

WIA Strategic or Unified Planning Decision

Division of Business Partnerships

1. **Summary:**

The Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Acts (WIA/W-P) State Plan is a requirement stipulated under the federal WIA statute. In 2000, Alaska submitted its first five-year plan. In 2005, and again in 2010, U.S. DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) advised that states could extend, modify, or create a new plan. Creating a new plan without reauthorization seemed inefficient when new legislation was under consideration. Alaska extended its plan twice then; in PY 2011, Alaska modified its plan to include a change in leadership (new Governor) and to align new resources, new strategies, and leveraged partners.

2. **Types of Plans:**

An approved plan is required in order for states to receive federal allotments under WIA title I and the Wagner Peyser Act.

There are two types of state workforce investment plans, a unified plan and a strategic state plan. Alaska's initial plan was a unified plan and later amended to a strategic state plan. The key criterion for a unified plan is strong external partnerships with required partners. The unified plan requires at least fifteen partners.

3. **Current Guidance from U.S. DOL ETA:**

WIA is under re-authorization. ETA has informed states that it will release a new Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) in February or March 2012, which will direct states that a new five -year plan will be required for PY 2012 - 2016. ETA may eventually require a unified plan and encourages states to be proactive. Once Alaska receives the official TEGL, the Department and its partners will have until April 15 to submit the new plan. Alaska can request an extension since it does not seem feasible to meet the April 15 deadline.

4. **Courses of Action and Option:**

- The new five-year plan is due on April 15 Alaska cannot meet this deadline. DBP recommends the state request an extension to September 15, 2012.
- Depending on the course of action by congress, submit a modified or extended strategic plan representing WIA and Wagner/Peyser programs by September 15, 2012.
- Submit a unified plan with all required partners that will take considerable planning, time, effort, and new partnerships. Assign appropriate staff from the different state agencies to race to meet the September 15 deadline.
- Submit a new five-year strategic state plan and establish a working/planning group to discern the value and potential for developing a unified plan.