benefits are merit staff.

Outreach: Since TAA has not been reauthorized, there is very limited funding for any outreach activities. As laid-off workers come into the workforce centers, laid-off workers are notified about TAA services if applicable.

State Department of Labor (UI): If a customer contacts the Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL)/Unemployment Insurance Call Center to file an unemployment insurance claim, the customer will be instructed to go to the nearest workforce center to make an application for TAA benefits if they have been laid off by a company having a certified TAA petition. There is a very close working relationship with KDOL/Trade Adjustment Allowances (TRA) staff, including constant communication regarding TAA customers for almost every aspect of the program.

Service Delivery and Compliance: Where possible, with limited TAA staff, TAA services are delivered at the Workforce Centers; therefore, the One-Stop delivery system serves as an important avenue for linking TAA with its WIOA Core and Required partners, as well as other partners, in the area affected.

Workforce center staff work with the customer to ensure registration in kansasworks.com, which is another element supporting the development of strong linkages between the TAA program and other workforce development partners. Once a customer is deemed TAA eligible, they will complete the Application for Trade Act Benefits form with a TAA-trained staff person will complete an initial assessment. During the Initial Assessment, TAA-trained staff reviews the availability of employment and case management services as some services may not be relevant/provided until later in their enrollment. Services are identified during their initial employment plan and customers will be offered the eight seven required employment and case management services. It is during these interactions with trade-affected workers in the groups identified in the TAA petitions that TAA customers are given an accurate understanding of the provision of TAA benefits and services.

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

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

WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker services are provided to improve the skills of Kansas workers and result in employment for participants. Through workforce centers and the well-established One-Stop system, local workforce investment boards and their partner agencies provide training which emphasizes the use of work-based learning, e.g. OJT, internships, customized training, etc. for eligible jobseekers and workers. It is required that training be designed for current skill/knowledge demands of the local job market and may often include traditional classroom training. Models used include on-the-job training during which a participant is employed by an employer, learns skills on the job and earns wages while working. This popular strategy provides the participant an opportunity to make sure the job is a good fit, that the skills can be attained and that the learning process is supported by the workforce system, including case management and supportive services. The employer's risk is mitigated by the investment made by the workforce system in reimbursing the employer a portion of the

participant's salary during the training period. This also allows the employer to assure the participant is a good fit and is able to learn the necessary skills.

Paid internships provide much the same benefits to participants and employers, although the employer of record may be a Local Workforce Development Board, a postsecondary education institution or an outside party. Other shorter-term work-based training such as boot camps and unpaid internships are most useful to the participant to assist with deciding their career path and with learning basic workplace skills (soft skills.) High quality training for both the participant and the employer is assured through the requirements of the workforce system: each LWDB OJT or other work- based training program plan must include an individualized training plan that specifies the roles of the participant, the employer and the case manager. The plan also details any supportive services the participant needs to successfully complete training. This support and engagement of a workforce professional reassures the participant as training progresses. Employers are also held accountable through the work-based training model because the workforce professional visits the work site, advocates for the participant, monitors the participant's progress and requires the employer to document the skills achieved by the participant or any performance/soft skills issues displayed by the participant. **KANSAS**WORKS intends to provide intensive training in OJT/Work-based Learning to WIOA and partner staff during the first two years of this plan period.

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

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

As stated in a previous section of this plan, Governor Kelly established the Office of Apprenticeship and Internships in the Department of Commerce which will continue to actively develop additional work-based learning models during this state plan period. Registered Apprenticeship is an employer-driven, "Earn while you Learn" model that combines on-the-job learning with related technical instruction that increases an apprentice's skill level and wages, designed to move an apprentice from a low or no skill entry-level position to full occupational proficiency. RA produces an immediate job. It is a flexible training system that can be customized to meet the needs of every business. Upon completion of a Registered Apprenticeship program, participants receive an industry issued, nationally recognized credential that certifies occupational proficiency. Kansas integrates Registered Apprenticeship (RA) with the Local WIOA Core partners' staffing structures, Veterans Program staff, and continues to train AJC front line and business services staff in the rules, regulations and service delivery requirements of RA.

Sponsors will work with RA program staff to design and execute registered apprenticeship programs, overseeing training development, providing hands-on learning and technical instruction for apprentices. The related technical instruction may be provided through community or technical colleges, correspondence, online, distance learning, contract vendors and/or apprenticeship training centers. RA in Kansas partners with Kansas Department of Education, building Youth Pre-Apprenticeship opportunities within the state. Youth Pre-Apprenticeship is a work-based learning opportunity that will give students both academic and workplace skills that can lead to post-secondary education opportunities and careers. Youth Pre-Apprentices will receive paid on-the-job training along with job-related technical instruction that also supports meeting high school graduations requirements.

During this state plan period, additional expansion of RA is planned both internally and outside of Commerce. First, Commerce has recently added the Workforce Center Supervisor RA to its already successful Career Services Specialist RA in which nearly 80 Apprentices have gained

valuable skills and received incremental wage increases. Finally, in March 2024, the RESEA RA will begin with 5 staff enrolled in the first cohort of the 2-year program.

Outside of Commerce, RA has been established in the State Department of Education to train paraeducators to become certified teachers. The project will continue through the period of this state plan. Multiple other RA concepts, including use and development of Intermediaries, RA Equity and state funding and taxation support can be reviewed in the RA Annual Report here: https://ksapprenticeship.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/2023-Apprenticeship-Report.pdf

3. TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

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

The **KANSAS**WORKS State Board revised Eligible Training Provider policy on May 6, 2020; a summary and description of the current policy is provided below.

Training Provider Eligibility is established by State Policy and can be found at https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/56/policies/2518/5-04-00-etpl-policy-5-1-24.pdf and is described below. Kansas utilizes performance information from training providers and the Kansas Board of Regents' Kansas Training Information Program Report (K-TIP) as the basis for approving traditional postsecondary education providers. The report includes performance information by institution and academic program.

Registered Apprenticeship program providers are automatically eligible to be included on the Kansas Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) unless they opt out. The Kansas Department of Commerce (Commerce) is the state agency responsible for carrying out the determinations, enforcement actions, and other duties related to the establishment and maintenance of the state's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). To maximize customer choice and assure all significant population groups are served, the eligible provider process shall be administered in a manner to assure significant numbers of competent providers offering a wide variety of training programs and occupational choices are available to customers.

Application for inclusion on the Kansas ETPL is open to providers of training services

(1) at a physical location within the State of Kansas, or

(2) by virtual learning conveyance.

Providers of training services delivered at a physical location in neighboring (border) communities that are accessible within normal and reasonable commuting distance to participants from Kansas shall be included on their respective State's Training and will be placed on the Kansas ETPL at the recommendation of a Kansas Local Board. Out-of-State and Private providers of training service(s), which has a physical presence within the state of Kansas or which solicits business within the state of Kansas and offers a course or courses of instruction or study through classroom contact or by distance education, or both, for the purpose of training or preparing persons for a field of endeavor in a business, trade, technical or industrial occupation or which offers a course or courses leading to an academic degree, must obtain and maintain a Certificate of Approval from the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) prior to application as an eligible training provider.

Exceptions are for Registered Apprenticeship programs and short-term training which meets a defined set of employable skills criteria established by a local board in consultation with local business to meet the specific needs of a defined employer or industry. The K-TIP report includes data for all approved postsecondary career technical education programs offered by technical colleges, community colleges, the Washburn University Institute of Technology, and the Wichita State University Campus of Applied Sciences and Technology.

The State ETPL is managed electronically through kansasworks.com. New providers are encouraged to apply at least 60 days in advance of initial program offerings. Initial eligibility expires on the end of each full federal fiscal year (September 30) after initial eligibility has been approved.

The Kansas Training Information Program (K-TIP) Career Technical Education report provides substantially similar performance information to the required performance information for 'all students' in applications for initial and subsequent eligibility. All approved postsecondary career technical education programs offered by technical colleges, community colleges, including the Washburn University Institute of Technology and the Wichita State University Campus of Applied Sciences and Technology must submit, annually and no later than October 1 of each year, such information as KBOR may require for the production of the K- TIP report. Performance data from the K-TIP report, when available, shall constitute reporting of performance for 'all students' in determinations of subsequent eligibility and may be used, when available, for determinations of initial eligibility. This report is accessible to local workforce development boards (local boards) at https://submission.kansasregents.org/ibi_apps/portal/BIP_Public2/KTIP

Each local board has cost-effective access to real-time performance information for WIOA participants within kansasworks.com. For subsequent eligibility providers may request WIOA participant performance information from the local board when such information is required. Local board accessible performance information for participants includes:

1. WIOA Number Participated;
2. WIOA Number Exited (includes students who completed, withdrew or transferred out of the program);
3. WIOA Number Completed;
4. WIOA Number Employed in 2nd Quarter After Exit;
5. WIOA Number Employed in 4th Quarter After Exit;
6. WIOA Number Who Attained Credentials;
7. WIOA Median Earnings in 2nd Quarter After Exit;

Programs registered by the National Apprenticeship Act (NAA) are automatically eligible to be included on the State ETPL. Registered Apprenticeship programs are notified of their eligibility and given the option to be listed on the State ETPL.

Local workforce investment boards must follow Federal and State guidelines when determining eligibility of programs.

Having successfully completed initial eligibility, continued eligibility is reviewed biannually.

Local boards may require a higher level of performance for local programs than the levels established by the State Board for continued eligibility of providers. Should local boards require additional verifiable information, the board shall specify additional content, or an alternative manner of reporting for providers: Access to cost-effective methods for collection and reporting of the information must be provided; Procedures by which providers can demonstrate the collection/reporting of additional information/processes imposes extraordinary costs on the provider must be established in local policy.

The minimum levels of program performance for "all students" is set as follows:

Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit:	64%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit:	62%
Median Earning 2nd Quarter After Exit:	$5,752
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarter After Exit:	54%

There are no minimum levels of performance for Number Participated, Number Exited, Number Completed, Average Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit, and Average Earnings 4th Quarter After Exit.

The minimum levels of program performance for "WIOA students" is set as follows:

Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit: 80%

Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit:	78%
Median Earning 2nd Quarter After Exit:	$7,155
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarter After Exit:	68%

There are no minimum levels of performance for WIOA Number Participated, WIOA Number Exited, and WIOA Number Completed.

When evaluating program performance for continued eligibility, local boards should take into account the cohort size that is reported. Programs should not be denied based solely on the low performance of a small cohort size.

Although not an absolute prerequisite for approval, of, consideration must be given to the degree to which a provider's training programs relate to in-demand industries and occupations within the State. Kansas Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services conducts studies of private sector industries and their respective job growth. The short-term industries projection database is accessible at https://klic.dol.ks.gov/vosnet/analyzer/resultsNew.aspx?session=shrtproj&plang=E&pu=1&plang=E Those industries exhibiting growth are generally considered to be in-demand industries. A list of high demand occupations in Kansas is available from the Kansas Labor Information

Center:
https://app.powerbigov.us/view?r=eyJrIjoiYmQ0ZDRhODItOWYxZi00NzE3LWI4YTQtYzg2MzUzYWI1OTE0IiwidCI6ImRjYWU4MTAxLWM5MmQtNDgwYy1iYzQzLWM2NzYxY2NjY2M1YSJ9

Local Boards may expand the industries and occupations in-demand based on locally available Labor Market intelligence. Industry sectors and occupations not identified by the State or Local Board should be considered on a case case-by-case basis, when appropriate, to best meet the specific needs of an individual customer or group of customers.

Eligibility for entities that carry out programs under the National Apprenticeship Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as Registered Apprenticeship) is exempt from initial eligibility procedures.

4. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR FOR THE ADULT PRIORITY OF SERVICE REQUIREMENT IN WIOA SECTION 134 (C)(3)(E) THAT REQUIRES AMERICAN JOB CENTER STAFF, WHEN USING WIOA ADULT PROGRAM FUNDS TO PROVIDE INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES AND TRAINING SERVICES, TO GIVE PRIORITY OF SERVICE TO RECIPIENTS OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT (INCLUDING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS).

State Board policy establishes requirements for Local Areas to implement priority for those characteristics described in WIOA sec. 134 as described in Guidance Letter 16-04: https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/17/wioa-guidance-letters/2007/gl-16-04-priority-of-service.pdf and the WIOA Eligibility Determination Policy 5-05-00: https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/56/policies/1930/5-05-00-wioa-eligibility-determination.pdf

Priority for Receipt of Individualized Career Services

- Priority access to individualized career services funded with Title I adult funds must be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skill deficient. Priority access must be given regardless of whether funding is limited in the local area.
- Please refer to State Guidance Letter 16-04, et. seq., Priority of Service under WIOA for further guidance.
- Follow-up Services are available, as appropriate, to former Adult or Dislocated Worker participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment or have otherwise exited. There is no required minimum number of services or "sequence of service" for receipt of Career Services. Career services are to be provided, as appropriate, according to individual customer need.

Priority for Receipt of Training Services:

- Priority access to training services funded with Title I adult funds must be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skill deficient.
- Priority must be given regardless of whether funding is limited in the local area. Please refer to State Guidance Letter 16-04, et. seq., Priority of Service under WIOA for further guidance.

- There is no required minimum number of prior Career Services or "sequence of service" for receipt of Training Services. All services are to be provided, as appropriate, according to individual customer need.

Kansas will meet ETA's vision to give priority of service to these individuals by ensuring that at least 75 percent of Kansas participants receiving individualized career and training services in the Adult program are from at least one of the priority groups mentioned above and expects this rate will be no lower than 50.1 percent.

Statutory Priority for Adult Funds

Section 134(c)(3)(E) of WIOA establishes a priority requirement with respect to funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities. When using WIOA Adult funds to provide individualized career services, training services, or both, must give priority to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Section 3(36) of WIOA defines a low-income individual as one who

1. receives, or in the past 6 months has received, or is a member of a family that is receiving or in the supplemental nutrition assistance program, the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families program, or the supplemental security income program;
2. is in a family with total family income that does not exceed the higher of the poverty line or 70 percent (70%) of the lower living standard income level;
3. is a homeless individual;
4. receives or is eligible to receive a free or reduced priced lunch;
5. is a foster child on behalf of whom State or local government payments are made;
6. is an individual with a disability whose own income meets the income requirement listed in clause ii, but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet this requirement.

Under WIOA, priority must be implemented regardless of the amount of funds available to provide services in the local area. The priority is to be applied for the provision of Adult individualized career services and training services. There are no restrictions to providing basic career services which may be provided to any eligible adult. This does not mean that only individuals with barriers to employment can be served.

LWDBs must develop policies and procedures to ensure that the priority system under WIOA is implemented.

Local Policy Considerations

Local Boards must establish criteria by which the one-stop center will apply the priority of service. Such criteria may include:

a. Availability of other funds for providing services

b. Needs of specific groups in the local area

c. Other appropriate factors

The Local Board may establish a process that also (additionally) gives priority to other eligible individuals, so long as that process remains consistent with Sec. 134 and Veteran priorities.

Priority must be provided in the following order:

- First, to veterans and eligible spouses who are also included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA Adult formula funding. This means that veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low- income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient would receive first priority for services with WIOA Adult formula funds for individualized career services and training services.
- Second, to non-covered persons (that is, individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA adult formula funds.
- Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups.
- Fourth, priority populations established by the Governor and/or Local WDB.
- Last, to non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA.

Policies/Processes that provide service to other eligible individuals while remaining consistent with prevailing statute and regulations could include:

1. Flexibility to serve other individuals when required priority individuals have been served, are not available or are not appropriate to receive a specific service (e.g. OJT, customized training) 2. Service to other eligible individuals does not impair the capacity to fully service required priority individuals (e.g., certain individual career services)

In developing Local Policies and Procedures implementing WIOA's priority of service, Local Boards are reminded:

1. Priority of service is NOT an eligibility factor or criteria to limit which individuals will receive service

2. Although priority for Adult individualized career and training services must be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, individuals who are basic skills deficient, and eligible veterans; this does not necessarily mean individualized career services and/or training services may only be provided to such individuals.

3. Except for eligible Veterans, there is no priority of service requirement for 'basic' career services or for services funded using WIOA Youth or WIOA Dislocated Worker funding. Veterans receive priority in all DOL funded training programs. Low-income criterion applies to eligibility when specified in the Act as an eligibility factor for certain Youth participants.

4. Except where service to a specific population is authorized by statute (e.g. Sec. 166, Native Americans) it is unlawful under WIOA sec. 188(a)(2) to use demographic information to limit which individuals will receive services.

Local Boards are strongly discouraged from setting arbitrary percentages, numbers or quotas of public assistance recipients, low-income individuals, basic skills deficient, veterans, etc. to be served.

The Commerce Regulatory Compliance Unit monitors the implementation of this and the Veterans Priority of Service policies.

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

As described in Section 133 of WIOA, a local board may transfer, if such a transfer is approved by the Governor, up to and including 100 percent of the funds allocated to the local area for a fiscal

year between adult employment and training activities and dislocated worker employment and training activities. Local Areas must provide a Budget Modification Form and a Narrative describing the reason for the transfer, the benefits of the transfer in terms of improving/increasing services to eligible individuals and the specific activities resulting from

the transfer. The request is reviewed and approved by Commerce, the Governor's Designee. The

transfer approval is then routed to both the Local Area and the Commerce fiscal department. The fiscal department then modifies the master budget for the Local Area and begins tracking funds using the new transfer amounts.

6. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S POLICY ON WIOA AND TAA CO-ENROLLMENT AND WHETHER AND HOW OFTEN THIS POLICY IS DISSEMINATED TO THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS AND REQUIRED ONE-STOP PARTNERS. TRADE ACT SEC. 239(F), SEC. 235, 20 CFR 618.325, 20 CFR 618.824(A)(3)(I).

Guidance Letter 22-2 specifies the requirements for co-enrollment of TAA-eligible participants in WIOA Dislocated Worker program: https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/17/wioa-guidance-letters/2017/gl-20-02-taa-co-enrollment-of-trade-impacted-workers-1-28-21.pdf

The Guidance Letter provides a description of 20 CFR Part 618 and the mandatory requirement for co-enrollment in 618.325 and strongly encourages enrollment in additional AJC partner programs as appropriate. The GL further describes Rapid Response activities, Intake requirements and eligibility documentation, assessments, reemployment planning and training. Finally, the GL provides instructions for initiating and completing an Appeals Process for aggrieved parties.

Local Workforce Development Boards have access to this GL on the KWSB website and as such does not receive a copy of this or any policy or guidance letter.

7. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S FORMAL STRATEGY TO ENSURE THAT WIOA AND TAA CO-ENROLLED PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE NECESSARY FUNDED BENEFITS AND SERVICES. TRADE ACT SEC. 239(F), SEC. 235, 20 CFR 618.816(C)

KANSASWORKS formal strategy for ensuring participants co-enrolled in TAA and WIOA once an Adversely Affected Worker (AAW) is approved for the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program, they are assigned to a TAA Case Manager. Within ten business days of the AAW applying for the TAA Program, Employment and Case Management Services are initiated. Employment and Case Management Services begin with an Initial Assessment to determine the best service strategy to assist the AAW in obtaining reemployment. Additional Employment and Case Management Services will be reviewed at an initial meeting between the TAA Case Manager and the AAW including; comprehensive and specialized assessment of skill levels and service needs, information on how to apply for financial aid, short-term prevocational services, individual career counseling (including job search and placement counseling), provision of employment statistics information (LMI Data), information related to the availability of supportive services and the development of an individualized employment plan (IEP).

The AAW is then co-enrolled into WIOA as a Dislocated Worker, and the TAA Case Manager reviews the IEP with the WIOA Case Manager. Together, both case managers work to ensure the AAW receives the necessary benefits and services from both the TAA and WIOA programs that will lead to a positive employment outcome.

8. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PROCESS FOR FAMILIARIZING ONE-STOP STAFF WITH THE TAA PROGRAM. 20 CFR 618.804(J), 20 CFR 618.305

KANSASWORKS will continue to familiarize one-stop staff with the TAA program

State TAA Program staff has conducted a series of trainings for each local area, so WIOA Dislocated Worker staff understand the benefits of co-enrollment. Each local area has worked with TAA staff to develop a process for co-enrollments. State TAA staff regularly attends staff meetings to share TAA program information with one-stop staff and to give updates on the TAA program.

C. YOUTH PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.

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

1. IDENTIFY THE STATE-DEVELOPED CRITERIA TO BE USED BY LOCAL BOARDS IN AWARDING GRANTS OR CONTRACTS FOR YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AND DESCRIBE HOW THE LOCAL BOARDS WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ABILITY OF THE PROVIDERS TO MEET PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES BASED ON PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR THE YOUTH PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 116(B)(2)(A)(II) OF WIOA.[11] FURTHER, INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE STATE ASSISTS LOCAL AREAS IN DETERMINING WHETHER TO CONTRACT FOR SERVICES OR TO PROVIDE SOME OR ALL OF THE PROGRAM ELEMENTS DIRECTLY.

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

KANSASWORKS Guidance Letter 08-02 describes requirements used by Local Boards when awarding youth activities: https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/17/wioa-guidance-letters/2006/gl-18-02-youthprogramprocurement-2-14-18.pdf

In awarding grants/contracts/awards for Youth services, Local Boards must:

- Competitively procure Youth services, except as provided for in §681.400(a) and §681(b)(4)
- §681.440(a) allows the LWDB to directly provide some or all youth services
- §681.44(b)(4) allows for sole-source procurement when there is an insufficient number of youth providers in a local area.
- Assure all fourteen (14) youth services are available in the local area
- Award contracts (or otherwise provide services as allowed) in such a manner as to have a reasonable assurance a minimum of 50% (per attached granted Waiver) of the Local Area funds will be spent for services to out-of-school youth
- Award contracts (or otherwise provide services as allowed) in such a manner as to have a reasonable assurance a minimum 20% of the Local Area funds are spent for work-based learning activities to both out-of-school and in-school youth.
- Hold service providers (contracted and/or direct) accountable for meeting the Local Area's negotiated performance measure.

In selecting providers of WIOA Youth services, Local boards must take into consideration:

- The proposed providers experience provided substantially similar services to substantially similar Youth populations

- The proposed provider's established linkages to (and significant work with) key partners; such as local education, social services, court services, housing authority, homeless shelters, etc.
- The proposed providers experience of successful performance, particularly performance that aligns with or matches WIA/WIOA performance measures.

Local Boards are strongly encouraged to formally incorporate these considerations with existing and locally developed evaluation criteria. This would most commonly be demonstrated on proposal evaluation (e.g., evaluators ranking or score card). This guidance includes minimum additional considerations in the selection and awarding contract for Youth services. This does not mean typical procurement guidance, policies, considerations, processes, etc. applicable to all procurements are not applicable to youth. Local Boards may add additional reasonable criteria in their respective local policies and procedures.

2. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE ASSISTS LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS IN ACHIEVING EQUITABLE RESULTS FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL AND IN-SCHOOL YOUTH. DESCRIBE PROMISING PRACTICES OR PARTNERSHIP MODELS THAT LOCAL AREAS ARE IMPLEMENTING AND THE STATE'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING AND SCALING THOSE MODELS WITHIN THE STATE FOR BOTH IN-SCHOOL AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH.

The state Technical Assistance Manager assists the local workforce development boards in achieving equitable results for both in-school and out-of-school youth through regularly scheduled meetings with local Youth leadership. During these sessions the TA Manager shares promising practices and invites input from Board staff, provider staff and guests from other states. *Youth promising practice: One local area has greatly improved the area partnership with Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) – Kansas. This has led to higher youth enrollments, more in-school youth being served, and better outcomes for the in-school youth population. As the local area has shared this promising practice, it has encouraged other local areas to do the same.*

3. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE ASSISTS LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS IN IMPLEMENTING INNOVATIVE MODELS FOR DELIVERING YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING EFFECTIVE WAYS LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS CAN MAKE AVAILABLE THE 14 PROGRAM ELEMENTS DESCRIBED IN WIOA SECTION 129(C)(2); AND EXPLAIN HOW LOCAL AREAS CAN ENSURE WORK EXPERIENCE, INCLUDING QUALITY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP AND REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP, IS PRIORITIZED AS A KEY ELEMENT WITHIN A BROADER CAREER PATHWAYS STRATEGY.

The state requires the LWDBs to detail how each of the 14 elements will be provided in the Local Area Plan. Each Local Area Plan must include MOUs or Contracts which describe what entity will provide which elements. The state workforce agency reviews each of these plans and determines if the Local Area has sufficiently planned to provide all 14 elements. If a Local Area does not provide needed plans and documentation, the state agency will require a plan modification and may require further corrective action. Once the Local Area Plan has been reviewed and approved, and sufficient evidence of planning and procurement of each of the 14 elements has been documented and approved, the Regulatory Compliance unit of the Commerce Legal Division will regularly monitor each Local Area to document its adherence to its plan and the outcomes of those strategies for providing all required elements. Additionally, the KWSB and state staff will review performance and other data to measure the effectiveness of the 14 elements and require corrective action if the service delivery is not available and effective. Commerce intends to apply for a waiver of the requirement for local areas to provide all 14 youth program elements.

The Office of Registered Apprenticeship is actively involved in developing and promoting quality Youth pre-apprenticeship programs and is recognized as key element within broader career pathways. The Kansas Youth Apprenticeship Collaborative (KYAC) will continue to participate in the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Policy Academy to Advance Youth Apprenticeship. This work is new and will act as the catalyst for prioritization and future assistance for Local Workforce Development Boards and K-12 to implement quality apprenticeship programs for Youth.

4. PROVIDE THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE STATE POLICY FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO ENTER OR COMPLETE AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(III)(VIII) AND FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO COMPLETE AN EDUCATION PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR IN-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(IV)(VII). IF THE STATE DOES NOT HAVE A POLICY, DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT LOCAL AREAS WILL HAVE A POLICY FOR THESE CRITERIA.

Language contained in the WIOA Eligibility Determination policy addresses criteria for ISY and OSY specified in WIOA Sec. 129:
https://ksworksstateboard.org/download/56/policies/1930/5-05-00-wioa-eligibility-determination.pdf

Youth Eligibility

In-School Youth (ISY)

An In-School Youth (ISY) must not be younger than 14 or (unless an individual with a disability attending school under state law) older than 21 years of age on the date of registration AND (except as provided in the Youth Eligibility Exception) be low-income; AND exhibit at least one of the following barriers:

1. Basic skills deficient

2. English language learner

3. Offender

4. Homeless individual, homeless child or youth, runaway, either in or aged out of the foster care system, eligible for assistance under section 477 of the Social Security Act , or in an out-of-home placement

5. Pregnant or a parenting

6. individual with a disability

7. Requires additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure and hold employment *

**Note re: "requires additional assistance": For ISY enrollment ONLY – when "requires additional assistance is the only barrier documented for an ISY eligibility, not more than five percent (5%) of the ISY assisted in the local area may be eligible based solely on this criterion.*

Out-of-School Youth (OSY)

An Out-of-School Youth (OSY) must not be younger than 16 or older than 24 years of age on the date of registration AND not attending any school (as defined under state law); AND exhibit at least one of the following characteristics:

1. A school dropout

2. A youth who is within the age of compulsory attendance, but has not attended any school* for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter based on the local school district's definition of school year quarters

3. A recipient of a secondary diploma or its recognized equivalent who is a low-income individual AND, either:

a. Basic skills deficient i. OR

b. An English language learner

4. An individual subject to the juvenile or adult justice system

5. A homeless individual, homeless child or youth, runaway, either in or aged out of the foster care system, eligible for assistance under section 477 of the Social Security Act, or in an out-of-home placement

6. An individual who is pregnant or parenting

7. An individual with a disability

1.

    a. A low-income individual who requires additional assistance to:

a. enter an education program, OR

b. complete an education program, OR

c. secure employment, OR

d. hold employment

**Note re: school. The term "school" refers to both, secondary and post-secondary schools. However, the U.S. Department of Labor does not consider providers of Adult Education under Title II of WIOA, YouthBuild programs or Job Corps programs to be "schools". Youth attending Adult Education provided under Title II of WIOA, YouhBuild, or Job Corps may be considered OSY for purposes of WIOA youth program eligibility.*

Youth Eligibility Exception

Up to five percent (5%) of youth participants served by youth programs in a local area may be individuals who do not meet the income criterion for eligible youth, provided they meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Basic skills deficient

2. Homeless

3. Offender

4. One or more grade levels below the grade level appropriate to the individual's age

5. Pregnant or parenting

6. Has a disability (which may be a learning disability)

7. Runaway

8. School dropout

9. Other additional barriers as defined by the local board.

Local Boards are encouraged to consider additional characteristics when developing local policy.

Youth who require additional assistance to Enter or Complete and Educational Program:

DROP- OUT: Previously dropped out of an educational program, or is attending secondary school but has previously dropped-out

ATTENDANCE: Has poor attendance patterns as defined by the local School District or education provider during the last twelve (12) calendar months, or Has poor attendance patterns in an educational program during the last 12 calendar months (defined as missing 20 or more days of middle school or high school; excused or unexcused), or has been deemed truant or exhibited a pattern of truancy during the current school year

GRADES: Has below average grades (defined as having a GPA below a 2.0 on a 4-point scale, or its equivalent) or is one or more grade levels below the grade level considered appropriate for the individual's age DISABILITY/IEP: Has a learning/physical/mental disability. Disability refers to:

(1) A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual; or

(2) A record of such an impairment; or

(3) Being regarded as having such an impairment.

"Major life activities" means functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. Supporting documentation must indicate that the customer has a disability at time of enrollment; has an open/active Individual Education Plan (IEP) with a local Unified School District due to a disability that impedes academic functioning

AT RISK: Lacks sufficient credits to graduate from secondary school with similarly situated student peers, or is currently attending an alternative school, or has attended an alternative school during the current school year

Other – As defined in the Local Plan

Secure or Hold Employment may be characterized by:

WORK HISTORY: Has never worked (no work history); or Has not worked for the same employer for longer than twelve (12) consecutive weeks in the eighteen months (18) prior to WIOA eligibility determination, or has been fired from a job in the last six (6) calendar months,

GOALS: Has no vocational/employment goal

TRAINING: Does not have any specific occupational training

DISABILITY: Has a learning/physical/mental disability. Disability refers:

(1) A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual; or

(2) A record of such an impairment; or

(3) Being regarded as having such an impairment.

"Major life activities" means functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. Supporting documentation must indicate that the customer has a disability at time of enrollment STABILITY: Has experienced the loss of a primary caregiver due to death, incarceration or extended military service within the past 24 months.

Other – as defined in the Local Plan

D. SINGLE-AREA STATE REQUIREMENTS

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

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

Kansas is not a Single-area State.

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

NA

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

NA

6. HOW TRAINING SERVICES OUTLINED IN SECTION 134 WILL BE PROVIDED THROUGH INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS AND/OR THROUGH CONTRACTS, AND HOW SUCH TRAINING APPROACHES WILL BE COORDINATED. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MEET INFORMED CUSTOMER CHOICE REQUIREMENTS REGARDLESS OF TRAINING APPROACH.

NA

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

NA

8. COPIES OF EXECUTED COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WHICH DEFINE HOW ALL LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL CARRY OUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR INTEGRATION OF AND ACCESS TO THE ENTIRE SET OF SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM, INCLUDING COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH ENTITIES ADMINISTERING REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

NA

E. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

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

1. IDENTIFIES THE STATUTORY OR REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR WHICH A WAIVER IS REQUESTED AND THE GOALS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, INTENDS TO ACHIEVE AS A RESULT OF THE WAIVER AND HOW THOSE GOALS RELATE TO THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

2. DESCRIBES THE ACTIONS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, HAS UNDERTAKEN TO REMOVE STATE OR LOCAL STATUTORY OR REGULATORY BARRIERS;

3. DESCRIBES THE GOALS OF THE WAIVER AND THE EXPECTED PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES IF THE REQUEST IS GRANTED;

4. DESCRIBES HOW THE WAIVER WILL ALIGN WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY PRIORITIES, SUCH AS:

A. SUPPORTING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT;

B. CONNECTING EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRATEGIES;

C. SUPPORTING WORK-BASED LEARNING;

D. IMPROVING JOB AND CAREER RESULTS, AND

E. OTHER GUIDANCE ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

5. DESCRIBES THE INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER, INCLUDING HOW THE WAIVER WILL IMPACT SERVICES FOR DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS WITH MULTIPLE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT; AND

6. DESCRIBES THE PROCESSES USED TO:

A. MONITOR THE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE WAIVER;

B. PROVIDE NOTICE TO ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER;

C. PROVIDE ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE REQUEST;

D. ENSURE MEANINGFUL PUBLIC COMMENT, INCLUDING COMMENT BY BUSINESS AND ORGANIZED LABOR, ON THE WAIVER.

E. COLLECT AND REPORT INFORMATION ABOUT WAIVER OUTCOMES IN THE STATE'S WIOA ANNUAL REPORT.

7. THE MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE REGARDING THE RESULTS AND OUTCOMES OBSERVED THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EXISTING WAIVER, IN CASES WHERE THE STATE SEEKS RENEWAL OF A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WAIVER.

Kansas requests the continuation of current Youth Waiver:

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Waiver Request

Original Date: August 18, 2023

State: Kansas

Agency: Department of Commerce

The statutory and/or regulatory requirements the state would like to waive

Kansas is requesting a continuation of the waiver of the requirement that the State expend 75 percent of Governor's reserve youth funds on OSY and the requirement that local areas expend 75 percent of local youth formula funds on OSY. Kansas requests to continue to lower the local youth funds expenditure requirement to 50 percent for OSY.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Section 129(a)(4)(A) and the corresponding regulations at 20 CFR 681.410 requires that at least 75 percent of WIOA youth funds be spent on "out-of-school youth" is what Kansas would like a continuous waiver from.

Actions the state has undertaken to remove state or local barriers

Kansas had previously asked for this waiver, and it was approved by the Department of Labor for PY 2024 and PY 2025. Currently no other State or local statutory or regulatory barriers exist that would prevent the implementation of this waiver.

A description of the state's strategic goal(s)

There are 4 main goals for the State's 2024-2026 strategic plan:

- Enhanced and improved workforce service delivery to disadvantaged youth
- Increased workforce system and reentry partner capacity to serve justice-involved individuals and other reentry community stakeholders
- Increased business and community awareness of, engagement with, and utilization of the workforce system
- Increased and sustained State Board member engagement and workforce system leadership

This waiver would help with the goal of improving service delivery to disadvantaged youth. Many of those disadvantaged youth are in-school and Kansas would be able to serve more in-school youth with this waiver.

Quantifiable projected programmatic outcomes resulting from implementation of the waiver

As a result of this waiver, Kansas served 626 Youth during PY 2024 – an increase over the 581 Youth that Kansas served in PY 2023.

Likewise, Kansas served 108 in-school youth during PY 2024 – also an increase over the 100 in-school youth Kansas served in PY 2023.

Performance accountability outcomes for overall WIOA Youth have remained steady or had a slight decline for WIOA Youth performance indicators:

Kansas Youth Performance Comparison			
Performance Indicator	PY 2023	PY 2024	
Youth Employment Q2	77.50%	73.90%	Decline
Youth Employment Q4	73.60%	73.80%	Steady
Median Earnings	$5,306	$4,265	Decline
Credential Rate	59.40%	53.60%	Decline
Measurable Skill Gains	61.20%	63.20%	Steady

The two performance measures that have seen a decline are the two measures that have the largest lag time in reporting. The reporting cohorts for both Youth Employment Q4 and Credential Attainment are looking at youth participants served from 1/1/2022 through 12/31/2022. Since our initial waiver request was approved on September 28, 2023, we would not expect this waiver to have an impact on Youth Employment Q4 and Credential Attainment as of yet.

Final PY 2025 Youth performance indicators are not yet available.

Individuals, groups, or populations benefiting, or otherwise impacted by the waiver from the waiver

The 14–18-year-olds that are in-school and in need of workforce services would benefit most from this waiver. By introducing more 14–18-year-olds to a quality work experience, this age group will be on a career pathway which will also benefit Kansas businesses, and help retain Kansas workers within the State, which is an economic development priority.

Concurrently, Kansas is requesting a waiver to provide in-school youth (ISY) with individual training accounts (ITA). Kansas has been working to clarify youth apprenticeship laws for hazardous occupations as well as develop policy around quality pre-apprenticeship programs. With the ability to spend WIOA Youth dollars on ITAs for in-school youth, Kansas would be better positioned to launch, promote and support new Registered Apprenticeship programs starting at 16 years of age as well as quality pre-apprenticeship programs, both in high wage and high demand occupations.

How the state plans to monitor waiver implementation, including collection of measurable waiver outcome information

Kansas will continue to monitor youth enrollments every quarter expecting to see increases from each local area. Likewise, Kansas will also monitor youth ages 14-18 who are being served and the number of work experiences that are provided each quarter, also expecting to see increases from each local area. Kansas will also monitor the other WIOA Youth program outcomes to ensure they are remaining steady or improving slightly.

Assurance of state posting of the request for public comment (including the dates that the state made the draft request available for public comment) and notification to affected local workforce development boards

This waiver request was posted to the Kansas Works State Board website during the dates of February 1, 2026, through March 2, 2026. Notices were also sent out to all three local areas in Kansas. There were no public comments received during this timeframe regarding this waiver request.

Kansas requests eight new Waivers as described below:

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Waiver Requests

Date: March 3, 2026

State: Kansas

Agency: Department of Commerce

The statutory and/or regulatory requirements the state would like to waive

Kansas is requesting a waiver of the requirements in WIOA Sec. 129 (a)(1)(B)(III) and (VIII) and at 20 CFR 681.210 (c)(3) and (c)(9). Kansas would like for Out-of-School Youth (OSY) who are either basic skills deficient, English language learners, or require additional assistance – not to have to also be low-income.

Actions the state has undertaken to remove state or local barriers

Kansas has not taken any actions to remove barriers and has only followed the WIOA law and corresponding regulations.

A description of the state's strategic goal(s)

There are 4 main goals for the State's 2024-2026 strategic plan:

- Enhanced and improved workforce service delivery to disadvantaged youth
- Increased workforce system and reentry partner capacity to serve justice-involved individuals and other reentry community stakeholders
- Increased business and community awareness of, engagement with, and utilization of the workforce system
- Increased and sustained State Board member engagement and workforce system leadership

This waiver would be in direct alignment with goal #1 listed above. If approved, this waiver would make it easier to serve disadvantaged youth who may or may not be low income but do have barriers to school or employment and would benefit from WIOA services.

Quantifiable projected programmatic outcomes resulting from implementation of the waiver

As a result of this waiver, Kansas would expect to see more OSY enrolled each year. Kansas will compare OSY enrollments before and after waiver implementation to see the impact. Kansas will also look at how many OSY were low-income in the years before and after waiver implementation as another projected impact on youth who are being served because of this waiver.

Individuals, groups, or populations benefiting, or otherwise impacted by the waiver from the waiver

The individuals directly benefiting from this waiver would be OSY. Specifically, those OSY who have barriers to school or employment and may or may not be necessarily low-income.

How the state plans to monitor waiver implementation, including collection of measurable waiver outcome information

Kansas will monitor OSY enrollments each year and expect to see yearly increases. Kansas will compare OSY enrollments before and after waiver implementation to fully see the impact.

Kansas will also monitor how many OSY were low-income in years before the waiver and compare that to after waiver implementation. While low-income participants may decrease, overall OSY enrollments should increase and will be monitored each year.

Assurance of state posting of the request for public comment (including the dates that the state made the draft request available for public comment) and notification to affected local workforce development boards

This waiver request was posted to the Kansas Works State Board website during the dates of February 1, 2026 through March 2, 2026. Notices were also sent out to all three local areas in Kansas. There were no public comments received during this timeframe regarding this waiver request.

Date: March 3, 2026

State: Kansas

Agency: Department of Commerce

The statutory and/or regulatory requirements the state would like to waive

Kansas is requesting a waiver of WIOA Section 121(e)(1) and the corresponding regulations at 20 CFR 678.300 (c) that requires each local area to maintain a comprehensive center (AJC).

Actions the state has undertaken to remove state or local barriers

Over the past 18 months, Kansas has consolidated down from 5 local areas in the state to 3 local areas. The State of Kansas has one comprehensive American Job Center (AJC) located in each local area along with 26 affiliate sites and 2 mobile workforce centers. As a large geographic state, Kansas has remote and rural workforce development areas. Having 2 mobile workforce centers allows for rural communities to be served that would otherwise have very limited access to needed workforce services and has been one strategy to offer more services in rural areas.

A description of the state's strategic goal(s)

There are 4 main goals for the State's 2024-2026 strategic plan:

- Enhanced and improved workforce service delivery to disadvantaged youth
- Increased workforce system and reentry partner capacity to serve justice-involved individuals and other reentry community stakeholders
- Increased business and community awareness of- engagement with, and utilization of the workforce system
- Increased and sustained State Board member engagement and workforce system leadership

This waiver would allow Kansas to expand on goal #3 listed above and increase the business and community awareness of the workforce system – especially in the remote and rural areas of the state.

Quantifiable projected programmatic outcomes resulting from implementation of the waiver

With this waiver, Kansas could have an estimated cost savings of $150,000. That would be more training funds for participants without splitting minimal WIOA funding that Kansas receives. If the average training program costs $4000, then the cost savings from this waiver alone could produce an extra 37 training slots for WIOA participants across the state.

Kansas would also like the flexibility to explore new AJC models, such as virtual AJCs and co-locating at locations like public libraries, community colleges, community centers, and chamber of commerce offices. Many of these locations could be free or very low cost in the rural communities of the state.

Partnerships and access to services would not be limited with this waiver. With any AJC model, Kansas would use technology to ensure that job seekers and businesses have the same access to services as in a traditional comprehensive or affiliate locations.

Program outcomes would be:

- An increase in WIOA participants served
- An increase in WIOA participants trained
- A cost savings in each local area

Individuals, groups, or populations benefiting, or otherwise impacted by the waiver from the waiver

All job seekers would benefit from this waiver – this would include WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, Wagner Peyser, Veterans and primarily job seekers located in rural areas of the state.

How the state plans to monitor waiver implementation, including collection of measurable waiver outcome information

Kansas would use the following metrics for monitoring the implementation of this waiver:

- An increase in WIOA participants served
- An increase in WIOA participants trained
- A cost savings in each local area

Kansas will look for increases in both WIOA participants and WIOA training participants. Kansas will also compare cost savings measures in each local area by looking at expenditures on facilities - comparing years after the approval of the waiver to the years before the waiver was in place.

Assurance of state posting of the request for public comment (including the dates that the state made the draft request available for public comment) and notification to affected local workforce development boards

This waiver request was posted to the Kansas Works State Board website during the dates of February 1, 2026 through March 2, 2026. Notices were also sent out to all three local areas in Kansas. There were no public comments received during this timeframe regarding this waiver request.

Date: March 3, 2026

State: Kansas

Agency: Department of Commerce

The statutory and/or regulatory requirements the state would like to waive
Kansas is requesting a waiver from WIOA Sec. 106 (a)(1) and (2) and 20 CFR 279.210. Kansas now only has three (3) local areas in the State, and it would make more sense to not have multiple planning regions. The State would have one stand-alone planning region comprised of all three local areas.

Actions the state has undertaken to remove state or local barriers
Over the past 18 months, the State of Kansas has consolidated down from five (5) local areas to three (3) local areas. There are many challenges during the consolidation of any local areas such as a combined Chief Elected Officials Board, combined Local Area Board members, revised MOUs, and new program reporting designations just to name a few. The State has tried to remove as many challenges as possible and streamline the process, but having only one planning region would help even further.

A description of the state's strategic goal(s)
There are 4 main goals for the State's 2024-2026 strategic plan:

- Enhanced and improved workforce service delivery to disadvantaged youth
- Increased workforce system and reentry partner capacity to serve justice-involved individuals and other reentry community stakeholders
- Increased business and community awareness of, engagement with, and utilization of the workforce system
- Increased and sustained State Board member engagement and workforce system leadership

A waiver from the requirements of planning regions would help Kansas to be able to focus on the efficiencies in each of the local areas and make improvements on each of the first 3 state goals, along with a renewed focus on training activities for state-wide high-demand occupations.

Quantifiable projected programmatic outcomes resulting from implementation of the waiver
Kansas hopes that without planning regions, there would be less overhead, less administration tasks and the state as a whole can focus efforts on training activities with WIOA funds. Our projected programmatic outcome would be to have each of the three local areas spend a minimum of 40% of their WIOA funds on training.

Individuals, groups, or populations benefiting, or otherwise impacted by the waiver from the waiver
All participants in WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs will benefit from this renewed focus on training activities. Individuals in all three programs will have more training opportunities that align with state-wide high-demand targeted occupations. Participants will then be able to obtain quality jobs and improve their overall quality of life.

How the state plans to monitor waiver implementation, including collection of measurable waiver outcome information
To monitor the outcome of this waiver, Kansas will track and evaluate the amount each of the three local areas are spending on training activities with their WIOA dollars. These evaluations will be done quarterly and discussed routinely at State Workforce Board meetings.

Assurance of state posting of the request for public comment (including the dates that the state made the draft request available for public comment) and notification to affected local workforce development boards
This waiver request was posted to the Kansas Works State Board website during the dates of February 1, 2026 through March 2, 2026. Notices were also sent out to all three local areas in

Kansas. There were no public comments received during this timeframe regarding this waiver request.

Date: March 3, 2026

State: Kansas

Agency: Department of Commerce

The statutory and/or regulatory requirements the state would like to waive
Kansas is requesting a waiver of the restriction in 20 CFR 681.550 to allow local areas to provide in-school youth (ISY) with individual training accounts (ITAs).

Actions the state has undertaken to remove state or local barriers
Kansas has requested a waiver from the requirement that states spend 75% of WIOA Youth funds on out-of-school youth. DOL has approved for Kansas to spend up to 50% of WIOA Youth funds on in-school youth. While this waiver helps, Kansas would be able to provide more training services to in-school youth should this waiver be approved.

In addition, Kansas has been working to clarify youth apprenticeship laws for hazardous occupations as well as develop policy around quality pre-apprenticeship programs. With the ability to spend WIOA Youth dollars on ITAs for in-school youth, Kansas would be better positioned to launch, promote and support new Registered Apprenticeship programs starting at 16 years of age as well as quality pre-apprenticeship programs, both in high wage and high demand occupations.

A description of the state's strategic goal(s)
There are 4 main goals for the State's 2024-2026 strategic plan:

- Enhanced and improved workforce service delivery to disadvantaged youth
- Increased workforce system and reentry partner capacity to serve justice-involved individuals and other reentry community stakeholders
- Increased business and community awareness of, engagement with, and utilization of the workforce system
- Increased and sustained State Board member engagement and workforce system leadership

This waiver directly aligns with goal #1 - improved services to disadvantaged youth.

Quantifiable projected programmatic outcomes resulting from implementation of the waiver
This waiver would see several outcomes including an increase in WIOA funds being spent on training activities, an increase in WIOA Youth ITAs, an increase in WIOA Youth credentials, an increase in WIOA Youth Measurable Skill Gains, and an increase in pre-apprenticeship program enrollments.

Individuals, groups, or populations benefiting, or otherwise impacted by the waiver from the waiver
WIOA in-school youth would be the population directly benefiting from this waiver.

How the state plans to monitor waiver implementation, including collection of measurable waiver outcome information

Kansas will monitor the WIOA funds being spent on training activities, the increase in WIOA Youth ITAs, the increase in WIOA Youth credentials, the increase in WIOA Youth Measurable Skill Gains, and the increase in pre-apprenticeship program enrollments. Kansas will compare these outcomes both before and after implementation of the approved waiver.

Assurance of state posting of the request for public comment (including the dates that the state made the draft request available for public comment) and notification to affected local workforce development boards

This waiver request was posted to the Kansas Works State Board website during the dates of February 1, 2026 through March 2, 2026. Notices were also sent out to all three local areas in Kansas. There were no public comments received during this timeframe regarding this waiver request.

Date: March 3, 2026

State: Kansas

Agency: Department of Commerce

The statutory and/or regulatory requirements the state would like to waive

Kansas is requesting a waiver of the One Stop Operator selection requirements found at 20 CFR 678.605 and 20 CFR 678.610 which require a competitive selection process every 4 years and only allows the Local WDB to be selected as One Stop Operator with the agreement of the chief elected officials and the Governor.

Actions the state has undertaken to remove state or local barriers

Over the past 18 months, Kansas has consolidated down from 5 local areas in the state to only having 3 local areas in the state. In 2 of those local areas, the Local WDB already serves as the One Stop Operator with approval from the Governor. Our largest local area, known as Kansas WorkforceONE, now has 96 counties within the state. Kansas WorkforceONE has had previous difficulty finding qualified entities to bid on an RFP for One Stop Operations, and now after consolidation, the likelihood of finding a qualified bidder is even more challenging.

A description of the state's strategic goal(s)

There are 4 main goals for the State's 2024-2026 strategic plan:

- Enhanced and improved workforce service delivery to disadvantaged youth
- Increased workforce system and reentry partner capacity to serve justice-involved individuals and other reentry community stakeholders
- Increased business and community awareness of, engagement with, and utilization of the workforce system
- Increased and sustained State Board member engagement and workforce system leadership

Quantifiable projected programmatic outcomes resulting from implementation of the waiver

With this waiver in place, all local areas in Kansas could have their Local WDB serve as the One Stop Operator. This would result in a cost savings and allow more WIOA funds to be spent on participants and on training activities for WIOA participants.

Individuals, groups, or populations benefiting, or otherwise impacted by the waiver from the waiver
Participants in the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs would see as benefit from this waiver as more WIOA funds would be available for training and supportive services without the additional cost of a One Stop Operator.

How the state plans to monitor waiver implementation, including collection of measurable waiver outcome information
The state will monitor this waiver by reviewing the training dollars that each local area is spending each quarter. The state will also compare training percentages for each local area, before and after the approved waiver went into effect.

Assurance of state posting of the request for public comment (including the dates that the state made the draft request available for public comment) and notification to affected local workforce development boards
This waiver request was posted to the Kansas Works State Board website during the dates of February 1, 2026 through March 2, 2026. Notices were also sent out to all three local areas in Kansas. There were no public comments received during this timeframe regarding this waiver request.

Date: March 3, 2026

State: Kansas

Agency: Department of Commerce

The statutory and/or regulatory requirements the state would like to waive
Kansas is requesting a waiver of WIOA Section 134(d)(2) and 20 CFR 680.910 to allow the use of supportive services for Adult and Dislocated Worker participants within 12 months of exit for employment retention. Supportive services during this time could include, but not limited to, transportation, temporary living costs, or childcare expenses.

Actions the state has undertaken to remove state or local barriers
There are no state barriers, only WIOA law and Federal regulations that currently prohibit supportive services for Adults and Dislocated Workers after exit.

A description of the state's strategic goal(s)
There are 4 main goals for the State's 2024-2026 strategic plan:

- Enhanced and improved workforce service delivery to disadvantaged youth
- Increased workforce system and reentry partner capacity to serve justice-involved individuals and other reentry community stakeholders
- Increased business and community awareness of, engagement with, and utilization of the workforce system
- Increased and sustained State Board member engagement and workforce system leadership

This waiver would align with the State goal of increased workforce resources to serve justice-involved individuals as many justice-involved individuals will benefit from additional supportive services after program exit.

Quantifiable projected programmatic outcomes resulting from implementation of the waiver

As a result of providing Adult and Dislocated Workers with supportive services after exit, we would expect to see an improvement for Employment 4th Quarter After Exit for both Adults and Dislocated Workers.

Individuals, groups, or populations benefiting, or otherwise impacted by the waiver from the waiver

Adults and Dislocated Workers who have exited after receiving career and/or training services would see the benefit of this waiver. This waiver would be especially helpful to Adults who were previously receiving public benefits and would be facing a public benefits cliff after obtaining gainful employment. Supportive services would help with the transition off public benefits.

How the state plans to monitor waiver implementation, including collection of measurable waiver outcome information

Kansas would monitor this waiver by tracking the Employment 4th Quarter After Exit for Adults and Dislocated Workers and would compare the percentage rates before and after the waiver went into effect.

Assurance of state posting of the request for public comment (including the dates that the state made the draft request available for public comment) and notification to affected local workforce development boards

This waiver request was posted to the Kansas Works State Board website during the dates of February 1, 2026 through March 2, 2026. Notices were also sent out to all three local areas in Kansas. There were no public comments received during this timeframe regarding this waiver request.

Date: March 3, 2026

State: Kansas

Agency: Department of Commerce

The statutory and/or regulatory requirements the state would like to waive

Kansas is requesting a waiver of WIOA Sec. 129(c)(2) and 20 CFR 681.460 to have each local area provide all 14 required youth elements. Kansas would like to give local areas the flexibility to provide only those elements that have proven to have the biggest impact on local area youth performance outcomes.

Actions the state has undertaken to remove state or local barriers

Kansas has not removed any state or local barriers and has only followed the WIOA law and corresponding regulations.

A description of the state's strategic goal(s)

There are 4 main goals for the State's 2024-2026 strategic plan:

- Enhanced and improved workforce service delivery to disadvantaged youth
- Increased workforce system and reentry partner capacity to serve justice-involved individuals and other reentry community stakeholders
- Increased business and community awareness of, engagement with, and utilization of the workforce system

- Increased and sustained State Board member engagement and workforce system leadership

This waiver, if approved, would be in direct alignment with goal #1 listed above – to improve service delivery strategies to disadvantaged youth. Local areas would be able to focus on those services that produce the best outcomes and the elements that local areas specialize in providing.

Quantifiable projected programmatic outcomes resulting from implementation of the waiver

Kansas would expect that all WIOA Youth outcomes would be improved, for both OSY and ISY. This would include:

- Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit
- Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit
- Measurable Skill Gains

Individuals, groups, or populations benefiting, or otherwise impacted by the waiver from the waiver

Both ISY and OSY would be the populations benefiting from this waiver. ISY and OSY would see better services and more targeted services that would lead to better outcomes for the WIOA Youth program.

How the state plans to monitor waiver implementation, including collection of measurable waiver outcome information

Kansas will monitor all WIOA Youth outcomes and will compare outcomes before waiver implementation to youth program outcomes after implementation. These include:

- Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit
- Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit
- Measurable Skill Gains

Kansas expects all performance outcomes to increase after waiver implementation.

Assurance of state posting of the request for public comment (including the dates that the state made the draft request available for public comment) and notification to affected local workforce development boards

This waiver request was posted to the Kansas Works State Board website during the dates of February 1, 2026 through March 2, 2026. Notices were also sent out to all three local areas in Kansas. There were no public comments received during this timeframe regarding this waiver request.

Date: March 3, 2026

State: Kansas

Agency: Department of Commerce

The statutory and/or regulatory requirements the state would like to waive

Kansas is requesting a waiver of WIOA Sec. 3(44) and corresponding regulations at 20 CFR 680.700(a) and 680.720(b). Kansas would like the ability for local areas to determine OJT reimbursement rates for employers which could include allowing larger employers the ability to receive OJT reimbursement rates higher than 50%.

Actions the state has undertaken to remove state or local barriers

Kansas has developed State Policy #5-26-00 which outlines the requirements for OJT and specifies when local areas can increase an OJT reimbursement rate from 50% to 75% for employers.

A description of the state's strategic goal(s)

There are 4 main goals for the State's 2024-2026 strategic plan:

- Enhanced and improved workforce service delivery to disadvantaged youth
- Increased workforce system and reentry partner capacity to serve justice-involved individuals and other reentry community stakeholders
- Increased business and community awareness of, engagement with, and utilization of the workforce system
- Increased and sustained State Board member engagement and workforce system leadership

This waiver would directly align with goal #3 listed above – increased business and community awareness. We would anticipate that allowing for higher OJT reimbursement rates will make businesses more inclined to develop OJTs and thus more aware of the workforce system in Kansas.

Quantifiable projected programmatic outcomes resulting from implementation of the waiver

Kansas expects the number of OJTs that are developed after implementation of the waiver to increase. Kansas would expect to see an increase year over year on OJT usage and expect to see an increase in training dollars expended for Adults and Dislocated Workers.

Individuals, groups, or populations benefiting, or otherwise impacted by the waiver from the waiver

Participants in both the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs would be the job seekers who would benefit. Businesses across the state would also benefit as more OJTs would be developed and awareness of the workforce system would be increased.

How the state plans to monitor waiver implementation, including collection of measurable waiver outcome information

Kansas will monitor the number of OJTs that are developed after implementation of the waiver and see how it compares to before the waiver was in place. Kansas would expect to see an increase year over year in OJT usage after the implementation of the waiver statewide.

Assurance of state posting of the request for public comment (including the dates that the state made the draft request available for public comment) and notification to affected local workforce development boards

This waiver request was posted to the Kansas Works State Board website during the dates of February 1, 2026 through March 2, 2026. Notices were also sent out to all three local areas in Kansas. There were no public comments received during this timeframe regarding this waiver request.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient;	Yes
2. The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;	Yes
3. The State established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;	Yes
4. The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);	Yes
5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership;	Yes
6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions;	Yes
7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7);	
8. The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan;	Yes
9. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I;	Yes
10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.	Yes
11. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3);	Yes

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

All Program-Specific Requirements provided for the WIOA core programs in this section must be addressed for either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

A. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF

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

Kansas will continue to use state merit staff employees to deliver labor exchange services.

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

The State will implement a comprehensive and ongoing professional development strategy for Employment Service staff to ensure the delivery of high-quality, consistent services to both jobseekers and employers across the workforce system. Professional development activities are designed to strengthen staff competency, promote integrated service delivery, and support continuous improvement in customer service outcomes.

Professional development will include participation in Kansas's Registered Apprenticeship Program for Workforce Professionals, where staff receive training in universally applicable skill areas essential to effective service delivery. These areas include customer service excellence; identifying and addressing barriers to employment; interest, aptitude, and skills assessment; local and regional labor market trends; delivery and use of labor market information; serving individuals with disabilities; time and workload management; personnel management; and technology and computer skills.

Workforce Center staff will also receive ongoing professional development on the appropriate and effective use of AI-supported tools to enhance service delivery to jobseekers and employers. Training will focus on using AI platforms to support career exploration, job matching, labor market analysis, resume development, interview preparation, and identification of training opportunities, while maintaining meaningful staff engagement and human oversight. AI tools will be used to complement—not replace—staff expertise, supporting consistent, high-quality customer service across Workforce Centers.

Professional development will be delivered through multiple methods to ensure accessibility and consistency statewide, including virtual training, workshops, webinars, and conference participation.

The overarching goal of these professional development activities is to ensure Workforce Center staff are equipped to connect jobseekers and employers to the full range of workforce services available within their communities. This includes assisting individuals in obtaining employment and supporting employers in meeting their workforce needs.

3. DESCRIBE STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING PROVIDED FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND WIOA STAFF ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES AND REFERRAL TO UI STAFF FOR ADJUDICATION

Leadership staff from the Department of Commerce and the Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) meet monthly to coordinate service delivery and address issues impacting Employment Services and Unemployment Insurance. These meetings include focused discussion on Unemployment Insurance policy updates, eligibility requirements, recurring eligibility issues observed in the field, and any operational or system changes that may affect customers.

To reinforce frontline capacity, KDOL provides quarterly training to Employment Service and WIOA staff specifically focused on the identification of potential UI eligibility issues during customer interactions and the appropriate referral of those issues to UI staff for adjudication. Training topics include common eligibility concerns, documentation requirements, staff roles and responsibilities, and established referral and escalation processes. Together, these coordination and training efforts ensure staff are equipped to recognize UI-related issues, make timely referrals to KDOL for adjudication, and support customers in receiving accurate information and coordinated services.

B. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION AND MEANINGFUL ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING ASSISTANCE IN FILING A CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION THROUGH ONE-STOP CENTERS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA AS A CAREER SERVICE

To ensure the State provides information and meaningful assistance to individuals requesting help with filing a UI claim, Workforce Centers serve as the primary access point for customer support. Workforce Centers provide customers with access to computers and telephones needed to file UI claims and offer direct assistance from trained staff throughout the process.

Workforce Center staff assist customers by explaining and supporting the UI claims filing process, including helping claimants navigate the online application, answering general questions, and guiding individuals in locating and using relevant information and tools available on the KDOL website. Staff help customers understand required steps, documentation, and timelines, while ensuring UI eligibility determinations and adjudication remain the responsibility of KDOL. When customers require individualized, technical, or complex assistance, staff make timely referrals to KDOL staff for further support.

This approach ensures customers receive coordinated, accurate, and meaningful assistance while preserving program integrity and compliance with federal requirements.

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

The State identifies claimants most in need of reemployment assistance through the Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) system during the initial UI claims process. Claimant-provided information is analyzed and scored by WPRS, producing a forecast of the likelihood that the individual will exhaust regular UI benefits. Claimants with a 60% or greater probability of exhausting benefits are entered into the queue to be scheduled for reemployment services.

KANSASWORKS provides the RESEA program statewide to support these individuals in returning to work. RESEA participants receive a range of services designed to assess skills, identify barriers, and connect them with employment opportunities:

- **Work Registration:** Participants must have a kansasworks.com Plus account with a complete, up-to-date resume. Workforce Center staff assist claimants in developing high-quality resumes to improve employability and better serve both jobseekers and employers.
- **Orientation to One-Stop Services:** Participants receive an introduction to the Workforce Centers, including an overview of available programs and services and guidance on using self-help tools.
- **UI Eligibility Review:** Potential UI eligibility issues are documented and referred to KDOL for adjudication.
- **Initial Assessment:** Staff evaluate the participant's employment history, education, interests, and skills to identify employment goals, barriers to employment, and necessary services.
- **Labor Market Information:** Claimants receive labor market information tailored to their residential location and employment history/interests.
- **Individual Employment Plan (IEP):** In consultation with the claimant, staff develop a

written IEP that aligns services with the participant's employment goals and needs identified during the Initial Assessment.

- **Follow-up:** RESEA participants report to staff every 30 days until they return to work or are no longer receiving benefits. At each follow-up, participants provide work search contacts from the previous four weeks.

  Individuals requiring additional support may be scheduled for up to two subsequent RESEA appointments. RESEA participants may also be required to engage in additional reemployment activities, including attending workshops, completing assessments such as the Kansas National Career Readiness Certificate, participating in WIOA services, completing career interest and skills profilers, or exploring potential occupations.

  To serve unemployed individuals not currently participating in RESEA, Workforce Centers implement processes to identify jobseekers at the start of their visit. These individuals receive information about available workforce services, both in-person and online, and are invited to meet with Workforce Center staff to discuss potential reemployment assistance and referrals.

  To enhance service delivery, staff may use AI-supported tools to assist with skills identification, career exploration, resume development, and interview preparation. Staff work directly with claimants to review AI-generated suggestions, refine resumes, and practice effective interviewing techniques. These tools support more personalized and efficient service delivery while maintaining direct staff involvement and oversight.

D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE W-P FUNDS TO SUPPORT UI CLAIMANTS, AND THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN W-P AND UI, AS APPROPRIATE INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

1. COORDINATION OF AND PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS AS REQUIRED BY THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT;

Wagner-Peyser staff will provide a full range of Wagner-Peyser services to any UI claimant accessing the Workforce Centers, based on their individual needs, whether it be in-person, on the phone or virtually.

Workforce Center staff provide labor exchange services to UI claimants to support their rapid reemployment. These services include assistance with job search and registration in the state employment system, referrals to job openings that match the claimant's skills and experience, and access to labor market information. Staff also conduct initial assessments of skills, interests, and barriers, and develop Individual Employment Plans (IEPs) to guide claimants toward employment. Additional services may include workshops, referrals to WIOA or partner programs, and guidance on using online tools to explore careers and training opportunities.

Staff may utilize AI-supported tools to enhance job matching, identify suitable job openings based on a claimant's skills and experience, and support career exploration. AI tools may also assist with resume development by identifying transferable skills, improving resume content, and tailoring resumes to specific job opportunities. Workforce Center staff review and refine AI-assisted resumes with customers to ensure quality, accuracy, and alignment with employer expectations.

AI-supported tools are used to complement staff services and do not replace staff judgment. Workforce Center staff maintain direct engagement with claimants to ensure individualized guidance and meaningful assistance.

Leadership from both WP and UI maintain regular communication through phone calls, emails and regular virtual meetings. Workforce Center and UI staff maintain ongoing communication, via emails and phone calls to support reemployment services. WP staff document potential UI eligibility issues and share relevant information with KDOL to ensure timely adjudication. KDOL provides updates on policy or procedural changes, and staff coordinate to monitor claimants' work readiness, availability, and participation in reemployment activities. This communication ensures UI claimants receive seamless, accurate guidance while maintaining program integrity.

2. REGISTRATION OF UI CLAIMANTS WITH THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE IF REQUIRED BY STATE LAW;

UI Claimants are automatically registered for a kansasworks.com job seeker account upon filing a claim. Login information is sent to claimants along with their monetary determination letter. If for some reason a claimant is found to be not registered, staff assistance is provided to the claimant.

Work search criteria that emphasizes engagement in the workforce system and provides claimants "best practice" information concerning their work search activities is in the process of implementation. One-stop staff, including Wagner-Peyser staff, will receive additional training on conducting eligibility assessments to identify potential eligibility issues, and will receive training on proper documentation of potential issues for use by UI staff. Staff report potential

eligibility issues through kansasworks.com and via a dedicated email address monitored by UI staff.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE WORK TEST FOR THE STATE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION SYSTEM, INCLUDING MAKING ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENTS (FOR REFERRAL TO UI ADJUDICATION, IF NEEDED), AND PROVIDING JOB FINDING AND PLACEMENT SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS; AND

The State ensures Workforce Center staff assist UI claimants in meeting the work test requirements while providing job finding and placement services. Staff guide claimants in conducting a meaningful job search, documenting job contacts, and participating in reemployment activities. Staff provide labor exchange and career services, job referrals, access to labor market information and online tools, and development of an IEP tailored to the claimant's skills, goals, and barriers. Staff also make referrals to workshops, training programs, and other WIOA partner services as needed. Ongoing communication with KDOL staff ensures timely adjudication of eligibility issues and coordinated support for claimants, helping them meet work test requirements while receiving meaningful reemployment assistance.

AI-supported tools may be used to help claimants identify job opportunities, strengthen job search strategies, and prepare for employment. This includes assistance with resume enhancement and interview preparation, such as practice interview questions and feedback on responses. Workforce Center staff provide coaching, critique, and guidance to help customers improve interview skills and job readiness.

4. PROVISION OF REFERRALS TO AND APPLICATION ASSISTANCE FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES.

The State ensures Workforce Center staff provide UI claimants and other jobseekers with referrals to appropriate training and education programs and assist them in accessing these resources. Staff help individuals identify training opportunities that align with their career goals, skill levels, and local labor market demand. This includes referrals to WIOA-funded programs, Registered Apprenticeships, adult education and literacy programs, postsecondary education, and other partner services.

To enhance this process, staff may use AI-supported tools to assist customers with career exploration, identification of in-demand occupations, and matching skills to relevant training and education pathways. Workforce Center staff guide customers in interpreting AI-generated information to ensure customers receive meaningful, individualized support.

Workforce Center staff also provide guidance and support with program applications and connecting customers with financial aid or support services when needed. Staff ensure everyone receives information on available resources and is supported in making informed decisions to advance their skills and employment prospects. This approach ensures that all customers receive meaningful assistance to access training and education programs to support their employment and career goals.

E. AGRICULTURAL OUTREACH PLAN (AOP). EACH STATE AGENCY MUST DEVELOP AN AOP EVERY FOUR YEARS AS PART OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN REQUIRED UNDER SECTIONS 102 OR 103 OF WIOA. THE AOP MUST INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF NEED. AN ASSESSMENT NEED DESCRIBES THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

1. ASSESSMENT OF NEED. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

The state is becoming more aware of who the farmworkers are in their local areas and is working to understand where and what resources are necessary. Due to the lack of outreach, the state is refocusing to understand who the Kansas MSFWs are. At this time, the state's main contact with MSFW's has been H-2A workers due to the agency conducting the housing inspections for the H-2A program.

Information provided by SER Corporation–KS, the designated National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) provider in Kansas, indicates that many NFJP participants are long-term seasonal agricultural workers. These individuals often face barriers related to employment stability, limited work experience, and constrained access to resources, which can make it difficult to secure well-paying, year-round employment both within and outside the agricultural sector. Because many MSFWs reside in rural communities, access to employment services, training opportunities, healthcare, housing, and financial resources is frequently limited by distance, availability, and lack of reliable transportation. Additionally, the seasonal and demanding nature of farm work restricts workers' ability to travel to job centers during regular business hours, making mobile outreach and the Outreach Worker's ability to travel to rural communities especially critical. Statewide staff input further identified strong demand for hands-on, career-focused training leading to industry-recognized credentials—particularly in areas such as equipment operation, CDL, skilled trades, diesel and agricultural mechanics, and basic digital literacy—along with ongoing needs related to affordable housing, healthcare access, transportation, and supportive services necessary to support successful employment outcomes for MSFWs in Kansas.

Another need from Workforce Centers is job search assistance including job search assistance for H-2A workers due to being fired from their current employer or simply needing to find a different employer. Although the state understands that we would not be able to assist due to the rules under homeland security, the state is making staff aware of the appropriate parties to connect the H-2A workers with and how to guide the employee in these circumstances. In addition, if the MSFW is leaving due to possible employment law issues, staff will inform the MSFWs of their workers' rights and the ES/EL complaint system.

One need for all Kansas families that may affect farmworkers is childcare. According to Child Care Aware of Kansas, the potential number of childcare slots needed was 84,880. (Kansas State Point-In-Time Child Care Data generated 1/17/2024) In addition, as of June 2023, there are still only a small number of programs offering non-traditional hours to care for children in Kansas. Cost for childcare is also an issue for Kansas families. The national average price for a year of childcare in America in 2022 was $10,853, which is higher than the US Department of Health and Human Service's recommendation that childcare should cost 7% of a family's annual income. (https://online.flippingbook.com/view/204292811/2/)

2. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY IN THE STATE MEANS: 1) IDENTIFYING THE TOP FIVE LABOR-INTENSIVE CROPS, THE MONTHS OF HEAVY ACTIVITY, AND THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF PRIME ACTIVITY; 2) SUMMARIZE THE AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS' NEEDS IN THE STATE (I.E. ARE THEY PREDOMINANTLY HIRING LOCAL OR FOREIGN WORKERS, ARE THEY EXPRESSING THAT THERE IS A SCARCITY IN THE AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE); AND 3) IDENTIFYING ANY ECONOMIC, NATURAL, OR OTHER FACTORS THAT ARE AFFECTING AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE OR ANY PROJECTED FACTORS THAT WILL AFFECT AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE

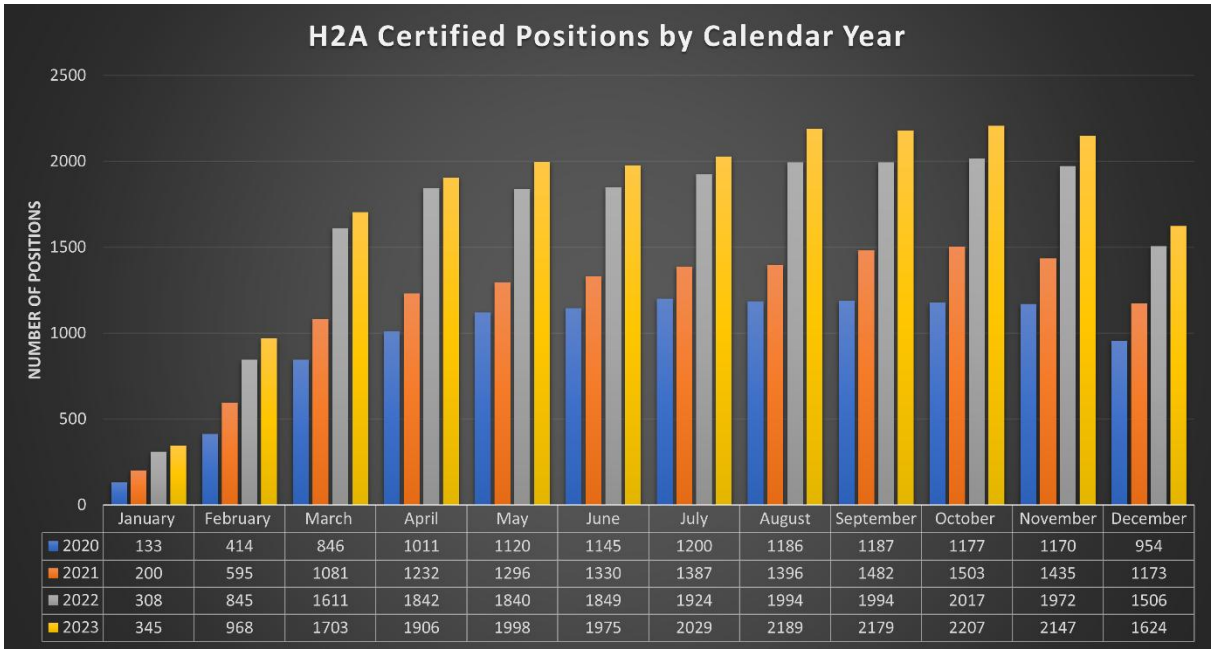
Kansas is a leader in wheat, grain, sorghum and beef production. The dairy sector is rapidly expanding in Kansas and other sectors of animal agriculture are growing as well. Farmers and ranchers across the state are responding to demand from consumers to raise healthy, wholesome food and are also continuously striving to do better, raising more food using fewer resources.

Agriculture is a critical part of Kansas' past, and it is a key economic driver in our present, but it also holds great potential for our future.

Increasingly, agricultural resources provide raw materials for a broad range of nonfood products, such as chemicals, fibers, construction materials, lubricants and fuels. Developing and commercializing bio-based and bioenergy products provide new and expanded markets for agricultural feedstocks, it reduces our nation's dependence on petroleum and other imported materials, and it helps diversify agriculture. As the world population grows and as demand for animal protein increases, Kansas farmers and ranchers will play a critical role in feeding Kansas families and families around the world. (https://agriculture.ks.gov/about-kda/kansas-agriculture)

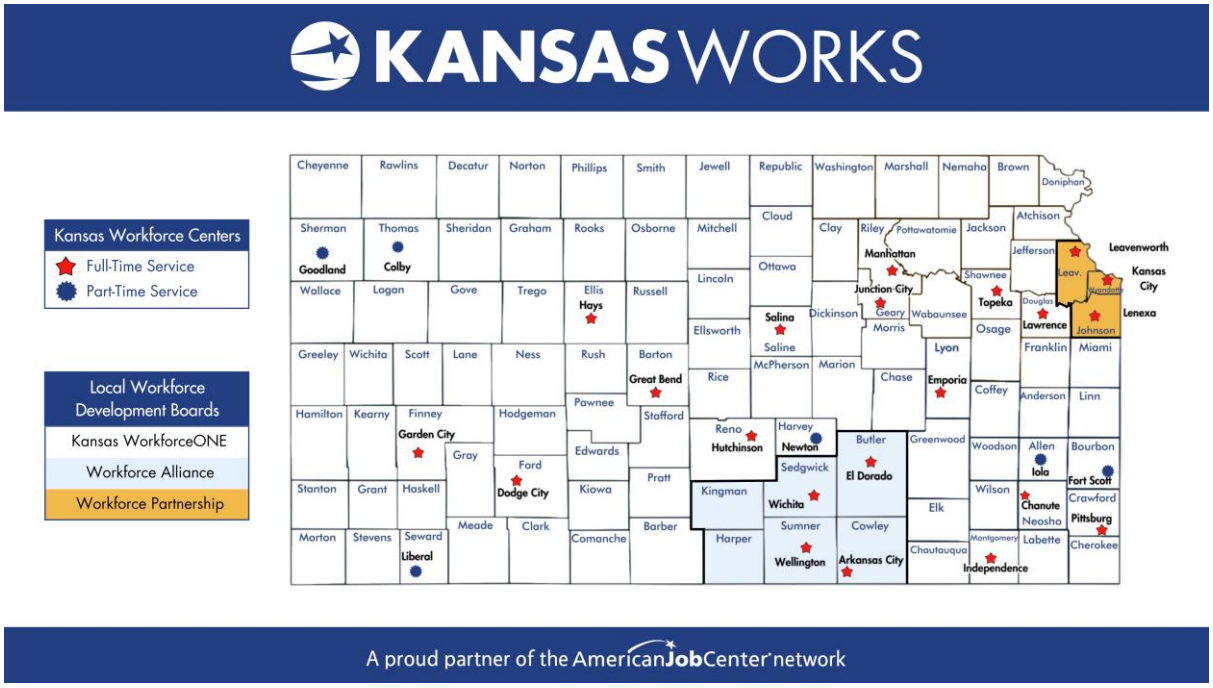
The Kansas Department of Agriculture's Economist creates annual economic contribution reports to estimate the impact of agriculture on the Kansas economy. The purpose of these reports is to provide information to stakeholders, policymakers, and the general public. In this report, the model analyzes the effects of agriculture on the State of Kansas. For the estimated current year (2023), 72 agriculture and agriculture-related sectors directly contribute $57 billion in output and 140,055 jobs to the Kansas economy. Including indirect and induced effects, agriculture and agriculture-related sectors have a total impact of $81.2 billion in output, 253,614 jobs and 14% of the total Gross Regional Product (GRP). (State of Kansas 2023 Economic Contribution Report (8/15/2023)

As per information from Spotlight.tcbmi.com, H-2A certified positions in Kansas experience significant activity from March to November. Based on this data, it can be inferred that the months of heavy agricultural activity in Kansas align with the same period.



	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
2020	133	414	846	1011	1120	1145	1200	1186	1187	1177	1170	954
2021	200	595	1081	1232	1296	1330	1387	1396	1482	1503	1435	1173
2022	308	845	1611	1842	1840	1849	1924	1994	1994	2017	1972	1506
2023	345	968	1703	1906	1998	1975	2029	2189	2179	2207	2147	1624

Geographic area of activity



According to the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Kansas' geographic area of cropland is primarily in local workforce development areas one and two. The area of prime activity for H-2A certifications also occurs in western and north central Kansas.

2. Summarize the Agricultural Employers' Needs in the State (I.e. are they predominantly hiring local or foreign workers, are they expressing that there is a scarcity in the agricultural workforce)

A lack of a skilled agriculture workforce is a top inhibitor of growth and expansion for many Kansas agriculture entities.

One of the most frequently mentioned concerns from the ag industry is workforce availability. It's seen as a barrier to growth for Kansas agriculture. A shortage of workers, both trained and entry level, has been mentioned as a significant concern in Ag Summit discussions across many sectors, including the beef, pet food, poultry, pork, ag equipment manufacturing, ag technology, and meat processing. In addition, stakeholders in several agriculture industries sectors have frequently stressed the need for federal immigration reform with a focus on long-term visas for agricultural workers. (Mike Beam, KS Dept of Agriculture, Testimony for the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources, 1/19/2023)

According to the 2022 Kansas Agriculture Workforce Survey Overview, of the critical positions that respondents said were difficult to fill, CDL and equipment operators were selected by over 12% of the respondents. Around 8–10% of respondents selected each of the labor categories, which included general unskilled labor, production physical labor, general farm labor and production skilled labor. Kansas agriculture remains a physically demanding industry with nearly two-thirds of respondents stating the average job, in their place of business, was moderately to intensely physically demanding.

Because of the shortage of available workers in the area, employers are turning to foreign labor to fill their vacancies. Over the past years, H-2A certifications have increased, showing employers are relying on foreign labor over domestic labor to fill their employment needs.

Overview of H-2A Program Activity in Kansas	
Six-Year Upward Trend Program Fiscal Year: October 1 to September 30	
Fiscal Year Change	% Worker Request
2020 → 2021	+19.90%
2021 → 2022	+33.70%
2022 → 2023	+19.40%
2023 → 2024	+6.60%
2024 → 2025	+5.10%

3. Identifying any economic, natural, or other factors that are affecting agriculture in the state or any projected factors that will affect agriculture in the state

A dominant factor in 2022 were the widespread drought conditions seen especially in the earlier months, which developed into severe drought conditions across the western portion of the state as the year went on. As fall began, bleak precipitation statewide turned drought conditions from severe drought into exceptional drought, which held through the end of that calendar year.

Those drought conditions led to a reduction in harvested acres especially in principal crops, despite a noticeable increase in total amount of acres planted. The historic drought hindered the performance of most of Kansas' main crops, especially evident in the yield of wheat and sorghum. However, the low supply of hay and oats due to drought caused a large increase in price for those producers.

On the livestock front, the drought conditions and market volatility increased the price of cattle in 2022, and where there is less supply to meet high demand, the production value and gross

income remained significant. The dairy sector also saw a strong impact in production value with large returns in milk production, as dairy remained one of the largest growing industries in Kansas.

Other notable indicators for the year included the strong realized gross farm income seen through gradually expansion in cash receipts, per farm income, and gross income for Kansas. However, factors like high fertilizer prices, low precipitation, and large input prices from inflation have led to a drop in net farm income, coinciding with a record increase in farm production expenses.

Kansas agriculture exports continued to see growth in 2022, with a total of $5.45 billion in agricultural products. The top three commodities included meat and edible offal, cereals, and oil seeds. Mexico again was the leading agricultural export partner, importing over 39% of Kansas' top three export commodities.

2023 Kansas Farm Facts (Winter 2023)
https://www.agriculture.ks.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/166/638441481201900000

Kansas's number of farms and ranches declined during 2022, according to USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. The number of farms and ranches in the state, at 57,700, was down 900 farms from 2021. Numbers of farms and ranches in Kansas with less than $100,000 in agricultural sales decreased 800 farms from a year earlier while operations with agricultural sales of $100,000 or more decreased 100 farms. Land in farms and ranches in Kansas totaled 45.7 million acres, unchanged from 2021. The average size of operation, at 792 acres, was up 12 acres from a year earlier.

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Kansas/Publications/Economic_Releases/Farm_Numbers/2023/KS-farmnum2302.pdf

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

Information provided by SER Corporation–KS, the designated National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) provider in Kansas, indicates that many NFJP participants are long-term seasonal agricultural workers. Additionally, recent participant trends show a strong presence of young adults, primarily ages 18–24. NFJP case managers report that many of these participants are young Caucasian adults working in local and regional agricultural operations, with English as the primary language spoken statewide. Residing largely in rural communities, many MSFWs face barriers related to limited work experience, transportation challenges, and reduced access to employment services, education and training opportunities, healthcare, housing, and financial resources due to distance and limited availability in some areas. The seasonal and demanding nature of agricultural work further restricts their ability to travel to job centers during regular hours of operation. Participant data also reflects ongoing needs

related to housing stability, access to health services, transportation, and education and training, particularly during peak agricultural seasons from spring through fall.

Kansas MSFW's through the H-2A program include individuals primarily from South Africa and Mexico. The majority speak English, as employers require individuals who can comprehend instructions and can communicate well.

Kansas also employs many full time, non-migrant farm workers. We have many dairy and beef plants who have Spanish speaking farmworkers, but they are full-time year-round employees. Although, they do not fit the MSFW definition since their work is not temporary, seasonal work. The biggest barriers for this demographic of farmworker in finding employment are language barriers, transportation, and childcare. Providing resources to these barriers is being addressed through AJC staff, building better relationships with NFJP grantee, SER Corporation, and training in each local area on local resources available through One Stop partners. Information provided by SER Corporation – KS, the designated National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) provider in Kansas, shows many of the NFJP participants consist of long-term seasonal agricultural workers. They are primarily white males, ages 18-24, and natural born citizens. Many of these individuals face challenges due to limited work experience and resources, hindering their ability to secure well-paying jobs within or outside the agricultural sector. Residing predominantly in rural areas, they encounter constraints in accessing both general and financial resources due to distance to resources and the lack of availability of resources in some rural communities. Due to their type of work, they have limited access to travel to job centers during the hours of operation. Information provided by SER Corporation-KS also showed housing, health services, access to education/training and transportation as needs for the MSFW demographic in Kansas.

4. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The local offices outreach activities must be designed to meet the needs of MSFWs in the State and to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

All data and information regarding outreach activities are found in sections below.

A. CONTACTING FARMWORKERS WHO ARE NOT BEING REACHED BY THE NORMAL INTAKE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICES

The State Workforce Agency (SWA) will implement a targeted and datadriven outreach strategy to ensure that Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) who are not reached through normal intake activities at American Job Centers (AJCs) are effectively contacted and connected to services. Recent information from the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) shows potential for reaching MSFWs at the local community and technical colleges. Data from AJC outreach shows the majority of farmworkers encountered during outreach are H2A workers rather than domestic workers. Between September 2024 and August 2025, 51 outreach visits were reviewed documenting contact with 403 H2A workers and only 3 domestic workers. Based on these findings, the SWA will adjust its outreach activities to include visits to community and technical colleges and community events, as well as collaboration with other community-based organizations serving farmworkers. Staff responsible for MSFW outreach will coordinate closely with the NFJP grantee to conduct joint outreach activities, leveraging the NFJP's established relationships and resources to more effectively engage MSFW participants. Through this coordinated approach, AJC staff will provide access to workforce center services

and facilitate referrals to WIOA partners and community resources in collaboration with NFJP case managers.

Staff providing outreach will be located in each local workforce area to ensure statewide coverage and consistent contact with MSFWs. Staff will maintain regular communication with NFJP case managers in their regions to coordinate outreach schedules, share information, and avoid duplication of effort. Outreach logs will continue to be maintained to ensure accurate reporting and continuous improvement.

Outreach training will continue to be provided to ensure that logs and imperative information is noted for future reference. Staff providing outreach will continue to be connected to other organizations that work with farmworkers to collaborate in sharing resource information and farmworker data by partnerships created through the One-Stop.

Communication with partners not physically located in the Workforce Centers will be facilitated by in-person meetings, virtual meetings, email, and referral methods.

B. PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO OUTREACH STAFF. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MUST INCLUDE TRAININGS, CONFERENCES, ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, AND INCREASED COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ON TOPICS SUCH AS ONE-STOP CENTER SERVICES (I.E. AVAILABILITY OF REFERRALS TO TRAINING, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, AND CAREER SERVICES, AS WELL AS SPECIFIC EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES), THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE AND EMPLOYMENT-RELATED LAW COMPLAINT SYSTEM ("COMPLAINT SYSTEM" DESCRIBED AT 20 CFR 658 SUBPART E), INFORMATION ON THE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS SERVING MSFWS IN THE AREA, AND A BASIC SUMMARY OF FARMWORKER RIGHTS, INCLUDING THEIR RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.

Staff providing outreach to MSFWs will attend any outreach related trainings or events that may be provided by the Regional Monitor Advocate (RMA), National Monitor Advocate (NMA) or other appropriate parties. Other trainings related to Wage and Hour Division (WHD), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and human trafficking trainings will be encouraged. The State Workforce Agency (SWA) and State Monitor Advocate (SMA) ensure they inform each other of all training opportunities related to MSFWs within and outside the agency. In addition, Kansas hosts an annual Workforce Innovation Conference for WIOA programs. Staff are encouraged to attend to learn about partner programs and services as well as present topics related to their role. The Kansas Dept of Agriculture hosts an annual Ag Summit, which is attended by the SMA and Regional Managers to connect with agricultural employers and others working in the agriculture community within our state.

In addition to the technical assistance provided by the SMA, Commerce will continue to train staff providing outreach to MSFW customers through staff development sessions, staff meetings and one-on-one supervisory meetings. Each local area provides training to Employment Services (ES) staff and covers Wagner Peyser program requirements of career services, business services, orientation to the one stop including referrals, and an overview of partner programs located within the workforce center – specifically Reemployment Services Eligibility Assessment and Jobs for Veterans State Grant. Additional resources are available to staff providing MSFW outreach including the definition and scope of the MSFW outreach worker, roles and responsibilities, overview of relevant laws and regulations: Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA), Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and OSHAS standards, and the ES and Employment-Related Law Complaint System.

Regional Operations Managers in each Local Workforce Development Area will include staff providing outreach to MSFWs in one-stop partner meetings and other activities with maximum exposure to partners to ensure MSFW outreach is represented in one-stop operations and service-delivery strategies.

C. INCREASING OUTREACH WORKER TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS INCLUDING THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES

Kansas continues to seek opportunities for cross-agency training. Commerce has a strong working relationship with the Kansas Department of Labor and WIOA partners, which enhances the cross-training goals of the state.

The Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) currently employs a Workforce Liaison who conducts quarterly trainings available to all Workforce Center staff. Training topics have included:

- Portal Processes and 1099G's,
- My Reemployment plan and Reemployment Services Eligibility Assessment: KDOL Process,
- The 411 on 1099G and tips to Translate KDOL site for ESL,
- Disclosures and Investigations-What You Need to Know,
- Workforce Center and UI: Best Practices for Assisting Customers with Unemployment,
- Adjudication – What is Adjudication and How Does it Work,
- A Day in the Life of a Call Center Representative,
- First Look at New Unemployment System,
- A Walkthrough of New Website, UI Guides and How to Videos.

The Workforce Liaison also coordinates communication between Workforce Center staff and the Kansas Department of Labor to assist customers with issues with their claims and updates to the KDOL system.

In 2024, online spotlight trainings will be made available to all Workforce Center staff and will be hosted on kansasworks.com. These trainings created by the **KANSAS**WORKS Training director, with technical assistance provided by the SMA, will cover Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers and Complaint System.

Additionally, the State has and will continue providing training to Workforce Center staff. Training will cover the following: Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers, Complaint System, Referring Domestic Workers to Ag employer job orders including H-2A job orders and the Agricultural Recruitment System. SMA monitors each area of the State and provides feedback and ideas for additional training opportunities. The SWA will direct designated staff to self-monitor to comply with CFR 653.108(a) to ensure an effective and functional advocacy system is set in place.

D. PROVIDING STATE MERIT STAFF OUTREACH WORKERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE THEY ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

The SWA offers professional development training for MSFW outreach workers, aiming to guarantee that staff deliver exceptional services to both jobseekers and employers. This encompasses, but is not restricted to, the following aspects.

The Outreach Worker (classified as a Program Specialist II) will participate in Kansas Department of Commerce's two-year Registered Apprenticeship program where they have in

depth training about various programs throughout the state workforce system. At the end of both the first and second years of the program, staff receive a pay increase. This has been a valuable tool in retention of Program Specialist II staff.

Kansas Department of Labor is also providing a quarterly training for all Workforce Center staff to give updates and train on specific topics requested by the Regional Operations Managers or State Operations Director.

The State has developed a training plan for the Outreach Worker covering the functions listed at 20 CFR 653.107 which will be updated in 2024. The outreach training consists of a training manual covering all required information, power points and the outreach staff member and SME's will receive a warm introduction to their local NFJP partner who works with farmworkers through the connections the SMA/SWA has established.

E. COORDINATING OUTREACH EFFORTS WITH NFJP GRANTEES AS WELL AS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCIES AND MSFW GROUPS

The SMA meets with the Executive Officer of the SER corporation (NFJP) on a quarterly basis. Local area staff providing outreach are also in contact with their local NFJP partner and MSFW groups. These staff document these contacts in their outreach logs. Local Areas include the NFJP executive director to one stop and partner meetings. These meetings bring together employment partners from the local area with the aim of enhancing knowledge about partner programs, exchanging information, and staying informed about employment trends and new resources.

Staff responsible for MSFW outreach will coordinate with the NFJP grantee to conduct joint outreach activities, as appropriate. Data provided by the NFJP partner indicates that a significant number of MSFWs are enrolled at local community and technical colleges. Accordingly, outreach efforts will prioritize these identified locations and leverage the established relationships and resources of the NFJP to effectively connect with MSFW participants. Through this coordinated approach, American Job Center (AJC) staff will provide access to workforce center services and facilitate referrals to WIOA partners and other community resources in collaboration with the NFJP case manager.

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

Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

A. PROVIDING THE FULL RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES TO THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY, BOTH FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS, THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. THIS INCLUDES:

I. HOW CAREER AND TRAINING SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER WIOA TITLE I WILL BE PROVIDED TO MSFWS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP CENTERS

II. HOW THE STATE SERVES AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH SERVICES

Commerce, through the **KANSAS**WORKS (AJC) system, will provide Wagner-Peyser (W-P) Act funded services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs) and to prospective and actual employers in accordance with Kansas Workforce Development Policies, specifically:

- 4-01-01 Wager-Peyser Funded Services, which in part states, "Wagner-Peyser Labor exchange services must be provided in the One-Stop delivery system in accordance with Section 7(e) of the Wagner-Peyser Act…"
- 4-03-00 Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) Outreach/Monitor Advocate Program, which in part states, MSFW must be provided information to include, but not be limited to, core services, intensive services, and training opportunities. It also states, "Wherever feasible, outreach efforts must be coordinated with public and private community service and MSFW groups." Services will include:
- Registration for labor exchange and other kansasworks.com services
- Explanation and use of kansasworks.com
- Job seeking assistance and referrals to job openings
- Testing
- Needs assessment
- Referrals to other agencies
- Information on other employment and training activities
- Labor Market information
- Tax Credit programs
- Language translation assistance
- Information about the Job Service complaint system, filing, and processing complaints per local policy, state statute and federal regulation
- Customer satisfaction surveys
- Federal Bonding program assistance

SMA provides technical assistance to the Workforce Center supervisors in training best practices in determining the unique needs of MSFWs to be able to offer appropriate resource information. After completing the intake process in each local area, Workforce Center Staff, including the Outreach Worker, will establish a direct linkage for MSFWs with Title 1 partners, including NFJP. Ongoing training initiatives will focus on educating Workforce Center staff about the MSFW demographics to effectively identify MFSWs. These training sessions will be conducted at the local level, overseen by the Regional Managers or their designees.

All services will be provided in accordance with state workforce policies addressing services to customers funded by Wagner-Peyser, Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act, veterans, and all other applicable funding streams.

As required by 20 CFR Subpart B, 653.101, through policy guidance, monitoring, and technical assistance, Commerce will ensure all MSFWs are offered the same range of employment services, benefits, and protections, including counseling, testing and job training referral services, as is provided to non-MSFWs.

Services Provided to Agricultural Employers through the AJC Network.

The staff of each **KANSAS**WORKS Local Area includes at least one individual who is a trained pre-occupancy housing inspector. In addition to performing the housing inspections, these staff members become the contact for agricultural employers and provide services, as necessary. Services include:

- Retention services
- Agricultural Recruitment System (Local, Intrastate, Interstate)
- Access and assistance with kansasworks.com
- Information and referral to other agencies
- Tax Credit Programs
- Customer Satisfaction Surveys
- Labor Market Information

- Job Fairs, recruitment

In 2023, the state updated the Employer Services flyer which provides information on available employer resources. This flyer will be distributed to the current H-2A employers to inform them of the services available to them through their local Workforce Center.

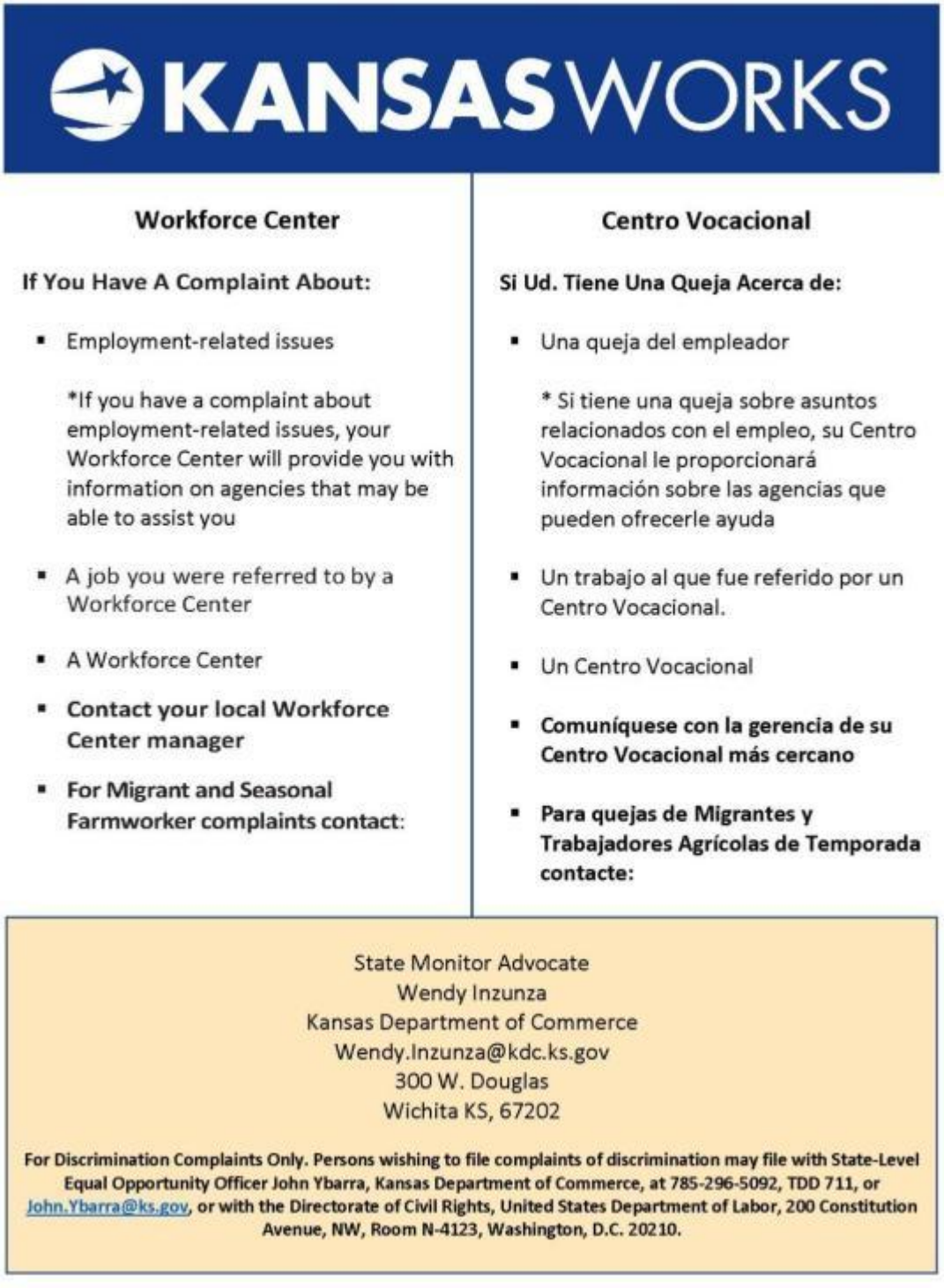
An Agricultural Employer Outreach plan has also been developed, which will be a benefit to the employers as well as helping to identify farmworkers and make sure they have the knowledge of resources available to them. Upon implementation, this outreach plan will involve having Department of Commerce personnel participate in events like agricultural expos. Furthermore, leveraging collaborations with agricultural entities such as Farm Bureau and the Kansas Department of Agriculture, we aim to disseminate information about our employer services through their newsletters and other promotional materials. This strategic plan aims to foster connections between the state and agricultural employers, as well as organizations offering services to such employers. By doing so, the state can extend AJC services to both employers and farmworkers, concurrently enhancing awareness of AJC programs and resources within the agricultural sector.

B. MARKETING THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE COMPLAINT SYSTEM TO FARMWORKERS AND OTHER FARMWORKER ADVOCACY GROUPS

The marketing of the Employment Service Complaint System is provided by the SWA.

Leadership provides employment services training to all Workforce Center staff, which includes

Outreach Worker and MSFW subject matter experts. In addition to the general Employment Service Complaint System training, the Outreach Worker and MSFW subject matter experts will continue to receive training on relevant information revolving around employment service and employment related laws complaints. This could include, but not be limited to, Human Trafficking, Wage and Hour forums and Immigrant and Employee Rights Webinars. This training will allow staff to be better versed in the complaint system and include it in any presentations they are doing with farmworkers or farmworker advocacy groups. Outreach Worker and SME's provide resources and information about the Employment Service Complaint System in person, by phone or email, based on what best serves the farmworker availability. The state has added the ES Complaint system to the Commerce website. The state utilizes the ETA-approved Complaint System poster.



C. MARKETING THE AGRICULTURAL RECRUITMENT SYSTEM FOR U.S. WORKERS (ARS) TO AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH PUBLICITY.

Kansas is rebuilding the Agricultural Recruitment System. Technical assistance has been provided by the SMA and covered the benefits of the system and necessary information to

assist in the process. Staff who will be trained include Workforce Center Leadership, One-stop Operations managers, Outreach staff, Workforce Center staff and relevant partners.
State Workforce agencies are in the process of identifying and determining how to best coordinate limited resources to improve promotion of the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) to employers for little or no cost. Additionally, Commerce is the state agency which provides foreign labor certification and the system for receiving VISA applications for agricultural work. This activity gives Commerce staff the unique ability to know who the H-2A employers are and to be able to rekindle the relationship of providing employer services to them and inform them of the ability to recruit across the state and in neighboring states.

The State will promote the ARS through Employer Information sessions coordinated by each local area as appropriate for the agricultural providers in their area. These sessions may be held in person or virtually.

The state will also seek to partner with other agriculture related agencies to promote the ARS and Commerce's employer services at events, through marketing materials and ag related journals, or by providing information for agencies to share with their patrons. Suggested agencies are Farm Bureau, County Extension Offices, USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), Kansas Cooperative Council, and the Kansas Grain and Feed Association.

In addition to promotion through printed materials, the state will seek to partner with existing events to host a booth at farm trade shows, state and local fairs, and the 3i show to inform agricultural employers of the services available to them through the Workforce System.

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. *SIGNIFICANT MSFW ONE-STOP CENTER STAFFING*. IF THE SWA HAS SIGNIFICANT MSFW ONE-STOP CENTERS, DESCRIBE HOW THE SWA INTENDS TO PROVIDE ES STAFF IN THE SIGNIFICANT MSFW ONE-STOP CENTERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH 20 CFR 653.111.

Kansas has four designated significant MSFW American Job Centers (AJCs) located in Dodge City, Garden City, Great Bend, and Hays. The State Workforce Agency (SWA) ensures that Employment Service (ES) staff assigned to these centers are sufficient in number and appropriately trained to provide effective, equitable services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs), in accordance with 20 CFR § 653.111.

ES staff in significant MSFW centers are locally based and have direct familiarity with the agricultural economy, including farm work common to their communities. Many staff have personal or family experience with agricultural employment, which supports culturally competent service delivery and effective engagement with MSFW customers. Participant data and coordination with the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) indicate that the majority of MSFWs served in these areas are domestic, seasonal agricultural workers who are Caucasian, English-speaking, and reside within the local communities.

ES staff provide the full range of Wagner-Peyser services, including job referral, labor exchange, outreach, and coordination of supportive and career services through referrals to WIOA partners.

B. *COLLABORATION*. DESCRIBE ANY COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENTS THE SWA HAS WITH OTHER MSFW SERVICE PROVIDERS INCLUDING NFJP GRANTEES AND OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS. DESCRIBE HOW THE SWA INTENDS TO BUILD UPON/INCREASE COLLABORATION WITH EXISTING PARTNERS AND ESTABLISH NEW PARTNERS OVER

THE NEXT FOUR YEARS (INCLUDING ANY APPROXIMATE TIMELINES FOR ESTABLISHING AGREEMENTS OR BUILDING UPON EXISTING AGREEMENTS).

The state has a formal MOU with the NFJP grantee SER. The SMA has an active role in helping the SWA and SER (NFJP Grantee) with their collaboration goal of improving the delivery of service to MSFWs. The SMA has joined SER staff meetings in person or via web-meeting when appropriate for data sharing and outreach updates. The SMA will offer SWA leadership participation for these meetings.

The SWAs are seeking to further develop relationships with SER by creating direct linkages of MSFW between agencies. SWA staff will also pursue meetings and cross-trainings with SER. This will provide for more targeted referrals and result in MSFWs obtaining more customized staff-assisted service.

SWA outreach staff will also continue to cultivate relationships with ag employers to educate them on services available to employers and their MSFWs through the SWA.

C. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

IN DEVELOPING THE AOP, THE SWA MUST SOLICIT INFORMATION AND SUGGESTIONS FROM NFJP GRANTEES, OTHER APPROPRIATE MSFW GROUPS, PUBLIC AGENCIES, AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, AND OTHER INTERESTED ORGANIZATIONS. IN ADDITION, AT LEAST 45 CALENDAR DAYS BEFORE SUBMITTING ITS FINAL AOP, THE SWA MUST PROVIDE A PROPOSED PLAN TO NFJP GRANTEES, PUBLIC AGENCIES, AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS EXPRESSING AN INTEREST AND ALLOW AT LEAST 30 DAYS FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT. THE SWA MUST: 1) CONSIDER ANY COMMENTS RECEIVED IN FORMULATING ITS FINAL PROPOSED AOP; 2) INFORM ALL COMMENTING PARTIES IN WRITING WHETHER THEIR COMMENTS HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED AND, IF NOT, THE REASONS THEREFORE; AND 3) TRANSMIT THE COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS RECEIVED AND ITS RESPONSES WITH THE SUBMISSION OF THE AOP.

1. THE AOP MUST INCLUDE A STATEMENT CONFIRMING NFJP GRANTEES, OTHER APPROPRIATE MSFW GROUPS, PUBLIC AGENCIES, AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER INTERESTED EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS HAVE BEEN GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE AOP. INCLUDE THE LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS FROM WHICH INFORMATION AND SUGGESTIONS WERE SOLICITED, ANY COMMENTS RECEIVED, AND RESPONSES TO THOSE COMMENTS.

SER Corporation – KS, the designated National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) provider in Kansas was consulted during the development of this plan.

D. DATA ASSESSMENT

REVIEW THE PREVIOUS FOUR YEARS WAGNER-PEYSER ACT DATA REPORTS ON PERFORMANCE. NOTE WHETHER THE STATE HAS BEEN MEETING ITS GOALS TO PROVIDE MSFWS QUANTITATIVELY PROPORTIONATE SERVICES AS COMPARED TO NON-MSFWS. IF IT HAS NOT MET THESE GOALS, EXPLAIN WHY THE STATE BELIEVES SUCH GOALS WERE NOT MET AND HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO IMPROVE ITS PROVISION OF SERVICES IN ORDER TO MEET SUCH GOALS.

The primary data source for the Kansas Department of Commerce's AOP is the data collected through kansasworks.com called the Monitor Advocate Report. This report allows the comparison of services provided to MSFW verses non-MSFW. Data is not available in this system prior to PY 21-22. The goal is for MSFW service levels to be equal to or greater than the service levels of non-MSFW. In the tables below, this is reflected in the Equity Indicator. If the Equity Indicator is equal to or greater than zero, this shows service levels to MSWF was equal to or better than services to non-MSFW. If the Equity Indicator is less than zero, this indicates that services to MSWF was below services to non-MSFW. Therefore, any negative numbers within the data below shows where the service level goals were not met. However, a combined look at all significant services delivered over a year is the Overall Equity Indicator. This measure shows the overall annual performance for all services combined and gives a better look at the overall equity of services.

PY 2021	Non-MSFW	MSFW	Equity Indicator
Basic Career Services	99.30	100.0%	+0.70
Staff Assisted Career Guidance	10.08%	21.43%	+10.63
Staff Assisted Job Search Activities	22.81%	21.43%	-1.38
Referred to Employment	19.10%	21.43%	+2.33
Placed in Non-Ag Employment	68%	61.54%	-6.46
Overall 2021 Equity Indicator			**+.1 total**
Median Earnings of Individuals in Unsubsidized Employment	$7,464	$7467	+$3

PY 2022	Non-MSFW	MSFW	Equity Indicator
Basic Career Services	99.11%	100%	+0.89
Staff Assisted Career Guidance	10.18%	7.14%	-3.04
Staff Assisted Job Search Activities	20.58%	28.57%	+8.0
Referred to Employment	18.05%	14.29%	-3.76
Placed in Non-Ag Employment	77.72%	41.67%	-36.05
Overall 2022 Equity Indicator			**+.10 total**
Median Earnings of Individuals in Unsubsidized Employment	$8,820.36	$9097.52	+$277

Enhancements in staff training and personalized support for MSFWs in job searches have played a pivotal role in the improvement of these metrics. Due to the complexities introduced by COVID-19 in recent years, coupled with the transition of data tracking processes and low outreach, interpretation of the data remains a challenging task. Nonetheless, an examination of the Median Earnings measure highlights that when staff assisted MSFWs in securing

employment, the obtained jobs were markedly superior compared to those secured by non-MSFWs.

In the upcoming period, additional training will be provided to all AJC staff, emphasizing the importance of accurately recording services for MSFWs and delivering services in an equitable manner. Specialized training will also be conducted to enable AJC staff to identify MSFWs efficiently. The SMA will be providing an annual MSFW training to WFC leadership that will cover MSFW's for better identifying demographics and data collection. From that training, leadership will develop their own training to provide to staff in the AJCs to continue to improve the accuracy of data collection.

The Monitor Advocate Report summarized below demonstrates the number of applicants that received services for MSFWs compared to non-MSFW:

Wagner-Peyser Participant by calendar year	**Non-MSFW**	**MSFW**	**Total Participants**
2021	14,603	53	14,656
2022	21,689	49	21,738
2023	24,464	47	24,511

Pursuant to 20 CFR 653.109 (h) Only significant MSFW SWAs will be required to meet minimum levels of service to MSFWs. 20 CFR 653.109 (g) SWAs must meet equity indicators that address ES controllable services and include, at a minimum, individuals referred to a job, receiving job development, and referred to supportive or career services.
Kansas is not a Significant State.

Through a process of self-monitoring and manual review, the SWA determined that the current Equity Ratio reports pull information from a limited set of enrollment data, which fails to capture the comprehensive range of services MSFWs receive across various integrated programs. This "mapping gap" means that even when staff provide the necessary services to customers, those interactions are not always being credited toward the state's equity ratios. Consequently, the performance reports often reflect an under-representation of the state's actual efforts and successes in serving the MSFW population.

The Data Program Manager is working with our provider, AJLA, to create mapping for Equity Ratios that accurately reflects the scope of Job Service activity statewide.

E. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

THE PLAN MUST INCLUDE AN EXPLANATION OF WHAT WAS ACHIEVED BASED ON THE PREVIOUS AOP, WHAT WAS NOT ACHIEVED AND AN EXPLANATION AS TO WHY THE STATE BELIEVES THE GOALS WERE NOT ACHIEVED, AND HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO REMEDY THE GAPS OF ACHIEVEMENT IN THE COMING YEAR.

During the last plan, Commerce moved the SMA from the Compliance Unit in the Legal Division to the Workforce Services Division under the Director of Workforce Services. The new assignment of a fulltime SMA within the Workforce Services Division has greatly improved the Monitor Advocate system, and the use and analysis of data pertaining to MSFW outcomes. This has provided for more direct oversight and delivery of the program components at the SWA level.

Monitoring reviews from the SMA have shown progress in the understanding of the MSFW population and the Complaint System. Additional training is still needed, but an increased awareness among staff in these areas is becoming apparent. SMA worked with the state Policy Manager and Workforce Services Director to complete a state policy for the Complaint System. This policy will be incorporated into future trainings for AJC staff.

During the last plan, outreach activities were limited due to no designated outreach workers at the local level. Since then, there has been a refocus within the state to assign the appropriate number of outreach workers or MSFW subject matter experts within each local area. These staff have received training and are now able to provide support to the Outreach Worker in their respective local areas.

Since the last plan, all Workforce Center staff have been offered MSFW related training and are beginning to show an increase in knowledge in covering the MSFW demographics question in kansasworks.com. Additionally, Kansas revised the MSFW demographics question on kansasworks.com. This modification aims to provide greater clarity regarding the definition of MSFW and improve the accuracy of data capture pertaining to this demographic group. Complaint system training and MSFW related training is also offered in the Program Specialist Registered Apprenticeship program.

As outlined in 653.108 each local area is required to collect their region's MSFW data and analyze how service delivery compares to non-MSFWs and to report Complaint System results in their region. The state has established a quarterly self-monitoring procedure that has helped identify opportunities and areas of growth. Workforce Center leadership reviewed the self-monitoring document and made updates to ease in its use. WFC leadership also updated the Outreach Worker logs and monthly report templates. Training was provided to staff on the use of the updated forms.

Over the last few years, the training, guidance, and technical assistance provided from the SMA has helped leadership and staff learn about the important role the Monitor Advocate System plays within the Wagner-Peyser program and core mission of WIOA. Kansas will continue to strive to provide the best services to MSFWs.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

The State Monitor Advocate has reviewed, provided input to, and approved this Agricultural Outreach Plan.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time (sec 121(e)(3));	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
2. If the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111, State Workforce Agency staffing requirements;	Yes
3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser Act services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and	Yes
4. SWA officials: 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services; 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued; 3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued; 4) Approve corrective action plans; 5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days; 6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and 7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing.	Yes
5. The SWA has established and maintains a self-appraisal system for ES operations to determine success in reaching goals and to correct deficiencies in performance (20 CFR 658.601).	Yes

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to adult education and literacy programs and activities under Title II of WIOA, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

Describe how the eligible agency has aligned its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).

Kansas WIOA Title II uses the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), a subset of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) adopted by the Kansas Department of Education for K-12 students. The CCRS for Adult Education are a subset of the CCSS, selected by a panel of representatives from the fields of Adult Education, community colleges, career and technical training, and the military, charged by the U.S. Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) to identify which of the CCSS were most essential for college and career readiness and important to adult students. The standards included in the CCRS for Adult Education were adopted from the CCSS as written, except where examples were adapted to be more appropriate for adults or where the original standards made specific references to school grades or children. Kansas WIOA Title II also uses the English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards for Adult Education for English learners. The ELP Standards correspond to the CCRS for English Language Arts and Literacy, and Mathematical and Science Practices. Kansas requires that curriculum for Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), English Language Acquisition (ELA), and Integrated Education and Training (IET) must demonstrate CCRS or ELP alignment.

Content on the GED® test is also based on career- and college-ready content standards and includes normed levels to demonstrate when test-passers have achieved “college ready” scores, which are equivalent to the performance of the top quartile of the national average of graduating high school seniors. Kansas is thus encouraging the use of multiple placement measures, including GED® scores, in the indicators postsecondary institutions use to determine college readiness and course placement. This can eliminate the need for an additional placement exam, reducing costs for institutions and learners and accelerating entry into postsecondary education.

B. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of these local activities.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

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

- Family literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that—

1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Special Rule. Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

The Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR), the state's passthrough agency for WIOA Title II, accepts applications for multiyear grants for the purpose of establishing or operating programs to provide the activities described in WIOA Section 203 to eligible individuals. Any combination of allowable activities may be considered, and all entities identified in 34 CFR 463.23 may apply. The current five-year grant period began July 1, 2025, and ends June 30, 2030.

The application process for funding under WIOA Section 231, WIOA Section 225, and WIOA Section 243 is the same, with a separate but near-identical application form for each section. (Any differences are due to requirements unique to each section as described in WIOA and in 34 CFR 463.) Grant competitions are run in accordance with 34 CFR 463 Subpart C and are aligned with federal guidance. All potential applicants receive the same form, same instructions, and same access to ask questions and view the response on the public-facing website per the published schedule. Each applicant must address the 13 considerations specified in WIOA Section 231.

Eligible individuals are defined as individuals who are 16 years of age or older; not currently enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law; lack a high school diploma or equivalent, need to learn English as a non-native language, and/or need to increase basic skills; and are eligible for federal benefits, including adult education. The process for disseminating grant information, reviewing and scoring applications, and ensuring direct and equitable access to all potential providers is described under Distribution of Funds.

To be considered eligible for funding, applicants must establish demonstrated effectiveness, which includes outcomes for improving skills in reading, writing, mathematics, English language acquisition, and other subjects; employment outcomes; attainment of secondary school credentials or the equivalent; and transition to postsecondary education and training. Methods for demonstrating effectiveness were provided both for potential applicants who had previously been funded under WIOA Title II and potential applicants who had not previously been funded

under WIOA Title II. Grant applications were shared with the appropriate Local Boards to determine consistency with local plans.

Applicants for funding included descriptions of methods planned to maintain and increase levels of performance for primary indicators. The 13 considerations were major factors in determining grant awards. These include responsiveness to regional needs and serving learners most in need, especially individuals with low levels of literacy, English learners, and individuals with disabilities. All services must be of sufficient intensity and duration to assist learners in achieving educational goals, using research-based best practices. Integrated Education and Training (IET) opportunities are expanding, and all applicants described past effectiveness and future plans for serving eligible individuals in IET. Local program staff meet minimum education qualifications, and all AEFLA-funded staff must meet annual requirements for professional development. Each local program must coordinate with WIOA and other partners, including entering into a contract or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the area One-Stop that details the contributions and responsibilities of each partner. Providers offer access to supportive services and use the state data management system to enter and track student information.

All providers offer Adult Education and Literacy services, which include instruction in literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving at Educational Functioning Levels (EFLs) appropriate to learners. All providers will also offer Integrated Education and Training (IET) and/or Workplace Literacy, concurrently and contextually teaching basic skills, workplace preparation skills, and occupationally specific training or training tailored to the needs of a local employer. These activities may be conducted in partnership with employers or postsecondary institutions. Providers with a need in the local area will also offer English Language Acquisition (ELA) services, which include instruction in English reading, writing, speaking, and listening at EFLs appropriate to learners. Family Literacy activities may be provided if there is demonstrated need in the area and if the local program has the internal capacity or appropriate partnerships in place to offer literacy activities between adults and children, training for parents or caregivers about their roles as the primary teachers of their children and full partners in the education of their children, and age-appropriate education to prepare children for success, in addition to academic skills for parents or caregivers.

Applicants partnering with facilities or other agencies to provide corrections education were eligible to apply for funding under WIOA Section 225, following the same application process. Applicants demonstrated need and described the partnerships in place to provide Adult Education and Literacy services to justice-involved eligible individuals. Applicants with need in the local area for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) were eligible to apply for funding under WIOA Section 243, following the same application process. IELCE is described further in the IELCE Program section.

For all activities, outcomes are demonstrated by learner progress, milestones, and achievements, including EFL gains, secondary diplomas, Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs), postsecondary credentials, and other measurable progress, including outcomes specific to IELCE and Family Literacy participants. Grant recipients annually report progress, successes, and challenges to the state; the state monitors local programs annually and throughout each program year to ensure grant compliance and quality of service.

Kansas WIOA Title II policies describe allowable costs under AEFLA and direct grant recipients to the Code of Federal Regulations for further information. Grant recipients annually submit proposed budgets to the state for spending WIOA Section 231, WIOA Section 225, and WIOA Section 243 funds to carry out required activities. A maximum of five percent of federal funds

can be used for administrative costs, except if the local provider negotiates with the state to determine an adequate level of funds used for non-instructional purposes. Any modifications to budgets of 10 percent or greater must have prior approval from the state before being enacted.

C. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund eligible providers to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following correctional educational programs identified in section 225 of WIOA:

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

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

During the competitive application process described under Distribution of Funds, eligible agencies may also apply for funds to establish or operate correctional education programs identified in WIOA Section 225, either alone or in combination with funding under WIOA Section 231 and/or WIOA Section 243. The grant periods of performance are the same. The current five-year competitive grant began July 1, 2025, and seven (7) providers were awarded WIOA Section 225 funding.

Applicants provided documented evidence of demonstrated effectiveness and addressed the 13 considerations described in WIOA Section 231. Kansas designated three percent of WIOA Section 231 funds to be used for activities under WIOA Section 225. Subawardees were awarded funds, based on need and enrollment, to establish and operate programs that provide correctional education services.

Providers offer Adult Education and Literacy activities, along with—as needed—secondary credential preparation, English Language Acquisition (ELA), and Integrated Education and Training (IET), including career pathways. Providers may also offer special education instruction, peer tutoring, transition to re-entry or post release activities, or any combination of these services depending on the needs of eligible individuals and the partnership of the correctional institution.

Participants must meet the eligibility requirements for Adult Education. Eligible individuals are defined as individuals who are 16 years of age or older; not currently enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law; lack a high school diploma or equivalent, need to

learn English as a non-native language, and/or need to increase basic skills; and are eligible for federal benefits, including adult education. Priority of service will be given to individuals likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

Considering the barriers justice-involved individuals experience in obtaining employment post release, career pathways are highly valued in corrections education. The Kansas Department of Corrections supplies a dedicated Career Navigator for each state facility. This position is designed to help guide learners through education and employment training pathways and to assist with transitioning after release.

D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund eligible providers to establish or operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) programs under section 243 of WIOA. Describe how adult English language learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, are served in IELCE programs.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be offered in combination with integrated education and training activities found in 34 CFR section 463.36.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund eligible providers to establish or operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) programs under section 243 of WIOA. Describe how adult English language learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, are served in IELCE programs.

Following the process detailed under Distribution of Funds, applicants may apply for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IECLE) funding under WIOA Section 243, either alone or in combination with funding under WIOA Section 231 and/or WIOA Section 225. The grant periods of performance are the same. The current five-year competitive grant began July 1, 2025, and six (6) providers were awarded IELCE funding. Applicants needed to demonstrate effectiveness in serving eligible individuals and address the 13 considerations described in WIOA Section 231. Need in the service area was evaluated before awarding IELCE funding.

All IELCE participants are concurrently engaged in English Language Acquisition (ELA), instruction on the rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizenship and civic participation, and workforce or occupational training. Eligible individuals are English learners who are interested

in a career pathway for which the provider offers Integrated Education and Training (IET) services, in addition to meeting all eligibility requirements for WIOA Title II services. IET pathways vary among providers, depending on the need in the local area and in response to interest from learners and from business and industry. Common pathways include healthcare, transportation, and welding.

IELCE participants are initially assessed for English reading and listening ability and placed into classes to meet their instructional level. Civics instruction is tailored to appropriate learning levels and includes instruction on U.S. government and history, community resources, culture and customs, and other skills needed to function as a citizen or resident of the United States, including digital skills. Workplace preparation includes not only occupational training, but also instruction in work readiness skills, workplace culture and etiquette, and job-seeking skills.

Professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries are eligible for IELCE. Kansas has provided initial training for serving Internationally Trained Professionals (ITPs) and is progressing toward full implementation of services specifically for Internationally Educated Nurses. Services may include intensive academic English and career navigation. Kansas permits providers to use funding to assist ITPs with foreign degree evaluation to achieve the purpose of an IET pathway, if such costs are reasonable, necessary, allocable, and in accordance with OCTAE Program Memorandum 19-2.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be offered in combination with integrated education and training activities found in 34 CFR section 463.36.

In Kansas, all IELCE participants are also IET participants. Participants engage concurrently and contextually in Adult Education and Literacy activities, which include English language instruction and may also include preparation for a secondary credential; civics education; workforce preparation activities; and workforce training for specific occupations or occupational clusters.

Common career fields in Kansas include healthcare, transportation, welding, construction, HVAC, and manufacturing. In addition to occupational training, courses for career exploration, introduction to career pathways, and employment readiness training are also offered throughout the state. Local programs integrate technology and hands-on tools whenever possible to increase opportunities for participants.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation.

Kansas programs offer high-quality English Language Acquisition (ELA) instruction, as demonstrated by Educational Functioning Level (EFL) gains and Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs). IELCE providers integrate instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation into their courses. Examples include hosting multicultural community events; understanding community resources; and practicing language needed for parent-teacher conferences.

Progress and achievements in increasing literacy and English language skills will continue to be measured with EFL gains and MSGs. Kansas is in the process of developing a standardized civics assessment, which will allow participants to demonstrate their knowledge of U.S. history and

government, along with demonstrating understanding of civic responsibilities. Achievement of civics skills will be documented in the state data management system.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

IELCE programs provide English language and civics instruction in combination with IET services. IET programs are in high-demand industries and occupations for the region or local area, with preference given to high-wage careers or careers that lead to economic self-sufficiency. One of the major IET initiatives in Kansas is Accelerating Opportunity: Kansas (AO-K), which combines Adult Education and Career Technical Education (CTE) to ensure participants exit the program with increased skills and an occupational certificate or credential for the individual's desired career.

To help students succeed, IELCE programs offer supportive, wraparound services to assist students in overcoming barriers to entry into the pathway and into the workforce. Career Navigators, Student Success Coaches, and other similar positions work individually with learners to provide personalized support and guidance. Community, industry, and educational partners, including CTE providers, are another source of support for IELCE programs and their participants, which help individuals complete training and enter unsubsidized employment.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.
In the grant application and in subsequent annual reports, providers must describe the alignment of services with local plans and detail how partnerships with the local workforce development system ensure efficient delivery of services to eligible individuals. WIOA Title II providers are part of each area's One-Stop contract or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which includes documented plans for direct linkages among partners, a description of the responsibilities and services of each partner, and a division of infrastructure costs. IELCE participants can co-enroll with partners, if eligible, to ensure individuals are receiving services to meet their specific needs. Even IELCE participants who are not co-enrolled frequently receive assistance from the area One-Stop, as partners coordinate job fairs, employment presentations, and workshops designed to increase workforce preparation. Integration with the workforce development system also assists in identifying business and industry partners for onsite training, financial support, referrals and placement, and other benefits.

E. STATE LEADERSHIP

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT THE REQUIRED STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA

State leadership funds are used to develop Adult Education activities and enhance the Adult Education system in the state. Staff funded with state leadership funds engage with the Kansas State Plan Management Team, a group of partners that work to align services across the core titles. Increased cross-training among Core partners will provide more access to participants to receive the assistance of other services, including employment and training services. WIOA Title II coordinates with Career Technical Education (CTE) to develop career pathways for eligible individuals; increased coordination will support additional opportunities for Kansans to access high-quality education and training and enter in-demand careers that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

State leadership funds will continue to be used to support needed professional development activities, including evidence-based reading instruction (EBRI); pedagogy and andragogy and the instruction of adults; digital literacy, skills, and resilience; instructional differentiation for the specific needs of learners; data collection and reporting; federal and state policies; and additional assistance requested by local providers or identified as a need in the state. Quarterly meetings between state staff and relevant local staff are opportunities to disseminate promising practices for IET development, career navigation, and data collection and reporting. Professional development opportunities will be available both virtually and in-person, with the state exploring innovative uses of technology to deliver timely, beneficial professional learning opportunities.

Technical assistance is provided based on requests from local providers or needs observed by the state. The annual risk-based assessment provides additional insight regarding necessary technical assistance. The state has increased the inclusion of one-stop partners at statewide meetings, both virtual and in-person, to help local providers understand their role in the one-stop system. This collaboration will continue, as the state streamlines and increases integration, unifying services for overall system efficiency. Technology training, especially for the new WIOA Title II state data management system, will continue; during the first year of deployment, monthly webinars are being provided, recorded and shared both via email and in an online repository for future reference.

State staff paid by leadership funds will monitor and evaluate WIOA Title II programs and activities at the state and local level. Monitoring includes checking the quality, accuracy, and timeliness of data entry for all providers at least quarterly and for extremely in-depth reviews for a small number of providers monthly. Local providers track employee time and effort and submit reports on a monthly basis. Each quarter, expenditure reports are submitted to the state by local providers, and progress on primary indicators is checked. Annually, local providers complete a Continuation Funding Application, and all programs are assessed for the risk of noncompliance each year, described more fully in the Assessing Quality section.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE

In addition to supporting the required state leadership activities, Kansas will use funds for permissible state leadership activities that will increase access to education and employment opportunities and support the development and delivery of high-quality services. Kansas WIOA Title II will be launching an initiative called ROSA (Remote Opportunities for Student Access) as a distance education hub, aiding local providers in using technology to best meet needs across the state by matching learners with the courses available at times that fit the learner's schedule. Kansas also strongly encourages all subrecipients to have one or more dedicated Career Navigators (also called Transition Coaches, Success Counselors, and other titles) to support learners in transitioning seamlessly to postsecondary education or training and in entering or advancing in employment. All local providers offer these services, and many already have this as a dedicated role; the state will continue to encourage the expansion of these services, in coordination with postsecondary advisers, who work closely with many local programs.

As more subrecipients partner with local employers for workplace adult education and literacy activities, Kansas expects these partnerships will continue to grow. Workplace adult education and literacy is a flexible model for workforce innovation that can scale quickly to meet the needs of employers, increasing worker mobility by helping them build industry-driven skills. Kansas will explore ways to increase outreach to employers and to support local providers as they build labor force connections. In addition, tools such as Unite Us, an online integrated network of

resource agencies, can be used to connect learners with partner organizations, streamlining the service system and increasing accountability for follow-up.

F. ASSESSING QUALITY

Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II. Describe how the eligible agency will take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA. Describe how the eligible agency will use evaluations, data analysis, program monitoring, or other methods to improve the quality of adult education activities in the State.

To ensure quality programming, the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) conducts onsite monitoring visits for multiple local providers each program year. Depending on the number of local providers, it is possible not all providers will be visited during a five-year grant cycle. During program monitoring, KBOR staff will visit with program directors and other staff members to discuss program activities, instruction, performance outcomes, data collection, professional development activities, and other areas of program management and delivery. Program activities are evaluated in the context of needs in the local area, with performance outcomes meeting or exceeding state goals serving as an indicator of quality. The state reviews curriculum alignment with the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) or English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards, the methods of instructional delivery, the instructional levels available to learners entering with a variety of abilities, and the process of teacher observation and evaluation used by the local program. Monitoring results, including findings, recommendations, and promising practices, are shared with local program directors and with the head of the sponsoring institution. Documentation of corrections and responses to recommendations are required within 60 days.

In addition, KBOR conducts an annual risk assessment for all programs, measuring actions and outcomes that may place programs at increased risk of noncompliance. Categories of assessment include the degree to which local providers have met or exceeded performance targets; failure to follow federal, state, or grant guidelines; audit findings; new or changed systems; failure to meet deadlines; prior grant experience; and other assessments of potential risk for noncompliance or decreased program quality. Based on the risk assessment, subrecipients might receive technical assistance from the state, might be required to do additional reporting, might have further monitoring, might need to provide more detailed financial information prior to receiving grant funds, or might engage in other corrective action as described in 2 CFR § 200.208, depending on the areas of concern. Other remedies for noncompliance, as described in 2 CFR § 200.339, would be instituted for providers failing to meet these requirements.

The state conducts multiple less formal program assessments throughout the year to guide programs, provide assistance, and identify potential issues. Data accuracy, compliance, and outcomes are reviewed at least quarterly, with in-depth data reviews for a small number of programs each month. Funding and spending for each program are evaluated quarterly, with regular and consistent spending indicating programming is proceeding as planned, while delayed spending might indicate the program has been unable to start or continue certain activities. Feedback and assistance are provided to subrecipients as often as needed.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;	Yes
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;	Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;	Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;	Yes
5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;	Yes
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;	Yes
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and	Yes
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;	Yes

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding the supplement-not-supplant requirement);	Yes
2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;	Yes
3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under Title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not “eligible individuals” within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA;	
4. Using funds made available under Title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.	Yes
5. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).	Yes

AUTHORIZING OR CERTIFYING REPRESENTATIVE CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Please download and sign the forms below. Please scan and return the forms to wioa@ed.gov at the same time you submit your State Plan via the portal.

1. SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)
2. Grants.gov - Certification Regarding Lobbying (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)
3. SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (required, only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)

APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION	**Enter information in this column**
Applicant's Organization	Kansas Board of Regents
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	**Enter information in this column**
First Name	Hector
Last Name	Martinez
Title	Director for Adult Education
Email	hmartinez@ksbor.org

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

OMB Control Number 1894-0005 Expiration 02/28/2026

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA Section 427 Form Instructions for State Applicants

State applicants must respond to the following four questions:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

• Applicants identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.

• Applicants use the associated text box to respond to each question. However, applicants might have already included some or all this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) in their State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.

• Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity to apply.

• Applicants that have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

• Applicants that believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

GEPA Section 427 Instructions to State Applicants for their Subrecipient Applicants

The State grantee provides a subrecipient applicant seeking Federal assistance instructions and guidance for how it must comply with the GEPA Section 427 requirement. The State grantee determines the form and content of the information a subrecipient applicant must include in its application regarding the steps it proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, its local-level project or activity. For example:

• The State grantee may require its subrecipient applicant to use and submit the GEPA Section 427 form that it is required to submit to the Department; or

• The State grantee may use a State-developed form that is sufficient to meet the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

• The State grantee maintains the subrecipient applicants' responses in the State office.

Please refer to GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

1. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ENTITY'S EXISTING MISSION, POLICIES, OR COMMITMENTS ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN, THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The first of four questions is:

Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

The Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) is committed to serving an academically, culturally, and racially diverse population. KBOR's policy of nondiscrimination guides and governs decision-making at all levels. KBOR does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, or any other status or classification protected by federal, state, or local law. To the fullest extent possible, KBOR will ensure equitable access to and participation in educational opportunities.

The Kansas state Adult Education mission statement is "Kansas Adult Education empowers learners to elevate their quality of life through education, training, and personal growth." This speaks to the commitment to meet students where they are, to help them determine their individual goals, and to support them in achieving those goals. To provide equitable access, Kansas Adult Education policies clearly state the requirements for receiving services. All individuals meeting minimal requirements are welcome in Adult Education, regardless of background or demographic profile. All programs are held to the same standards for curriculum and for service delivery, ensuring equitable participation.

2. BASED ON YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY, WHAT BARRIERS MAY IMPEDE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, OR OTHER BENEFICIARIES?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The second of four questions is:

Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

Adult Education assists populations that often face multiple barriers to participation in education or the workforce. Kansas has identified the following barriers and potential barriers.

- Economic Disadvantage – Economic disadvantage can be a barrier in multiple aspects, including the need to work superseding participation in education, less control over work schedules, and "odd jobs" or occasional "gigs" occurring irregularly and interfering with scheduled services. Most Adult Education providers in Kansas also charge an enrollment fee, which may be a barrier for low-income individuals.
- Rural Status – With many rural areas in the state, Kansas finds multiple barriers to entry and participation associated with rural status. Access to an Adult Education location and lack of reliable high-speed internet are the principal challenges seen among learners.
- Transportation – Transportation is a barrier strongly but not solely connected with low-income individuals and individuals living in rural areas. As a state, Kansas has few regions with robust public-transportation systems, and some areas lack them altogether. Even in cities with bus lines, students might be challenged by the bus schedule not aligning with class schedules, buses not running in the evening, or by the cost of riding.
- Parenting or Caregiving Status – Another barrier frequently associated with low-income and rural statuses is parenting or caregiving status. However, in recent years, childcare providers have decreased in the state, and the cost of childcare has risen, impacting individuals in all areas of the state, including urban areas, and affecting individuals at nearly all economic levels. Parents or caregivers of dependent children might lack adequate childcare during scheduled services or might have unexpected challenges or needs arise related to the child(ren)'s in their care.
- Gender – Gender is not a significant barrier to entry in Kansas Adult Education. Each program year, female and male participant categories each represent close to 50% of all participants, demonstrating the state is reaching male and female learners. Gender is a potential barrier for entry into certain career fields that are typically dominated by one gender.
- Gender Identity – Gender identity is a potential barrier, especially for individuals who are non-binary, gender fluid, or other. Barriers exist in data collection and reporting, with current federal reports only allowing for "female" and "male" categories. This same barrier exists when legal identification is required, such as for GED® testing, which is also a barrier for individuals who have transitioned or are transitioning and whose official identification does not match the person's identity. Possible non-inclusive facilities at local provider sites are a potential barrier, as are potential negative attitudes or actions from staff or fellow learners (whether anticipated or perceived).
- Race, Ethnicity, and Color – Adult Education serves a diverse population that reflects the demographics of the state, and thus race, ethnicity, and color are not considered significant barriers.

- National Origin and Culture – National origin and culture are potential barriers, principally due to the possible lack of knowledge regarding Adult Education opportunities, the methods of entry, and/or the cultural norms and expectations while receiving services. Standardized tests may also exhibit cultural bias, resulting in a flawed or incomplete view of a learner's abilities and knowledge.
- Language – Kansas Adult Education providers find language to be one of the most significant barriers participants face. Over half of Adult Education participants have a native language other than English and represent dozens of languages. Challenges include disseminating understandable outreach information about services offered, ensuring the understanding of program requirements and safety information, and properly assessing student knowledge and abilities.
- Disability – Disabilities can represent a significant barrier and might include learning or cognitive disabilities, physical disabilities, and/or mental health or behavioral issues. Barriers include accessing services, engaging with services over time, and obtaining and providing documentation of disabilities needed for certain accommodations, particularly for taking the GED® Test.
- Age – Historically, age has not been a significant barrier to participation in Adult Education, which serves individuals from 16 years old to those 65 and older. In recent years, a barrier has arisen for minors struggling to obtain documentation to join Adult Education programs due to chronic absence of the legal guardian or other circumstances. These 16- and 17-year-olds also encounter a barrier in obtaining state-accepted identification for GED® testing if their birth certificates or other documents are not readily accessible.
- Migrant Status – Kansas Adult Education historically has few participants identifying as migrant workers. Kansas has an estimated 400 – 500 migrant out-of-school youth, and while numbers are difficult to ascertain, it is likely a similar number of migrant adults eligible for Adult Education services are in the state but are unable to enter programs due to lack of longevity in a single location, conflicting schedules, work or family pressures, or other challenges.
- Homeless Status or Housing Insecurity – Similar to migrant status, homeless status can be a significant barrier to receiving Adult Education services if individuals are inside a service area for a short period. Participants testing for GED® are required to show a valid state identification card and may have difficulty gathering the documentation needed to obtain the ID.
- Pregnancy and Chronic Health Conditions – Pregnancy is not a barrier that impacts a large number of Adult Education participants, but individuals who are pregnant may feel the need to stop receiving services or to delay starting. Individuals with chronic health conditions may struggle with attendance policies or with completing assignments.
- Sexual Orientation – Sexual orientation is not assessed as a significant barrier. No activities or services are predicated on sexual orientation, and no reports require the collection of this information.
- Justice-Involved – Justice-involved individuals within a facility might encounter barriers to entry if needed services are unavailable at that location. Non-institutionalized individuals might experience scheduling conflicts with Adult Education services and court-mandated activities.

- Low Levels of Literacy – Low levels of literacy can be a barrier to individuals seeking Adult Education services if outreach materials are not at an appropriate reading level, limiting the ability of individuals with low literacy to enter programs.
- Religion – A learner's religious practices are a potential barrier if, for example, class schedules interfere with prayer times, attendance policies do not allow for absences on religious holidays, and/or proper sensitivity is not given to needs related to religious practices, such as periods of fasting.

3. BASED ON THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO ADDRESS SUCH BARRIERS TO EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The third of four questions is:

Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

Practices are in place to mitigate many barriers Adult Education participants encounter. The state also acknowledges that more can be done to assist learners in achieving their educational goals and intends to focus on needs that have not yet been addressed.

- Economic Disadvantage – Adult Education programs offer services at a variety of times to accommodate scheduling needs. In the past two years, more local programs have begun exploring weekend class options in addition to weekday mornings, afternoons, and evenings. All programs have attendance policies, but flexibility is provided with "make-up" days or online resources and assignments so individuals unexpectedly called away from class to work can continue to make educational progress. Almost all local programs charge an enrollment fee, but all have policies to waive or reduce the fee as needed.
- Rural Status – Currently, 20 Adult Education programs offer services at over 50 locations across the state. Online or remote options for study are available for students distant from one of these locations. Kansas Adult Education has also partnered with wireless internet carriers to obtain discounted hotspots and mobile devices to lend to students.
- Transportation – In areas with bus lines, programs somewhat mitigate transportation barriers by scheduling classes to align with the bus schedule and partnering with transportation providers to offer participants free or reduced fares. With many factors

outside the control of Adult Education, transportation continues to be an area for pursuing alternate options.

- Parenting or Caregiving Status – This is another area which is largely outside the control of Adult Education. Some programs have options to provide onsite childcare or to coordinate with local providers; others have facilities that enable children to attend classes with parents. Otherwise, programs demonstrate flexibility in scheduling and in attendance policies for individuals missing class due to childcare issues.

- Gender – Gender is not a significant barrier to participation in Adult Education. To mitigate the potential barrier in Career Technical Education, Kansas higher education markets career fields to underrepresented genders to encourage diverse enrollment in careers typically dominated by one gender.

- Gender Identity – Kansas's new data management system will have the option to report "non-binary" or "other" for gender. Issues such as location facilities and legal identification requirements are outside Adult Education practitioners' control, but diversity training can help practitioners ensure a welcoming environment, greater empathy and understanding when speaking with individuals, and increased confidence in advocating for student needs.

- Race, Ethnicity, and Color – Adult Education populations meet or exceed statewide demographics for all races and ethnicities apart from White alone, which is 74.3% of the state and an average of 33.6% of Adult Education participants. Hispanic/Latino participants are the largest group in Adult Education at an average of 41.4%, compared to 13% of the state population. Black or African American represents 6.2% of the state and 11.3% of Adult Education participants. Asian participants also far exceed the statewide percentage (7.6% compared to 3.2% in the state). Both American Indian and Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander reflect the statewide population at 1.1% (compared to 1.2% in the state) and 0.23% (compared to 0.2% in the state), respectively. Two or More Races slightly exceeds the state total of 3.3% with 4.6% of Adult Education participants.

- National Origin and Culture – Adult Education practitioners explain the policies, structures, and expectations of the program to all incoming students, in addition to clearly defining the steps to register or enroll in outreach materials. Advisors meet one-on-one with students and can further assist with any confusion about norms, expectations, and opportunities while receiving services. While NRS-approved tests are outside Adult Education's control, practitioners recognize that standardized tests are not the full measure of an individual's ability and use other means to activate prior knowledge and recognize the skills each learner brings to the classroom.

- Language – Adult Education provides substantial outreach in both English and Spanish, the most common languages in the state. Most programs have at least one bilingual staff member. Programs have safety and privacy information translated into multiple languages and use online and other tools for additional language support. Adult Education practitioners have received training in communicating across languages to ensure understanding.

- Disability – All individuals entering Adult Education are informed of the need to self-disclose disabilities. Program staff then meet individually with learners to determine needed accommodations, which are recorded and filed. At least monthly, staff connect

with learners to track progress and make updates to accommodations if needed. Simple accommodations not requiring documentation, such as colored overlays or private testing rooms, are offered to all learners. To the fullest extent possible, program staff assist learners in accessing supportive services and obtaining documentation to receive accommodations for the GED® Test.

- Age – Most of the barriers related to age are outside Adult Education's control. Practitioners clearly explain the steps for 16- and 17-year-olds to enroll and assist minors whenever possible in obtaining necessary documentation.
- Migrant Status and Homeless Status or Housing Insecurity – To assist individuals moving among different service areas, Adult Education policy allows initial assessments to be transferred to the new program so incoming learners do not need to duplicate these assessments. Adult Education programs are accustomed to serving adults with busy schedules who might need flexibility in services and thus offer classes at a variety of times. Remote and online options for study are also available. While documentation required to obtain an identification card is outside Adult Education's control, practitioners do as much as possible at the local level to connect individuals to supportive services.
- Pregnancy and Chronic Health Conditions – While all Adult Education programs have attendance policies, flexibility is built into such policies, especially for unusual circumstances. Participants are able to make up work on other days, meet with tutors, or complete assignments remotely. Individuals needing to "stop out" for more than 90 days are assured of a welcome when they are able to return.
- Justice-Involved – Adult Education partners with the Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) to provide services inside nine state correctional facilities. Local programs also partner with county jails, probation services, and drug/rehab services to serve other justice-involved individuals. Programs are accustomed to providing the scheduling flexibility adults need, especially for court-mandated appointments or activities.
- Low Levels of Literacy – Half of all Adult Education participants enter programs at the lowest levels of Adult Basic Education (ABE) or English Language Acquisition (ELA), demonstrating programs are reaching these learners. The state and local programs will review outreach materials to ensure readability and accessibility for all potential participants.
- Religion – Adult Education programs are accustomed to accommodating diverse needs, including allowing students to leave the classroom to pray, offering flexibility during religious holidays, and being sensitive to external events in individual's lives.

4. WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE, INCLUDING TARGETED MILESTONES, FOR ADDRESSING THESE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA*

Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The final of four questions is:

What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

Adult Education will continue many current practices to remain welcoming, supportive, and flexible to serve learners with barriers. For elements outside Adult Education's control, practitioners will continue to seek mitigation and solutions. Kansas has identified four barriers that can be addressed in the near future.

- Rural status – By July 1, 2025, Kansas will have documentation of at least one Adult Education provider serving a minimum of 90% of the counties in the state. Adult Education will offer in-person, remote, and online options for service delivery.
- Gender Identity – By July 1, 2025, the Adult Education data management system will have at least one option beyond "female" and "male" for individuals to select. All programs will engage in diversity training no later than December 2025.
- Language – By June 30, 2026, all Adult Education programs will have an enrollment/intake form and release form available in at least two languages.
- Low Levels of Literacy – By August 2025, the state will facilitate training for developing outreach materials that are accessible and understandable to individuals with low levels of literacy. By June 2026, the state will have reviewed outreach materials from all programs.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA.

A. STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL.

1. ALL VR AGENCIES, EXCEPT FOR THOSE THAT HAVE AN INDEPENDENT CONSUMER-CONTROLLED COMMISSION, MUST HAVE A STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (COUNCIL OR SRC) THAT MEETS THE CRITERIA IN SECTION 105 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPLICABLE, HAS:

Select A or B:

(A) is an independent State commission

(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council

(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council

2. IN ACCORDANCE WITH ASSURANCE (A)(1)(B), IF SELECTED, PLEASE PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE CURRENT COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL BY REPRESENTATIVE

TYPE, INCLUDING THE TERM NUMBER OF THE REPRESENTATIVE, AS APPLICABLE, AND ANY VACANCIES, AS WELL AS THE BEGINNING DATES OF EACH REPRESENTATIVE'S TERM.

Council Representative	Current Term Number/Vacant	Beginning Date of Term Mo./Yr.
Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)	**Vacant**	
Parent Training and Information Center	**1**	**1/1/2022**
Client Assistance Program	**1**	**1/1/2022**
Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (Ex Officio)	**1**	**1/01/2024**
Section 121 – Prairie Band Pottawatomie Nation	**1**	**1/01/2022**
Community Rehabilitation Program Service Provider	**1**	**11/2025**
Business, Industry and Labor	**2/4** **1 Pending new appointment** **Recruiting**	**1/1/2023** **1/1/2023** **Sub- 12/25**
Disability Advocacy Groups	**3/4** **1 Pending new appointment**	**1/1/2023** **1/1/2023** **1/1/2025** **Sub 12/25**
Current or former applicants, or recipients of vocational rehabilitation services	**2/4** **Recruiting**	**1/1/2025** **1/1/2025**
State educational agency	**1**	**1/1/2020**
State Workforce Investment Board	**1**	**1/1/2023**
Director of Kansas Rehabilitation Services	**1**	**3/15/2020**
Directors of SEC 121 project	**1**	**1/1/2022**
Members-at-large	**0**	**Sub 12/2025**

3. IF THE SRC IS NOT MEETING THE COMPOSITION REQUIREMENTS IN SECTION 105(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AND/OR IS NOT MEETING QUARTERLY AS REQUIRED IN SECTION 105(F) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, PROVIDE THE STEPS THAT THE VR AGENCY IS TAKING TO ENSURE IT MEETS THOSE REQUIREMENTS.

KRS and SRC meet on a quarterly basis. SRC and KRS have a sub-committee dedicated to recruitment. The sub-committee convened to strategize on how to proceed with the enlistment of SRC members. The KRS staff is actively collaborating with the governor's office to review applications and appoint SRC members. We provide a quarterly report outlining the attendance

of each board member, the composition of the board, and our compliance with council seat requirements.

4. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS IN SECTION 101(A)(21)(A)(II)(III) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, INCLUDE A SUMMARY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT (INCLUDING HOW IT WAS OBTAINED) INTO THE STATE PLAN AND ANY STATE PLAN REVISIONS, INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORTS, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS.

Summary of the Council's Input

Based on the Council's review of program operations, data, and consumer experiences during the 2024–2025 planning period, the SRC provided the following input to KRS:

1. Staff Recruitment, Retention, and Stability
   The Council expressed concern regarding ongoing vacancies and turnover among VR Counselors and other VR staff, noting the effect of workforce instability on service delivery, timeliness, communication, and consumer satisfaction.
2. Coordination With School Districts and Consistency in Pre-ETS
   The SRC emphasized the need to strengthen collaboration with school districts, improve consistency in Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), and ensure that communication and outreach to schools are uniform across regions.
3. Provider Capacity and Service Availability
   Members highlighted gaps in provider availability, particularly in rural areas, and raised concerns about recruitment, retention, provider rates, and barriers to expanding the provider network.
4. Quality Assurance, Performance Data, and Transparency
   The Council requested expanded data reporting, more frequent updates on program performance and outcomes, and greater clarity regarding case review activities and quality assurance findings.
5. SRC Membership, Recruitment, and Engagement
   Members discussed challenges in filling federally required SRC membership categories and requested continued agency support for recruitment, member onboarding, and improving overall Council engagement.
6. Communication, Outreach, and Training
   The Council requested that KRS provide more predictable communication related to policy updates, training schedules, implementation timelines, and outreach materials for consumers, providers, and schools.
7. Program Access and Timeliness of Processes
   The Council requested clearer information regarding referral and intake processes, expectations related to timeliness of eligibility determinations, and consistency in early engagement with applicants.

5. Provide the VR agency's response to the Council's input and recommendations, including an explanation for the rejection of any input and recommendations.

1. Staff Recruitment, Retention, and Stability

KRS agrees with the SRC's concerns and continues to work with DCF Human Resources and the Department of Administration to strengthen recruitment strategies, expand advertising, streamline hiring processes, and support retention. Efforts include expanded remote-work

options, internship pathways, caseload evaluation, and ongoing discussions regarding job classifications, onboarding supports, and professional development.

2. Coordination With School Districts and Pre-ETS Consistency

KRS is working to improve coordination with school districts through updated partnership planning tools, clearer expectations for Pre-ETS communication, and ongoing collaboration with the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE). Training efforts for transition staff are being expanded to ensure consistent practices statewide.

3. Provider Capacity and Service Availability

KRS continues to address provider recruitment and sustainability through rate increases, expanded communication with providers, and efforts to resolve barriers in contracting and billing. The agency is prioritizing strategies to expand provider availability, particularly in underserved and rural areas.

4. Quality Assurance, Data Reporting, and Transparency

KRS has expanded quarterly data reporting provided to the SRC and incorporated customer satisfaction results into routine updates. The agency is redesigning its case review and targeted review processes and refining internal quality assurance tools. SRC feedback informs the data elements included in future quarterly reports.

5. SRC Membership, Recruitment, and Engagement

KRS supports the SRC Recruitment Subcommittee, provides quarterly updates on membership status, and collaborates with the Governor's Office to review applications and make appointments. Annual meeting dates are confirmed in advance to support member participation.

6. Communication, Outreach, and Training

KRS is strengthening communication through predictable policy rollout schedules, advance notifications, increased training opportunities, and expanded outreach to stakeholders. The Training Committee uses quality assurance findings and program data to identify training priorities.

7. Program Access and Timeliness

KRS is analyzing timeliness measures related to initial contact, intake scheduling, and eligibility determinations and is developing statewide guidance to support consistent practices. Improvements in intake documentation and communication with applicants are underway.

KRS did not reject any recommendations from the State Rehabilitation Council.

B. COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT (CSNA).

Section 101(a)(15), (17), and (23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to provide an assessment of:

1. THE VR SERVICES NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING WITHIN THE STATE, INCLUDING:

A. INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES AND THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT;

Summary of Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

Kansas Rehabilitation Services (RS) contracted with the Public Consulting Group, LLC. (PCG) to conduct a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) related to the employment needs of Kansans with disabilities. The CSNA was conducted from June through October 2025.

Individuals with most significant disabilities make up about three-quarters of KRS' recent service population. The experience of individuals with MSD is largely reflective of the overall KRS consumer experience. As such, the average/overall program responses highlighted here essentially mirror the experience of individuals with MSDs. These individuals report largely positive experiences and see their own needs as being met the majority of the time.

Though their reported experience is satisfactory, consumers with MSD do appear to have some service challenges. In particular, consumers with MSD have the lowest median case spending within KRS' service population. This runs counter to expectation; in many states, individuals with the greatest barriers to employment typically receive the highest level of spending. In Kansas, this variance could be explained by a difference in service need, as spending appears to be focused on a small number of cases who are not most significantly disabled but who receive large amounts of service spending. Perhaps this cohort requires tuition or technology supports that are not frequently sought out by individuals with MSD.

B. INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE MINORITIES AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

Overall, data analysis confirms that while KRS maintains a broad statewide network, minority individuals with disabilities and those living in rural or marginalized communities are not equitably accessing or benefiting from services.

Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) case management data, supplemented with state and federal datasets, revealed persistent inequities in how services reach and support individuals with disabilities who are minorities or who remain unserved/underserved. While KRS serves a wide range of consumers statewide, the data showed important gaps tied to race, ethnicity, geography, and disability type.

Racial and Ethnic Disparities

Minority individuals with disabilities are underrepresented in KRS service utilization compared to their proportion in the Kansas population, based on U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey benchmarks. However, these differences are relatively small and may be driven more by differences in data collection and data entry practices than by true population or service difference.

However, for those minority individuals served, data suggest lower average service expenditures and more frequent case closures prior to successful employment outcomes. African American consumers, in particular, receive lower average spending and notably less success in case outcomes than White or Asian consumers served by KRS. Some of this is likely a reflection of broader employment trends in Kansas—African American Kansans have an unemployment rate nearly twice the rate of White Kansans. These differences in outcome remain notable and these additional barriers should be well-known to KRS staff.

Language access and culturally tailored outreach remain limited. This is especially problematic for Spanish-speaking households and Native populations, who may be less likely to engage with

VR services due to communication barriers or lack of awareness. Service providers report lower penetration of services information in some communities, particularly rural areas.

In partner focus groups Native American communities, particularly through the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation partnership, highlight the need for stronger, ongoing engagement to ensure access to VR services in a culturally competent manner.

Rural areas face significant service delivery challenges, including limited provider capacity, transportation barriers, and fewer competitive, integrated employment opportunities. These issues disproportionately affect minorities and low-income individuals living in smaller communities. Case data showed wide variation in referral and service utilization across counties and regions, pointing to inconsistent local outreach and engagement.

These challenges mirror those found in other states where rural service delivery is in lower demand and more resource intensive to provide. Staff and CRPs are agreed that individuals in rural areas face higher barriers to service, and report difficulties with outreach, information, and job markets.

Underserved groups include transition-aged youth from minority backgrounds and those aging out of foster care. KRS and Prevention and Protection Services (PPS) have collaborated on independent living supports, but gaps persist in connecting foster youth to Pre-ETS or VR services. CRPs in qualitative engagements report the need to better partner with KRS to support individuals working toward independence.

Students with disabilities in racially diverse school districts or who attend under-resourced schools are at higher risk of not being identified for early services, limiting their access to critical supports prior to high school exit. This compounds with lower average spending on minority cases to suggest that youth who are also minorities may not receive the same quality of services as others.

Individuals with disabilities exiting correctional facilities often remain unserved or under-connected to VR despite partnerships with the Kansas Department of Corrections.

Consumers with co-occurring behavioral health conditions or substance use issues are disproportionately represented among underserved minorities who encounter delays or gaps in access due to limited cross-agency capacity. Staff and CRPs both report that mental health services are in high demand but are often inaccessible across the state.

C. INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND KRS LEVERAGES A BROAD NETWORK OF PARTNERSHIPS WITH FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL, AND COMMUNITY AGENCIES TO EXPAND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES ACROSS KANSAS. THESE COLLABORATIONS ARE DESIGNED TO TAILOR SERVICES TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS AND SUPPORT COMPETITIVE, INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT AS THE FIRST OPTION.

Some of the established practices that add value include the following:

- Interagency collaboration with the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) includes regular coordination and the development of an interagency agreement to support competitive employment. This also helps ensure referrals

for individuals in sub-minimum wage jobs receive information and counseling on integrated employment options.

- Partnerships with InterHab and other community developmental disability organizations promote innovative approaches to service delivery that expand employment opportunities.
- Collaboration with the Governor's Behavioral Health Planning Council and its vocational subcommittee has increased the focus on employment-related issues at the systems level.
- Coordination with the Department for Children and Families (DCF) Economic and Employment Services strengthens supports for TANF recipients with disabilities through braided, wraparound employment services.
- Partnership with the Prairie Band Potawatomie Nation (PBPN) provides longstanding coordination of referrals, resources, and culturally responsive services.
- Collaboration with the Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) helps individuals with disabilities prepare for employment as they reenter the community.
- Coordination with the Small Business Administration (SBA) supports individuals interested in entrepreneurship by providing mentoring and technical assistance.
- Funding to the Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation (CPRF) increases access to assistive technology, while support for the Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy promotes career and leadership training for youth with disabilities.
- Collaboration with Assistive Technology for Kansans (ATK) helps ensure individuals receive appropriate technology supports, with KRS staff receiving ongoing training.

Despite the identified successes, respondents cited several areas that need additional improvement:

- Supported Employment (SE) service delivery is inconsistent, particularly in rural areas. KRS continues to work with KDADS and community providers to address the availability of extended services needed to maintain employment.
- Employer engagement is an area that needs improvement. Currently, this engagement is handled mostly at the local level. The absence of a statewide employer engagement manager seems to have created gaps in coordination and consistency.
- The geographic distribution of services continues to be a challenge requiring ongoing efforts to expand access to ensure equity across the state.
- Training and capacity-building for providers is still needed to enhance their ability to develop employer relationships and natural support networks that lead to sustained employment outcomes.

By strengthening these interagency partnerships and cooperative agreements, KRS can strengthen service capacity, expand consumer choice, and promote innovative strategies to ensure individuals with disabilities have access to meaningful, competitive employment opportunities statewide.

D. YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES. INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES FOR TRANSITION CAREER SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH SERVICES ARE COORDINATED WITH TRANSITION SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER IDEA.

PCG assessed the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition services and pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS), and the extent to which such services provided under this Act are coordinated under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.) to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities.

KRS has made significant progress in prioritizing outreach and services to transition-aged youth (ages 14–21). This group is represented at more than three times the expected rate compared to ACS estimates, reflecting effective engagement efforts. Although partnerships with other state programs have expanded opportunities for youth with disabilities exiting foster care, including the growth of Pre-Employment Transition Services, only 48 percent of CRP respondents indicated that all Pre-ETS services were always adequately available in their communities. Educators further noted that younger students (ages 14–16), as well as individuals with significant intellectual disabilities, mental health conditions, or those who are single parents, remain underserved due to capacity limitations and prioritization of older transition youth.

Employment outcomes for this population highlight ongoing challenges: youth ages 14–21 reported the lowest average wages and fewest hours worked per week. These outcomes suggest limited access to higher-paying work experiences and skills aligned with high-demand industries.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE.

The CSNA must include an assessment of the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs in Kansas, including establishing programs in rural areas and expanding service providers in those areas. Some of the most cited areas of need are transportation, mental health supports, staff training, employer engagement, interagency collaboration, provider network expansion, and financial counseling.

Additional considerations for expansions include:

- Expand the provider network to ensure adequate geographic coverage, particularly for underserved rural communities and individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Improve provider reimbursement rates and referral processes to sustain partnerships and encourage high-quality service delivery.
- Increase cultural and linguistic accessibility, including translation services and outreach strategies tailored for underserved racial and ethnic populations and to meet the diverse needs of consumers. This is also necessary for individuals with some types of disability, such as ASL.
- Training and communication on implementing best practices and supporting special populations.

- Increase outreach and training for employers to reduce stigma, particularly around hiring individuals with mental health conditions and promote inclusive practices.
- Develop stronger industry partnerships that connect consumers to community-based work experiences, apprenticeships, and career pathways aligned with high-demand fields.

C. GOALS, PRIORITIES, AND STRATEGIES

Section 101(a)(15) and (23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to describe the goals and priorities of the State in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs. The goals and priorities are based on (1) the most recent CSNA, including any updates; (2) the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of Section 116 of WIOA; and (3) other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the SRC and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under Section 107 of the Rehabilitation Act. VR agencies must—

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE SRC AND THE VR AGENCY JOINTLY DEVELOPED AND AGREED TO THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES AND ANY REVISIONS; AND

1. Describe how the SRC and the VR agency jointly developed and agreed to the goals and priorities and any revisions; and

- Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) jointly developed and agreed upon the goals and priorities for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). This collaborative process included review of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), analysis of program performance and WIOA accountability indicators, consideration of SRC recommendations, monitoring and quality assurance activities, and consultation with KRS staff, service providers, and workforce partners.
- The CSNA identified both strengths and areas for improvement related to service access, workforce capacity, supported employment, transition services, equity for underserved populations, data quality, and quality employment outcomes. KRS and the SRC used these findings to confirm and refine goals and priorities that build upon effective practices while addressing identified gaps, particularly for individuals with the most significant disabilities, individuals living in rural areas, and other underserved populations.

2. Identify measurable goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs and the basis for selecting the goals and priorities (e.g., CSNA, performance accountability measures, SRC recommendations, monitoring, other information). As required in section 101(a)(15)(D), (18), and (23), describe under each goal or priority, the strategies or methods used to achieve the goal or priority, including as applicable, description of strategies or methods that

- The following goals and strategies guide the administration of the VR and Supported Employment programs. Goals were selected based on CSNA findings, SRC input, WIOA performance accountability measures, program data, and operational considerations, including system modernization timelines.

2. IDENTIFY MEASURABLE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS AND THE BASIS FOR SELECTING THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES (E.G., CSNA, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES, SRC RECOMMENDATIONS, MONITORING, OTHER INFORMATION). AS REQUIRED IN SECTION 101(A)(15)(D), (18), AND (23), DESCRIBE UNDER EACH GOAL OR PRIORITY, THE STRATEGIES OR METHODS USED TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL OR PRIORITY, INCLUDING AS APPLICABLE, DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGIES OR METHODS THAT—

A. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES;

B. OVERCOME BARRIERS TO ACCESSING VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

C. IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES); AND

D. IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO ACHIEVE QUALITY EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES.

List and number each goal/priority, noting the basis, and under each goal/priority, list and number the strategies to achieve the goal/priority

(A) Support innovation and expansion activities;

Goal 1: Support innovation and expansion activities to strengthen outreach, engagement, and partnerships

Strategies:

- Enhance communication and outreach to individuals with disabilities, families, and stakeholders through consistent, accessible messaging about VR services and initiatives.
- Increase the visibility of VR services by sharing success stories and program information through multiple communication channels.
- Strengthen collaboration with transition councils, workforce partners, community organizations, and other state agencies to support innovation and service expansion.
- Coordinate with grant-funded initiatives and partner programs to expand employment opportunities for transition-aged youth and underserved populations.
- Foster stronger partnerships with employers to promote the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities and to expand competitive, integrated employment opportunities.

(B) Overcome barriers to accessing VR and supported employment services

Goal 2: Reduce barriers to accessing VR and Supported Employment services, particularly for underserved and rural populations

Strategies:

- Strengthen recruitment, training, and retention of VR personnel and community rehabilitation providers to improve service capacity statewide.
- Review and refine application, eligibility, and service delivery processes to promote timely access and sustained engagement in VR services.

- Prepare for the implementation of a modernized case management system to reduce administrative burden and improve efficiency for staff, providers, and consumers.
- Expand the use of remote and virtual service options, when appropriate, to address geographic and transportation barriers.
- Enhance access to benefits counseling to support informed choice and reduce concerns related to the potential loss of SSI/SSDI benefits.
- Implement targeted training for VR staff, including administrators, supervisors, and counselors, on policies affecting SSI/SSDI recipients to support informed service delivery and reduce access barriers to VR services, rehabilitation programs, and higher education.

(C) Improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, postsecondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services); and

Goal 3: Improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities and transition-aged youth

Strategies:

- Strengthen coordination with schools, education partners, and community providers to improve identification and early engagement of students with disabilities.
- Improve access to and quality of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), with attention to equitable availability across regions and populations.
- Enhance provider onboarding, communication, and monitoring processes to ensure timely and high-quality transition services.
- Promote career exploration, work-based learning, and postsecondary planning aligned with competitive, integrated employment outcomes.
- Monitor consumer satisfaction and service effectiveness through regular feedback mechanisms to inform continuous improvement.

(D) Improve the performance of the VR and Supported Employment programs in assisting individuals with disabilities to achieve quality employment outcomes. [text box: List and number each goal/priority, noting the basis, and under each goal/priority, list and number the strategies to achieve the goal/priority

Goal 4: Improve VR and Supported Employment program performance and quality employment outcomes

Strategies:

- Align VR and Supported Employment services with WIOA performance measures, including employment outcomes, measurable skill gains, and credential attainment.
- Promote career-focused counseling, assessment, education, and training services that support higher-quality and higher-wage employment outcomes.
- Continue to promote Employment First principles and support informed choice for individuals considering extended employment.
- Strengthen Supported Employment and Customized Employment practices through staff training and collaboration with community rehabilitation providers.
- Enhance data quality, expenditure monitoring, and performance review practices to support data-informed decision-making and equitable use of resources.

D. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

For the most recently completed program year, provide an evaluation and report of progress for the goals or priorities, including progress on the strategies under each goal or priority, applicable to that program year. Sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to describe—

1. PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED FOR THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS;

List the goals/priorities and discuss the progress or completion of each goal/priority and related strategies **(1) Progress in achieving the goals and priorities identified for the VR and Supported Employment Programs**

During the most recently completed program year, Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) made progress toward the goals and priorities identified in previous Section C of the WIOA State Plan for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Supported Employment programs. Progress reflects both completed actions and ongoing efforts, informed by operational learning, stakeholder feedback, and system capacity considerations.

Goal 1: Support innovation and expansion activities to strengthen outreach, engagement, and partnerships

KRS advanced efforts to strengthen communication and outreach by working collaboratively with the agency's communications department to develop more consistent messaging and approaches for sharing information about VR services, initiatives, and program expectations. These efforts represent foundational steps toward a broader communication strategy that supports awareness and engagement with individuals with disabilities, families, providers, and partners.

KRS continued to engage community rehabilitation providers (CRPs) and other partners through regular communication, surveys, and annual provider progress reports. These activities supported ongoing dialogue about service quality, expectations, and opportunities for improvement, reinforcing strong partnerships while identifying areas for refinement.

Goal 2: Reduce barriers to accessing VR and Supported Employment services, particularly for underserved and rural populations

During the program year, KRS made progress in strengthening workforce capacity and reducing access barriers. Vacancy rates declined, reflecting successful recruitment and onboarding efforts. KRS also began planning enhancements to hiring process language to improve clarity and consistency regarding job expectations, with the goal of promoting better job fit, improved retention, and long-term workforce stability.

KRS piloted an engagement unit model to explore strategies for improving consistency in application processing and eligibility. Evaluation of this pilot indicated that the centralized model was not the most effective strategy for KRS. As a result, KRS is incorporating lessons learned by returning management of these functions to regional operations while utilizing a limited number of staff to assist with quality assurance monitoring, addressing vacant caseloads, and supporting activities at administration. This approach reflects KRS' commitment to data-informed decision-making and continuous improvement.

KRS continued preparation for implementation of a new case management system, with a planned go-live date of 2027. While system limitations remain, ongoing planning activities are intended to support future improvements to the application and eligibility process, data quality, and service efficiency.

Goal 3: Improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities and transition-aged youth

KRS continued to prioritize services for students with disabilities and transition-aged youth, maintaining coordination with providers and partners to support access to Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) and VR services. Feedback mechanisms, including provider progress reports and surveys, were used to assess service delivery and identify areas for improvement.

Consumer satisfaction was monitored through quarterly surveys administered to individuals served by KRS. These surveys provided valuable feedback on service experiences and helped inform ongoing adjustments to service delivery and communication practices to better meet consumer needs.

Goal 4: Improve VR and Supported Employment program performance and quality employment outcomes

KRS continued efforts to align VR and Supported Employment services with WIOA performance expectations through staff engagement, provider collaboration, and monitoring activities. Surveys of staff and providers were conducted to gather feedback on program operations, training needs, and service effectiveness. Information gathered through these surveys supported ongoing evaluation of practices related to employment outcomes, service consistency, and program performance.

KRS also continued to monitor case activity and expenditures, using available data to inform operational decisions and identify opportunities for improvement while preparing for expanded performance monitoring capabilities associated with the future case management system.

(2) Performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA

Indicator	PY 2024 Negotiated	PY 2024 Actual
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	**51%**	**53.1%**
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	**48%**	**49.8%**
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	**$3,600**	**$4,764**
Credential Attainment Rate	**22%**	**41%**
Measurable Skills Gains	**32%**	**36.7%**

During Program Year (PY) 2024, KRS met or exceeded all negotiated performance levels for the WIOA section 116 indicators. Specifically, 53.1% of individuals were employed in the second quarter after exit, exceeding the negotiated level of 51%, and 49.8% were employed in the fourth quarter after exit, exceeding the 48% target. Median earnings in the second quarter after exit were $4,764, surpassing the negotiated amount of $3,600. The credential attainment rate reached 41%, significantly above the 22% target, and measurable skill gains were achieved by 36.7% of participants, exceeding the 32% negotiated level.

KRS continues to use SWIS data and other performance metrics to monitor trends and identify areas for improvement. Quarterly performance reviews are conducted to evaluate progress, inform operational decisions, and ensure accountability across staff and provider teams. Additionally, KRS provides ongoing training and education to staff and providers on all aspects of service delivery, including employment outcomes, credential attainment, measurable skill gains, and data quality. These activities support consistent, high-quality service delivery and contribute to continuous improvement of VR and Supported Employment programs.

3. THE USE OF FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES (SECTIONS 101(A)(18) AND 101(A)(23) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT) (E.G., SRC, SILC).

KRS uses the innovation and expansion authority, as specified by the Rehabilitation Act, to support the functions of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). Operating within existing resources, the Council does not receive any direct allocation of funds. KRS encourages SRC members to attend and seek out conferences, with DCF internal funds available to support these activities as appropriate.

Consistent with KRS goals and priorities, innovation and expansion efforts are underway to promote improved employment outcomes for transition-aged youth and to assist community rehabilitation providers in building and maintaining their capacity to provide evidence-based employment services. KRS is currently coordinating and partnering with multiple entities that have received grants, including the Pathways to Partnership and Equitable Transition Model Demonstration, to support innovation and expansion for transition-aged youth.

Additionally, Kansas has developed multiple transition councils across the state to enhance coordination and communication regarding resources available for students and youth with disabilities. These councils, along with other stakeholder engagement activities—including surveys, provider progress reports, and collaboration with partners—help inform data-driven planning and continuous quality improvement. Through these efforts, KRS is leveraging innovation and expansion authority to align program priorities with operational strategies and strengthen service delivery across the VR and Supported Employment programs.

E. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS, AND ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

1. ACCEPTANCE OF TITLE VI FUNDS:

(B) VR agency does NOT elect to receive title VI funds and understands that supported employment services must still be provided

2. IF THE VR AGENCY HAS ELECTED TO RECEIVE TITLE VI FUNDS, SECTION 606(B)(3) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT REQUIRES VR AGENCIES TO INCLUDE SPECIFIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES WITH RESPECT TO THE DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. DESCRIBE THE USE OF TITLE VI FUNDS AND HOW THEY WILL BE USED IN MEETING THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES OF THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM.

KRS currently does not elect to receive title VI funds and understands that supported employment services must still be provided under title I.

3. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES MAY BE PROVIDED WITH TITLE 1 OR TITLE VI FUNDS FOLLOWING PLACEMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES IN EMPLOYMENT. IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(22) AND SECTION 606(B)(3) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, DESCRIBE THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES; AND THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES.

KRS is committed to providing supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth, in accordance with federal regulations. Supported employment means competitive integrated employment, including customized employment, or employment in an integrated work setting in which an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a disability, is working on a short term basis toward competitive integrated employment, that is individualized and customized, consistent with the unique strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual, including with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. KRS provides Supported employment services which are ongoing support services, including customized employment, and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability, including youth with a most significant disability in supported employment. These services are intended for individuals for whom competitive employment has not historically occurred or for whom competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and who, because of the nature and severity of the disability, need intensive supported employment services from Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS), and extended services in order to perform work.

Supported employment services are considered post-employment services and are included on an IPE. KRS Supported employment services begin after job placement, are time-limited and provided for a period not to exceed 24 months, unless the consumer and counselor agree to an extension in order to achieve the employment outcome in a supported employment setting identified in the individualized plan for employment (IPE). Supported employment services typically include intensive on-the-job training and other training provided by skilled job coaches as well as regular observation and coaching of the consumer at the work site, including coaching to develop natural supports.

Services leading to a competitive integrated employment outcome in a supported employment setting identified on the IPE are typically provided through a Customized Placement service provider agreement that identifies key components or milestones, including the creation of a job development action plan and placement. The support employment services include those that support job stabilization of 45 days of continuous employment. Once an individual has stabilized in employment, the transition from supported employment services to extended services is coordinated between KRS and community agencies in order to assist an individual with a most significant disability in maintaining supported employment. KRS works with community agencies and providers to finalize an extended services plan to ensure successful transition to the ongoing supports of extended services. Extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities are provided in coordination with other agencies. In the event there is no other funding source available to provide extended services to youth for a period not to exceed four years, or at such time that a youth reaches age 25 and no longer meets the definition of a youth with a disability, whichever occurs first, KRS will provide the extended services. A successful VR case closure occurs after the customers has successfully maintained employment for a minimum of 90 days after stabilization.

KRS is actively exploring and seeking to improve its supported employment services including extended services for youth. KRS plans to explore technical assistance, other states, and the current provider network to discuss gaps in services and potential solutions.

In implementing supported employment services, KRS emphasizes the importance of geographic distribution and working with community agencies capable of providing extended/ongoing support services. Provider agreements outline the time-limited services for eligible individuals with significant disabilities and address provider responsibilities in coordinating community services for extended ongoing support.

4. SECTIONS 101(A)(22) AND 606(B)(4) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT REQUIRE THE VR AGENCY TO DESCRIBE EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND ARRANGE, INCLUDING ENTERING INTO COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS, WITH OTHER STATE AGENCIES AND OTHER APPROPRIATE ENTITIES IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. THE DESCRIPTION MUST INCLUDE EXTENDED SERVICES, AS APPLICABLE, TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES TO YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH 34 C.F.R. § 363.4(A) AND 34 C.F.R. § 361.5(C)(19)(V).

Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) actively works to identify, arrange, and coordinate supported employment services and extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities. KRS engages in ongoing collaboration with State agencies, community partners, and other appropriate entities to ensure the availability of extended services necessary to support individuals in maintaining competitive integrated employment.

KRS coordinates with community rehabilitation providers, state and local agencies, and other funding sources to secure extended services following the completion of time-limited supported employment services funded through the VR program. These efforts include collaboration with agencies responsible for long-term supports, such as Medicaid-funded programs, developmental disability services, mental health agencies, workforce partners, and other community-based organizations capable of providing ongoing support services.

Provider agreements and service contracts outline expectations for coordination and communication related to supported employment and extended services, including the responsibility to assist in identifying appropriate extended service resources prior to the conclusion of VR-funded services. KRS requires that planning for extended services occur during the supported employment process to ensure a timely and seamless transition and to minimize disruption in employment supports.

For youth with the most significant disabilities, KRS works collaboratively with education agencies, developmental disability organizations, and other community partners to identify and arrange extended services. When no other funding source is available, KRS may provide extended services to youth for a period not to exceed four years, or until the individual reaches age 25, whichever occurs first, in accordance with federal requirements.

KRS continues to evaluate the availability and geographic distribution of supported employment and extended service providers statewide and seeks opportunities to strengthen partnerships, explore technical assistance, and address service gaps, particularly in underserved and rural areas. These efforts support KRS's commitment to ensuring individuals with the most significant disabilities have access to the long-term supports necessary to achieve and maintain competitive integrated employment.

F. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act require all VR agencies to annually conduct a full assessment of their resources and ability to serve all eligible individuals before the start of the Federal fiscal year. In accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 361.29(b), annual estimates must include the following projections:

1. ESTIMATES FOR NEXT FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR—

A. VR PROGRAM; AND

Priority Category (if applicable)	No. of Individuals Eligible for Services	No. of Eligible Individuals Expected to Receive Services under VR Program	Costs of Services using Title I Funds	No. of Eligible Individuals Not Receiving Services (if applicable)
1 Most Significant disability	8,624	7,589	24,420,547	N/A
2 significant disability	1,189	1,047	5,174,637	N/A
3 has a disability that is not most significant or significant	334	294	1,063,345	N/A

B. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM.

Priority Category (if applicable)	No. of Individuals Eligible for Services	No. of Eligible Individuals Expected to Receive Services under Supported Employment Program	Costs of Services using Title I and Title VI Funds	No. of Eligible Individuals Not Receiving Services (if applicable)
1 most significant disability	1,166	1,026	3,451,552	0

G. ORDER OF SELECTION

1. PURSUANT TO SECTION 101(A)(5) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, THIS DESCRIPTION MUST BE AMENDED WHEN THE VR AGENCY DETERMINES, BASED ON THE ANNUAL ESTIMATES DESCRIBED IN DESCRIPTION (F), THAT VR SERVICES CANNOT BE PROVIDED TO ALL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE WHO APPLY FOR AND ARE DETERMINED ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES.

* VR agencies may maintain an order of selection policy and priority of eligible individuals without implementing or continuing to implement an order of selection.

The VR agency is not implementing an order of selection, and all eligible individuals will be served.

2. FOR VR AGENCIES THAT HAVE DEFINED PRIORITY CATEGORIES DESCRIBE—

A. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

A. The justification for the order

Several factors will be considered in periodically determining whether KRS has sufficient funds to serve all eligible persons who apply. These factors include:

- Availability of state general funds to match available federal VR funds
- Application, referral and caseload trends
- Adequacy of staff coverage
- Costs of purchased services, such as diagnostics, medical, restoration and training
- Estimated costs of continuing services under existing IPEs
- Emphasis on serving persons with the most significant disabilities
- Timeliness of determination of eligibility and provision of services
- Outreach efforts
- Unserved or underserved groups

Determinations will be made prior to the beginning of each fiscal year and whenever a change in circumstances warrants. Prior to implementing an order of selection, the agency will solicit public input, including the SRC, and complete the required plan amendment process.

B. THE ORDER (PRIORITY CATEGORIES) TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES ENSURING THAT INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND

- KRS categories are defined as follows:

- Category 1: Eligible individuals with a most significant physical or mental impairment that seriously limits two or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome, and whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple VR services over an extended period of time. In the event that VR services cannot be provided to all eligible individuals in Category 1, a waiting list based upon the date of application will be activated.
- Category 2: Eligible individuals with a significant physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple VR services over an extended period of time; and who has one or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, intellectual developmental disability , mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, Musculo-skeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia, other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another disability or combination of

disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitation. In the event that VR services cannot be provided to all eligible individuals in Category 2, a waiting list based upon the date of application will be activated.

- Category 3: All other eligible individuals. In the event that VR services cannot be provided to all eligible individuals in Category 3, a waiting list based upon the date of application will be activated.
- An order of selection gives priority to persons with the most significant disabilities when there are insufficient resources to provide vocational rehabilitation services to all eligible individuals who apply. After eligibility has been determined, each consumer is assigned to a category group. The consumer will be assigned to the highest priority category for which he or she is qualified, and a rationale will be documented in the case file. If the consumer's circumstances change or new information is acquired, the category designation can be changed.
- Depending on available resources, all categories may be served. However, if there is a need to close one or more categories for services:
- Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) will set aside sufficient funds to purchase services necessary to determine eligibility. Applications for services will be accepted without restriction.
- The closure will not affect individuals who already have final Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs). IPE services will continue.

C. THE VR AGENCY'S GOALS FOR SERVING INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, INCLUDING HOW THE AGENCY WILL ASSIST ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS ASSIGNED TO CLOSED PRIORITY CATEGORIES WITH INFORMATION AND REFERRAL, THE METHOD IN WHICH THE VR AGENCY WILL MANAGE WAITING LISTS, AND THE PROJECTED TIMELINES FOR OPENING PRIORITY CATEGORIES. NOTE: PRIORITY CATEGORIES ARE CONSIDERED OPEN WHEN ALL INDIVIDUALS IN THE PRIORITY CATEGORY MAY BE SERVED.

As KRS is not operating under an order of selection, all priority categories are considered open, and individuals in each category may be served based on available resources. KRS monitors caseload and expenditure trends routinely to determine whether it will be necessary to implement Order of Selection. KRS projects that all categories will continue to be open for services during FFY 2026 & FFY 2027.

If KRS determines that one or more priority categories must be closed, eligible individuals assigned to a closed category will be provided timely information and referral to other appropriate federal, state, and local programs and service providers that may assist them in preparing for, securing, retaining, or regaining employment. Information and referral will be provided at the time the individual is notified of their assignment to a closed category and will be documented in the case record.

3. HAS THE VR AGENCY ELECTED TO SERVE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS OUTSIDE OF THE ORDER OF SELECTION WHO REQUIRE SPECIFIC SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT?

No.

H. WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS.

The State plan shall be in effect in all political subdivisions of the State, however, the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (Commissioner) may waive

compliance with this requirement in accordance with Section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and the implementing regulations in 34 C.F.R. § 361.26. If the VR agency is requesting a waiver of statewideness or has a previously approved waiver of statewideness, describe the types of services and the local entities providing such services under the waiver of statewideness and how the agency has complied with the requirements in 34 C.F.R. § 361.26. If the VR agency is not requesting or does not have an approved waiver of statewideness, please indicate "not applicable."

KRS is not requesting a waiver of Statewideness.

I. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT.

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act, the VR agency must develop and maintain annually a description (consistent with the purposes of the Rehabilitation Act) of the VR agency's comprehensive system of personnel development, which shall include a description of the procedures and activities the State VR agency will undertake to ensure it has an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals that provides the following:

1. ANALYSIS OF CURRENT PERSONNEL AND PROJECTED PERSONNEL NEEDS INCLUDING—

A. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE VR AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

B. THE NUMBER AND TYPE OF PERSONNEL THAT ARE EMPLOYED BY THE VR AGENCY IN THE PROVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES, INCLUDING RATIOS OF QUALIFIED VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELORS TO CLIENTS;

C. PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY, WHO WILL BE NEEDED BY THE VR AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES IN 5 YEARS BASED ON PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL EXPECTED TO RETIRE OR LEAVE THE FIELD, AND OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS.

Personnel Category	No. of Personnel Employed	No. of Personnel Currently Needed	Projected No. of Personnel Needed in 5 years
Administration	9	12	17
Field Management	23		27
VR Counselors	82	86	94
Support Staff	19	22	30
Pre-ETS Transition Specialist	27	30	38

D. RATIO OF QUALIFIED VR COUNSELORS TO CLIENTS:

The ratio of qualified VR counselors to clients is 100.

E. PROJECTED NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED IN 5 YEARS:

- The projected number of individuals to be served in 5 years 8,600.

2. DATA AND INFORMATION ON PERSONNEL PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION, AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

A. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED DURING THE PRIOR YEAR FROM EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS WITH CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, OR WITH THE CREDENTIALS FOR CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, BROKEN DOWN BY THE PERSONNEL CATEGORY FOR WHICH THEY HAVE RECEIVED, OR HAVE THE CREDENTIALS TO RECEIVE, CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE.

Institute of Higher Education	Type of Program	No. of Students Enrolled	No. of Prior Year Graduates
Emporia State University	Clinical Counseling, Rehabilitation Counseling Masters	32	14

B. THE VR AGENCY'S PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL, WHICH ADDRESSES THE CURRENT AND PROJECTED NEEDS FOR QUALIFIED PERSONNEL; AND THE COORDINATION AND FACILITATION OF EFFORTS BETWEEN THE VR AGENCY AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS TO RECRUIT, PREPARE, AND RETAIN PERSONNEL WHO ARE QUALIFIED, INCLUDING PERSONNEL FROM MINORITY BACKGROUNDS AND PERSONNEL WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

- KRS is dedicated to filling open positions with highly qualified and diverse individuals. Vacancy announcements explicitly outline the educational requirements aligned with the national CRC educational standard, which was the prerequisite before WIOA. Recruiting individuals who already meet these qualification standards has proven challenging, leading to a situation where numerous new hires must fulfill additional educational requirements. Currently, a substantial portion of our employed counselors—50 out of 79 VRCs—need additional graduate-level classes to meet the CSPD standards.
- To enhance recruitment efforts, Regional Program Administrators and DCF Personnel Services have adopted a comprehensive strategy. Beyond traditional advertising, they have cultivated personal contacts with universities offering master's programs in rehabilitation counseling, informed candidates about geographical regions with vacancies, and targeted specialized programs, such as those for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, or programs focusing on

service delivery for people who are blind. As an additional recruitment strategy, KRS has recently established a pipeline with Emporia State University to support student internships with VR.

- Vacancy announcements are widely distributed, reaching independent living centers and colleges recognized as traditionally minority institutions, promoting cultural diversity within the KRS workforce. Recruitment extends to professional, advocacy, and service provider associations, as well as online platforms like Indeed. The Personnel Services office actively represents KRS at various opportunities, including career fairs, and posts vacant positions through a rehabilitation counselor recruiting system on www.experience.com, reaching over 200 schools both regionally and nationally. Direct distribution of job vacancy announcements is also made to a list of 30 master's level programs and programs specializing in the rehabilitation of individuals who are blind.
- Several factors influence KRS's ability to recruit and retain qualified staff:
- The starting salary for a Human Services Counselor classification is $1,909.60 bi-weekly.
- The graduate training program for rehabilitation counselors at Emporia State University anticipates a limited number of graduates compared to KRS's vacancies.
- Recruiting candidates for counselor positions who either meet the CSPD requirements or are willing to pursue additional graduate-level classes as a condition of employment has proven challenging.
- Filling qualified VR counselor positions with fluency in American Sign Language and knowledge of the deaf culture has also posed difficulties.

C. DESCRIPTION OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND ACTIVITIES THAT ENSURE ALL PERSONNEL EMPLOYED BY THE VR AGENCY RECEIVE APPROPRIATE AND ADEQUATE TRAINING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS:

I. PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO ASSESSMENT, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING, JOB PLACEMENT, AND REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING TRAINING IMPLEMENTED IN COORDINATION WITH ENTITIES CARRYING OUT STATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998; AND

II. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO VR AGENCY PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS AND FOR PROVIDING TRAINING REGARDING THE AMENDMENTS TO THE REHABILITATION ACT MADE BY THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT.

KRS is committed to advancing and sustaining a comprehensive professional development system for all staff, including both professionals and paraprofessionals. The system is designed to ensure staff receive appropriate and ongoing training in assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, including training in coordination with entities carrying out state programs under Section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998.

KRS delivers training through a combination of regional and statewide sessions, intensive onboarding for new Counselors and Pre-Employment Transition Services staff, and targeted monthly sessions based on data from

the case management system, case reviews, and staff input. Training topics are informed by evidence-based and promising practices and cover a range of competencies, including consumer engagement, development and implementation of Individual Plans for Employment (IPEs), informed choice, linking eligibility and rehabilitation needs to consumer goals, progress measurement, time and caseload management, financial accountability, cultural competence, benefits counseling, leadership development, and expertise in working with specific disability populations such as individuals who are blind or visually impaired, have autism spectrum disorder, mental illness, or head injuries. KRS utilizes YesLMS as a centralized platform to support training efforts on a wide range of topics.

KRS collaborates with Assistive Technology for Kansans to provide specialized training on technology solutions and services for individuals with disabilities and health conditions. Staff participation on the Assistive Technology for Kansas advisory committee ensures ongoing awareness of innovations in rehabilitation technology and their application in counseling and job placement. KRS also seeks technical assistance and contracts for the development of online training modules to further support knowledge and skills related to specific populations as needed.

Staff performance and professional growth are supported through the KRS Performance Management Process (PMP), which emphasizes alignment with the agency's mission to help individuals with the most significant disabilities achieve competitive integrated employment outcomes. Supervisors provide ongoing guidance and feedback through regular supervision, mid-year reviews, and annual evaluations. Staff goals are linked to improving outcomes for the individuals served, ensuring that professional development directly enhances the ability of staff to help consumers reach their employment goals.

Through this structured and data-informed approach, KRS ensures that its personnel are well-equipped to provide high-quality, effective vocational rehabilitation services across the state, fostering both staff expertise and positive consumer outcomes.

3. DESCRIPTION OF VR AGENCY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF PERSONNEL STANDARDS CONSISTENT WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B) TO ENSURE THAT VR AGENCY PROFESSIONAL AND PARAPROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL ARE ADEQUATELY TRAINED AND PREPARED, INCLUDING—

A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR -RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

Educational and experience requirements are intended to ensure that personnel have a 21st-century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

To address recruitment and retention issues, and ensure an adequate supply of qualified rehabilitation professionals, KRS updated its minimum and preferred requirements to allow for hiring of VRC's with lower standards with the contingency that they complete additional educational requirements.

Minimum Standard Requirements

A bachelor's degree in a field of study reasonably related to vocational rehabilitation, to indicate a level of competency and skill demonstrating basic preparation in a field of study such as vocational rehabilitation counseling, social work, psychology, disability studies, business administration, human resources, special education, supported employment, customized employment, economics, or another field that reasonably prepares individuals to work with consumers and employers; and demonstrated paid or unpaid experience, for not less than one year, consisting of—

- Direct work with individuals with disabilities in a setting such as an independent living center: or
- Direct service or advocacy activities that provide such individual with experience and skills in working with individuals with disabilities; or
- Direct experience in competitive integrated employment environments as an employer, as a small business owner or operator, or in self-employment, or other experience in human resources or recruitment, or experience in supervising employees, training, or other activities
- **There are no exceptions to the minimum requirements. They must have a 4-year degree and provide verification of this.**

Additional education requirement for minimum Standards Candidates selected under the Minimum Standards will be required to complete additional graduate-level courses within five years of their employment start date, as follows: (minimum of SEVEN graduate courses):

- Priority to complete: ONE integrated OR TWO separate graduate courses with the primary focus on Theories of Counseling AND Techniques of Counseling
- Priority to complete (medical and psychosocial aspects): TWO with the individual or combined primary focus on 1) Medical Aspects of Disabilities; 2) Psychosocial Aspects of Disabilities; AND 3) Multicultural Issues
- ONE on Foundations of Rehabilitation Counseling
- ONE on Assessment
- ONE on Occupational Information OR Job Placement
- ONE on Case Management AND Rehabilitation Services

Preferred Qualifications

- Standard #1- A current Certified Rehabilitation Counselor designation; or
- Standard #2- A master's or doctorate degree in Rehabilitation Counseling; or
- Standard #3- A master's or doctorate degree in Counseling, Rehabilitation Psychology, Counseling Psychology, or Clinical Social Work plus the additional education requirements described below: or
- Standard #4- A master's or doctorate in one of the following closely related fields, majors or disciplines plus the additional education requirements described below:
    - Behavioral Health
    - Behavioral Science
    - Business Administration

- Clinical Social Work
- Counseling
- Counseling Psychology
- Disability Studies
- Education
- Human Relations
- Human Resources
- Human Services
- Special Education
- Counseling
- Law
- Management
- Marriage and Family Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Psychology
- Psychometrics
- Public Administration
- Rehabilitation Administration/Services
- Rehabilitation Psychology
- Social Work
- Vocational Assessment/Evaluation

Additional education requirements for Standard #3 and #4: Candidates selected under Standards 3 and 4 will be required to complete additional graduate level courses within three years of their employment start date, as follows:

- One integrated or two separate courses in the Theories of Counseling and the Techniques of Counseling; and
- One integrated or two separate courses in the Medical Aspects of Disability and the Psychosocial Aspects of Disability.

Minimum qualifications:

In accordance with state classification specifications:

Five years of experience interviewing, investigating, compiling information, documenting decisions, interpreting guidelines and/or providing technical assistance relevant to the agency's programs. Post-secondary education may be substituted for experience as determined relevant by the agency.

Preferred qualifications:

A bachelor's degree in a field of study reasonably related to vocational rehabilitation, indicating a level of competency and skill demonstrating basic preparation in a field of study such as vocational rehabilitation counseling, social work, psychology, disability studies, business administration, human resources, special education, supported employment, customized employment, economics, or another field that reasonably prepares individuals to work with consumers and employers.

Demonstrated paid or unpaid experience, for not less than one year, consisting of—

- Direct work with individuals with disabilities in a setting such as an independent living center;
- Direct service or advocacy activities that provide such individual with experience and skills in working with individuals with disabilities; or
- Direct experience in competitive integrated employment environments as an employer, as a small business owner or operator, or in self-employment, or other experience in human resources or recruitment, or experience in supervising employees, training, or other activities.

For hard-to-fill positions, KRS may use Title I funds for employment incentives, including but not limited to relocation expenses or student loan payback after a qualifying period of employment. Such incentives would be offered in exchange for the candidate's commitment to work in the position for a specified period of time.

State personnel standards require the following knowledge, abilities and skills at entry into Counselor positions:

- Knowledge of the principles and techniques of counseling.
- Knowledge of the physical and psychological aspects of disability and human behavior.
- Knowledge of individual appraisal instruments and their applications.
- Knowledge of job analysis, job modification and rehabilitation engineering.
- Knowledge of agency policy and procedures.
- Ability to relate to and work effectively with persons with diverse disabilities.
- Ability to communicate effectively with a variety of people.
- Ability to review and evaluate information and to adapt trends and developments in the field to a practical program application.
- Ability to analyze medical, psychological, economic, social and academic information to formulate recommendations.
- Ability to evaluate personal and psychological characteristics, physical abilities, work background, potential capabilities and interests of the disabled individual and to interpret these in terms of their occupational significance.
- Ability to develop individual written plans for employment.
- Ability to use reference materials on disability to guide eligibility decisions and rehabilitation plan development.
- Ability to use computer technology with accommodations as needed, to complete job duties.

B) The establishment and maintenance of education and experience requirements, in accordance with section 101(a)(7)(B)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

KRS will work with DCF Personnel Services to incorporate the following WIOA priorities into the personnel standards:

Ensuring that personnel have a 21st-century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities means that personnel have specialized training and experience that enables them to work effectively with individuals with disabilities to assist them to achieve competitive integrated employment and with employers who hire such individuals. Relevant skills include, but are not limited to—

(A) Understanding the medical and psychosocial aspects of various disabilities;

(B) Assessing an individual's skills and abilities to obtain and retain competitive integrated employment and establishing a plan to meet the individual's career goals;

(C) Counseling, case management, and advocacy to modify environmental and attitudinal barriers;

(D) Understanding the effective utilization of rehabilitation technology;

(E) Developing effective relationships with employers in the public and private sectors; and

(F) Delivering job development and job placement services that respond to today's labor market.

4. METHOD(S) THE VR AGENCY USES TO ENSURE THAT PERSONNEL ARE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE IN APPROPRIATE MODES OF COMMUNICATION WITH OR IN THE NATIVE LANGUAGE OF APPLICANTS OR ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING ABILITY.

The Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing provides support to staff and consumers statewide. Foreign language interpreting is provided as needed through use of DSA foreign language interpreting contracts. The KRS Handbook of Services, application for services, and informational brochures have been translated into Spanish and Vietnamese.

When accommodations cannot be provided by staff directly, services may be contracted through a private individual or organization, such as a sign language interpreter or foreign language interpreters. When appropriate, family members may assist with communication if that is the consumer's informed choice.

5. AS APPROPRIATE, DESCRIBE THE PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES TO COORDINATE THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT WITH PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT.

A Memorandum of Understanding between KRS and the Kansas Department of Education addresses the intention to share staff training resources and to facilitate cross-informational training among special education and rehabilitation staff.

J. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS.

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(D) of the Rehabilitation Act—

1. DESCRIBE PLANS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATION BETWEEN THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATION OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PUBLIC EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, THAT ARE DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF THE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM THE RECEIPT OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES IN SCHOOL TO THE RECEIPT OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES.

Coordination Between Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) and Education Officials

KRS is dedicated to serving students with disabilities aged 14-21 who are potentially eligible for vocational rehabilitation (VR) services. Our major goals include emphasizing the employment

potential of students with disabilities and improving outreach and outcomes for this demographic.

To achieve these goals, KRS collaborates closely with local school officials to implement Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) and ensure a seamless transition from education to VR services and employment. This approach provides a continuum of services directed toward additional post-secondary education or direct entry into the workforce.

Pre-ETS

KRS reserves 15% of its federal VR funding for Pre-ETS, which includes job exploration and other services such as counseling and self-advocacy training. We have built capacity for Pre-ETS by deploying 30 transition specialists to local VR offices, along with six Pre-ETS Managers and a Statewide Program Administrator. Additionally, we have established service provider agreements with Jobs for America's Graduates-Kansas and the Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy for specific components of Pre-ETS, with a focus on paid work-based learning experiences. These experiences allow students to gain early exposure to employment, explore career options, and develop soft skills necessary for long-term employment success.

According to the Kansas State Department of Education, there are approximately 21,000 youth with disabilities ages 14-21 receiving special education services through an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Our target population for Pre-ETS includes individuals with disabilities covered under Section 504 plans.

Policies and Procedures for Transition

Coordination and collaboration between VR and Special Education are crucial to ensure that students with disabilities have access to the services they need for employment and self-reliance. Students may apply for services directly or be referred by the Local Education Agency (LEA). Our Pre-ETS Transition Specialists work closely with students to address VR programs, services, and procedures, promoting a seamless continuum of services.

Referrals are encouraged for students receiving special education services or accommodations under Section 504. Referral timelines are designed to coordinate Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs) with Individual Education Plans, ensuring that IPEs are written as early as possible during the transition planning process and no later than when the student exits high school.

KRS may provide technical assistance, such as participation in IEP meetings or referral to community resources, prior to the referral timeline if existing staff resources allow.

2. DESCRIBE THE CURRENT STATUS AND SCOPE OF THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VR AGENCY AND THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY. CONSISTENT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT PURSUANT TO 34 C.F.R. § 361.22(B), PROVIDE, AT A MINIMUM, THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ABOUT THE AGREEMENT:

A. CONSULTATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, WHICH MAY BE PROVIDED USING ALTERNATIVE MEANS FOR MEETING PARTICIPATION (SUCH AS VIDEO CONFERENCES AND CONFERENCE CALLS), TO ASSIST EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES IN PLANNING FOR THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO POST-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES AND OTHER VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES;

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY PERSONNEL FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPS) UNDER SECTION 614(D) OF THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT;

C. THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES;

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES. OUTREACH TO THESE STUDENTS SHOULD OCCUR AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE DURING THE TRANSITION PLANNING PROCESS AND MUST INCLUDE, AT A MINIMUM, A DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSE OF THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM, ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS, APPLICATION PROCEDURES, AND SCOPE OF SERVICES THAT MAY BE PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS;

E. COORDINATION NECESSARY TO SATISFY DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN 34 C.F.R. PART 397 REGARDING STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE SEEKING SUBMINIMUM WAGE EMPLOYMENT; AND

F. ASSURANCE THAT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH 34 C.F.R. § 397.31, NEITHER THE SEA NOR THE LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY WILL ENTER INTO A CONTRACT OR OTHER ARRANGEMENT WITH AN ENTITY, AS DEFINED IN 34 C.F.R. § 397.5(D), FOR THE PURPOSE OF OPERATING A PROGRAM UNDER WHICH YOUTH WITH A DISABILITY IS ENGAGED IN WORK COMPENSATED AT A SUBMINIMUM WAGE.

Formal interagency agreement between KRS and the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE)

This agreement includes the following:

KSDE and KRS will conduct joint professional development, in-service training, and development of resource materials for school personnel, VR staff, other adult service providers, parents, and students. This may include orientation to programs, referral processes, policies, procedures, pertinent legislation and other areas as may be appropriate, along with the development of related informational materials.

KSDE and KRS may access and share national resources and expertise to support the delivery of technical assistance and training.

KSDE and KRS will provide TA or support for local efforts in implementing transition planning and programming to educate LEA staff, VR counselors and Pre-ETS Transition Specialists about procedures related to transition planning and services for employment and postsecondary education for students eligible or potentially eligible for Pre-ETS and/or VR services.

KSDE and KRS may participate in TA and advisory opportunities to support the goals of this agreement.

KSDE and KRS will provide training and TA to LEAs and local VR offices on coordinating the transition planning process. Topics in this area may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Inviting KRS counselors and Pre-ETS Transition Specialists to IEP meetings.
- Providing information about Pre-ETS and VR services in the IEP development process.

    - KRS will attend meetings for the development of an IEP when invited, with appropriate consent and as resources allow. Participation by KRS staff (VR or Pre-ETS) may include in-person attendance, conference call, live video, LEA personnel presenting written, oral or video materials highlighting VR and/or Pre-ETS information, or other mutually agreed upon options.
    - KSDE will encourage LEAs to distribute the Pre-ETS and VR services brochure to students, family members, and/or guardian and their representatives at all IEP meetings as part of the routine information shared. KSDE will emphasize this best practice with all LEAs at least annually.
    - KRS, in collaboration with LEAs, will provide or arrange for the provision of Pre-ETS to all students with disabilities who meet criteria for participation in Pre-ETS. The Pre-ETS Transition Specialist will make the determination that the student meets the criteria.
    - KRS shall determine the eligibility for VR services of all students with disabilities who have applied for VR services as soon as possible but no later than 60 calendar days from the date of application, in accordance with KRS policy and regulations, pursuant to section 102(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 34 C.F.R. § 361.41(b)(1) of its implementing regulations.
    - KRS will develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), which takes into consideration the student-client's IEP as soon as possible but no later than 90 calendar days from the determination of eligibility, in accordance with KRS policy and regulations.

As outlined in the agreement, KRS will provide VR services for students in accordance with KRS policy under the following conditions:

- The student has been determined eligible for VR and can be served within the Order of Selection.
- The student (and his/her parents or representative if appropriate) and the VR counselor have agreed to an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE).
- The goods or services provided will be necessary for post-high school training or employment, or will substantially contribute to the achievement of the competitive, integrated employment objective on the IPE.
- Employment or post-secondary services provided by VR must occur outside the established school sessions. The term “school sessions” refers not only to the school semester or term, but also to the school day.
- Consideration of comparable benefits is required, and application of the economic need policy may be required.
- No supplanting transition services under IDEA.

According to the agreement and consistent with regulations, the Local Education Agency/Authority (LEA) is not relieved of any responsibility to provide transition services until the student formally exits the public school program and as long as the student remains eligible for and receives special education services.

KRS and KSDE agree on the following:

The responsibilities of KRS are to:

- Serve as the lead agency for carrying out federal and state policies relating to the program under the Rehabilitation Act, including, upon written request from LEA staff, and with parent, guardian, or adult student consent, distribution of general information related to services, consultation, TA, attendance at transition events and other forums to provide information about Pre-ETS and VR services, attend IEP meetings, provide Pre-ETS services, make referral for VR services, eligibility determination, IPE development, and VR services, pursuant to 34 C.F.R. §300.321(b)(3). Pre-ETS will accept referrals of students with disabilities during the transition planning process as long as the student meets all criteria to participate.
- Accept and process applications for VR services from students in transition in accordance with KRS policy.
- Provide consultation with school LEA staff on transition planning to prepare eligible students to move from school to work or post-secondary education, leading to employment in accordance with the student's unique needs as determined through the IEP process and provision of Pre-ETS.
- Assess, plan, develop, and provide VR services for eligible individuals with disabilities who have been referred for VR services, consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice, so that such individuals may prepare for and engage in competitive integrated employment.
- Ensure that IPEs are developed and signed for students determined eligible for VR services as early as possible during the transition planning process, but at the latest, before they exit school, or if KRS is operating under an Order of Selection, for each eligible student able to be served.
- Develop an IPE, which is consistent with and which takes into consideration the student-client's IEP, within 90 days of VR eligibility determination in accordance with KRS policy and regulations.
- Provide consultation to assist in the identification of eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities, and assessment of their individual needs for Pre-ETS.
- Provide or arrange for the provision of services identified on the IPE, when the student has been determined eligible for VR, and the services are specific to his/her employment objective, and are not services customarily provided to the student by the LEA under the IDEA.
- Provide training and technical assistance for KRS staff to facilitate coordination of the transition planning process with LEAs for students with disabilities. Actions in this area may include but are not limited to:
    - Local KRS staff members' participation in IEP meetings, in person or through conference technology, within available resources and in accordance with KRS policy.
    - Training of LEA staff about VR services, processes and timelines.
- Provide VR services for students in accordance with KRS policy under the following conditions:
    - The student has been determined eligible for VR and can be served within the Order of Selection.

    - The student (and his/her parents or representative if appropriate) and the VR counselor have agreed to an IPE.
    - The goods or services provided will be necessary for post-high school training or employment, or will substantially contribute to achievement of the competitive, integrated employment objective on the IPE.
    - Employment or post-secondary services provided by VR must occur outside the established school sessions.
    - Consideration of comparable benefits and application of the economic need policy are required.
    - No Supplanting transition services provided under IDEA.
- Obtain written consent for the release of confidential information, pursuant to KRS VR policy and procedures, federal and state laws and regulations regarding confidentiality.
- Provide contact information for KRS VR counselors and Pre-ETS Transition Specialist.
- Identify a single point of contact who will coordinate transition activities within each school LEA.
- Share information regarding policies, procedures, guidelines, programs, and services for the purpose of improving the access to, and availability of, transition services.
- Provide brochures and materials about the VR process and services to the school LEAs for distribution to the students, parents, legal guardians, teachers, and others.
- Provide TA to inform teachers, KSDE, students, legal guardians, and parents of the mandates found in the Rehabilitation Act in Section 511 as amended (34 C.F.R. § 397), which require the youth with a disability exiting school to be referred to VR prior to working in a subminimum wage work with a 14c certificate holder.

The responsibilities of KSDE are to:

- Encourage LEA and VR collaboration and coordination for the purpose of providing more opportunities and resources to move students from school to work, (e.g. participation on local multi-agency teams), Career and Technical Education (CTE), post-secondary education, leading to employment and other opportunities for collaboration for improved Pre-ETS and VR services outcomes.
- Identify a single point of contact within the KSDE for collaboration of transition activities with VR.
- Develop active communication and outreach efforts for parents and students to increase awareness of coordinated transition services and opportunities.
- Upon formal request following the KSDE process for data requests, share aggregated student data with KRS, including statewide students with disabilities exit data, students with disabilities 14 years of age and older per building, LEA, and statewide.
- KSDE will facilitate joint training between VR and appropriate LEA personnel on new state or federal requirements, or initiatives that impact the provision of services by both entities.
- KSDE will encourage LEAs to provide the required documentation identified in the Referral for Vocational Rehabilitation Services prior to the provision of Pre-ETS, to coordinate IEP meetings with VR, to coordinate the provision of services, to obtain the required parental consent to invite a representative from an outside agency to any such meeting prior to sharing confidential information about the child, and to meet its ongoing requirement to provide all special educational services or related transition

services required under IDEA in accordance with section 101(c) of the Rehabilitation Act, and 34 C.F.R. § 361.22(c) of its implementing regulations.

- Provide training and technical assistance to LEAs to identify the transition needs of each student, and document those needs on the IEP of each student with a disability aged 14 and over. Provide training and technical assistance to LEAs to facilitate the sharing of the following information, contained in the student's education record, at the time of referral to KRS (with parent consent):

    - The source documentation from which eligibility for special education services was determined;
    - The most recent evaluation or re-evaluation information;
    - Age-appropriate transition assessments;
    - Current IEP; and
    - Current contact information for student and parents or guardian, if appropriate;
    - Behavior plans, other documentation ancillary to the IEP, 504 plans, medical records or any other documentation available to support eligibility for Pre-ETS and VR services.
- Provide training and technical assistance to LEAs specific to the provision of transition services related to employment and/or postsecondary education activities, which occur within established school sessions.

Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) collaborates closely with the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) to ensure the effective provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities. This collaboration is formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between KRS and KSDE, which outlines the roles and responsibilities of each agency, including financial responsibilities.

The MOU designates KSDE as the lead agency for identifying students with disabilities who are potentially eligible for VR services and referring them to KRS for Pre-ETS. KRS is responsible for providing Pre-ETS, including job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on post-secondary education opportunities, workplace readiness training, and instruction in self-advocacy.

Financial responsibilities are outlined in the MOU, with provisions for determining the allocation of funds between KRS and KSDE for the provision of Pre-ETS. The MOU also specifies the qualified personnel responsible for transition services and Pre-ETS within each agency, ensuring that services are delivered by individuals with the appropriate expertise and training.

Overall, the MOU serves as a comprehensive framework for coordinating the delivery of Pre-ETS to students with disabilities, ensuring that services are provided in a timely and effective manner to support their transition from school to vocational rehabilitation services and employment.

RS maintains staff liaisons for each public high school to ensure statewide coverage. In addition to working with special education staff, KRS staff contact vocational education departments, school nurses, and guidance counselors to provide greater outreach to students with disabilities and their families.

Consistent with the goals and priorities, KRS will emphasize the employment potential of students with disabilities and improve the outreach and outcomes for transition-aged students.

In doing so, KRS will pursue opportunities to collaborate with students, families, the Kansas State Department of Education, schools, and other stakeholders.

All regions are responsible for outreach to students, parents and schools. Some examples include: scheduling specific days for Pre-ETS transition specialists and counselors to work at schools and meet with students and transition staff; operating informational booths at transition fairs or parent-teacher events; and participating in special events such as Job Olympics and Disability Mentoring Day events.

KRS will promote the use of the Career Technical Education initiative for students to participate in technical education while in high school. As a result, they graduate with a qualifying certificate in hand and are, therefore, able and prepared for direct entry into the workforce.

Under Section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act, 14(c) businesses referred to as "employers" are prohibited from hiring any individual with disabilities who is 24 years of age or younger at subminimum wage, unless the individual has received documentation from KRS upon completion of all the following activities:

- Pre-ETS or transition services under the IDEA.
- Apply for vocational rehabilitation services, and the individual was determined ineligible for vocational rehabilitation services.
- Eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, had an approved IPE, and the individual was unable to achieve an employment outcome in competitive, integrated employment after a reasonable period of time, and his/her case was closed.
- Career counseling and information and referral services to federal and state programs to help the individual discover, experience, and attain competitive integrated employment and the counseling and information was not for employment at sub-minimum wage.

These requirements should be shared by the KSDE with LEAs, parents, guardians, teachers, and students. KRS VR will maintain the documentation and provide a copy to the individual within the timelines identified as specified under 34 C.F.R. §§ 397.1 to 50. Any of the services identified above that the LEA provides must be documented by the LEA, and provided to the student and VR.

KRS, in cooperation with the KSDE, must develop or use an existing process to document the completion of this process, as well as the transmittal of documentation from LEAs to the KRS, consistent with the confidentiality requirements of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g(b), and 34 C.F.R. §§ 99.30, 99.31), the IDEA (20 U.S.C. § 1417(c) and 34 C.F.R. § 300.622) pursuant to section 511(d) of the Act, and 34 C.F.R. § 397.10, and 34 C.F.R. § 397.30, and the Kansas Student Data Privacy Act, K.S.A. 72-6312 through 72-6230 and amendments thereto.

Consistent with the above cited acts, KSDE will encourage each LEA to provide KRS documentation that the youth has received transition services under the IDEA. This documentation should include (34 C.F.R. § 397.30(b)(1)):

- The youth's name,
- A description of the service or activity completed,
- Name of the provider of the service or activity,
- Date service or activity completed,
- Signature of educational personnel documenting the completion of the service or activity,

- Date of above signature,
- Signature of educational personnel transmitting documentation to KRS, and
- Date and method the documentation was transmitted to KRS.

Documentation should be provided as soon as possible upon completion but, no later than, 30 calendar days after the completion of the required activities, or 60 calendar days if additional time is necessary due to extenuating circumstances (to be interpreted narrowly) (34 C.F.R. § 397.30(c)(l)(i)):

If the educational agency is documenting the youth's refusal of services, the documentation should include (34 C.F.R. § 397.30(b)(2)):

- The youth's name,
- Description of the refusal and reason for the refusal,
- Signature of the youth or as applicable the youth's parent or guardian,
- Signature of the educational personnel documenting the youth's refusal,
- Dates of above signatures,
- Signature of educational personnel transmitting documentation to KRS, and
- Date and method the documentation was transmitted to KRS

This documentation should be provided from the educational agency to VR within five calendar days of the youth's refusal. (34 C.F.R. § 397.30(c)(l)(ii).

The educational agency should retain a copy of all documentation provided to KRS consistent with the requirements of 2 C.F.R. § 200.333. (34 C.F.R. § 397.30(d)).

KRS will provide documentation to the youth, including documentation of transition services provided by the local educational agency, as soon as possible upon completion, but, no later than, 45 calendar days after the completion of these activities, or 90 calendar days in extenuating circumstances (to be interpreted narrowly) (34 C.F.R. § 397.10(c)). This documentation must contain, at a minimum, those details listed in 34 C.F.R. § 397.10(a)(l)).

If a youth with a disability or, as applicable, the youth's parent or guardian, refuses, through informed choice, to participate in the activities required by section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act or its implementing regulations in 34 C.F.R. §§ 397.1 to .50, documentation must be provided by KRS. This documentation must at a minimum contain those details listed in (34 CFR 397.10(a)(2)).

KRS will provide this information to the youth within 10 calendar days of the youth's refusal to participate. (34 C.F.R. § 397.10(c)(2)(ii)):

- When transmitting documentation of the final determination or activity, Kansas VR will provide a cover sheet itemizing the documents that have been provided to the youth (34 C.F.R. § 397.10(c)(3)).
- KRS must retain copies of the documentation in a manner consistent with the requirements of 2 C.F.R. § 200.333. (34 C.F.R. § 397.10(a)(3)).

Neither the KSDE nor a LEA in Kansas will enter into an arrangement with an entity holding a special wage certificate under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act for the purpose of operating a program under which a youth with a disability is engaged in work at a subminimum wage.

K. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(E) of the Rehabilitation Act, describe how the VR agency will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of VR services; and transition services for youth and students with disabilities, including pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities.

- Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) prioritizes fostering relationships with employers to showcase the valuable skills and capabilities that qualified workers with disabilities possess, thereby contributing to the success of businesses and industries across Kansas. KRS will enhance and sustain its ability to effectively reach out and engage with employers statewide to achieve the following objectives:

- Fulfill the workforce requirements of businesses through the pool of skilled individuals with disabilities.
- Identify competitive, integrated employment prospects for vocational rehabilitation (VR) consumers, including opportunities for youth and adults diverted from sub-minimum wage employment under Section 511 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- Expand avenues for youth with disabilities to participate in paid work-based learning experiences as part of the Pre-Employment Transition Services program, fostering career exploration and the development of essential soft skills crucial for long-term employment success.
- Collaborate with partners in the workforce development system to establish streamlined processes for engaging businesses.
- Coordinate with the Economic and Employment Services unit in the Department for Children and Families, which oversees the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, in their efforts related to employer development activities. KRS has established service provider agreements for job placement and on-the-job support with nearly 120 local providers, including community rehabilitation programs, local organizations, and individual service providers. Annually, KRS and its network of providers engage with numerous employers, fostering various levels of interaction.

L. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(C) and (K), describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system to develop opportunities for community-based employment in integrated settings, to the greatest extent practicable for the following:

1. STATE PROGRAMS (DESIGNATE LEAD AGENCY(IES) AND IMPLEMENTING ENTITY(IES)) CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

KRS collaborates with the Assistive Technology for Kansans program to assess and provide personalized assistive technology services for VR consumers. Comprehensive training on

cutting-edge technology is included in the in-service training for all new VR counselors and program specialists. Moreover, KRS maintains a presence on the ATK advisory committee.

2. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

In alignment with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act and its regulations, KRS has the option to utilize the Rural Development Programs offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, provided that these programs are accessible to local communities.

3. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH;

KRS will collaborate with local workforce operators and Adult Education to facilitate employment services for youth not currently enrolled in school. The portion of this plan that combines these efforts incorporates comprehensive operational strategies specifically tailored to youth services. Moreover, KRS allocates funding to the Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy to enable leadership training, the development of self-advocacy skills, and the provision of mentoring services for youth facing disabilities. KRS personnel actively engage in Family Employment Awareness Trainings organized by Families Together and contribute to local-level planning and referrals for Project Search programs. Furthermore, KRS will explore potential means to contribute to the expansion of effective practices aimed at broadening employment opportunities and enhancing overall outcomes.

4. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS;

Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) does not directly manage the State Use Catalog or its purchasing processes; these are overseen by the Kansas Department of Administration. However, KRS adheres to the state's procurement practices and, like all state agencies, procures goods and services from the State Use Catalog. This catalog includes offerings from individuals who are blind or severely disabled, ensuring that KRS considers these options whenever they align with the agency's needs.

KRS engages with state use contracting programs in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act's mandate for competitive, integrated employment. This approach ensures that purchases support the Act's objectives and promote the opportunities of individuals with disabilities in the workforce.

5. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR ADMINISTERING THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT (42 U.S.C. 1396 ET SEQ.);

Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) is set collaborates with the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) coordinate to delineating roles and responsibilities pertaining to competitive, integrated employment for individuals with disabilities in Kansas. KDADS and KDHE jointly oversee the administration of the Medicaid program, with KDADS specifically managing services for individuals with intellectual disabilities and behavioral health challenges.

The primary objective of the coordination meetings is to foster a shared understanding of responsibilities, policies, and procedures. It will encompass data sharing initiatives aimed at comprehensively analyzing how mutual consumers engage with the array of services and support available to them. Of utmost importance, the agreement will establish a collaborative framework for services that enhance competitive, integrated employment outcomes for people with disabilities. A key focus will be on outlining procedures for referring youth with disabilities

to vocational rehabilitation (VR) services, allowing them to explore options for competitive, integrated employment rather than being immediately placed in sub-minimum wage positions after leaving school, in accordance with Section 511 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Additionally, the agreement will address referral procedures for adults currently employed in sub-minimum wage roles, enabling VR to provide periodic guidance and career counseling related to competitive, integrated employment opportunities.

Continuous communication and collaboration remain integral to KRS's operations with other agencies concerning the competitive, integrated employment of individuals with disabilities in Kansas. Notably, this includes active participation in the Governor's Behavioral Health Planning Council and its vocational sub-committee, the Developmental Disabilities Council, the Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns, the Employment First Commission, and the Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Additionally, KRS has established agreements with Comprehensive Schools for the Blind in Colorado (Colorado Center for the Blind) and Missouri (Alphapointe) to ensure access to the intensive level of training required by certain consumers. KRS will consistently seek further agreements as necessary to effectively meet the evolving needs of its consumers.

6. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES;

Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) collaborates at least quarterly with the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) to improve outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities, although currently, there is no formal agreement in place. This collaboration aims to establish a shared understanding of responsibilities, policies, and procedures related to competitive, integrated employment for individuals with disabilities in Kansas. This includes procedures for referring youth and adults with disabilities to vocational rehabilitation (VR) services, allowing them to explore competitive, integrated employment options. Continuous communication and collaboration remain integral to KRS's operations, with a commitment to seeking further agreements as necessary to meet the evolving needs of individuals with disabilities and improve outcomes for community-based employment in integrated settings.

7. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES; AND

Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) collaborates with the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) to enhance community-based employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, including those with mental health needs. While there is no formal agreement in place, KRS maintains ongoing meetings and communication at least quarterly with these agencies to support the competitive, integrated employment of individuals with disabilities. This collaboration aims to develop a comprehensive understanding of roles, policies, and procedures related to competitive, integrated employment and to improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities in Kansas.

8. OTHER FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS OUTSIDE THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM.

Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) engages in partnerships and harmonizes efforts with federal, state, and local employment and rehabilitation agencies to contribute to the vocational rehabilitation (VR) of individuals with disabilities in Kansas. These collaborations are customized at the local level, tailoring services to meet the specific needs and preferences of each individual, reflecting the personalized approach that underpins VR services.

At the state level, KRS collaborates with various units within the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) and other state departments. For instance:

- KRS collaborates with DCF Economic and Employment Services to cater to individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) with disabilities, ensuring they receive the necessary and specialized services to secure employment before their TANF benefits expire.
- KRS partners with DCF Prevention and Protection Services independent living staff to address the employment and post-secondary education needs of youth with disabilities transitioning out of foster care.
- Cooperative partnerships between the oversight units for community developmental disability organizations and community mental health centers within the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services foster discussions on the significance of competitive, integrated employment, an employment-first strategy, evidence-based practices, and supported employment services. Managed Care Organizations collaborate on service coordination for HCBS participants with employment goals outlined in their care plans.
- KRS maintains an active presence on various councils and committees, including the Statewide Independent Living Council of Kansas, the Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns, the Governor's Behavioral Health Planning Council, the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities, and five local workforce development boards.
- A memorandum of understanding with the Prairie Band Potawatomie Nation Native American VR program has been established to ensure coordinated services that facilitate employment for consumers.
- To optimize resources and facilitate consumer access to essential services, KRS collaborates with numerous local and state programs, including Working Healthy and independent living centers.
- KRS collaborates with the Department of Corrections and individual correctional institutions to assist individuals with disabilities who are reentering society to secure employment.

9. OTHER PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

To ensure the diverse needs of people with disabilities are met, Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) will sustain its extensive collaborations with various community service providers, offering a comprehensive range of vocational rehabilitation (VR) services. The establishment of these agreements and contracts serves multiple purposes, including aiding KRS consumers in attaining their employment objectives, bolstering community service capabilities, fostering innovative service delivery strategies, catering to specific demographic groups, and expanding the selection of service providers for consumers. Additionally, these arrangements help uphold the equitable distribution of services across different regions.

The process of forging such agreements underscores the pivotal role of regional KRS offices in identifying necessary services and overseeing the utilization and efficacy of services provided through the agreements. These contracts and agreements outline the specifics of the services to be provided, including outcome metrics, procedures for referrals, authorizations, reporting protocols, fees, billing, and financial processes.

A variety of services can be availed through these service provider agreements, such as vocational assessments, independent living assessments, community-based work assessments, job-related training, and rehabilitation services for individuals with visual impairments. Emphasizing the formulation of action plans, improved communication channels between KRS personnel and service providers, and measures to ensure successful rehabilitation outcomes, these agreements facilitate a collaborative approach.

A multitude of service providers, including community rehabilitation programs, consumer-run organizations, independent living centers, mental health centers, and assistive technology access sites, participate in these agreements, often delivering multiple services across various regions.

Furthermore, exclusive state funding supports specific initiatives, such as allocating $125,000 to the Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation (CPRF) in Wichita, which aids in providing individual assistive technology equipment and services to enhance the independent living of individuals with disabilities. Moreover, $160,050 is designated for the Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy to facilitate career and leadership training, as well as mentoring programs for youth with disabilities.

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner, that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:

The VR agency must select the "Edit" button to review and agree to the VR State plan Assurances.

The State Plan must include
1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.
2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a Unified State plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.
3. Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan: The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:
3.a. the establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act.

The State Plan must include
3.b. either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.c. consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.d. the financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3).
3.e. as applicable, the local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.f. as applicable, the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.g. statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.h. the requirements for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.i. all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.j. the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.k. the compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.l. the reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities as set forth in section 101(a)(18)(A).
3.m. the submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:
4.a. comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(E) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.b. impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.c. provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services or, if implementing an order of selection, in accordance with criteria established by the State for the order of selection as set out in section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act.

The State Plan must include
4.d. determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.e. comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.f. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act
4.g. provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.h. comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by sections 101(a)(14) and 511 of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.i. meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs.
4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,
4.j.i. has developed and will implement,
4.j.i.A. strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and
4.j.i.B. strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and
4.j.ii. has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15), 101(a)(25) and 113).
4.j.iii. shall reserve not less than 15 percent of the allocated funds for the provision of pre-employment transition services; such funds shall not be used to pay for the administrative costs of providing pre-employment transition services.
5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement to the State plan:
5.a. The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act.
5.b. The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.

The State Plan must include
6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program (Title VI):
6.a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(H) and (I) of the Rehabilitation Act.
6.b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act.
7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:
7.a. The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.
7.b. The designated State agency assures that the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(7)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.

Do you attest that these assurances will be met?
Yes

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL) CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE,) IS AUTHORIZED TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (REHABILITATION ACT), AS AMENDED BY TITLE IV OF WIOA[1], AND ITS STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT;

[1] Public Law 113-128.

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE

Department for Children and Families, Kansas Rehabilitation Services

2. IN THE EVENT THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY IS NOT PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH VOCATIONAL AND OTHER REHABILITATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY MUST INCLUDE A DESIGNATED STATE UNIT FOR THE VR PROGRAM (SECTION 101(A)(2)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT). AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES, THE (DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WHEN THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY HAS A DESIGNATED STATE UNIT)[2]AGREES TO OPERATE AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[3], THE REHABILITATION ACT, 34 CFR 361.13(B) AND (C), AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[4], POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE TO STATES UNDER SECTION 111(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

[2] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

[3] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[4] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 361.

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

Department for Children and Families, Kansas Rehabilitation Services

3. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY, OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WHEN THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY HAS A DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AGREES TO OPERATE AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[5], THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[6], POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER TITLE VI ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

[5] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[6] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 4, as well as Supported Employment program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 363.

4. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT OR, IF NOT APPLICABLE, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO PERFORM THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE

REGARDING THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH 34 CFR 361.13(B) AND (C);

5. THE STATE LEGALLY MAY CARRY OUT EACH PROVISION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

6. ALL PROVISIONS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT ARE CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW.

7. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO RECEIVE, HOLD, AND DISBURSE FEDERAL FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Daniel Decker

8. THE (ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND THE SUPPLEMENT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Director of Rehabilitation Services

9. THE AGENCY THAT SUBMITS THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT HAS ADOPTED OR OTHERWISE FORMALLY APPROVED THE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Public Law 113-128.

[2] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

[3] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[4] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 361.

[5] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[6] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 4, as well as Supported Employment program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 363.

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

Signatory information	Enter Signatory information in this column
Name of Signatory	Daniel Decker
Title of Signatory	Director of Rehabilitation Services
Date Signed	

GEPA 427 FORM INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION PACKAGE - VOCATIONAL

REHABILITATION

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

OMB Control Number 1894-0005 Expiration 02/28/2026

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA Section 427 Form Instructions for State Applicants

State applicants must respond to the following four questions:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

• Applicants identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.

• Applicants use the associated text box to respond to each question. However, applicants might have already included some or all of this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) in their State Plans that include the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.

• Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity to apply.

• Applicants who have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

• Applicants who believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

Please refer to GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

1. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ENTITY'S EXISTING MISSION, POLICIES, OR COMMITMENTS ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN, THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The first of four questions is:

Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

The Department for Children and Families (DCF) and Rehabilitation Services (RS) are committed to ensuring equitable access to and participation in all programs and services. This commitment is deeply embedded in our mission statements, values, goals, and organizational practices.

Mission Statements:

DCF's mission is to protect children, strengthen families, and promote adult self-sufficiency. RS's mission is to work in partnership with Kansans with disabilities to achieve their goals for employment and independence. These missions reflect our dedication to serving all individuals, including those with disabilities, and ensuring their inclusion and success.

Values and Goals:

RS values the worth, rights, and contributions of people with disabilities, demonstrating a commitment to treating individuals with respect and recognizing their unique contributions. Our goals related to meaningful participation, delivering quality services, advocating for rights, and valuing competent staff highlight a comprehensive approach to ensuring equitable access and outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

Staff Values and Goals:

Emphasizing the use of outcome-oriented performance standards, recruitment and support of qualified staff, open communication, and celebrating exemplary performance indicates a commitment to having a competent and responsive team. This ensures that individuals with disabilities receive the support they need to achieve their goals.

Organizational Climate:

Goals related to promoting an organizational climate of trust and consistency, using management practices that emphasize outcomes, and utilizing measures of client satisfaction demonstrate a commitment to creating a supportive and accountable environment. This encourages individuals with disabilities to actively participate in our programs and services.

Resource Management:

Goals related to allocating and managing resources in a timely manner, collaborating with others to address the needs of individuals with disabilities, and increasing resources for improved services indicate a commitment to effective resource management. This ensures that individuals with disabilities have access to the resources they need to succeed.

Public Support:

Goals related to involving persons with disabilities in policy development, actively engaging business and industry, assisting employers in meeting workforce needs, and informing and educating the public demonstrate a commitment to fostering public support and inclusivity. This ensures that individuals with disabilities are integrated into the community and have access to opportunities for growth and development.

Non-Discrimination Policy:

The explicit statement that all services shall be provided without regard to sex, race, age, creed, color, national origin, or type of disability reinforces the commitment to non-discrimination and equal access to services. This ensures that individuals with disabilities are treated fairly and have access to the same opportunities as others.

Overall, our mission, values, goals, and organizational practices demonstrate a clear commitment to ensuring equitable access to and participation in our programs and services for individuals with disabilities.

2. BASED ON YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY, WHAT BARRIERS MAY IMPEDE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, OR OTHER BENEFICIARIES?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The second of four questions is:

Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

Barriers Related to Individuals with Disabilities:

Despite the commitment to non-discrimination, there may still be challenges in ensuring equal access for individuals with disabilities. This could include our application process and having better access to online presence.

Resource Allocation Challenges:

While the organization aims to allocate and manage resources effectively, there could be constraints that impede the timely provision of necessary resources.

Communication and Awareness Gaps:

Even with a commitment to open communication and public support, there might be gaps in awareness and understanding of the available services and resources. This lack of awareness could affect the equitable participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries, especially if they are not fully informed about the support services offered.

Organizational Climate and Cultural Barriers:

Despite efforts to create a supportive organizational climate, there could be challenges related to the organizational culture that may inadvertently create barriers for certain individuals or groups. Addressing issues of bias, fostering cultural competence, and ensuring a truly inclusive environment may be necessary.

Access to Information and Services:

Achieving meaningful participation relies on individuals being well-informed about the available services and being able to access them easily. Barriers related to the dissemination of information or difficulty navigating service systems may hinder equitable access for students, educators, or beneficiaries.

Collaboration Challenges:

While collaboration with public and private sectors is a goal, actual collaboration may face challenges. Differing priorities, communication breakdowns, or resistance to collaboration from external partners could impede the organization's ability to address the needs of individuals with disabilities effectively.

Educational and Workforce Engagement:

Despite goals to involve persons with disabilities in policy development and engage business and industry, there may be challenges in ensuring active participation. This could be due to a lack of understanding among employers about the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities or insufficient support for workforce integration.

3. BASED ON THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO ADDRESS SUCH BARRIERS TO EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The third of four questions is:

Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

1. **Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment:**

    a. Conducting a comprehensive statewide needs assessment is a proactive step towards understanding the specific challenges and requirements of diverse individuals, including students, educators, and other beneficiaries. This assessment can identify areas where resources and services may be lacking, helping you tailor your programs to meet the unique needs of different groups.

2. **Monitoring Customer Service Satisfaction Surveys:**

    a. Continuously monitoring customer service satisfaction surveys is an effective way to gauge the effectiveness of your services from the perspective of the beneficiaries. This feedback mechanism can provide insights into areas that need improvement and help identify any disparities in satisfaction among different groups. Addressing issues raised in these surveys can contribute to a more equitable experience for all.

3. **Increasing Program Visibility to the Public:**

    a. Making your program more visible to the public is crucial for raising awareness about the available services and resources. By doing so, you create opportunities for individuals, including those with disabilities, to access the support they need. This outreach effort can help bridge communication gaps and ensure that information about your program reaches a wider audience.

4. **Streamlining Application Processes:**

    a. Simplifying and streamlining application processes is a practical step to enhance accessibility. Complex or cumbersome application procedures can act as barriers, particularly for individuals with disabilities who may face additional challenges in navigating bureaucratic systems. By making the application process more user-friendly, you reduce barriers and encourage broader participation.

These measures collectively address various aspects of potential barriers, from understanding the needs of the target population to improving the ease of access to services and enhancing overall program visibility. Additionally, the combination of a needs assessment, customer satisfaction monitoring, outreach efforts, and process streamlining aligns with the values and goals outlined in the mission and objectives of the Rehabilitation Services.

4. WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE, INCLUDING TARGETED MILESTONES, FOR ADDRESSING THESE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The final of four questions is:

What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment:

Conduct the needs assessment to be completed by the modification of the State Plan of the project or activity initiation.

Target Milestone: Complete the assessment and compile a report with key findings within six months.

Action Steps:

- Form a task force or working group responsible for the assessment.
- Develop and administer surveys, interviews, or focus groups to gather data.
- Analyze data and identify key barriers and areas for improvement.
- Draft a comprehensive report outlining assessment results and recommendations.

Monitoring Customer Service Satisfaction Surveys:

Begin regular administration of customer service satisfaction surveys at the start of the project.

Target Milestone: Implement a feedback loop, reviewing and responding to survey results every quarter.

Action Steps:

- Establish a system for ongoing survey administration.
- Develop a protocol for reviewing survey results.
- Identify and prioritize action items based on feedback.
- Implement changes and improvements based on survey findings.

Increasing Program Visibility to the Public:

Initiate a targeted public awareness campaign during the State Plan 2024-2027 of the project.

Target Milestone: Achieve a measurable increase in program visibility within the first year.

Action Steps:

- Develop marketing materials and outreach strategies.
- Collaborate with media outlets, community organizations, and relevant stakeholders.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the awareness campaign.
- Adjust strategies based on feedback and results.

Streamlining Application Processes:

Begin the process of streamlining application procedures during our case management modernization of the project.

Target Milestone: Implement a more user-friendly application process within nine months.

Action Steps:

- Conduct a thorough review of the current application process.
- Identify bottlenecks and areas for simplification.
- Redesign and test the streamlined application process.
- Communicate changes to stakeholders and provide support for implementation.

Ongoing Evaluation and Adjustments:

Implement a continuous improvement cycle, with regular evaluations and adjustments throughout the project.

Target Milestone: Conduct a comprehensive project review and adjustment every six months this will begin after our needs assessment has been completed.

Action Steps:

- Establish a dedicated team or committee for ongoing evaluation.
- Review progress towards targeted milestones.
- Adjust strategies based on feedback, assessments, and changing needs.
- Update timelines and milestones as necessary.

GEPA 427 FORM INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION PACKAGE - SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

OMB Control Number 1894-0005 Expiration 02/28/2026

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA Section 427 Form Instructions for State Applicants

State applicants must respond to the following four questions:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

• Applicants identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic

disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.

• Applicants use the associated text box to respond to each question. However, applicants might have already included some or all this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) in their State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.

• Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity to apply.

• Applicants who have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

• Applicants who believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

Please refer to GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

1. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ENTITY'S EXISTING MISSION, POLICIES, OR COMMITMENTS ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN, THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The first of four questions is:

Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

KRS has elected not to receive Title VI funds.

2. BASED ON YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY, WHAT BARRIERS MAY IMPEDE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, OR OTHER BENEFICIARIES?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that*

provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The second of four questions is:

Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

KRS has elected not to receive Title VI funds.

3. BASED ON THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO ADDRESS SUCH BARRIERS TO EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The third of four questions is:

Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

KRS has elected not to receive Title VI funds.

4. WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE, INCLUDING TARGETED MILESTONES, FOR ADDRESSING THESE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) *(20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The final of four questions is:

What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

KRS has elected not to receive Title VI funds.

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult program, Dislocated Worker program, Youth program, Wagner-Peyser Act program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation program— and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it elects to include in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program. 24 If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the "common planning elements" in Sections II-IV of this document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program.

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

TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA)

There are no program-specific state planning requirements for TAA. If the state includes TAA in a Combined State Plan, the state must incorporate TAA in its responses to the common planning elements in sections II, III, IV, and V of the WIOA State Plan requirements instrument.

Has the state incorporated TAA into the sections indicated above?

Yes

JOBS FOR VETERANS' STATE GRANTS

(OMB Control Number: 1293-0017)

Components of the Jobs for Veterans State Grants State Plan

Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) recipients must provide a four-year state plan as a condition for the receipt of annual funding in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(c). This plan must include responses to each of the components below.

A. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES TO VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS UNDER THE JVSG PROGRAM (I.E., VIRTUALLY AND IN-PERSON).

The primary objective of the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) program is to support activities that increase employment and job training opportunities for eligible veterans and eligible persons. Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Consolidated DVOP/LVER (CODL) staff provide individualized career services to eligible veterans and eligible persons with qualifying barriers to employment (QBEs), consistent with 38 U.S.C. §§ 4103A and 4104 and current Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) guidance.

Transitioning Service Members (TSMs) who meet eligibility requirements for JVSG services and are determined to have qualifying barriers to employment (QBEs) may receive individualized career services from Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists. DVOP services to eligible TSMs are provided through coordination with Transition Assistance Program (TAP)

partners and the State's workforce delivery system, rather than through embedded or sequential service models.

KANSASWORKS staff and the State JVSG Manager coordinate with military installations located in Kansas to support a seamless transition for eligible TSMs through in-person and virtual service delivery, consistent with current statutory requirements and Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) guidance.

Additionally, eligible Native American Veterans who may be living on a reservation and/or on tribal lands, as well as any other eligible Native American Veterans that accesses the American Job Centers (AJCs) and are determined to have an SBE will be provided DVOP services.

Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) staff will conduct outreach to employers to assist Veterans in gaining desired employment. Additionally, LVERs will conduct seminars for employers and, in conjunction with employers, conduct job search workshops and establish Veteran job search groups. LVERs will promote training between employers and Veteran clients, referring both to Kansas Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) WIOA partners in the areas of On-the-Job Training, Apprenticeship, and other federal and state programs based on their present and future employment needs. Additionally, LVERs will also facilitate employment placement services to Veterans while coordinating services with the AJC business service representatives.

Outreach Activities

The primary purpose of DVOP staff outreach activities is to locate and connect with Veterans with significant barriers to employment, transitioning service members, and military spouses eligible for provision of individualized career services by DVOPs to aid them in overcoming their barriers to long- term, meaningful employment. When conducting outreach, DVOPs will assess eligibility of the aforementioned through on-site triage via eligibility criteria on the Veterans Initial Intake Form (VIIF) and arrange for service provision at the Veteran's discretion. Additionally, DVOP activities during outreach also include increasing visibility and awareness of employment service programs and training opportunities available to all customers at statewide AJCs as a means of advocating for the One-Stop Operation model.

Outreach efforts are conducted to support the identification and referral of eligible veterans and eligible persons with qualifying barriers to employment (QBEs). Consistent with VPL 05-24 guidance, outreach activities are targeted toward service providers, partner organizations, and agencies that serve veteran populations.

Outreach locations and partners may include, but are not limited to, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities and Vet Centers, VA Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) offices, correctional facilities, homeless service providers, food pantries and soup kitchens, civic and service organizations, community Stand Down events, military installations, National Guard and Reserve units, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) partner programs, state vocational rehabilitation agencies, and other locations or partners likely to serve populations of disenfranchised veterans. Additional outreach partners may be identified based on local need and service gaps.

Strategies for coordinating with partner agencies are implemented to support identification, referral, and service coordination for eligible veterans and eligible persons. These strategies emphasize collaboration with service providers, community-based organizations, and government agencies that regularly interact with veteran populations to advise them of

available services for Veterans and encourage them to promote our services to the veterans they may encounter during their normal business activities.

Coordination activities include maintaining ongoing communication with partner organizations to share information regarding available workforce services for veterans and to encourage appropriate referral of eligible individuals. Collaboration among partners supports the alignment of education, employment services, and career opportunities for veterans and transitioning service members, while ensuring that roles and responsibilities remain clearly delineated and consistent with statutory requirements.

Partnerships are facilitated through engagement with veteran-serving organizations, interagency groups, and advisory bodies, including but not limited to the Governor's Military Council, Military Relations Committees (MRC), American Legion, American Veterans (AMVETS), Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs (KCVA), Kansas National Guard and Reserve Commands, the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Vietnam Veterans of America, the Kansas Board of Regents, and other appropriate veteran service organizations and task forces.

These partnerships support coordinated outreach, referral, and service alignment efforts that enhance access to employment and training opportunities for veterans, while remaining consistent with VPL 05-24.

B. LIST THE POPULATIONS TO BE SERVED BY DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM (DVOP) AND CONSOLIDATED POSITION STAFF, INCLUDING THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR REFERRAL FOR DVOP SERVICES.

The primary objective of the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) program is to support activities that increase employment and job training opportunities for eligible veterans, transitioning service members, and eligible persons. Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists provide individualized career services to eligible populations.

Eligible populations for DVOP services include eligible veterans as defined in 38 U.S.C. § 4211(4) and eligible persons as defined in 38 U.S.C. § 4101(5) who are determined to have one or more qualifying employment barriers (QBEs), consistent with 38 U.S.C. § 4103A and VPL 05-24.

Eligible populations for Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) services include eligible veterans and eligible persons, as defined in statute, who are determined to have one or more **qualifying employment barriers**, consistent with **38 U.S.C. § 4103A** and **(VPL) 05-24.** Eligible populations may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Eligible populations for Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) services include eligible veterans and eligible persons, as defined in statute, who are determined to have one or more **qualifying employment barriers,** consistent with **38 U.S.C. § 4103A** and**)\ VPL 05-24**. Eligible populations may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Disabled veterans**, including special disabled veterans, as defined in 38 U.S.C. § 4211(3), who are:
    - Entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; or
    - Discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability.

- **Homeless veterans**, as defined in Section 103(a) and (b) of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. § 11302(a) and (b)).
- **Recently separated veterans**, as defined in 38 U.S.C. § 4211(6).
- **Offenders**, meaning veterans who are currently incarcerated or who have been released from incarceration.
- Veterans who:
    - Lack a high school diploma or equivalent credential;
    - Are low-income, as defined in WIOA Section 3(36); or
    - Are between the ages of 18 and 24.
- **Veterans of the Vietnam Era.**
- **Transitioning Service Members (TSMs)** who meet eligibility requirements for JVSG services and are determined to have qualifying employment barriers, including:
    - Active-duty service members being involuntarily separated through a service reduction-in-force;
    - Members of the Armed Forces who are wounded, ill, or injured and receiving treatment in military treatment facilities or Warrior Transition Units; and
    - Spouses or other family caregivers of wounded, ill, or injured service members.

Eligibility for DVOP services is determined through appropriate screening and assessment processes. **Priority of Service** for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with **38 U.S.C. § 4215** and **20 C.F.R. Part 1010** and is distinct from eligibility for JVSG-funded services.

DVOP specialists conduct outreach and provide services through coordination with partner organizations and agencies that serve veteran populations. Outreach and service coordination may include collaboration with Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities and community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs), veteran outreach centers, nonprofit community-based organizations serving veterans, military installations supporting the separation of active-duty service members, correctional facilities (including work-release and prerelease programs), and organizations serving homeless veterans. DVOP specialists may also provide services to eligible veterans in rural areas through scheduled appointments and coordinated service delivery.

DVOP specialists coordinate with military installations and Transition Assistance Program (TAP) partners to support eligible transitioning service members and other eligible populations, consistent with VPL 05-24. Service delivery is structured to ensure DVOP specialists maintain their primary responsibility for providing individualized career services through case management and do not engage in duties that detract from those responsibilities.

Eligible Native American Veterans, including those residing on or near tribal lands or accessing services through American Job Centers, who are determined to be eligible veterans with one or more qualifying employment barriers, may receive DVOP services through coordinated service delivery models that respect tribal partnerships and local service structures, consistent with VPL 05-24.

C. DESCRIBE THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES ASSIGNED TO DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM (DVOP) SPECIALISTS, LOCAL VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTATIVE (LVER) STAFF, AND CONSOLIDATED DVOP/LVER POSITIONS BY THE STATE. THESE MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH 38 U.S.C. 4103A AND 4104.

Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists are primarily assigned to provide individualized career services through structured case management to eligible veterans and

eligible persons who are determined to have one or more qualifying employment barriers, consistent with 38 U.S.C. § 4103A and VPL 05-24.

DVOP specialists prioritize service delivery to eligible veterans and eligible persons in accordance with statutory requirements, and with DOL-VETS most current guidance, with emphasis on individuals facing significant employment challenges that require individualized career services to obtain and retain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency. DVOP specialists do not perform employer outreach or job placement activities as a primary function and do not engage in duties that detract from their responsibility to provide individualized career services.

Individualized career services provided by DVOP specialists may include, but are not limited to, comprehensive assessments, development of an individual employment plan, career guidance and counseling, coordination of referrals to appropriate employment, training, and supportive services, and ongoing case management. Outreach activities conducted by DVOP specialists are limited and strategic and are directed toward service providers and partner organizations for the purpose of identifying and referring eligible populations.

DVOP specialists focus their services on eligible veterans and eligible persons who are economically and/or educationally disadvantaged, where individualized career services are necessary to address qualifying employment barriers and support successful employment outcomes.

All Kansas Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists receive training to support the effective delivery of individualized career services to eligible veterans and eligible persons with qualifying employment barriers, consistent with VPL 05-24. DVOP specialists complete required training through the National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI) within 18 months of their hire date.

In addition, newly hired DVOP specialists receive onboarding training provided by the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) Program Manager. Onboarding training includes an overview of the JVSG program, individualized career services and case management, JVSG staff roles and responsibilities, applicable Veterans' Program Letters, qualifying employment barriers, and administrative and reporting requirements associated with the DVOP role.

Ongoing professional development is provided through annual JVSG staff training conferences and other state-led training activities. These trainings focus on staff development and skills enhancement, integrated service delivery models and role delineation, effective individualized career services, strategic planning, performance measurement, and workforce system tools and reporting systems.

Additional local training is conducted by American Job Center (AJC) managers and One-Stop partners to familiarize DVOP specialists with location-specific procedures, partner programs, and coordinated service delivery practices.

DVOP Targeted Services

The State of Kansas monitors DVOP activities through established reporting and oversight processes that capture service delivery, case management activity, and performance outcomes for eligible veterans and eligible persons with qualifying employment barriers. Monitoring is conducted through regular review of program data, reports, and case documentation generated through the State's labor exchange and workforce reporting systems.

In accordance with VPL 01-24, Attachment 4 (Negotiated Targets for Services to Veterans), the JVSG Program Manager utilizes the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS) and other approved reporting tools to track JVSG performance indicators, including employment

outcomes measured in the second and fourth quarters after exit. Performance data are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure compliance with federal reporting requirements and alignment with negotiated performance targets.

DVOP specialists are expected to prioritize the delivery of individualized career services through case management consistent with 38 U.S.C. § 4103A and VPL 05-24. Time and workload management expectations are structured to ensure DVOP specialists maintain primary focus on providing individualized career services, while also completing required administrative, training, travel, documentation, and reporting activities necessary to support effective service delivery.

Quality and effectiveness of DVOP services are assessed through program monitoring, case review, performance analysis, and other evaluation methods as appropriate. These processes support continuous improvement, accountability, and compliance with JVSG program requirements.

LVER Primary Duties

The primary role of Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff at Kansas American Job Centers (AJCs) is to conduct employer outreach and engagement to promote the employment of veterans. LVERs work directly with employers, industry partners, and workforce stakeholders to identify job opportunities, promote veteran hiring, and support the placement of veterans into suitable employment.

LVERs plan, promote, and participate in job fairs, hiring events, and employer seminars and advocate for veterans as qualified, job-ready candidates with transferable skills and experience. LVERs coordinate closely with American Job Center business services staff and other employer-facing representatives to align outreach strategies, share labor market information, and facilitate veteran access to employment opportunities.

LVER staff establish and maintain regular contact with employers, including federal contractors, unions, apprenticeship sponsors, and business or industry organizations, to promote the advantages of hiring veterans and to identify employment and training opportunities for veteran job seekers. LVERs advocate for the employment of veterans by promoting on-the-job training opportunities, registered apprenticeship programs, and other demand-driven workforce initiatives that support veteran employment outcomes.

LVERs also provide employer-focused technical assistance, training, and information sharing to AJC staff, including education related to veterans' employment initiatives, differences between Veterans' Preference and Priority of Service, federal contractor obligations, and relevant state and federal hiring incentives and programs. These activities are conducted in coordination with workforce partners and consistent with VPL 05-24.

LVERs provide regular activity reports to the State JVSG Manager and consult with supervisors and AJC business services teams regarding local hiring trends, employer needs, and emerging employment opportunities. LVERs may also leverage statewide and partner initiatives, such as veteran hiring pledges and recognition programs, to identify and engage veteran-friendly employers seeking to hire veterans.

Employer outreach activities are planned and coordinated in collaboration with the JVSG Program Manager and local supervisors to ensure consistent, strategic engagement with employers. These activities support ongoing communication with businesses to understand workforce needs, share information about veteran hiring initiatives, and promote veteran employment opportunities. Follow-up with employers is conducted as appropriate to support relationship development and service quality.

LVER staff may utilize a variety of outreach methods, including in-person engagement and appropriate use of technology-based tools, to identify and connect with employers seeking to hire veterans. Consideration is given to employer preferences and business needs, with in-person engagement prioritized when feasible to strengthen employer relationships and support effective outreach.

The expected outcomes of employer engagement activities include increased employment opportunities for veterans, promotion of veteran hiring, and improved retention of veterans in the workforce.

All Kansas Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff receive training to support effective employer outreach and engagement activities consistent with VPL 05-24. LVER staff complete required training through the National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI**)** within 18 months of their hire date.

In addition, newly hired LVER staff receive onboarding training provided by the State JVSG Program Manager. This onboarding includes an overview of the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) program, Employment Services, the Jobs for Veterans Act, JVSG staff roles and responsibilities, and applicable provisions of Chapters 41 and 42 of Title 38, as well as current Veterans' Program Letters relevant to LVER duties and employer engagement.

Ongoing professional development is provided through annual JVSG staff training conferences and other state-led training opportunities. These trainings focus on staff development and skills enhancement, integrated service delivery models and role delineation, employer engagement strategies, labor market trends, strategic planning, performance measurement, and workforce system tools and reporting systems.

Additional local training is provided by American Job Center (AJC) managers and One-Stop partners to familiarize LVER staff with location-specific practices, employer engagement strategies, and partner operations.

Consolidated DVOP/LVER (CODL) Positions

During the current four-year State Plan period, the State intends to convert four rural Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) positions to Consolidated DVOP/LVER (CODL) positions. The timing of implementation will be based on operational readiness and programmatic considerations, with the goal of completing the conversion prior to the conclusion of the current State Plan period. These conversions are intended to improve service coverage in rural areas while maintaining full statutory and regulatory compliance.

CODL staff perform both DVOP and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) duties as permitted under VPL 05-24, allocating time between individualized career services and employer outreach based on local workforce needs. CODL staff do not perform duties outside the scope of DVOP or LVER roles and maintain clear role delineation consistent with federal guidance.

CODL positions are geographically assigned and are subject to the same eligibility, prioritization, training, reporting, and oversight requirements applicable to DVOP and LVER staff.

D. DEMONSTRATE THE MANNER IN WHICH DVOP, LVER AND CONSOLIDATED DVOP/LVER STAFF ARE INTEGRATED INTO THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEMS OR AMERICAN JOB CENTER (AJC). THIS DEMONSTRATION SHOULD SHOW ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN JVSG AND OTHER AJC STAFF, SUCH AS THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN STAFF MEETINGS AND CROSS-TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES.

Kansas integrates Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists into the American Job Center (AJC) one-stop delivery system to ensure coordinated access to services for veterans and eligible persons. DVOP specialists operate within the AJC environment and collaborate with workforce and partner staff to support appropriate referral and service coordination consistent with statutory requirements.

Veterans and eligible spouses entering an AJC are identified at the point of entry and informed of Priority of Service in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4215 and 20 C.F.R. Part 1010. Initial intake and basic service functions are conducted by Wagner-Peyser staff and other AJC partners using established intake and assessment processes. Intake staff identify veterans' service needs and document referrals and service activity in kansasworks.com, the State's labor exchange system.

Veterans and eligible persons who meet eligibility criteria for DVOP services and are determined to have one or more qualifying employment barriers may be referred to DVOP specialists for individualized career services through case management, consistent with 38 U.S.C. § 4103A and VPL 05-24. Veterans who do not meet eligibility requirements for DVOP services continue to receive employment and training services through Wagner-Peyser and other AJC partner programs, consistent with Priority of Service requirements.

When appropriate, Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff may be consulted by American Job Center (AJC) staff regarding military documentation and veteran-related employment questions, including information related to character of discharge as documented on a DD-214. This consultation supports accurate identification of veteran status and appropriate referral within the workforce system.

Integration of JVSG services within the one-stop delivery system extends beyond physical co-location. Veterans and eligible spouses seeking services at rural AJCs that do not have on-site DVOP or LVER staff continue to receive Priority of Service in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4215 and 20 C.F.R. Part 1010. AJC staff coordinate referrals for eligible veterans and eligible persons to access JVSG services through scheduled appointments, virtual service delivery, or referral to the nearest AJC with JVSG staff availability.

Upon identification of a veteran or eligible spouse, AJC staff conduct an initial intake and needs assessment and register the individual in kansasworks.com, the State's labor exchange system. Intake processes are used to identify service needs and determine whether additional assessment is necessary.

In the absence of immediate DVOP availability, Wagner–Peyser staff and other American Job Center (AJC) partner staff may provide **basic and individualized career services within their program authority** to eligible veterans, consistent with Priority of Service requirements, until a DVOP specialist becomes available. These services are intended to address initial employment-related needs and support continuity of service while coordination with a DVOP specialist is completed.

AJC staff coordinate referrals and scheduling to ensure eligible veterans and eligible persons who are determined to have one or more **qualifying employment barriers** are connected with a DVOP specialist for individualized career services through case management, consistent with **38 U.S.C. § 4103A** and **VPL 05-24.**

JVSG services are coordinated with military installations and Transition Assistance Program (TAP) partners to support transitioning service members and other eligible populations. Service delivery may include in-person or virtual coordination with installation-based partners; however, DVOP specialists and JVSG staff are **not assigned on a permanent or embedded basis** at military facilities. Service delivery models are structured to maintain compliance with statutory roles and responsibilities while ensuring access to services for eligible populations.

The State of Kansas utilizes an integrated service delivery system in which Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists operate within the American Job Center (AJC) environment in coordination with One-Stop partners. Day-to-day operational coordination may involve local supervisory staff employed by the One-Stop Operator to support workflow, scheduling, and integration with AJC operations.

Programmatic oversight of DVOP specialists, including monitoring of roles, responsibilities, and performance expectations under the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), is maintained by the State workforce agency. Performance monitoring and evaluation processes are conducted in coordination with supervisory staff to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and **VPL 05-24.**

The Manner In Which DVOP Specialists and LVER Staff Are Integrated Into the State's Employment Service Delivery System Or One-Stop Delivery Partner Network

Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)–funded services are required partners within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) one-stop delivery system. In Kansas, JVSG services are fully integrated into the American Job Center (AJC) network and operate in coordination with workforce and partner programs to support Priority of Service for veterans and eligible spouses.

Local Area WIOA Plans and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) govern the partnership between the one-stop delivery system, partner agencies, and JVSG-funded services. These agreements describe how Priority of Service is implemented, how referrals and service coordination occur for eligible veterans and eligible persons, and how roles and responsibilities are delineated among partners. MOUs also describe coordination with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs, and other veteran-serving organizations.

DVOP specialists are integrated into the AJC service delivery system and collaborate with one-stop partners to support eligible veterans and eligible persons who are determined to have one or more qualifying employment barriers. Consistent with 38 U.S.C. § 4103A and VPL 05-24, DVOP specialists focus on providing individualized career services through case management and do not perform duties that detract from these statutory responsibilities.

LVER staff are integrated into the one-stop system through employer engagement and business services functions. LVERs coordinate with AJC business services teams and other employer-facing partners to promote veteran employment, support employer outreach, and facilitate access to employment and training opportunities for veterans, consistent with VPL 05-24.

Consolidated DVOP/LVER (CODL) staff are integrated into the one-stop delivery system in areas where staffing models require combined service delivery. CODL staff perform both DVOP and LVER duties as permitted under VPL 05-24, allocating time between individualized career services and employer outreach based on local workforce needs. CODL staff maintain clear role delineation, ensuring that DVOP-related services are provided to eligible veterans and eligible persons with qualifying employment barriers, and that employer outreach activities remain consistent with LVER responsibilities.

All AJCs maintain integrated business services functions responsible for connecting employers with the workforce system, including qualified veteran candidates, and for ensuring that workforce services remain responsive to the needs of employers, job seekers, partner agencies, and the local economy. JVSG-funded staff, including DVOP specialists, LVERs, and CODLs, participate in these integrated service delivery efforts while maintaining clear role separation and compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

DVOP specialists, LVER staff, and CODL staff support integrated service delivery by sharing program-specific information with American Job Center (AJC) partners, veteran service organizations, and community-based partners consistent with their distinct statutory roles. Information sharing is conducted to promote appropriate referral, coordination of services, and understanding of JVSG program functions within the workforce system.

DVOP specialists focus on the delivery of individualized career services through case management to eligible veterans and eligible persons with qualifying employment barriers, while LVER staff focus on employer engagement and promotion of veteran employment opportunities. Each role operates within clearly defined responsibilities and collaborates with partners to support coordinated access to services for veterans without overlapping or supplanting partner functions.

DVOP specialists and LVER staff participate, as appropriate, in local workforce development activities, including Local Workforce Board staff meetings and partner coordination forums. Through these activities, JVSG staff share best practices related to veteran services, provide subject matter expertise regarding veteran-specific employment needs, and support partner awareness of veteran-serving resources and organizations within the local community.

This collaboration enhances coordinated service delivery for veterans while maintaining compliance with statutory requirements and VPL 05-24.

Integration into the One-Stop System

Kansas integrates services to veterans through State policy and the narrative requirements contained in Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) WIOA Plans. These plans describe how American Job Centers (AJCs) coordinate services for veterans and eligible spouses within the one-stop delivery system and are subject to ongoing oversight to ensure consistent implementation and compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

LWDB WIOA Plans describe how workforce system resources, including Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)–funded services, and other partner resources, are coordinated to provide appropriate services to veterans and eligible persons. Coordination ensures that services are delivered within each program's authority while avoiding duplication or role overlap.

Plans also describe the processes used for identification, intake, assessment, registration, and follow-up for veterans and eligible spouses. These processes ensure veterans are identified at the point of entry, informed of Priority of Service, and referred to appropriate programs based on service needs and eligibility.

LWDB WIOA Plans further describe the range of workforce services available to veterans and eligible persons, including staff-assisted and self-service options, and how services are delivered through coordinated referrals and partner collaboration. Services are provided consistent with program authority and Priority of Service requirements.

Priority of Service for veterans and eligible spouses is implemented across all Department of Labor–funded employment and training programs in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4215 and 20 C.F.R. Part 1010. Plans describe how Priority of Service is applied to employment, training, and placement activities funded in whole or in part by the Department of Labor.

FINALLY, LWDB WIOA PLANS DESCRIBE HOW INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES THROUGH CASE MANAGEMENT ARE PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS WHO ARE DETERMINED TO HAVE QUALIFYING EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS. CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES DELIVERED BY DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM (DVOP) SPECIALISTS

ARE PROVIDED CONSISTENT WITH 38 U.S.C. § 4103A AND VETERANS' PROGRAM LETTER (VPL) 05-24, WHILE OTHER PARTNERS PROVIDE SERVICES WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE PROGRAM AUTHORITIES.

E. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE AWARD PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALS AND/OR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICES TO IMPROVE AND/OR ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE IN THE PROVISION OF SERVICES TO VETERANS, INCLUDING:

1. THE NOMINATION AND SELECTION PROCESS FOR ALL PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE AWARDS TO INDIVIDUALS AND/OR OFFICES;

The State of Kansas administers performance incentive awards in accordance with federal requirements and applicable state policies governing employee recognition and awards. Incentive awards are used to recognize and encourage excellence in the provision of services to veterans and eligible persons and are administered consistent with Veterans' Program Letter (VPL) 01-24, Attachment 5.

Nominations for performance incentive awards may be submitted for individuals and/or offices based on established criteria that reflect outstanding performance and contributions to veteran employment outcomes. Selection criteria for JVSG-funded staff may include, but are not limited to, demonstrated excellence in individualized career services and case management, enhancement of job training or customized training opportunities, development or implementation of initiatives that support veteran hiring, and efforts that strengthen relationships between employers and the veteran population. Recognition may also be given for activities that promote U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOL-VETS) initiatives, such as the Hire Vets Medallion Program and other approved veteran employment programs.

For Wagner-Peyser and American Job Center partner staff, selection criteria may include exceptional job performance, effective outreach and community engagement that supports veteran employment, high-quality customer service to veteran clients, and contributions that support successful employment outcomes for veterans, consistent with each program's authority and role.

THE JVSG PROGRAM MANAGER PROVIDES GUIDANCE TO AMERICAN JOB CENTER STAFF REGARDING NOMINATION PROCEDURES, ELIGIBILITY, AND SELECTION CRITERIA FOR INCENTIVE AWARDS, CONSISTENT WITH VPL 01-24, ATTACHMENT 5, AND APPLICABLE STATE POLICIES. ALL NOMINATIONS AND SELECTIONS ARE REVIEWED TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL GUIDANCE, STATE LAW, AND INTERNAL CONTROLS GOVERNING THE USE OF INCENTIVE FUNDS.

2. THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER AND VALUE OF CASH AWARDS USING THE ONE PERCENT INCENTIVE AWARD ALLOCATION;

The JVSG Program allocates up to one percent of the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) award for performance incentive awards, consistent with federal requirements and applicable state fiscal policies. The estimated amount available for cash incentive awards during a program year is dependent on the total JVSG grant award and may vary accordingly.

Incentive award funds are administered by the Kansas Department of Commerce and are used solely for purposes authorized in the approved State Plan and in accordance with Veterans'

Program Letter (VPL) 01-24, Attachment 5. Incentive awards may be provided to American Job Centers (AJCs) or offices that demonstrate exceptional performance in serving veterans and eligible persons during the program year.

Selection of offices for cash incentive awards is based on established performance criteria and overall program performance. Award recommendations are developed through a collaborative review process involving the Regional Operations Managers (ROMs), the JVSG Program Manager, the Department of Commerce's Assistant Secretary, and the Director of Workforce Services, consistent with state oversight and internal control requirements. Final award determinations are made in accordance with state policies governing fiscal approval and employee recognition.

The State anticipates awarding cash incentive awards to a limited number of AJCs during a program year, with award amounts determined based on available funding and performance outcomes. All AJCs are informed of the nomination process, selection criteria, and award determinations to ensure transparency and consistency.

Incentive award funds are obligated and expended in accordance with federal grant requirements and state fiscal policies. Funds must be obligated by the end of the applicable federal fiscal year, September 30th, and liquidated by December 31st. Any incentive award funds not expended within allowable timeframes are subject to recapture in accordance with federal requirements.

3. THE GENERAL NATURE AND APPROXIMATE VALUE OF NON-CASH PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE AWARDS TO BE CHARGED TO THE BASE ALLOCATION; AND

The State of Kansas may provide non-cash performance incentive awards charged to the JVSG base allocation, consistent with federal guidance and applicable state policies governing employee recognition and expenditures. Non-cash incentive awards are intended to recognize exemplary performance and contributions that enhance services to veterans and eligible persons and support positive employment outcomes.

Selection criteria for non-cash incentive awards may include, but are not limited to, demonstrated excellence in individualized career services and case management, enhancement of job training or customized training opportunities, development of initiatives that support veteran hiring or strengthen relationships between employers and the veteran population, and efforts that promote U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service initiatives, such as the Hire Vets Medallion Program and similar approved programs.

For Wagner-Peyser and American Job Center partner staff, selection criteria may include exceptional job performance, effective outreach and community engagement in support of veteran employment, high-quality customer service to veteran clients, and contributions that support successful employment outcomes for veterans, consistent with each program's authority and role.

The JVSG Program Manager provides guidance to American Job Center staff regarding eligibility, nomination procedures, and selection criteria for non-cash incentive awards, consistent with Veterans' Program Letter (VPL) 01-24, Attachment 5, and applicable state policies. All non-cash incentive awards are reviewed to ensure compliance with federal requirements, state law, and internal controls governing the use of JVSG funds.

4. ANY CHALLENGES THE STATE MAY ANTICIPATE TO CARRYING OUT A PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE AWARD PROGRAM AS MANDATED BY 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(C). THIS SHOULD INCLUDE ANY STATE LAWS OR POLICIES THAT PROHIBIT SUCH AWARDS, IF APPLICABLE. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S EFFORTS IN OVERCOMING THOSE CHALLENGES.

No challenges to be noted at this time.

F. LIST THE PERFORMANCE TARGETS FOR DIRECT SERVICES TO VETERANS PROVIDED BY JVSG STAFF, AS MEASURED BY PARTICIPANTS':

The State of Kansas establishes performance targets for direct services to veterans provided by Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)–funded staff using the WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance. Performance outcomes are measured for JVSG participants based on the following indicators:

- Employment rate in the second quarter after exit
- Employment rate in the fourth quarter after exit
- Median earnings in the second quarter after exit

The Jobs for Veterans State Grant is a mandatory, formula-based staffing grant authorized under 38 U.S.C. § 4102A and is funded annually based on statutory and regulatory requirements. The JVSG program operates on a federal fiscal year basis. Performance accountability for services to veterans is aligned with the WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance set forth in 20 C.F.R. Part 677 and applied to JVSG-funded services in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4102A and Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) guidance.

The U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOL-VETS) utilizes WIOA performance indicators to monitor and oversee employment outcomes for veterans served by JVSG-funded staff and Wagner-Peyser Employment Services staff. Performance outcomes reflect the effectiveness of coordinated service delivery and are not used to establish individual staff performance quotas.

Primary Indicators of Performance

Employment Rate – Second Quarter After Exit
The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

Employment Rate – Fourth Quarter After Exit
The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.

Median Earnings – Second Quarter After Exit
The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

Performance Targets for JVSG-Funded Services

Kansas establishes performance targets for JVSG-funded services consistent with negotiated performance levels and federal guidance. Performance targets are reviewed annually and may be adjusted based on federal negotiations, economic conditions, participant characteristics, and statewide labor market factors.

For DVOP specialist services, anticipated performance targets may include:

Employment Rate – Second Quarter After Exit: 48 percent
Employment Rate – Fourth Quarter After Exit: 51 percent
Median Earnings – Second Quarter After Exit: $6,940

Performance data are collected and reported through the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS) and through required quarterly performance reports in accordance with VPL

01-24, Attachment 4. Performance outcomes are calculated using rolling quarters, consistent with federal reporting requirements.

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SCSEP)

(OMB Control No. 1205-0040)

A. ECONOMIC PROJECTIONS AND IMPACT

1. DISCUSS LONG-TERM PROJECTIONS FOR JOBS IN INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS IN THE STATE THAT MAY PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER WORKERS. (20 CFR 641.302(D)) (MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN.)

Forecasted economic conditions for Kansas through 2030 project 100,058 new jobs, with an annual gain of 0.7% with 171,795 expected job openings annually. Job growth is expected to occur statewide with the greatest growth in Local Areas III and IV. Bureau of Labor (BLS) projects that by 2032 24% of the labor force will be age 55 or older. Transportation and material moving, Food preparation and service, Healthcare practitioners and technical, Business, and financial, and Healthcare support are expected to be fast-growing sectors over the next six years.

Economic recovery in Kansas continued in 2022 with the majority of economic indicators reaching or exceeding pre-pandemic levels. Kansas' labor force grew to 1,504,932 in 2022, while the labor force participation rate held steady at 66.4%. Future labor force growth continues to be a concern for Kansas, as the average annual population growth rate for the past 10 years is just 0.2%; the over-the-year change from 2021 was a slight decline of less than a tenth of a percent. The population of prime-age workers, 25–54-year-olds, saw a small increase of 831 individuals, or 0.1%, in 2022. The issue of most concern is the population under 25, which has continued to decline, decreasing by 5,573 people, or 0.6%, over the year. The Kansas population was estimated at 2,937,150 in 2022. This represents a gain of 23,836 people from 2019. Older citizens (55 years of age and older) account for about 29% of the population in Kansas. In 2022 Kansas' unemployment rate dropped to 2.7%; this was a decrease of 0.6 percentage points over the year and 0.6 percentage points below the pre-pandemic rate of 3.3% recorded in 2019. The 2022 rate is the lowest annual unemployment rate since records began in 1976.

Real wages declined over the year while nominal personal income grew in Kansas. Real average weekly wages, which have been adjusted for inflation, decreased from $1,109 in 2021 to $1,081 in 2022. This represents a decline of 2.5% in real average weekly wages for Kansas. Nominal per capita personal income, which has not been adjusted for inflation, grew by 2.2% in Kansas. Real gross domestic product grew by 1.6% during 2022. Kansas recorded larger gains than the Plains Region but smaller gains than the U.S., which experienced growth of 0.8% and 2.1% respectively. Kansas export sales continued to increase in 2022, growing by 11.6%. Processed foods remained the top exporting industry, accounting for 22.9% of Kansas exports and recording over $3.2 billion in sales. Civilian aircraft, engines, and parts continue to be the top export product category, accounting for 16.8% of export sales and totaling over $2.3 billion. Mexico and Canada continue to be Kansas' top trading partners, collectively totaling nearly $5.8 billion and accounting for 41.3% of Kansas export sales. In 2022, Kansas export sales reached a new high of nearly $14.0 billion. This represents an 11.6% increase in export sales over the year, or $1.5 billion. Job growth was experienced in 10 of the 11 industry supersectors in Kansas

during 2022, as shown in Table 4. The supersector that added the most jobs over the year was professional and business services, with a gain of 10,400 jobs, or 6.1%; approximately half of these gains were recorded in professional, scientific, and technical services, which increased by 5,100 jobs, or 7.0%. Leisure and hospitality recorded job gains of 8,200, or 6.8%, in 2022. The majority of this growth can be attributed to the accommodation and food services sector, which saw an increase of 6,600 jobs, or 6.3%. Manufacturing saw an increase of 8,200 jobs, or 5.1%, in 2022. These gains were primarily due to an increase of 6,400 jobs in durable goods manufacturing, an increase of 7.0%. Information saw the highest percent increase at 7.7%, gaining 1,300 jobs over the year. The only supersector to experience job loss in 2022 was financial activities, which saw a small decline of 500 jobs.

2. DISCUSS HOW THE LONG-TERM JOB PROJECTIONS DISCUSSED IN THE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN RELATE TO THE TYPES OF UNSUBSIDIZED JOBS FOR WHICH SCSEP PARTICIPANTS WILL BE TRAINED AND THE TYPES OF SKILL TRAINING TO BE PROVIDED. (20 CFR 641.302(D))

Occupation groups that have the largest annual projected growth are as follows: Food preparation and serving related, Architecture and Engineering, Building and grounds cleaning/maintenance, Personal care and service, Legal, Transportation, and material moving occupations, and Healthcare support occupations. The largest numerical increases are attributed to the occupational groups of Food preparation and service, Transportation and material moving, and Healthcare support.

Occupations expected to be in high demand currently and during the next two- and ten-year periods are registered nurses; heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers; secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical and executive; customer service representatives; laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand; first-line supervisors of food preparation and serving workers; nursing assistants; and janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners; stockers and order fillers; teaching assistants, except postsecondary; home health and personal care aides; cashiers; and fast food and counter workers. Each of these occupations scored the highest level of demand, 30 out of a possible 30 in the combined measures of long-term projection openings, short-term projection openings, and current job vacancies. They are ranked in order of median wage.

As discussed, previously, there are several in-demand short- and long-term employment pathways for SCSEP participants in the job categories of most interest. The types of skills among the eligible population vary. Asking participants to self-identify skills, knowledge, and experience is key to an appropriate SCSEP employment placement. Skills such as caring for adults, caring for children, cashier, cooking, organization, clerical, bookkeeping, food service, maintenance, carpentry, keyboarding, sales, customer service, and auto mechanics are examples of some commonly identified transferable skills among eligible individuals.

The self-assessment, career interests, and local labor market are discussed with each participant when developing their training and career goals. This information is included in the employment and training plan and is also used as the basis for developing a community service training site. Several community service sites offer training in customer service, food preparation, office and clerical skills, janitorial, transportation, and maintenance. When training is not available at an existing host site, a more suitable host site is recruited. Additional community service sites will be explored over the next four years to prepare individuals for

health care support, teaching assistants, and booking occupations.

3. DISCUSS CURRENT AND PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE STATE (SUCH AS BY PROVIDING INFORMATION AVAILABLE UNDER §15 OF THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT (29 U.S.C. 491-2) BY OCCUPATION), AND THE TYPES OF SKILLS POSSESSED BY ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS. (20 CFR 641.325(C))

Based on PY 2021 data from the state SCSEP grantee community service assignments where job skills are trained predominantly fall into two categories: office administrative (80%) and community social (11%). Skills learned in these assignments were primarily transferrable skills used by all occupations with a focus on workplace readiness, customer service, and basic computer. In addition, most assignments (70%) are in a job interest category other than the resulting placement category.

Placement data from PY 2020 to PY 2021 reveals the state grantee's top five unsubsidized employment categories were office administrative (23%), maintenance (15%), with retail sales (11.5%), transportation (11.5%), food industry (11.5%) equally represented. These categories align well with the demand occupations for the next two to ten years, but the employment opportunities diminish when compared with Kansas' long-term employment outlook.

Based on the goals of SCSEP—to foster individual economic self-sufficiency and promote useful opportunities in community service activities—and given demographics, desires, and barriers faced by the eligible population one must carefully determine what best meets the individuals' needs. Sometimes a part-time position to supplement retirement/social security income is all that is desired/needed to foster individual economic self-sufficiency. Often 65 years and up want something low-key to supplement retirement benefits and most are happy with even minimum wage. Fifty-five to 64-year-old individuals typically have no income, desire a job to support them until retirement, and generally want a higher wage ($12+) with medical insurance. Data from PY23, shows 55% of participants are 55- 64, with 45% aged 65 and over.

The top five SCSEP job interest categories are:

- Office and Administrative Support Occupations (33.0%)
- Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations (14.8%)
- Sales and Related Occupations (14.8 %)
- Community and Social Service Occupations (13.9%)
- Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (11.3%)

SCSEP offers participants on-site training during their community service placements for skill

The state SCSEP grantee's unsubsidized employment reported for PY23 are Office Clerks (57%), Food (14%), Manufacturing (14%), and Social Services (14%).

Except for personal care aides and home health aides, industries with long-term growth opportunities require more technical skill sets. To balance the demands of tomorrow with the realities of today, state and national SCSEP grantees will need to develop short-term and moderate-term training opportunities for SCSEP participants that build skills aligning with future occupational demand and keeping pace with technological advances.

When developing training plans for participants, the following factors are important to consider with both the worksite and participants:

- Explore requirements for short-term or moderate-term on-the-job training (OJT) requirements
- Review hiring requirements to ensure that education and experience requirements are attainable;
- Use transferable skill sets that demonstrate the ability to learn new skills as an important part of the knowledge base;
- Denote skills that contribute to multiple occupations occurring across several industries
- Assess the appropriateness of working conditions, including virtual arrangements; and
- Discuss how job demands will be met, for example, some jobs may stress flexibility and task collaboration over specialized skills.

The following sectors are expected to have the greatest annual growth: Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing (18.8%), Support Activities for Transportation (4.8%), Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing (2.9%), Computing Infrastructure Providers, Data Processing, Web Hosting, and Related Services (2.5%), Transportation Equipment Manufacturing (2.3%), Nursing and Residential Care Facilities (2.3%), and Social assistance (2.2%). Within each of these sectors are opportunities for those with skills in customer service, office and clerical, and transportation. There are also opportunities to expand discussions around further training if required for various jobs within these sectors.

B. SERVICE DELIVERY AND COORDINATION

1. A DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER PROGRAMS. THIS MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE STATE STRATEGIES SECTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN, BUT REGARDLESS OF PLACEMENT IN DOCUMENT, MUST INCLUDE:

A. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF SCSEP GRANTEES WITH WIOA TITLE I PROGRAMS, INCLUDING PLANS FOR USING THE WIOA ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND ITS PARTNERS TO SERVE INDIVIDUALS AGED 55 AND OLDER. (20 CFR 641.302(G), 641.325(E))

The **KANSAS**WORKS State Board codified the inclusion of workers aged 55 and older as a priority population for all **KANSAS**WORKS services. With both a *national* SCSEP grantee and *state* SCSEP grantee operating in Kansas, coordination of activities goes beyond the coordination with WIOA title I programs and partners, but also between the *national* and *state* grantees. Statewide, both the *national* and *state* SCSEP grantees ensure individuals with whom they work are enrolled in **KANSAS**WORKS to have full benefit of not only the WIOA Title I program, but also Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, American Indian, and other partner programs like Dress for Success, Children and Family Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, United Way, and Older Kansans Employment Program.

Coordinated activities between SCSEP providers and **KANSAS**WORKS will include state and local-level strategies to strengthen partnerships and collaboration in each of the below categories:

Ensure the memoranda of understanding (MOU) between a local workforce development board and SCSEP operator specifies roles and responsibilities for:

- Confirming participants have attempted and been unable to successfully secure unsubsidized employment through **KANSAS**WORKS;
- Performing joint outreach to employers about SCSEP services;
- Sharing information about workforce center and SCSEP services available to seniors;
- Instituting collaborative case management services for co-enrolled participants;
- Communicating and coordinating services among SCSEP providers in a shared county like Sedgwick to:
    - coordinate unduplicated outreach efforts to maximize potential reach to the public, and
    - share referrals to avoid placing participants on a waiting list (based on meeting 100% occupancy of a county's total authorized positions).
    - Co-enrolling SCSEP participants into WIOA and other workforce programs, as appropriate,
    - Providing information about services available to and from both SCSEP operators and local workforce centers
    - Developing community service assignments for SCSEP participants at local workforce centers,
    - Co-locating SCSEP staff in workforce centers when funding and space is available (currently there are no SCSEP staff co-located at a workforce center),
- Other joint efforts as appropriate;
- List participant and staff openings in kansasworks.com;
- Assist job-ready participants with updating registration in kansasworks.com;
- Promote **KANSA**SWORKS job fairs, job clubs, and workshops including them
- when feasible as part of a SCSEP participant's individual employment plan (IEP);
- Provide updates to Kansas Workforce Offices about SCSEP activities and successes in the local workforce development areas (workforce areas);
- Share information between SCSEP providers and workforce centers about current future labor market trends for seniors and the required skill sets necessary for identified industries and occupations; and
- Other joint efforts, as appropriate.

B. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF SCSEP GRANTEES WITH THE ACTIVITIES BEING CARRIED OUT IN THE STATE UNDER THE OTHER TITLES OF THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT (OAA). (20 CFR 641.302(H))

The purpose of the Kansas Older Worker Task Force is to advocate for older workers and ensure the provision and coordination of workforce services for older workers. Membership includes programs operating under the other titles of OAA. The state and national Grantee staff are encouraged to attend these meetings which occur up to four times a year to gain access to information and resources relevant to wrap-around services and improved service delivery for

example senior health, support services, and older job seekers. More information about the *OWTF Charter* is shared below. The state coordinates with the OTWF to schedule and host regular, in-person meetings and ongoing access to the state agencies serving seniors.

SCSEP staff will attend area job fairs and senior events, meet the public, provide verbal and written information, and promote SCSEP services as well as encourage participants towards possible employment opportunities. SCSEP staff will coordinate with local agencies and community centers to schedule outreach presentations focused on the recruitment of potential new participants and new host agencies.

SCSEP staff will have monthly contact with various community agencies to determine the local availability of possible host agency sites as well as opportunities for participant recruitment. SCSEP staff will share SCSEP program information and gather other agency program information so services may be better coordinated in the community. SCSEP staff will coordinate efforts with business development staff to maximize opportunities to find employers willing to hire seniors in SCSEP once training is complete.

State and national grantees, including their sub-recipients, will employ the following strategies to promote an ongoing dialogue and coordination with other providers that serve seniors:

- Explore opportunities for improving the quality of training and access to training for community-based direct service workers caring for individuals with disabilities;
- Attend the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) quarterly training meeting when feasible; and
- Contact regional specialists to schedule interpreters and other communication access services if assistance is needed for training and employment services with the deaf and hard of hearing.

C. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER PRIVATE AND PUBLIC ENTITIES AND PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE SERVICES TO OLDER AMERICANS, SUCH AS COMMUNITY AND FAITH- BASED ORGANIZATIONS, TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS, AND PROGRAMS FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES. (20 CFR 641.302(I))

SCSEP customers will receive the same services through **KANSAS**WORKS as any other eligible job seeker including coordination with local service providers to assess needs and developing solutions that resolve barriers faced by participants. **KANSAS**WORKS will share information on the employment of individuals with disabilities and accessible technology with SCSEP grantees and sub-recipients. SCSEP grantees will work with local workforce development boards to encourage community colleges to create short-term education and training programs relevant to older individuals that conform to their learning style and pace. Training will align with the local targeted industries and high-priority occupations and incorporate appropriate computer skills. Important to this endeavor will be adult basic education (ABE), high school equivalency, continuing education, and other targeted training courses at community colleges. If available, course discounts for individuals 55 and above will be utilized.

To provide participants the opportunity to be seen at least annually by a doctor to monitor their health, participants are offered a voluntary referral for a free annual physical. The state SCSEP grantee offers referrals to the Kansas University Medical Center in Wichita, KS, and the national SCSEP grantee lets participants select a medical provider and receive reimbursement up to $200. SCSEP grantees will continue to evaluate the physical exam process ensuring optimal benefit for both the participant and the program operations.

Both the national and state SCSEP grantees have a two-way referral system to receive referrals from local agencies or refer participants to local agencies for various services. The two-way referral system is informal and relies on making personal connections with front-line staff in each agency and then passing along these relationships when new staff are onboarding. The state sub-awardee has a more formal referral process with some partners because they work closely with the one-stop operator. These connections are made by attending community service/agency meetings and participating in one-stop coordination activities with the Local Workforce Development Boards. Referrals include such services as Dress for Success for clothing, Children and Family Services for cash/food/utility assistance or vocational rehabilitation, the Older Kansans Employment Program for job readiness skills, the Salvation Army for food/shelter/clothing/support, and other public and private providers. SCSEP conducts outreach events in various community agencies with the intent of informing the public of the services available through the SCSEP and the local workforce center.

SCSEP grantees and sub-recipients will participate in meetings, as appropriate, with senior service providers and other public and private groups advocating for the employment of older workers. SCSEP staff have arranged office staffing in the Senior Services of Wichita building for 3 days a week to allow ease in referrals of eligible participants for SCSEP.

Funding from the Kansas Legislature has allowed the Department of Commerce to grant funds to our SCSEP provider, Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas, and the Senior Services of Wichita to provide computer skills training to eligible individuals aged 55 and older. In addition, they will communicate and coordinate with members of the local disability community on activities, resources, and services for seniors with disabilities in the workforce area. One of the most significant and successful efforts to coordinate workforce services for experienced workers is through the Older Worker Task Force, whose purpose is to advocate for Older Workers and ensure the provision and coordination of workforce services for older workers. The Charter of the OWTF establishes its duties, roles, and membership requirements and is as follows:

Kansas Older Worker Task Force - *Charter*

Sponsor: The Kansas Department of Commerce, Workforce Services Division

Purpose/Objective: To advocate for Older Workers and ensure the provision and coordination of Workforce Services for Older Workers.

Membership: The Kansas Older Worker Task Force shall be comprised of the following required members

- One staff person from each program funded by OKEP and SCSEP
- Up to two representatives from appropriate state agencies
- One staff person from each Area Agency on Aging or its State Association
- Up to two members of the Kansas Silver Haired Legislature
- Up to two representatives of AARP
- One member of the State Legislature
- Up to four at-large members (employer, advocate, older job seeker preferred)

Terms of Membership: Required members are chosen by their respective agencies and serve for a term determined by their respective agencies. Members-at-large serve two-year terms and may be re-elected for one additional term.

Election of Chair, Vice Chair, and Members-At-Large: At the last meeting of the Task Force in even-numbered years, the Chair will appoint a three-member nominating team from within its membership to nominate members for Chair, Vice Chair, and members-at-large. Members will consider each candidate and choose each by a simple majority. The Chair, Vice Chair, and members-at-large shall be elected to a two-year term at the first regularly scheduled meeting of each odd-numbered year.

For the Chair and Vice Chair, votes will be cast by voice if there is a single candidate and by secret ballot if there is more than one candidate.

The chief duty of the Chair is to convene the Task Force at least two times per year and additionally as needed. The chief duty of the Vice Chair is to assume the responsibility of the Chair if the Chair is unable to fulfill his or her duty.

Amendments to the Charter: Amendments may be made to this Charter at the first regularly scheduled Task Force meeting each year. Any member may propose amendments to the full membership for a vote. A three-quarter majority must vote in the affirmative to amend the Charter.

Scope of Task Force Responsibilities:

- Recommend how Older Workers should be served through the workforce development process
- Identify and recommend Older Worker target participants
- Provide expertise on the use of funds for Older Workers
- Provide expertise on service provider qualifications for Older Worker services
- Assist in designing award and sanctions process
- Provide expertise on the rules, regulations, standards, and guidelines governing State funds for Older Worker services
- Assist in developing and modifying the Strategic and State Plans for Older Workers
- Provide recommendations to Commerce Staff regarding Older Worker programs
- Foster creative partnerships with private, public, and government entities
- Recommend appropriate, additional funding sources for Older Worker programs

Measures of Success:

- Each meeting of the Task Force will have a quorum
- Informed action by the Kansas Department of Commerce
- Meet specific targets/goals set by Strategic and State Plans
- Satisfaction of Older Workers and State/Federal Oversight Personnel
- Encourage a vibrant economic environment for Older Workers

Outside the scope of the Task Force Responsibilities:

- Making final decisions on behalf of the Kansas Department of Commerce
- Day-to-day management of programs
- Creation of policies, plans, and budgets for Older Worker programs
- Functioning as the Kansas Department of Commerce Staff
- Determining the focus or work of the Kansas Department of Commerce Staff

Deliverables:

- Elect Task Force Chair, Vice Chair, and members-at-large
- Review, recommend updates, and implement the Strategic and State Plans for Older Workers
- Report on the current status of Older Worker programs and recommend future action –
- annual report to legislators
- Recommend service delivery system improvements
- Recommend prioritization of State funding
- Provide Executive Summaries as requested to guide Commerce Staff
- Generate a list of Older Worker service providers and services needed
- Recommend priorities of Request for Proposals for OKEP funding

Maintenance of Records: Commerce staff shall maintain minutes, agendas, and membership rosters.

The Older Worker Task Force has actively provided advocacy, advice, and support for all Kansas Older Worker programs.

D. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER LABOR MARKET AND JOB TRAINING INITIATIVES. (20 CFR 641.302(J))

Sedgwick County is the one Kansas county where both the state and national grantees operate. To best serve Kansans, the ongoing dialogue and communication between grantees and their subrecipients should permit each to know whether the other provider has an available SCSEP position before an individual is placed on a SCSEP waiting list. The state grantee selected a local WIOA workforce system as its subrecipient for SCSEP and has offered space at the AJC for co-location in Sedgwick County; however, due to staffing issues, the national grantee has been unable to take advantage of this offer since 2019. In place of collocation at the AJC, the national grantee requires all SCSEP applicants to register with the AJC and require this documentation as a part of the enrollment process. This requirement is the first step in determining what additional employment and training services are available through the AJC. The WIOA workforce system and one-stop partners regularly communicate with their local workforce system partners to support collaboration and access to services for all. This provides a high level of coordination between SCSEP, WIOA titles I & III, and other labor market and job training initiatives. In addition, the state grantee is the Kansas Department of Commerce which is the

WIOA state workforce agency and houses numerous job training initiatives, most of which are administered through local workforce centers. Commerce also administers the Older Kansans Employment Program (OKEP) traditionally operated by area agencies on aging, independent living centers, and local workforce development boards. OKEP is a state-funded program that supports job placement of individuals who are 55 and older. Funded activities include job clubs, resume workshops, job placement, referral to training, computer skills training, and outreach. The OKEP operators work closely with the SCSEP staff to provide up-to-date access to Labor market information and training initiatives as appropriate for the individual customer.

The national grantee in Kansas got off to a slow start in 2025, due to the funding delays at the Federal level. As a result, the national grantee had to shut down operations for a period of time until funding was restored. Even with funding restored, the national grantee has had to rebuild the program due to losing staff, losing office space, losing worksites, and difficulty recruiting program participants. The Kansas Department of Commerce will work in closer collaboration with the national grantee to promote open job opportunities with the national grantee, connect them with open office space as needed, assist in finding participant work sites and assist with program recruitment.

E. ACTIONS TO ENSURE THAT SCSEP IS AN ACVE PARTNER IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND THE STEPS THE STATE WILL TAKE TO ENCOURAGE AND IMPROVE COORDINATION WITH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. (20 CFR 641.335)

The local workforce centers provide an opportunity for both state and national SCSEP providers to integrate services funded by WIOA and SCSEP to best serve older workers. SCSEP's immersion in the workforce centers will assist both center staff and SCSEP staff in tailoring programs to address the needs of older workers. MOUs between local workforce development boards and SCSEP providers ensure SCSEP is an active partner of the local workforce system.

Involvement in the local workforce system also promotes strong coordination among private and public entities and programs that provide services to older Americans, such as community and faith–based organizations, transportation programs, and programs for those with special needs or disabilities.

SCSEP providers will seek an MOU with the local workforce development boards to delineate how SCSEP services will be provided through the system. A separate MOU should be prepared for both the state and national SCSEP grantees. Local flexibility and negotiation among partners are encouraged over the use of boilerplate MOUs. The MOU should define the services available, how the partners will provide those services, how operating costs will be allocated, the determination of in-kind contributions, and what special benefits SCSEP can provide to WIOA, such as access to job-ready individuals unable to be served by SCSEP. The allowance for Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), including administration of, results, and costs, for SCSEP participants is an area to consider including in the MOU.

The MOU should discuss how SCSEP-eligible individuals will be referred to the SCSEP staff. Streamlining services to benefit participants is one of the major points of WIOA. The MOU should contain a provision for mutual acceptance of assessments and IEPs for SCSEP participants. This ensures less paperwork/processes for the participant, as well as making sure that partner agencies coordinate participant services to address their goals. The MOU should also contain a specification that SCSEP participants receive Wagner-Peyser intensive services before participation in SCSEP and be deemed eligible for training services under WIOA Adult.

All MOUs are required to be approved by a SCSEP grantee-level authorized signatory for both state and national grantees.

The state SCSEP grantee additionally assures SCSEP as an active partner in workforce centers by requiring respondents to leverage **KANSAS**WORKS services, including co-enrollment in WIOA Title I, to supplement SCSEP services as a part of the sub-grant Terms and Conditions.

F. EFFORTS TO WORK WITH LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICES IN RURAL LOCATIONS.

About half of SCSEP positions are located in urban areas and the other half in rural locations. In the rural areas, SCSEP staff are encouraged to connect with the local workforce centers for access to members of the workforce center business services team and information about local economic development agencies to recruit participants and placements in rural areas. SCSEP grantees also access labor market information and gather information about possible host sites through the local economic development agencies and chambers of commerce. This information is used to develop appropriate occupational goals, training expectations, recruit community service sites, and contribute to long-term program planning.

In addition, the Kansas Department of Commerce is the state's economic development agency as well as the state workforce agency, providing the local workforce system and state SCSEP grantee with direct connections to local economic development agencies. Commerce leadership encourages cross–division cooperation, planning, and sharing of employment intelligence information. The economic development agency employs business services staff who coordinate services with local economic development offices.

Workforce centers are encouraged to have their business services team meet with and help coordinate SCSEP participant placements in unsubsidized employment. This should be done by providing daily job posting notifications and hot job lists to SCSEP case managers from both state and national grantees. State and national SCSEP grantees may also locate these lists through the internet on local workforce center websites or kansasworks.com.

2. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR ENGAGING EMPLOYERS TO DEVELOP AND PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PLACEMENT OF SCSEP PARTICIPANTS IN UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT. (20 CFR 641.302(E)) (MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE STATE STRATEGIES SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN.)

KANSASWORKS long–long-term strategy for engaging employers and other employment programs is found in the KWSB strategic plan, located in Section I of the Kansas Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Combined Sate Plan. As with all **KANSAS**WORKS programs, SCSEP customers will be represented in the state's strategies. The Governor has seated a WIOA–compliant State Board as soon as possible, enhancing the workforce system's access to employers who have actual job openings and can provide real–time intelligence about the future availability of employment opportunities. Specific activities will include 1) Referrals to the business services team, 2) Interest and skills assessments, 3) Job Fairs attendance requirement, 4) Resumes uploaded to kansasworks.com and updated as skills increase, and 5) Outreach conducted by the Business Services Team to employers. Both state and national SCSEP grantees commit to assisting both job seekers and employers by helping to vet the aptitude and fit of individuals for job duties. As part of this process, grantees identify the qualities employers seek, such as:

- Commitment to quality work;
- Strong customer service orientation;
- Getting along with other employees;
- Dependability in times of crisis;
- Ability to pass a drug test; and
- Consistent, reliable performance.

Once an employer's needs are determined, staff promote the skills and competencies of SCSEP participants as viable workers who will add value to the business. To assist employers in rethinking their hiring strategies, employers are presented with information on the value of hiring 50+ workers. The data demonstrates that older workers have higher levels of engagement, commitment, stability, productivity, experience, and problem-solving skills. Older workers are also a critical component of a multigenerational workforce, often becoming mentors to younger generations.

SCSEP grantees will also pursue partnerships with employers that:

- Develop job openings requiring the same or similar skill requirements possessed by older participants;
- Have successfully employed participants;
- Are listed on AARP's National Employer Team, which is committed to hiring seniors;
- Seek older participants, based on the local wisdom of workforce development boards, business organizations, and others in the community; or identified in online labor market information as major employers in local industries with the greatest employment potential for participants;
- Publicize the success stories of former participants and their employers, thereby attracting other employers to consider hiring older job seekers;
- Attend chamber of commerce board meetings and other economic development meetings to expand employer networks; learn about job opportunities from employers; and
- Contact employers to determine the skills and qualities needed to be successful in these jobs.

3. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR SERVING MINORITY OLDER INDIVIDUALS UNDER SCSEP. (20 CFR 641.302 (C))

The long-term strategies both state and national SCSEP grantees will employ are to:

- Monitor and share statewide and grantee-specific minority enrollment data and factors/barriers impacting minority recruitment;
- Analyze enrollment targets and geographic areas where performance is strong and where improvement is needed;

- Identify factors contributing to minority enrollment strengths and factors impeding minority enrollments;
- Share best practices for minority recruitment and provide technical assistance to SCSEP staff and partners in the local workforce development system;
- Coordinate activities such as workshops, meetings, job fairs, etc., with organizations representing minority populations to increase referrals and recruitment, host agency assignments, and/or unsubsidized employment opportunities; and
- Target outreach to specific underserved minority groups based on county and/or metropolitan data to serve participants in proportion to the population minority breakdown.

These strategies have proven effective. The "PY21 SCSEP Minority Report" conveyed 56.5% of the national grantee's SCSEP participants identified as minority, while only 38.4% of the population in the national grantee's service area identified as minority. For the state grantee, 41.5% of participants identified as minority, with 26.8% of the service area population identifying as minority.

4. A LIST OF COMMUNITY SERVICES THAT ARE NEEDED AND THE PLACES WHERE THESE SERVICES ARE MOST NEEDED. SPECIFICALLY, THE PLAN MUST ADDRESS THE NEEDS AND LOCATION OF THOSE INDIVIDUALS MOST IN NEED OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND THE GROUPS WORKING TO MEET THEIR NEEDS. (20 CFR 641.330)

It has been found that there are many organizations working in the communities within the urban areas of Kansas. Those organizations work well and can respond to a lot of the needs of the community. The rural areas have fewer services and limited access to resources. Participants in those areas have little or no community support. Participants in rural areas also have challenges finding host agencies for placement. Participants often use neighbors or family members as primary support. If participants have transportation available, community resources in neighboring areas are shared. United Way has a community guide of resources that covers the region and is used by staff and participants. The services are accessible through the Internet and by phone. Internet access can be limited or nonexistent in many of the rural counties, so resources are printed and provided to participants in those areas. Developing and maintaining partnerships with service providers outside the workforce system is essential for identifying the most needed community services.

Identified community services most often needed by SCSEP participants include the following:

- Educational/skills training activities;
- Employment assistance;
- Health care in homes and hospitals;
- Housing rehabilitation and weatherization;
- Nutrition programs;
- Outreach and referral;
- Project administration;
- Public works;

- Recreational activities in parks and senior centers;
- Social services;
- Transportation; and
- Other services determined essential for the employability of participants

Those most in need of community services reside in rural areas that lack many services due to population demographics and general lack of funds. In rural communities with Internet access **KANSAS**WORKS Virtual Services can provide a wide range of employment services using high–definition video and/or electronic information and referral.

5. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY TO IMPROVE SCSEP SERVICES, INCLUDING PLANNED LONG-TERM CHANGES TO THE DESIGN OF THE PROGRAM WITHIN THE STATE, AND PLANNED CHANGES IN THE USE OF SCSEP GRANTEES AND PROGRAM OPERATORS TO BETTER ACHIEVE THE GOALS OF THE PROGRAM. THIS MAY INCLUDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT AS APPROPRIATE. (20 CFR 641.302(K))

The long-term strategy to improve SCSEP services in Kansas is to serve eligible participants through increased coordination between the national and state grantees, increase outreach efforts, and enhance training opportunities that both improve or build skill levels suitable for available jobs, preferably in the participant's community. A deeper connection between the national and state grantees is expected as the national grantee is still rebuilding program elements after the delay in federal funding. The goal is to ensure that the job matching is appropriate for both the employer and the older worker so that the relationship will be retained and benefit the employer, the older worker, and the state's economy. Partnerships for integrating services are crucial to these strategies. Plans are to expand the breadth of partnerships with nonprofit agencies, grow meaningful community service opportunities for SCSEP participants and aid nonprofits in fulfilling their volunteer needs.

The SCSEP service provider's success is measured by its attainment of negotiated goals for serving the older worker population, increases in services within the network of nonprofits and public agencies within communities, and the cultivation of skilled workers for employers. State and national grantees review performance results and deliver technical assistance to SCSEP staff as determined necessary.

There are currently no plans to change program sub-grantees for the state service provider. To increase cooperation between state and national grantees both grantees have agreed to meet quarterly to:

- Problem-solve and evaluate alternative solutions to issues;
- Share best practices and performance progress;
- Plan and coordinate collaborative activities; and
- Explore areas for collaboration likely to improve or enhance SCSEP services in the state, such as:
- Actively partnering with local workforce boards and workforce center staff— both workforce professionals and business services;

- Expanding relationships with chambers of commerce and local economic development organizations;
- Emphasizing creative partnerships with groups that advocate and provide services to veterans and individuals with disabilities; and
- Increasing joint outreach efforts to community organizations and other senior service providers;

The state grantee will assist the national grantee to promote open job opportunities working for the national grantee, connect the national grantee with open office space as needed, assist in finding participant work sites and assist with program recruitment.

Each SCSEP grantee will also increase outreach and recruitment to increase the number of enrolled participants. This focus will include reaching out and creating partnerships with agencies and organizations older adults already trust as well as organizations and entities that reach younger friends, family, or co-workers of older adults. Here is a non-comprehensive list of outreach and recruitment activities:

- State agencies serving older adults (Kansas Department of Commerce, Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Resources, Kansas Department of Children and Family Services, Kansas Department of Labor)
- Senior service providers like area agencies on aging, disability resource center programs like Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas (SHICK), adult day care facilities, or community-based adult service centers. Even if they are not employment-related, they often see seniors needing assistance and would be a good resource for referrals.
- Recruit where older adults gather, like:
    - Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) a/k/a Area Agencies on Aging
    - Congregate meal sites
    - Restaurants with bulletin boards (Cracker Barrel, Perkins, McDonalds, coffee shops)
    - Grocery stores
    - Senior living facilities often have a gathering room
    - Social service agencies
    - Local farmers' markets
    - Senior health fairs
    - Public libraries
    - Churches, houses of worship
    - Cooling/warming centers
    - Mobile home parks
    - Laundromats

- Attend fairs, festivals, and community events (https://www.fairsandfestivals.net/states/KS).
- Post open SCSEP slots on kansasworks.com, just as an employer would post a job vacancy.
- Create and execute outreach throughout the community via multiple avenues, such as:
    - Word of mouth – ask current participants to talk to people they know. Spread the word beyond older adults. Inform teachers and counselors who are often in the know when a parent or grandparent is having difficulty finding employment. Think outside the box and in a broad spectrum.
    - Create flyers to spread the word. Consider recruiting a bright, University marketing or business administration intern to spearhead the campaign.
    - Utilize college, high school, and youth services organizations to assist with posting flyers.
- Increase the use of social media platforms to share messaging.
- Hold a recruitment event like you do job fairs.
- Agencies or organizations that don't immediately strike you as a possibility ARE a possibility. Individuals working in those organizations often run across (or know) low-income adults, 55 or older, in need of additional skills to obtain employment. Below are some potential opportunities for additional outreach.
    - Faith-based groups, organizations,
    - Civic organizations (Lion's Club, Rotary Club, Masons, Kiwanis, etc.)
    - Community action agencies
    - Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), Senior Corps programs
    - Grocery stores or local farmers' markets
    - Home health agencies and visiting nurse programs
    - Hospital and health clinics
    - Humane Society or pet rescue organizations
    - Labor unions
    - Libraries
    - Managed care organizations
    - Public housing authority
    - Public transportation authorities
    - Radio/local TV "Community Spotlight" programs
    - Senior recreation centers
    - American Red Cross, Salvation Army, Goodwill, etc.

- Volunteer groups (foster grandparents, telephone reassurance programs, etc.)

Focus participant training on employment skills acquisition as guided by individual employment plans, assessment results, and labor market needs. Training will include short–term training classes, education, and National Career Readiness Certification. SCSEP staff will also ensure participants receive the job notification list generated by the local workforce center, so participants are informed about area job openings. Training will now focus on computer-based skills to meet demands in today's job market.

Perform all required follow–up contacts with participants who exited for unsubsidized employment to address employment and life issues to provide support assuring they maintain employment.

Assure all requested data elements in USDOL's grant performance measurement system are entered accurately and timely.

Create a host agency skill development training plan that aligns with each employment plan and a method for tracking accomplishments, review with participant and agency every quarter. Reinforce the SCSEP program's goal of unsubsidized employment with each

participant regularly by acknowledging job-related skills development and emphasizing ongoing job search activities.

6. THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN THE LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE FOR SCSEP PARTICIPANTS' ENTRY INTO UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT, AND TO ACHIEVE, AT A MINIMUM, THE LEVELS SPECIFIED IN OAA SECTION 513(A)(2)(E)(II). (20 CFR 641.302(F))

The state and national grantee's strategy for continuous improvement in the level of performance for SCSEP participants' entry into unsubsidized employment focuses on fostering a multitalented workforce, continual reminders for participants and host agencies that SCSEP is a temporary training program, and encouraging participants that they can accomplish what they set their mind to accomplish. Participants will also be encouraged to take advantage of online advice to older job seekers, such as www.AARP.org, www.Monster.com, www.Quintscareer.com, and www.AARP.org/LearnAt50Plus .

The technical and occupational skills of many SCSEP participants often lag behind today's employment requirements. Qualities offered by the older worker, such as work ethic and reliability, are valued by employers, but the need for technical skills is a concern. Training and retraining of SCSEP participants are designed to help their employability. Offering computer skills training to SCSEP participants is now available and encouraged.

SCSEP service providers seek to gather input from the business community, community leaders, host agency supervisors, the participants themselves, and local government officials about the job skill needs within their organizations and communities. This effort includes networking at the chamber of commerce events and other business organizations' functions. The information gathered enables the development of meaningful training opportunities for older workers and suitable matches for unsubsidized work.

Recommendations include the following:

- Place SCSEP "graduates" in industries and occupations with high growth or
- substantial employment need;

- Research labor market information and consult with local workforce development boards and their partners, economic development agencies, chambers of commerce, and local business partners to identify targeted industries and high-growth occupations appropriate for seniors, local employers that are hiring, and skills and qualities needed to be successful in these jobs;
- Strengthen initial assessments of participant skills, knowledge, interests, aptitudes, and qualities, and define career objectives that are relevant to the participant's interests and abilities and local business needs;
- Assess the participant's barriers and skills gaps to create individual employment plans with timelines for training and support service needs;
- Coordinate with programs that offer work experience options, on-the-job training, or registered apprenticeship;
- Ensure host agency assignments provide skills training that is relevant for participant career objectives and employer needs;
- Develop effective relationships with participants and monitor their training progress so grantees can gauge when participants are ready to look for employment and update the IEP;
- Promote a motivated attitude through counseling and monitoring participants;
- Coordinate with **KANSAS**WORKS workforce centers to provide effective job search preparation and support;
- Require participants to register with kansasworks.com;
- Follow up frequently with participants in on-the-job experience arrangements to ensure that participants have the skills, confidence, and qualities to be successful in the job;
- Intervene early, as needed, to resolve any obstacles to successful employment; and
- Respect a participant's right of refusal of a job when they feel unprepared or unsuited for the job.

C. LOCATION AND POPULATION SERVED, INCLUDING EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION

1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCALITIES AND POPULATIONS FOR WHICH PROJECTS OF THE TYPE AUTHORIZED BY TITLE V ARE MOST NEEDED. (20 CFR 641.325 (D))

SCSEP in Kansas is operated in 88 of its 105 counties. The state grantee program is authorized to operate in south-central Kansas in the counties of Butler, Cowley, Harper, Harvey, Kingman, Sedgwick, and Sumner. The local workforce development board, Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas, operates SCSEP services through the Wichita Workforce Center creating an excellent opportunity for SCSEP participants to access all available **KANSAS**WORKS services. The national grantee, SER Jobs for Progress National, Inc., operates in the remainder of the state. There are 18 counties where SCSEP is not authorized to operate—Anderson, Barber, Chase, Chautauqua, Cheyenne, Clark, Comanche, Decatur, Doniphan, Edwards, Elk, Ellsworth, Greeley, Hodgeman, Sheridan, Stranton, Wallace, and Wichita. Sedgwick is the one county where both the state and national grantees operate SCSEP with 73 authorized positions. Both programs are in the Wichita Workforce Center.

The state SCSEP program operates in a mostly urban area, the city of Wichita, the second-most populated city in Kansas. The SCSEP positions located in rural areas surrounding Wichita where access to services is limited and lack of transportation makes it difficult for older workers to access services in Wichita. Whether within the city or in a surrounding rural area, SCSEP participants are indicative of the abject poverty experienced by a significant percentage of the overall population.

2. LIST THE CITIES AND COUNTIES WHERE THE PROJECT WILL BE CONDUCTED. INCLUDE THE NUMBER OF SCSEP AUTHORIZED POSITIONS AND INDICATE WHERE THE POSITIONS CHANGED FROM THE PRIOR YEAR.

The state grantee has 82 authorized positions in 7 counties with the following distribution: Sedgwick (58), Butler (8), Cowley (7), Sumner (5), Harvey (4) and Harper and Kingman each of 1 position.

Kansas County	State Grantee Modified Positions
Butler	7
Cowley	6
Harper	2
Harvey	3
Kingman	0
Sedgwick	60
Sumner	4
Total Positions	82

Gove and Logan County were added to the service area for the national grantee with one position each. The remaining 147 positions are distributed among 72 counties, ranging from 5 positions (3), 4 positions (12), 3 positions (6), 2 positions (15), to 1 position (36). The table below provides the number of positions per county:

Kansas County	National Grantee Modified Positions
Allen County	2
Anderson County	2
Atchison County	3
Barber County	1
Barton County	4
Bourbon County	4

Kansas County	National Grantee Modified Positions
Brown County	2
Chase County	1
Chautauqua County	1
Cherokee County	5
Cheyenne County	N/A
Clay County	2
Cloud County	2
Coffey County	2
Crawford County	6
Decatur County	N/A
Dickinson County	3
Doniphan County	2
Douglas County	12
Edwards County	1
Elk County	1
Ellis County	4
Ellsworth County	1
Finney County	5
Ford County	3
Franklin County	5
Geary County	3
Gove County	N/A
Graham County	N/A
Grant County	1
Greenwood County	2
Haskell County	N/A
Jackson County	2
Jefferson County	2
Jewell County	1

Kansas County	National Grantee Modified Positions
Johnson County	40
Kearny County	1
Labette County	5
Leavenworth County	10
Lincoln County	1
Linn County	3
Logan County	N/A
Lyon County	4
Marion County	2
Marshall County	2
McPherson County	4
Meade County	N/A
Miami County	4
Mitchell County	2
Montgomery County	6
Morris County	2
Morton County	N/A
Nemaha County	1
Neosho County	3
Ness County	1
Norton County	1
Osage County	3
Osborne County	1
Ottawa County	1
Pawnee County	1
Phillips County	1
Pottawatomie County	3
Pratt County	1
Rawlins County	1

Kansas County	National Grantee Modified Positions
Reno County	12
Republic County	1
Rice County	2
Riley County	4
Rooks County	1
Rush County	1
Russell County	1
Saline County	9
Scott County	1
Sedgwick County	17
Seward County	3
Shawnee County	29
Sherman County	1
Smith County	1
Stafford County	1
Stevens County	1
Thomas County	1
Trego County	1
Wabaunsee County	1
Washington County	1
Wichita County	1
Wilson County	2
Woodson County	1
Wyandotte County	30
Total	310

3. DESCRIBE CURRENT SLOT IMBALANCES AND PROPOSED STEPS TO CORRECT INEQUITIES TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.

The SCSEP program manager evaluates our modified slots compared to census and labor market information. Indications of slot imbalances will be reported to the SCSEP Federal Project

Officer and a request for slot modification for the affected will be submitted if appropriate. At this time, Kansas has not found any indication of a slot imbalance.

4. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING AN EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF SCSEP POSITIONS WITHIN THE STATE THAT:

A. MOVES POSITIONS FROM OVER-SERVED TO UNDERSERVED LOCATIONS WITHIN THE STATE IN COMPLIANCE WITH 20 CFR 641.365.

The equitable distribution report prepared by the State grantees at the beginning of each fiscal year provides a statewide ''snapshot'' of the distribution of authorized positions for each state and national grantee. The report shows the optimum number of participant positions in each designated area based on Census data and other relevant data.

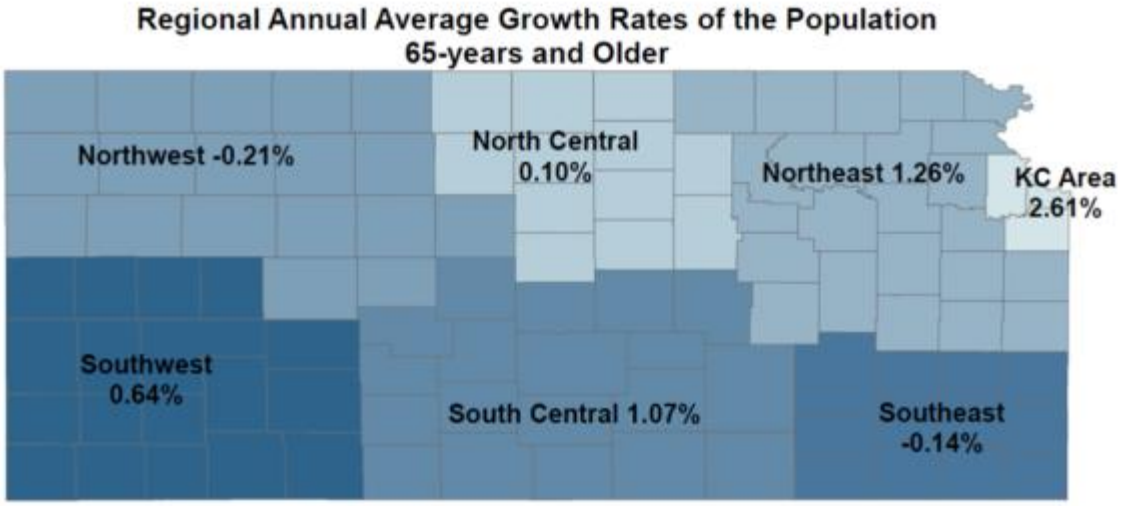
Kansas' long-term strategy for maintaining equitable distribution of SCSEP positions within the state is to review Census data provided by USDOL, obtain current economic status in areas that are under/over-served to determine if conditions warrant a redistribution of authorized slots, and request redistribution if warranted. The state and national grantee will work collaboratively to discuss possible authorized position swaps resulting in consolidated positions in counties where they both operate and, if deemed appropriate, a formal request will be made to USDOL

B. EQUITABLY SERVES RURAL AND URBAN AREAS.

The aging of our population is one of the most significant trends affecting the workforce today and in the future. residents aged 55 and older, or 28.7 percent of the state's population. In 2020, the US Census reported Kansas had 855,051 residents aged 55 and older, or 29.3%. The 2018 - 2022 American Community Survey data estimates there are 861,407 aged residents 55 and older reflecting a small increase in this population of 0.7%.

The 2018 - 2022 American Community Survey data estimates that 152,202 individuals lived below the poverty level and 53,918, or 35.4 percent, were 55 years and older. Most individuals who have the greatest economic need are minorities and those who demonstrate the greatest social risk live in urban areas in Kansas. However, 10.1 percent of Kansans are limited English proficient, according again to the 2010 US Census, and are more equally distributed among rural and urban areas, with less than 60 percent living in urban areas. This type of statistical information provides the basis on which Kansas determines services are equitably divided between urban and rural areas.

The map below from Wichita State University's Center for Economic Development and Business Research (CEDBR) shows the expected annual population growth for those 65 years and older by region in Kansas. Many counties in the Northwest, North Central, South Central, and Southeast are also expected to experience population declines by 2064 as high as 94.2% of the current population, Kansas Population Forecast (cedbr.org).



Based on this information, the Equitable Distribution report for PY2022, and current workforce trends, the National service provider recognizes that there is a significant under-enrollment of individuals in the rural area they serve, as well as in one metro area, Johnson County. They plan to expand their collaboration with the State service provider, American Job Centers, Economic Development Agencies, Kansas Area Agencies on Aging, and the Kansas Older Worker Taskforce. To develop and maintain these relationships with local partners, the National grantee plans to hire and train staff to serve in these rural areas. These positions have been unfilled for several months. Once these positions are filled, the National Grantee will connect their staff to these and other organizations that might contribute to community service site recruitment, knowledge of local businesses, economic development, knowledge of community supports for older workers, and especially the local workforce development boards. Information and coordination with these local partners will be used for participant recruitment, to identify career pathways, to develop community services sites, and local training opportunities intended to lead to unsubsidized employment.

C. SERVES INDIVIDUALS AFFORDED PRIORITY FOR SERVICE UNDER 20 CFR 641.520. (20 CFR 641.302(A), 641.365, 641.520)

SCSEP staff use the most up–to–date data, both from internal and external sources, the USDOL grants performance management system (GPMS), and other information to ensure eligible individuals receive priority of service designation and the service delivery order the designation provides, including formerly incarcerated individuals as a new priority of service population. Every individual interested in SCSEP completes an intake assessment to identify if any of the priority service characteristics apply. Those who have one or more priority of service characteristics and meet the income guidelines may be enrolled. Both the State and National grantee rely on an electronic case management system to gather this participant data and use these systems to assess the priority of service as well as eligibility.

Priority of Service is given to individuals who have one or more of the following characteristics:

1. 65 years of age or older OR has a disability;
2. has limited English proficiency or low literacy skills;

3. resides in a rural area;
4. is a veteran or spouse of a veteran as defined in 20 CFR 641.520(a) (2);
5. has low employment prospects;
6. has failed to find employment after utilizing services provided under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; or
7. is homeless or at risk for homelessness.
8. is a formally incarcerated individual.

5. THE RATIO OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN EACH SERVICE AREA TO THE TOTAL ELIGIBLE POPULATION IN THE STATE. (20 CFR 641.325(A))

The percentage of Kansas's population 55 and older is 29.3%, with 28.8% of this population living below the poverty line also within this age group. The estimated population of Kansas as of July 2023 is 2,940,546. This means there are approximately 861,579 Kansans 55 and over, and potentially 248,135 older workers eligible for SCSEP. Based on the 2020 census, 27.7% of the population resides in rural areas in Kansas. Extrapolating this statistic, we expect that there are approximately 68,733 SCSEP-eligible individuals in the rural counties served and 179,401 potentially eligible individuals in the urban counties. 216 of the modified positions in Kansas in PY2023 were in urban or semi-urban areas. This is approximately 53.7% of the total modified positions, whereas there is approximately 72.3 % of the total population lives in urban areas. 46.3% of the modified positions are located in rural and frontier areas where only 27.7% of the total population resides.

The 2022 ACS 1-Year Supplemental Estimates reports the following numbers and percentages of individuals 65 and over living whose income was reported below the poverty level, and the number of modified positions allocated to those counties. The data shows only the larger counties in Kansas.

	Barton	Butler	Cherokee	Cowley	Crawford County	Douglas	Ellis	Finney
Total Population	24,095	65,489	18,885	32,251	37,383	112,028	27,313	36,954
Number of individuals 65+ and below poverty	384	580	550	203	659	1,006	840	622
Percent of population individuals 65+ and below poverty	1.59%	0.89%	2.91%	0.63%	1.76%	0.90%	3.08%	1.68%

	Barton	Butler	Cherokee	Cowley	Crawford County	Douglas	Ellis	Finney
Number of SCSEP Positions	5	8	5	7	6	11	4	5

	Ford	Franklin	Geary	Harvey	Johnson	Labette	Leavenworth	Lyon
Total Population	33,119	25,371	34,634	32,756	613,260	19,431	79,314	30,736
Number of individuals 65+ and below poverty	417	976	381	254	5,350	721	662	419
Percent of population individuals 65+ and below poverty	1.26%	3.85%	1.10%	0.78%	0.87%	3.71%	0.83%	1.36%
Number of SCSEP Positions	4	4	3	4	44	4	9	4

	McPherson	Miami	Montgomery	Pottawatomie	Reno	Riley	Saline
Total Population	28,191	34,364	29,926	25,811	58,271	60,940	52,104
Number of individuals 65+ and below poverty	357	118	312	395	1,310	573	1,552
Percent of population individuals 65+ and below poverty	1.27%	0.34%	1.04%	1.53%	2.25%	0.94%	2.98%

	McPherson	Miami	Montgomery	Pottawatomie	Reno	Riley	Saline
Number of SCSEP Positions	4	4	7	3	11	4	9

	Sedgwick	Seward	Shawnee	Sumner	Wyandotte
Total Population	523,820	21,035	173,050	22,169	163,779
Number of individuals 65+ and below poverty	10,207	382	3,687	344	3,486
Percent of population individuals 65+ and below poverty	1.98%	1.82%	2.13%	1.55%	2.13%
Number of SCSEP Positions	73	3	27	5	32

6. THE RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO:

A. RESIDE IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS WITHIN THE STATE

In 2020, the Census Bureau reported the top 10 counties in Kansas with the highest population were Johnson (609,863), Sedgwick (523,824), Shawnee (178,909), Wyandotte (169,245), Douglas (118,785), Leavenworth (81,881), Riley (71,959), Butler (67,380), Reno (61,898), and Saline (54,303).

According to 2020 data from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 57.4% of the state's population resides in urban areas, 15.5% in semi-urban, 15.8% in densely settled rural, 7.7% in rural, and 3.6% in frontier. These classifications are based on a population density of:

- Frontier: less than 6 people per square mile (ppsm)
- Rural: between 6 and 19.9 ppsm
- Densely Settled Rural: between 20 and 39.9 ppsm
- Semi-Urban: between 40 and 149.9 ppsm
- Urban: 150 or more ppsm

B. HAVE THE GREATEST ECONOMIC NEED

The 2018 - 2022 American Community Survey data estimates that 152,202 individuals lived below the poverty level and 53,918, or 35.4 percent, were 55 years and older. The Kansas population was estimated at 2,852,901 in 2022. Meaning that nearly 2% of the population in Kansas may be eligible for SCSEP.

Many individuals who have the greatest economic need are minorities, and those who demonstrate the greatest social risk live in urban areas in Kansas. However, in a 2018 report from the USDOL National SCSEP Office, three rural counties in Kansas meet the persistent unemployment threshold—Coffey, Linn, and Neosho.

C. ARE MINORITIES

The "PY21 SCSEP Minority Report" conveyed 56.5% of the national grantee's SCSEP participants identified as minority, while only 38.4% of the population in the national grantee's service area identified as minority. For the state grantee, 41.5% of participants identified as minority, with 26.8% of the service area population identifying as minority.

D. ARE LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT

In a report from Kansas State University in December 2019, 11.5% of Kansans speak a language other than English, with 65% of those speaking Spanish. About 81,500 Kansans report that they do not speak English well or at all.

E. HAVE THE GREATEST SOCIAL NEED. (20 CFR 641.325(B))

Needs caused by non–economic factors such as physical and mental disabilities, language barriers, and cultural, social, or geographic isolation, including isolation brought about by racial or ethnic status, are examples of "greatest social needs."

The following list includes those within the potential SCSEP–eligible population who are in these and other categories that could reasonably be said to correlate with the potential for greater social need:

- 41.8% have a disability (based on the 65 or older in the 2022 population)
- 7.2% have less education than a high school diploma or the equivalent (based on 65 and older population)
- 29.5% of one-person households are 65 and older
- 2.43% have limited English proficiency (based on the 45 and older population)
- 46.3% live in rural areas
- 18,442 grandparents serve as caregivers, and 8,706 provide sole support to grandchildren (based on the total population)
- 1.6% are at risk of being homeless (based on the Survey of Homeless Services)
- 21.1% are Veterans (ACS 2022, ages 55 and over)

F. FORMERLY INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS, AS DEFINED IN TEGL 17-20

Kansas has an incarceration rate of 286 per 100,000 people. There are approximately 8900 justice-involved adults incarcerated in Kansas at any given time. Most recent data show nearly 14.6% are aged 55 and over. **KANSAS**WORKS currently coordinates case management with incarcerated individuals up to 6 months before release. These individuals are assessed prior to

release so that referral to employment and training services including SCSEP can be initiated before release and assessments, documentation for enrollment, and community service site recruitment can begin as soon as possible. Once released the participant can begin their SCSEP training more quickly.

7. A DESCRIPTION OF THE STEPS TAKEN TO AVOID DISRUPTIONS TO THE GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE, WHEN POSITIONS ARE REDISTRIBUTED, AS PROVIDED IN 20 CFR 641.365; WHEN NEW CENSUS OR OTHER RELIABLE DATA BECOME AVAILABLE; OR WHEN THERE IS OVER-ENROLLMENT FOR ANY OTHER REASON. (20 CFR 641.325(I), 641.302(B))

The state's plan for assuring distribution of SCSEP participant slots is modified as population shifts or other factors create greater need in other geographic areas, and is developed by the state and national grantee SCSEP staff leads who are responsible for notifying SCSEP staff of any new census data indicating such a shift. In cases of such a shift or when there is over-enrollment for any other reason, the grantees will implement the most recent Equitable Distribution for SCSEP as prescribed and will resolve the issue of over-enrollment through attrition of participants, with particular focus on unsubsidized placement of program participants.

Small shifts identified through Census data will be accommodated through attrition in the counties where a small number of slots are lost or by adding additional participants who are on waiting lists in counties where a minimal number of slots were added. When there is over-enrollment, grantees will transfer positions and encourage employment to make positions available for eligible individuals in the areas where there has been an increase in the eligible population.

Appendix I: Performance Goals for the Core Programs

	Title I – Adult Program			
	Program Year: 2025		Program Year: 2026	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	77.0%	76.0%	77.0%	76.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	65.4%	71.9%	65.4%	71.9%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	$6,790	$6,784	$6,790	$6,784
Credential Attainment Rate	78.0%	76.5%	78.0%	76.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	56.0%	64.1%	56.0%	64.1%

	Title I – Dislocated Worker Program			
	Program Year: 2025		Program Year: 2026	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	76.9%	77.0%	76.9%	77.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	64.1%	78.0%	64.1%	78.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	$9,773	$9,653	$9,773	$9,653
Credential Attainment Rate	78.0%	86.9%	78.0%	86.9%
Measurable Skill Gains	53.1%	58.1%	53.1%	58.1%

	Title I – Youth Program			
	Program Year: 2025		Program Year: 2026	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	73.0%	72.3%	73.0%	72.3%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	61.1%	69.4%	61.1%	69.4%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	$3,050	$3,050	$3,050	$3,050
Credential Attainment Rate	67.0%	66.3%	67.0%	66.3%
Measurable Skill Gains	46.2%	49.2%	46.2%	49.2%

	Title I – Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Program			
	Program Year: 2025		Program Year: 2026	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	73.5%	66.5%	73.5%	66.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	72.8%	64.9%	72.8%	64.9%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	$5,614	$5,653	$5,614	$5,653
Credential Attainment Rate	NA	NA	NA	NA
Measurable Skill Gains	NA	NA	NA	NA

	Title II –Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program			
	Program Year: 2026		Program Year: 2027	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	56.0%		56.1%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	55.0%		55.1%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	$6,750		$6,800	
Credential Attainment Rate	33.0%		33.5%	
Measurable Skill Gains	60.8%		61.0%	

	Vocational Rehabilitation Program			
	Program Year: 2026		Program Year: 2027	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	54.0%		55.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	50.0%		50.9%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	$4,800		$5,000	
Credential Attainment Rate	42.0%		43.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	38.0%		39.0%	

	All WIOA Core Programs			
	Program Year: 2025		Program Year: 2026	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Additional Indicators of Performance
1.
2.
3.
4.