



**ALASKA WORKFORCE FUTURE (AWF) WORKFORCE INNOVATION OPPORTUNITY ACT  
(WIOA)  
COMBINED STATE PLAN REVISION  
PROGRAM YEARS 2026 -2027**

This draft Combined State Plan is being released for public review and comment in accordance with federal requirements. The document reflects comprehensive program planning across all required partner programs and includes detailed descriptions to ensure transparency and completeness.

Following the public comment period, the State will incorporate feedback and finalize the plan for submission to the U.S. Department of Labor. The final version may be streamlined for clarity and readability while maintaining all required elements.

“OMB-required prompts and instructional language are included in this draft for clarity during public review and will be removed in the final version submitted through the State Plan Portal.”

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Throughout this document, [blue text indicates language provided by the US Department of Labor](#). Black text indicates Alaska’s responses.

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# CONTENTS

OVERVIEW.....	3
Options for Submitting a State Plan .....	3
How State Plan Requirements are Organized.....	4
I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE and EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	5
(a) Unified or Combined State Plan.....	5
(b) Plan Introduction or Executive Summary.....	5
II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS .....	8
(a) Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis.....	8
(b) State Strategic Vision and Goals.....	27
(c) State Strategy.....	32
III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS.....	68
(a) State Strategy Implementation.....	68
(b) State Operating Systems and Policies.....	89
IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS.....	123
V. COMMON ASSURANCES (for all core programs).....	126
VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS.....	127
Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I-B.....	127
Wagner-Peyser Act Program (Employment Service).....	189
Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program .....	225
Vocational Rehabilitation .....	254
VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM .....	310
Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP).....	310
APPENDICES.....	347
Appendix A – Economic and Labor Market Data.....	347
Appendix B – Workforce Analysis Supporting Figures.....	350
Appendix C – Performance Goals for the Core Programs.....	353
Appendix D – State Workforce Policy Inventory .....	359
Appendix E – Organizational Chart Reference.....	361
Appendix F – Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) Membership.....	362
Appendix G – ETPL Performance Criteria and Scoring Methodology.....	364
Appendix H – Locations of Aquatic Farms and Hatcheries in Alaska .....	365
Appendix I – Alaska Senior Population Demographics (Age 55+) .....	366
Appendix J – SCSEP Authorized Positions by Borough and Census Area .....	367
Appendix K – Acronyms and Abbreviations .....	368
Appendix L – One-Stop Partner Programs and Workforce System Resources .....	370

## 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-paying 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 planning fosters alignment of Federal investments in job training, integrates service delivery across programs, improves service delivery efficiency, and ensures that the workforce system matches employers with skilled individuals. WIOA requires States to plan across core programs and include this planning process in the Unified or Combined State Plans. This unified planning can promote a shared understanding of workforce needs within each State and foster more comprehensive, integrated approaches to addressing the needs of businesses and workers. 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.))<sup>1</sup>

#### 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, as well as 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 requirements.

When responding to Unified or Combined State Plan requirements, States must identify specific strategies for coordinating programs and services for State-identified populations with barriers to employment.<sup>2</sup> Use of links to external websites and documents is permitted within the State Plan narrative submission, provided that such links remain active and comply with 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. The public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated at 86 hours per state, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining needed data, and completing and reviewing the information collection. 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.

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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) 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. Indicate which Combined State 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.)
- 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.))

### (b) Plan Introduction or Executive Summary.

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

#### Alaska's workforce vision and strategy

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides the framework for a coordinated, performance-driven workforce system that connects individuals to employment, supports employers in meeting workforce needs, and strengthens economic competitiveness. Alaska's workforce system builds on this framework through a statewide, integrated approach that aligns workforce, education, and economic development strategies to address the state's unique economic conditions and geographic challenges.

Workforce programs in Alaska are administered by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) in partnership with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), core program partners, and a broad network of regional and community stakeholders. Together, these partners deliver coordinated employment, education, and training services designed to respond to industry demand, expand access to opportunity, and support long-term economic growth.

Alaska's workforce strategy is guided by Alaska Workforce Future (AWF), the State's unified framework for aligning workforce system investments and activities. AWF reflects federal priorities for sector strategies, career pathways,

and job-driven training, while addressing Alaska’s distinct needs, including rural access, workforce shortages, and demographic shifts.

#### **Statewide strategic priorities**

Alaska Workforce Future establishes five strategic priorities that guide statewide workforce system coordination and investment:

- Strengthening employer engagement and industry partnerships
- Expanding career pathways and work-based learning opportunities
- Improving access to workforce services for rural and underserved populations
- Modernizing workforce system infrastructure and data capabilities
- Aligning education, workforce, and economic development strategies statewide

These priorities support a system that is responsive to employer demand while expanding access to skills development, credential attainment, and employment opportunities for Alaskans across all regions.

#### **Major system developments since the 2024 State Plan**

This document represents Alaska’s two-year modification to the approved 2024–2027 WIOA Combined State Plan and reflects updated priorities and system improvements for Program Years (PY) 2026–2027.

Since the submission of the 2024 State Plan, Alaska has advanced several major workforce system initiatives to strengthen coordination, improve performance, and expand career pathways:

- continued expansion of registered apprenticeship and work-based learning, including progress toward establishing a State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) to support statewide program growth and oversight
- modernization of workforce investment programs, including the State Training and Employment Program (STEP) and federal grant programs, to improve alignment with employer demand and strengthen accountability for outcomes
- expansion of youth career pathway strategies, including pre-apprenticeship programs and increased alignment with career and technical education (CTE) and postsecondary partners
- continued investment in workforce system technology, including enhancements to AlaskaJobs, performance dashboards, and program evaluation tools to support data-informed decision making

These efforts align with federal workforce priorities emphasizing system integration, employer engagement, and improved access to employment and training services.

#### **Combined State Plan framework and coordination**

Alaska operates under a Combined State Plan framework that integrates WIOA core programs with selected partner programs to deliver coordinated services to job seekers and employers.

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is included as a Combined State Plan partner program and is fully integrated into the State’s workforce system. Coordination among core and partner programs supports aligned career pathways, shared service delivery strategies, and improved access to services, while maintaining each program’s statutory roles and accountability requirements.

The workforce system emphasizes equitable access to services across Alaska’s diverse geographic regions, including rural and remote communities, and prioritizes individuals facing barriers to employment. Workforce investments focus on high-demand and high-growth industries that support the State’s economic development priorities.

Consistent with WIOA and Alaska Workforce Future, the State’s workforce system emphasizes:

- Sector-based strategies aligned with employer demand
- Career pathways integrating education, training, and work-based learning
- Data-informed planning and performance accountability
- Job-driven investments that support measurable employment outcomes

#### **State Plan development and public engagement**

The development of the 2026–2028 Combined State Plan modification involved coordination among core programs, partner agencies, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board, and a broad range of stakeholders.

The draft State Plan was made available for public comment from March 27, 2026, to April 27, 2026. Notice was published through the State of Alaska Online Public Notices system at <http://notice.alaska.gov/223261>, and stakeholders were invited to provide input.

Outreach included employers, labor organizations, Alaska Native organizations, education and training providers, community-based organizations, disability service providers, veterans’ organizations, senior service providers, and members of the public. Comments received were reviewed and, as appropriate, incorporated into the final plan.

In addition to the formal comment process, the State conducted ongoing stakeholder engagement to inform workforce priorities, identify service delivery challenges, and respond to emerging workforce needs across Alaska.

#### **Plan organization**

This Combined State Plan is organized to clearly present Alaska’s workforce strategy and implementation approach in alignment with federal guidance:

- Strategic elements describe economic conditions, workforce challenges, and statewide priorities
- Operational planning elements describe implementation across programs and partners
- Program-specific sections detail service delivery for each core and partner program
- Appendices provide supporting materials, including performance information and partner listings

This structure ensures transparency, supports federal review, and clearly connects the statewide strategy to program-level implementation.

The sections that follow provide detailed information on Alaska’s workforce system structure, strategic priorities, and program implementation approaches under WIOA and partner 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 enable the State to develop data-driven goals to prepare an educated and skilled workforce and to identify successful strategies to align workforce development programs with 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); 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, 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 State's economic conditions and trends, including sub-State regions and any specific economic areas identified by the State. This must include—

### **Overview – Economic Conditions and Trends**

Alaska's economy has largely stabilized, with job recovery completed by 2024. Federal infrastructure investments, resource development, and sustained strength in key industries such as tourism and health care drive current and projected economic and employment growth.

Significant federal investments, including funding through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and broadband expansion initiatives, are expected to inject substantial capital into Alaska's economy. Alaska is projected to receive among the highest per capita federal infrastructure funding in the nation, supporting statewide transportation, energy, and broadband development projects.

Major oil and gas development projects on the North Slope, including the Willow and Pikka projects, are expected to generate thousands of temporary construction jobs and hundreds of long-term operational positions. These projects are also anticipated to increase oil production and contribute to long-term state revenue. Alaska's natural resource sectors, including mining, continue to present long-term growth opportunities, particularly in critical minerals essential to emerging energy technologies.

Alaska's tourism industry has experienced record visitation, with more than 1.6 million visitors in 2023, exceeding pre-pandemic levels and supporting continued demand in the hospitality and related sectors.

Despite these positive trends, Alaska faces persistent structural challenges. The state has experienced more than a decade of negative net migration, resulting in a declining working-age population. Between 2013 and 2022, the working-age population decreased significantly, contributing to widespread labor shortages across industries. These demographic trends, combined with geographic isolation and population turnover, continue to create challenges for employers seeking to recruit and retain workers.

These economic conditions underscore the importance of coordinated workforce development strategies that expand labor force participation, strengthen career pathways, and align training investments with industry demand. Additional supporting data on economic conditions and labor market trends are provided in Appendix A – Economic and Labor Market Data (see Figures A-1 through A-3).

#### **Key Elements – Regional Economic Structure**

Alaska operates as a single WIOA area; however, the state utilizes six economic regions for labor market analysis and planning: Anchorage/Mat-Su, Gulf Coast, Interior, Northern, Southeast, and Southwest. These regions reflect distinct economic conditions, industry concentrations, and workforce characteristics that inform regional and statewide workforce strategies.

- Anchorage/Mat-Su region serves as the state’s population and economic hub, with a diversified economy that includes health care, transportation and logistics, government, retail, and oil and gas headquarters functions.
- The Gulf Coast and Southeast regions are characterized by maritime industries, tourism, fishing, government employment, and resource development, with strong seasonal employment patterns.
- The Interior region includes a mix of military, education, mining, health care, and tourism-related employment, anchored by Fairbanks.
- Northern region is dominated by oil, gas, and mining activity, with significant rotational workforce patterns and fly-in/fly-out employment structures.
- The Southwest region is heavily dependent on commercial fishing and seafood processing and faces challenges related to workforce housing, transportation, and access to training services.

These regional distinctions highlight the need for flexible, regionally responsive workforce strategies that account for seasonal employment, rural access challenges, infrastructure limitations, and industry concentration.

Workforce development strategies must be adaptable to regional conditions, including differences in employer demand, access to training providers, and the need for innovative service delivery approaches such as distance learning, mobile training, and partnerships with regional training centers and tribal organizations. Alaska’s six economic regions are illustrated in Appendix A (see Figure A-1).

#### **Summary and Transition to Workforce Analysis**

Alaska’s economic outlook reflects strong demand across key industries; however, projected growth and replacement needs are expected to outpace the supply of workers in several sectors. These dynamics highlight the importance of understanding the characteristics, capacity, and limitations of Alaska’s labor force.

The following section, II(a)(1)(B) – Workforce Analysis, examines labor force trends, participation, education and skill levels, and workforce characteristics to assess the extent to which Alaska’s workforce is positioned to meet current and projected economic demand.

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

#### **Overview – Existing Demand**

Demand for workers in Alaska remains high across nearly all industries, driven by continued economic activity and a constrained labor supply. Alaska consistently reports a higher job openings rate than the national average, reflecting persistent workforce shortages across sectors and regions.

### **Key Elements – Industry and Occupational Demand**

Key industries with strong existing demand include:

- Health care
- Construction and skilled trades
- Transportation and logistics
- Education
- Energy (oil, gas, and mining)
- Seafood and maritime industries
- Tourism and hospitality
- Public sector and public safety

Occupational demand is particularly strong in:

- Registered nurses, certified nursing assistants, and behavioral health professionals
- Teachers and education support staff
- Commercial drivers, aviation workers, and logistics personnel
- Construction trades, including electricians, welders, and heavy equipment operators
- Mechanics, technicians, and information technology support roles

Occupational projections indicate that health care occupations account for a significant share of projected growth over the next decade. Strong demand also continues in occupations requiring apprenticeships, postsecondary credentials, and on-the-job training.

These demand patterns are consistent across multiple data sources, including employer job postings, industry projections, and regional workforce analyses.

### **Implications for Workforce Development**

These demand patterns reinforce the need to expand training capacity, increase access to apprenticeship opportunities, and strengthen work-based learning strategies aligned with industry demand. Supporting data on projected industry employment trends and occupational demand are provided in Appendix A – Economic and Labor Market Data (see Figures A-2 and A-3).

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

### **Overview – Emerging Demand**

Emerging demand in Alaska is driven by both the development of new industries and the expansion of existing sectors. These trends reflect evolving economic conditions, technological advancements, and long-term infrastructure investments that are shaping future workforce needs.

### **Key Elements – Emerging Industries and Occupations**

Recent examples of emerging demand include:

- Growth of the legalized cannabis industry, which has matured into a stable employment sector
- Expansion of aquaculture and mariculture, with increasing interest in sustainable seafood production
- Broadband and digital infrastructure development, creating demand for telecommunications and information technology-related occupations
- Renewable energy and energy transition activities, including opportunities linked to critical minerals development

Alaska's economic outlook is also influenced by potential large-scale infrastructure development, including the Alaska LNG project. Workforce planning efforts associated with this project, as outlined in the Alaska LNG

Workforce Development Plan, identify significant projected demand across construction and skilled trades occupations, with peak workforce needs estimated in the thousands.

Projected demand includes occupations such as:

- Welders
- Electricians
- Heavy equipment operators
- Construction laborers

These projections are based on detailed workforce modeling and scenario analysis conducted as part of statewide infrastructure planning efforts.

### **Implications for Workforce Development**

The emergence of new industries and large-scale infrastructure projects highlights the need to expand training capacity, strengthen alignment between workforce programs and industry demand, and prepare workers for high-growth occupations.

Key workforce challenges include:

- Training capacity constraints
- Competition for skilled labor
- The need for coordinated, statewide workforce development strategies

These factors are incorporated into Alaska's economic and workforce analysis to ensure the workforce system is positioned to respond to both current and emerging industry demand.

(iii) **Employers' Employment Needs.** About 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.

### **Overview – Employer Workforce Needs**

Employers across Alaska consistently report challenges in recruiting and retaining workers, driven by labor shortages, geographic barriers, and skills mismatches across industries and regions.

### **Key Elements – Skills, Credentials, and Training Needs**

Key workforce needs identified by employers include:

- Technical and occupation-specific skills aligned with industry standards
- Foundational employability skills, including communication, reliability, and adaptability
- Industry-recognized credentials, licenses, and certifications
- Work-based experience, including internships, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training

In many sectors, employers also emphasize the importance of:

- Career pathway alignment to support entry and advancement
- Flexible training models that accommodate rural and remote communities
- Coordination across the workforce, education, and training systems

These needs reflect increasing demand for workers who possess both technical competencies and foundational skills and who are prepared to enter and advance within structured career pathways.

### **Implications for Workforce Development**

These findings are informed by ongoing employer engagement, sector partnerships, and labor market analysis conducted by DOLWD. They directly inform Alaska's sector strategies, career pathway development, and training investments under Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF), ensuring that workforce system activities remain aligned with employer demand and economic priorities.

Supporting data related to workforce demand, industry trends, and occupational projections are provided in Appendix A – Economic and Labor Market Data (see Figures A-2 and A-3).

These employer-identified needs directly inform Alaska's workforce dynamics, including labor force participation, workforce availability, and skill alignment challenges, which are examined in detail in Section II(a)(1)(B).

*(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, including populations with barriers to employment described in the first paragraph of Section II. Analysis must include—*

### **Overview – Workforce Conditions and Trends**

Alaska's workforce analysis examines labor force trends, employment characteristics, educational attainment, and workforce supply conditions to assess the State's capacity to meet current and projected employer demand. This analysis reflects Alaska's unique economic structure, geographic challenges, and demographic trends and aligns with the economic analysis presented in Section II(a)(1)(A).

Long-term demographic changes, including an aging population, slower population growth, and outmigration of working-age individuals, continue to shape Alaska's workforce. These trends contribute to a constrained labor supply and affect the availability of workers across industries and regions. Broader employment trends and workforce dynamics are further illustrated in Appendix B (see Figures B-1 and B-2).

At the same time, Alaska's economy continues to generate demand for workers across key sectors, including health care, construction, transportation, energy, maritime, and public services. The combination of sustained employer demand and a constrained labor supply results in persistent workforce gaps reflected in labor force participation, employment trends, and skill alignment.

### **Key Elements – Workforce Analysis Areas**

This section examines four key areas:

- Labor force participation (i)
- Employment and unemployment trends (ii)
- Education and skill levels of the workforce (iii)
- Comparison of economic and workforce analytical conclusions (iv)

*(i) Employment and Unemployment. Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the State.*

### **Overview – Employment and Labor Force Trends**

Alaska's labor force reflects both strengths in workforce participation and ongoing challenges related to unemployment, geographic variation, and labor force attachment across key populations.

Labor force participation in Alaska has historically remained above the national average; however, recent trends indicate gradual declines influenced by demographic shifts, outmigration, and an aging population.

Employment levels have stabilized following pandemic-related disruptions, with growth concentrated in key sectors such as health care, construction, and natural resources. Despite this recovery, workforce shortages persist across multiple industries.

#### **Key Elements – Employment and Unemployment Dynamics**

Key trends in employment and unemployment include:

- Labor force participation rates that remain relatively strong but are gradually declining due to demographic pressures
- Employment growth concentrated in key sectors, with ongoing workforce shortages across industries
- Unemployment rates that generally exceed the national average due to structural factors such as seasonality and geographic isolation
- Significant regional variation, with urban areas offering more diverse employment opportunities and rural areas experiencing more limited and seasonal labor markets
- Disparities in employment outcomes among populations with barriers to employment, including Alaska Native populations, individuals with disabilities, and individuals with limited access to education and training

These trends reflect persistent structural challenges in Alaska’s labor market, including geographic constraints, seasonal employment patterns, and uneven access to workforce opportunities.

#### **Implications for Workforce Strategy**

These employment and unemployment dynamics highlight the need for targeted workforce strategies that improve access to employment opportunities, strengthen workforce attachment, and address regional and population-based disparities. These factors directly inform Alaska’s workforce development strategies described in Section II(c).

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

#### **Overview – Labor Market Conditions**

Alaska’s labor market is characterized by persistent workforce shortages, skills mismatches, and structural challenges that affect the State’s ability to meet employer demand across key industries and occupations.

Employers across Alaska consistently report difficulty filling positions in high-demand sectors, including health care, construction, transportation, and skilled trades. A combination of limited labor supply, geographic constraints, and misalignment between training programs and industry needs drives these challenges.

#### **Key Elements – Labor Market Dynamics**

Key labor market trends include:

- Persistent workforce shortages across high-demand industries, particularly in health care, construction, transportation, and skilled trades
- Skills gaps in occupations requiring technical skills, industry-recognized credentials, and work-based experience
- Employer demand for foundational employability skills, including communication, reliability, and adaptability
- Geographic and structural barriers that limit access to education, training, and employment opportunities, particularly in rural and remote communities
- External factors such as transportation, housing availability, and access to supportive services that influence workforce participation and employment outcomes

These trends reflect structural challenges within Alaska’s labor market, including workforce supply constraints, regional disparities, and training gaps misaligned with industry needs.

#### **Implications for Workforce Strategy**

These labor market conditions underscore the need for workforce strategies that:

- Expand access to training and education
- Strengthen alignment between workforce programs and industry demand
- Increase availability of work-based learning opportunities
- Address barriers to employment for key populations

These factors directly inform Alaska’s workforce development strategies described in Section II(c), including sector partnerships, career pathway development, and coordinated service delivery across the workforce system.

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

#### **Overview – Education and Workforce Skills**

Alaska’s workforce reflects a combination of strong foundational educational attainment and notable gaps in postsecondary education, credential attainment, and access to training opportunities aligned with industry demand.

High school attainment remains a relative strength for the state, with approximately 93 percent of Alaskans age 25 and older holding a high school diploma, compared to 89 percent nationally.

However, attainment of higher education credentials presents a more mixed picture. While approximately 31 percent of Alaskans hold a bachelor’s degree, comparable to the national average, the state has experienced a relative decline in national rankings over time.

#### **Key Elements – Education, Credentials, and Workforce Skills**

Key findings related to education and skill levels include:

- Strong foundational education levels, with high rates of high school attainment
- Postsecondary attainment levels that are comparable to the national average but declining relative to historical rankings
- Higher-than-average attainment of industry-recognized credentials and licenses, with approximately 28.6 percent of Alaskans holding a certification or license
- Strong employment outcomes associated with short-term, industry-aligned training programs, particularly in technical fields such as welding
- Data limitations related to non-degree credentials that constrain the comprehensive assessment of workforce skill levels

The University of Alaska system plays a central role in workforce development by providing degree and non-degree training aligned with industry needs. Outcomes demonstrate strong employment and wage progression among individuals who complete short-term credential programs, reinforcing the value of industry-aligned training pathways.

#### **Key Elements – Regional and Population Disparities**

Significant disparities in education and skill levels exist across regions and populations, including:

- Alaska Native populations, who experience lower educational attainment, higher unemployment rates, and lower average wages
- Rural communities, where access to education, training, and employment opportunities is more limited

- Individuals with disabilities, who face barriers to accessing training, accommodations, and employment opportunities
- Justice-involved individuals, who experience prolonged barriers to employment following release
- Individuals experiencing homelessness, who face significant barriers to both education and workforce participation
- Other populations with barriers, including individuals in or exiting foster care, individuals with limited English proficiency, and those with low literacy levels

These disparities highlight structural challenges in workforce access and outcomes across Alaska’s diverse regions and populations.

#### **Key Elements – Demographic Trends and Workforce Impacts**

Alaska’s aging population has significant implications for workforce supply and skill availability. The population age 65 and older has grown substantially and now represents an increasing share of the workforce, with higher concentrations in sectors such as health care, local government, and professional services.

While older workers contribute valuable experience and institutional knowledge, this trend signals increasing workforce replacement needs and potential skill gaps as retirements accelerate.

Veterans represent a significant share of Alaska’s population and workforce and demonstrate relatively strong labor force participation and earnings outcomes. However, targeted workforce strategies remain important for supporting transitions into civilian employment and aligning with industry needs.

#### **Implications for Workforce Strategy**

Overall, Alaska’s workforce demonstrates strong foundational education levels and strengths in credential attainment in certain sectors, but also faces significant challenges related to postsecondary access, regional disparities, and barriers to employment for key populations.

These findings underscore the need for workforce development strategies that:

- Expand access to education and training
- Strengthen alignment with industry demand
- Increase access to industry-recognized credentials
- Expand work-based learning opportunities, including Registered Apprenticeship
- Improve access and outcomes for populations with barriers to employment

These education and skill gaps directly affect Alaska’s ability to meet occupational demand in priority industries identified in the economic analysis and inform the workforce strategies described in Section II(c).

[\(iv\) 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.](#)

#### **Overview – Workforce Supply and Demand Alignment**

This section synthesizes the findings from both the economic and workforce analyses to identify key gaps and opportunities within Alaska’s workforce system.

Alaska’s economic and workforce analyses collectively identify a structural imbalance between employer demand and available workforce supply. While the economic analysis demonstrates strong and sustained demand across key industries, including health care, construction, transportation, energy, and resource development, the

workforce analysis highlights constraints related to labor force participation, workforce availability, and skill alignment.

These findings indicate that Alaska's workforce challenges are not solely cyclical but are driven by longer-term structural factors, including demographic decline, geographic isolation, and limited training capacity and access. As a result, employers face persistent difficulty recruiting and retaining workers, particularly in high-demand, hard-to-fill occupations.

Workforce residency patterns, including the distribution of resident and nonresident workers across regions, are illustrated in Appendix B (see Figure B-2). These patterns demonstrate Alaska's reliance on nonresident labor in several key industries and regions, particularly in seasonal and resource-based sectors.

#### **Key Elements – Demand Exceeds Supply**

Analysis of long-term projections and workforce supply indicators demonstrates sustained demand in several priority industries, including:

- Healthcare and behavioral health
- Construction and skilled trades
- Maritime and fisheries-related occupations
- Transportation and logistics
- Energy and utilities
- Public sector and education support roles

Projected annual openings in these industries are driven by both growth and replacement needs, particularly retirements. In multiple occupations, projected demand exceeds the number of qualified individuals currently available in Alaska's labor force, indicating structural shortages rather than short-term hiring fluctuations.

#### **Key Elements – Workforce Alignment Gaps**

The analysis identifies several misalignments between employer needs and workforce capabilities:

- Credential gaps: Employers require industry-recognized credentials, licenses, and technical certifications not held by a sufficient share of the workforce
- Experience gaps: Job seekers lack work-based learning experience aligned to in-demand occupations
- Geographic mismatch: Job growth does not align with the distribution of available workers
- Skill transferability challenges: Workers transitioning from seasonal or declining industries lack clear pathways into high-demand sectors

These misalignments reinforce the need for stronger career pathway alignment, expanded work-based learning, and increased access to credential attainment opportunities.

#### **Key Elements – Regional and Structural Barriers**

Regional analysis highlights significant disparities across Alaska:

- Rural and frontier communities face persistent workforce shortages in healthcare, education, and public services
- Infrastructure constraints, including housing, transportation, and broadband access, limit labor mobility and participation
- Seasonal employment patterns contribute to income instability and workforce churn
- Access to training and education remains limited without hybrid, mobile, or distance-based delivery models

These conditions underscore the need for regionally tailored workforce strategies and flexible service delivery approaches.

### **Key Elements – Priority Populations and Equity Gaps**

The workforce analysis identifies disproportionate impacts on populations with barriers to employment, including:

- Individuals with disabilities
- Justice-involved individuals
- Alaska Native and rural residents
- Youth and young adults disconnected from education or employment
- Older workers
- Individuals with limited English proficiency

These populations often experience higher unemployment or underemployment and face additional barriers to accessing education, training, and employment aligned with in-demand industries. Addressing labor shortages and advancing equity are, therefore, closely interconnected objectives within Alaska’s workforce system.

### **Implications for Workforce Strategy**

These findings highlight the need for coordinated, demand-driven workforce strategies under Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF), including:

- Sector strategies
  - Focus on high-demand industries such as healthcare, construction, maritime, transportation, and energy
  - Strengthen employer-led sector partnerships aligned with projected workforce needs
- Registered apprenticeship expansion
  - Expand apprenticeship opportunities across priority sectors
  - Increase rural access through hybrid and regionally adapted models
- Youth and career pathways
  - Expand work-based learning, pre-apprenticeship, and career exploration
  - Align secondary, postsecondary, and workforce programs with high-demand occupations
- Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN) modernization
  - Improve data-driven referrals to in-demand occupations using AlaskaJobs
  - Strengthen co-enrollment across Titles I–IV
  - Enhance employer engagement and business services capacity

These strategies support a coordinated workforce system that aligns training investments with industry demand, expands access to employment opportunities, and strengthens long-term workforce sustainability.

Additional workforce and economic comparison data supporting these findings are provided in Appendix B (see Figure B-2).

(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<sup>3</sup> and optional one-stop delivery system partners.<sup>4</sup>

### **Overview – Workforce Development System**

Alaska's workforce development activities are delivered through a coordinated system of WIOA core programs, required one-stop partner programs, Alaska Native workforce programs, and complementary state-funded workforce initiatives.

These activities are delivered through the Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN), supported by AlaskaJobs, the State's primary workforce system for labor exchange, case management, service tracking, and performance reporting across programs. Services are provided through both physical job centers and virtual platforms, ensuring statewide access across Alaska's diverse geographic regions.

This section describes Alaska's current statewide and regional workforce development activities and analyzes how these activities support labor market demand, priority populations, and employer workforce needs identified in Section II(a)(1). The analysis reflects the integrated structure of Alaska's workforce system and the coordinated implementation of programs administered by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), and partner agencies.

Consistent with WIOA and federal guidance, Alaska's workforce system emphasizes coordinated service delivery, career pathway development, work-based learning, and employer engagement to support employment outcomes aligned with labor market demand. These activities are intentionally structured to align workforce investments with high-demand industries, ensuring that training and employment services help close identified workforce gaps.

### **Key Elements – Workforce Development Activities**

Key elements of Alaska's workforce development system include:

- Integrated service delivery through the Alaska Job Center Network and AlaskaJobs system
- Coordination across WIOA core programs, one-stop partner programs, and state-funded workforce initiatives
- Emphasis on career pathways, work-based learning, and employer engagement
- Targeted service delivery for populations with barriers to employment
- Alignment of workforce investments with high-demand industries identified through labor market analysis
- Flexible and responsive service delivery models that adapt to changing demographic and economic conditions

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<sup>3</sup> Required one-stop partners: In addition to the core programs, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the one-stops: Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, HUD Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs program, Senior Community Service Employment program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (unless the Governor determines TANF will not be a required partner), Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Compensation programs, and YouthBuild.

<sup>4</sup> Workforce development activities may include a wide variety of programs and partners, including educational institutions, faith- and community-based organizations, and human services.

### **Core and Partner Programs**

Alaska's workforce development system integrates WIOA core programs and required one-stop partner programs to provide comprehensive employment, education, and training services. Services are delivered through Alaska Job Center locations and the AlaskaJobs system, ensuring both in-person and virtual access statewide.

Workforce development activities are designed to serve individuals with barriers to employment and to support equitable access across Alaska's urban, rural, and remote communities. Priority populations include individuals with barriers to employment as defined in WIOA, including low-income individuals, individuals with disabilities, Alaska Natives and American Indians, English language learners, individuals experiencing homelessness, ex-offenders, older individuals, and others facing barriers to employment.

Service delivery strategies are adapted through targeted outreach, partner coordination, and flexible service models that address geographic, cultural, and access barriers. This approach supports alignment between equity objectives and labor market demand. It ensures that priority populations are connected to in-demand occupations and career pathways that support long-term economic self-sufficiency.

Alaska's workforce system also demonstrates the ability to respond to changing demographic and economic conditions. Between FY 2022 and FY 2024, increased arrivals of refugees, asylees, and humanitarian parolees led to greater demand for employment services, English-language instruction, credential recognition, and coordinated case management. More recent trends indicate declining arrivals entering FY 2026, reinforcing the need for a system that can scale services while maintaining alignment with long-term workforce priorities.

### **Alaska Native Workforce Partnerships**

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development partners with Alaska Native organizations to address cultural, geographic, and logistical barriers to workforce participation, particularly in rural and remote communities. These partnerships support the delivery of culturally responsive employment and training services aligned with regional economic needs and local employer demand.

These partnerships also strengthen regional talent pipelines by connecting local populations to employment opportunities within their communities, supporting both economic development and workforce sustainability in rural Alaska.

### **Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB)**

AWIB provides strategic oversight of workforce development activities and aligns state and federal investments with labor market demand. Sector-based strategies focus on key industries including maritime, health care, education, energy, construction, transportation, and tourism.

AWIB also coordinates funding across workforce programs, including WIOA Youth, apprenticeship initiatives, STEP, ACA, and TVEP, to support alignment, reduce duplication, and maximize impact. This coordinated investment approach enables Alaska to leverage multiple funding streams to support shared workforce goals, increasing efficiency and strengthening the overall impact of workforce development activities.

### **WIOA Core Programs**

#### **Title I – Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs**

Services are delivered through Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) case managers in Alaska Job Centers. Participants receive career services, training, and supportive services to support employment and re-employment.

Case managers develop Individualized Employment Plans (IEPs) and use Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to fund training delivered through providers on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Participants may be co-enrolled with programs such as STEP, TANF, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Tribal workforce programs.

Co-enrollment is actively implemented through coordinated intake, shared case management practices, and the use of AlaskaJobs to document services and track participant progress across programs.

Training services include occupational skills training, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, customized training, integrated education and training, and apprenticeship-related instruction. These strategies prioritize work-based learning and employer engagement to ensure alignment with industry needs.

#### **Title I – Youth Program**

The Youth program is delivered through competitively procured subrecipients across Alaska and provides access to all fourteen required program elements.

Services include:

- Comprehensive assessments
- Individual service strategies (ISS)
- Career exploration and pathway development
- Work experience and work-based learning
- Coordination with education and training providers

Youth participants receive individualized services designed to support transitions to employment, postsecondary education, or training. Co-enrollment with Adult programs occurs where appropriate. These services support early connections to career pathways and reduce the risk of disconnection from education and employment.

#### **Types of Workforce Services (Across Title I)**

- Career services: Labor market information, assessments, career planning, and counseling
- Training services: Occupational skills training, on-the-job training, apprenticeship, and customized training
- Supportive services: Transportation, childcare, housing, and other supports necessary for participation
- Follow-up services: Support for employment retention and continued education

The integration of these service types supports a comprehensive workforce development approach that addresses both skill development and barriers to employment.

#### **Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy**

The Alaska Adult Education program provides instruction in basic skills, high school equivalency attainment, English language acquisition, digital literacy, and workforce preparation. Programs support transitions to postsecondary education, training, and employment.

Alignment between adult education and workforce programs supports integrated education and training models that accelerate participant progress into employment and career pathways.

#### **Title III – Wagner-Peyser Employment Services**

Employment Services are delivered through the Alaska Job Centers and AlaskaJobs system, providing universal access to labor exchange services.

Services include:

- Job search, referral, and placement assistance
- Reemployment services for UI claimants
- Employer recruitment services
- Career guidance and assessments

Services are delivered through self-service, facilitated self-help, and staff-assisted models, allowing resources to be targeted to individuals with greater barriers to employment.

DVOP and LVER staff provide specialized services to veterans, while business services teams support employer engagement and workforce solutions.

#### **Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)**

The TAA program provides reemployment and training services to workers impacted by foreign trade. While not currently authorized for new enrollments, Alaska continues to serve eligible participants and maintain readiness for reauthorization.

#### **Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation**

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) provides services to individuals with disabilities to support competitive integrated employment. Services include assessment, counseling, training, and supported employment, delivered through regional offices and rural service hubs.

DVR's regional and hub-based service model supports access in rural areas while maintaining consistent service delivery statewide.

#### **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)**

SCSEP serves low-income individuals aged 55 and older, providing part-time community service employment and training opportunities. The program is integrated within the AJC system and supports transitions to unsubsidized employment through coordinated service delivery and co-enrollment with partner programs.

#### **State-Funded Workforce Programs**

State-funded programs, including STEP, TVEP, ACA, and Registered Apprenticeship, complement WIOA-funded activities and expand Alaska's capacity to respond to employer demand.

Registered Apprenticeship remains a central workforce strategy supporting employer-driven training across multiple industries and continues to expand into emerging sectors through State Apprenticeship Expansion initiatives. These programs provide structured, earn-and-learn pathways aligned with industry needs and workforce priorities.

#### **Transition**

Together, these workforce development activities form a coordinated statewide workforce system aligned with Alaska's labor market demand.

This integrated approach positions Alaska to align workforce investments, service delivery, and employer engagement strategies to support both immediate hiring needs and long-term economic growth.

These activities are supported by coordinated policies, data systems, and partner collaboration, as described in Section III, enabling integrated service delivery and continuous improvement across Alaska's workforce system. Section II(a)(2)(B) evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of these activities and identifies opportunities to strengthen coordination and system performance further.

*(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.*

#### **Overview – System Performance and Continuous Improvement**

This subsection updates Alaska's assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of its workforce development activities during the Program Years (PY) 2026–2027 modification period. The assessment reflects current system capacity, operational experience, stakeholder input, and evolving workforce conditions identified through economic analysis and ongoing partner engagement.

The purpose of this assessment is to evaluate how effectively Alaska's workforce system is positioned to meet identified workforce needs, serve priority populations, and respond to employer demand. These findings support Alaska's workforce vision, goals, and strategic implementation and contribute to the continuous improvement of workforce service delivery.

Consistent with WIOA requirements and federal guidance encouraging modernization and innovation, this assessment also considers opportunities to optimize service delivery using WIOA flexibilities and integrated workforce strategies that align education, training, and employment pathways.

### **Key Elements – System Strengths**

Alaska's workforce system demonstrates several key strengths:

#### **Statewide Coordination and Stakeholder Alignment**

Alaska has established a strong capacity for statewide coordination and cross-sector stakeholder engagement. Initial statewide convenings and ongoing partner collaboration informed the development of Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF), a cross-industry workforce framework that guides coordinated planning and implementation.

#### **Partner Collaboration and Co-enrollment**

Core programs and partner programs coordinate referrals, assessments, case management, and training decisions to support integrated service delivery. Co-enrollment is actively implemented through coordinated intake, shared case management practices, and the use of AlaskaJobs to document services and track participant progress across programs. These practices reduce duplication and improve outcomes for individuals with barriers to employment.

#### **Cross-Agency Planning and Alignment Initiatives**

State agencies and partners engage in coordinated workforce planning efforts that align workforce, education, and economic development strategies. Key initiatives include Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF), broadband workforce planning, infrastructure workforce coordination, and LNG workforce development planning. These efforts support data-informed decision-making and proactive alignment of the workforce system.

#### **Integration of Refugee and Immigrant Workforce Services**

Integration of Refugee Support Services (RSS) within the workforce system strengthens coordination across programs and supports employment, English language acquisition, and economic self-sufficiency for ORR-eligible populations.

#### **Alaska Native Workforce Partnerships**

Partnerships with Alaska Native organizations support culturally responsive service delivery and strengthen workforce participation in rural and remote communities. These partnerships enhance regional workforce development capacity and align services with local labor market needs.

#### **Sector Strategies and Apprenticeship Expansion**

Workforce investments are aligned with high-demand industries through sector-based strategies and expanded Registered Apprenticeship opportunities. These approaches strengthen career pathways and support industry-driven training aligned with employer demand.

#### **Technology-Enabled Service Delivery**

Expanded use of virtual services and online tools improves access to workforce services, supports partner coordination, and enhances system responsiveness, particularly in geographically dispersed areas.

### **Responsive and adaptable service delivery**

The workforce system demonstrates the ability to scale and adjust services in response to demographic and economic changes, including fluctuations in refugee arrivals and evolving workforce demand.

### **Key Elements – System Weaknesses and Challenges**

Alaska’s workforce system also faces several ongoing challenges:

#### **Geographic Barriers**

Alaska’s vast geography and dispersed population limit access to education, training, and employment opportunities, particularly in rural and remote communities where travel costs and logistical barriers are significant.

#### **Technology Access and Digital Skills**

Uneven broadband access and digital literacy gaps limit participation in online education, workforce services, and job search activities, particularly in rural areas.

#### **Employability Skills Gaps**

Employers continue to report challenges in finding workers with foundational employability skills such as reliability, communication, and workplace readiness.

#### **Staffing Capacity and Turnover**

Recruitment and retention challenges, particularly in rural areas, affect staffing levels, continuity of case management, and consistency in service delivery across the workforce system.

#### **Variation in One-stop Partner Coordination**

While collaboration is strong statewide, local variations in partner presence and capacity can affect consistency in service delivery and access to co-located services.

#### **Data Sharing and System Interoperability**

Differences in data systems and reporting requirements limit seamless data sharing and constrain the ability to generate comprehensive cross-program performance insights.

#### **Barriers Affecting Immigrant and Refugee Populations**

Limited English proficiency, credential recognition challenges, and variable service demand affect workforce participation and employment outcomes for immigrant and refugee populations.

#### **State Fiscal Constraints**

Budget limitations affect staffing levels, service delivery capacity, and the availability of in-person services in some communities, particularly in rural areas.

#### **Implications for Workforce Strategy**

The strengths and challenges identified in this subsection directly inform Alaska’s workforce vision and goals described in Section II(b) and the workforce strategies described in Section II(c).

These findings support continued efforts to:

- Modernize workforce service delivery
- Strengthen system integration and data sharing
- Expand employer engagement and sector partnerships
- Improve access to services across Alaska’s regions
- Address barriers to employment for priority populations

- Enhance accountability and performance outcomes

The State uses data, performance outcomes, and partner feedback to support continuous improvement of workforce system operations and service delivery.

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

### **Overview – Workforce System Capacity and Constraints**

Alaska’s workforce development capacity reflects a combination of system strengths and structural challenges that influence service delivery, access, and outcomes across the state. The workforce system benefits from established infrastructure, coordinated program delivery, and data-driven planning, while also navigating constraints related to geography, staffing, and service availability in rural and remote communities.

This section assesses Alaska’s statewide capacity to support workforce development activities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The analysis examines the institutional, operational, and resource capacity of the state’s workforce system to deliver education, training, and employment services aligned with current and emerging workforce needs.

The capacity analysis reflects system developments, operational experience, and workforce conditions observed during the Program Years (PY) 2026–2027 modification period. It considers governance, service delivery infrastructure, education and training systems, workforce staffing, technology and data capabilities, and fiscal resources, with particular attention to how geography and regional variation affect access and scalability.

This assessment is informed by Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF) framework and supports the State’s Vision and Goals in Section II(b) and the strategies outlined in Section II(c).

### **Key Elements – Core Capacity Factors**

Several key factors shape Alaska’s workforce system capacity:

- Strong statewide infrastructure through the Alaska Job Center Network and core program partners
- Established coordination across the workforce, education, and partner programs supporting integrated service delivery
- Use of labor market information and data systems to inform planning and resource allocation
- Geographic constraints affecting access to services in rural and remote communities
- Workforce system challenges related to staffing, provider availability, and service delivery in hard-to-reach areas

### **Governance and System Oversight Capacity**

Alaska’s workforce development system is supported by a centralized governance and oversight structure that provides policy direction, coordination, and accountability across programs. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), in collaboration with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), serves as the primary entity responsible for guiding statewide workforce policy, aligning programs with labor market needs, and ensuring compliance with federal and state requirements.

AWIB’s statutory responsibilities include advising the Governor and Legislature, approving policies, and promoting cross-system alignment—supporting coordinated planning, performance oversight, and system-level decision-making. Its placement within the Office of the Commissioner strengthens responsiveness and cross-agency coordination.

The Alaska Workforce Future (AWF) framework further enhances governance capacity by providing a shared statewide vision, identifying priority sectors, and supporting alignment across agencies and partners while preserving program-specific authority.

Capacity for governance and coordination varies by region, depending on staffing, partner presence, and infrastructure, requiring ongoing oversight to ensure consistent implementation across Alaska's diverse geographic contexts.

### **Education and Training Infrastructure Capacity**

Alaska's education and training infrastructure provides foundational capacity through secondary education, postsecondary institutions, and sector-based training providers.

- **K–12 Career and Technical Education (CTE)**  
Career and Technical Education programs support early workforce preparation through career exposure, employability skills, and industry-aligned instruction. Capacity varies significantly across districts, with rural districts facing greater limitations in staffing, facilities, and program availability.
- **Postsecondary Education Capacity (University of Alaska and AVTEC)**  
The University of Alaska system and AVTEC provide primary postsecondary education and occupational training aligned with priority industries. While distance delivery expands access, geographic barriers often require travel or relocation for participation.
- **Regional Training Centers and Sector-Focused Providers**  
Regional Training Centers and specialized providers deliver industry-specific training aligned with regional labor market demand. Capacity varies by region and is often limited to specific occupations or credentials.

Overall, infrastructure provides essential capacity but is unevenly distributed, affecting scalability and responsiveness to emerging workforce needs.

### **Registered Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning Capacity**

Registered Apprenticeship and work-based learning models are critical components of Alaska's workforce system capacity, aligning training directly with employer demand.

These models are strongest in industries with established employer networks, including construction, maritime, health care, aviation, mining, and energy sectors. They support career pathways leading to industry-recognized credentials and family-sustaining wages.

However, expansion is constrained by employer readiness, administrative capacity, availability of mentors, and access to related technical instruction. In rural areas, limited employer density restricts opportunities. The State continues to assess opportunities to strengthen apprenticeship system capacity, including consideration of a State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) model, in coordination with federal partners.

### **Alaska Job Center Network and Service Delivery Capacity**

The Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN) serves as the primary access point for workforce services across the state.

- In urban areas, Job Centers provide direct access to in-person services and coordinated partner engagement
- In rural and remote areas, service delivery relies on virtual services, itinerant staff, and partnerships with local entities

Geographic distribution of infrastructure remains uneven, with fewer physical access points in rural regions. The system has demonstrated adaptability in responding to fluctuations in demand, including refugee arrivals, through coordinated service delivery and partnerships.

Fiscal and operational factors have reduced physical footprint in some areas, increasing reliance on technology-enabled services and partnerships.

#### **Workforce System Staffing and Professional Capacity**

Workforce system effectiveness depends on the availability and expertise of staff who deliver services and coordinate programs.

Recruitment and retention challenges persist, particularly in rural areas, affecting continuity of service delivery and institutional knowledge. Staff often manage multiple responsibilities, which can limit capacity for specialized functions such as employer engagement and sector partnerships.

Ongoing professional development supports adaptation to evolving program requirements and technology systems, but consistent implementation across regions remains a priority.

#### **Technology and Data Capacity**

Technology systems support service delivery, case management, and performance reporting across Alaska's workforce system.

Virtual services and online tools expand access, particularly in remote areas. However, effectiveness is influenced by:

- Broadband availability
- Digital literacy
- Access to devices

Differences in data systems limit interoperability and seamless data sharing across programs, constraining integrated service delivery and cross-program performance analysis.

Improving data governance, interoperability, and data-driven decision-making remains a key priority.

#### **Fiscal and Resource Capacity**

Federal funding, state resources, and partner investments support Alaska's workforce system.

Fiscal constraints, inflationary pressures, and competing demands affect staffing, infrastructure, and service delivery capacity. These constraints have contributed to increased reliance on virtual services and partnerships to maintain access.

Balancing available resources with service demand requires ongoing coordination to maintain statewide services while meeting compliance and performance expectations.

#### **Capacity Summary and Link to Vision and Strategy**

Alaska's workforce system demonstrates strong foundational capacity across governance, service delivery, education and training infrastructure, work-based learning, staffing, technology, and fiscal resources. At the same time, geographic scale, regional variation, staffing constraints, technology limitations, and fiscal conditions influence how services are delivered and expanded across the state.

These capacity considerations directly inform the State's Vision and Goals in Section II(b) and the strategies outlined in Section II(c), ensuring that workforce priorities are grounded in a realistic assessment of system capabilities and constraints.

## (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 to support economic growth and self-sufficiency. This must include—

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

### Overview – State Strategic Vision

Alaska's workforce development system advances a statewide vision that:

- Aligns workforce, education, and economic development strategies to support a demand-driven talent system
- Expands access to career pathways, education, and training opportunities that lead to self-sufficiency
- Strengthens employer engagement and sector partnerships to meet current and emerging workforce needs
- Promotes system integration, co-enrollment, and coordinated service delivery across core programs and partners
- Uses data and labor market information to guide decision-making, improve outcomes, and support continuous improvement
- 

Alaska's workforce system is guided by a unified, statewide strategic vision grounded in Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF), an integrated framework that aligns education, workforce development, and economic development efforts to meet the needs of employers, workers, and communities across the state. This vision reflects Alaska's unique geographic, demographic, and economic conditions. It is designed to deliver coordinated, responsive, and accessible workforce services that support long-term economic opportunity, workforce participation, and statewide economic resilience.

The strategic vision focuses on preparing Alaskans for high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand careers while supporting employers' need for a skilled and adaptable workforce. The system emphasizes sector-based strategies, work-based learning, and career pathways that align education and training with current and projected labor market demand. By strengthening connections among employers, education and training providers, and workforce partners, Alaska supports workforce attachment, advancement, and retention across priority industries and regions.

Alaska's strategic vision is informed by federal workforce priorities, including the U.S. Department of Labor's *America's Talent Strategy: Building the Workforce for the Golden Age*, which emphasizes system integration, skills-based pathways, employer engagement, and expanded access to high-quality training and careers. These principles align with Alaska's focus on workforce system modernization, employer responsiveness, and coordinated statewide planning while allowing the State to implement strategies consistent with its priorities, resources, and workforce system capacity.

This vision is implemented through a coordinated governance structure led by the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) in partnership with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) and core and partner agencies. AWIB provides strategic oversight, policy guidance, and system alignment to ensure that workforce investments and initiatives operate as part of an integrated statewide system rather than as isolated programs. This governance model promotes collaboration across agencies, sectors, and regions while maintaining program-specific accountability and statutory responsibilities.

Equitable access is a central component of Alaska's workforce vision. The system is designed to reduce barriers to participation for individuals facing geographic, economic, cultural, or systemic challenges, including residents of rural and remote communities and populations with barriers to employment. Flexible service delivery models—including in-person, virtual, and partner-based approaches support access while accounting for regional capacity, infrastructure, and community needs.

Modernization and continuous improvement are also integral to this vision. Alaska emphasizes the effective use of technology, data, and performance information to improve service delivery, strengthen program coordination, and inform decision-making. Data-driven planning and accountability support ongoing assessment of system effectiveness and guide adjustments to workforce strategies as labor market conditions and employer needs evolve.

This strategic vision provides the foundation for Alaska's workforce goals and strategies described in Sections II(b)(2) and II(c) of this plan. It guides statewide coordination during the Program Years 2026–2027 State Plan modification period, consistent with WIOA requirements and federal guidance.

Alaska's workforce vision also reflects the need to prepare for emerging economic opportunities, including potential large-scale infrastructure investments such as the Alaska LNG project. Through proactive, data-informed planning, the State is aligning workforce strategies to ensure Alaskans are prepared to meet future industry demand while supporting long-term economic growth and resilience.

[\(2\) 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—](#)

#### **Overview – State Workforce Goals**

Alaska's strategic workforce goals establish the systemwide outcomes the State's workforce development system will pursue during the Program Years (PY) 2026–2027 State Plan modification period. These goals translate the statewide workforce vision described in Section II(b)(1) into actionable priorities and are grounded in the economic, workforce, and workforce system analysis presented in Section II(a), including identified high-demand sectors, regional workforce conditions, and priority populations.

The goals are aligned with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) framework, which supports statewide coordination among workforce, education, and economic development partners. These goals reflect Alaska's approach to addressing workforce gaps, system capacity, and employer demand identified in Section II(a).

#### **Key Elements – State Workforce Goals**

- Workforce preparation goals (Section II(b)(2)(A)), focused on preparing Alaskans with the skills, credentials, and career pathways needed to participate in the labor market
- Employer and industry workforce goals (Section II(b)(2)(B)), focused on supporting employer demand, sector-based workforce strategies, and workforce system responsiveness

Together, these goals reflect a coordinated, employer-responsive workforce system that supports equitable access to services, long-term sustainability, and alignment across education, workforce, and economic development systems. They are implemented through the strategies described in Section II(c) and measured through the performance framework outlined in Section II(b)(3).

Where appropriate, workforce goals are coordinated with Career and Technical Education efforts under Perkins V while preserving distinct statutory authority, funding responsibility, and accountability

(A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment<sup>5</sup> and other populations.<sup>6</sup>

Alaska's workforce preparation goals focus on strengthening the skills, credentials, and work readiness of individuals to support entry, advancement, and retention in employment aligned with current and projected labor market demand. These goals translate Alaska's workforce vision into systemwide priorities that strengthen the State's talent pipeline.

**Goal A-1: Expand Access, Equity, and Opportunity for Job Seekers**

Increase equitable access to workforce services, education, and training opportunities for all Alaskans, regardless of geography or employment barriers. This goal emphasizes reducing regional and systemic barriers, supporting inclusive service delivery models, and ensuring participation by individuals in rural and remote communities and populations with barriers to employment.

**Goal A-2: Strengthen Career Pathways and Skill Development**

Support aligned career pathways that prepare individuals for entry, progression, and advancement in occupations aligned with employer demand and regional labor market needs. This goal focuses on aligning education, training, and workforce services to support skill development, credential attainment, and long-term workforce attachment. Where appropriate, workforce preparation efforts are coordinated with Career and Technical Education programs under Perkins V while preserving program-specific roles and accountability.

**Goal A-3: Enhance Work-Based Learning Opportunities for Individuals**

Expand access to work-based learning approaches, including Registered Apprenticeship and other employment-connected models, that provide paid, structured opportunities to gain skills aligned with labor market demand. This goal supports hands-on skill development, employability, and career advancement.

**Goal A-4: Modernize Workforce Services and Improve Customer Experience**

Promote modernization of workforce service delivery through effective use of technology, data, and integrated service delivery models that improve access, coordination, responsiveness, and performance accountability. This goal supports improved navigation of workforce services and strengthens coordination across programs and partners.

These goals are implemented within existing statutory authority, available resources, and regional capacity through coordinated efforts across core and partner programs rather than through new mandates or uniform service requirements.

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

Alaska will strengthen sector-based strategies in key industries, including construction, energy, and infrastructure, to prepare for projected workforce demand associated with major projects such as the Alaska LNG project. This includes expanding Registered Apprenticeship programs, increasing access to occupational skills training, and aligning training investments with industry-identified needs.

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<sup>5</sup> 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. 3514); 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.

<sup>6</sup> Veterans, unemployed workers, youth, and any other populations identified by the State.

**Goal B-2: Align Workforce Development with Economic and Regional Priorities**

Enhance alignment among workforce development, education, and economic development partners to support regional economies and industry growth. This goal emphasizes coordinated planning and aligned accountability within each program's statutory authority.

**Goal B-3: Improve Workforce System Responsiveness to Employer Needs**

Increase the workforce system's ability to respond effectively to employer needs by improving coordination among programs and partners, supporting work-based learning and training partnerships, and aligning services with business demand.

**Goal B-4: Promote System Sustainability and Continuous Improvement**

Support long-term workforce system sustainability within available resources through data-informed planning, performance accountability, and continuous improvement. This goal emphasizes responsible stewardship of workforce investments while maintaining responsiveness to employer needs and labor market demand.

The economic analysis and workforce system assessment presented in Section II(a) inform these goals. They are designed to be implemented within the scope of the PY 2026–2027 State Plan modification period. Where appropriate, strategies are coordinated with Career and Technical Education efforts under Perkins V while preserving distinct statutory authority, funding responsibility, and accountability.

(3) [Performance Goals](#). Using the table provided in Appendix 1, include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. (This Strategic Planning element only applies to core programs.)

**Overview – Performance Accountability Goals**

Consistent with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) performance accountability framework, Alaska establishes expected performance levels for the primary performance indicators of each WIOA core program. These performance goals reflect the State's commitment to improving employment outcomes, supporting workforce participation, strengthening alignment between workforce services and labor market demand, and measuring progress toward the strategic goals outlined in Section II(b)(2).

Expected levels of performance are established in accordance with WIOA Section 116(b). They are informed by historical program performance, labor market conditions, and other relevant factors considered during federal performance negotiations, including economic conditions and participant characteristics. The State works in coordination with the U.S. Department of Labor to ensure that negotiated performance levels reflect both program capacity and economic conditions.

The State's expected performance levels for the WIOA primary indicators are provided in Appendix C – Performance Goals for the Core Programs, in the table format required for State Plan submission. These performance goals apply to WIOA core programs and support ongoing performance accountability, program improvement, and system coordination across Alaska's workforce development system.

These performance goals also serve as a key mechanism for evaluating progress toward the State's strategic priorities and ensuring accountability across core programs.

In establishing expected performance levels, Alaska considers unique state factors such as seasonal employment patterns, rural service delivery challenges, and variation in participant access to training and employment opportunities. Performance results are regularly reviewed by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce

Development (DOLWD) and the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) to assess progress, inform program improvements, and support data-driven decision-making across the workforce system.

(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.

#### **Overview – Assessment and Continuous Improvement**

Alaska uses a combination of performance accountability, data analysis, monitoring, and stakeholder feedback to assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system and support continuous improvement. These activities align with the strategic vision in Section II(b)(1), the strategic goals in Section II(b)(2), and the performance goals in Section II(b)(3). They are guided by Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF) framework during the Program Years (PY) 2026–2027 State Plan modification period.

#### **Key Elements – System Assessment Approach**

- Performance accountability and data analysis
- System oversight, monitoring, and compliance
- Alaska Job Center certification and service quality review
- Stakeholder engagement and customer feedback
- Evaluation and continuous learning
- Use of assessment results to drive continuous improvement

#### **Performance Accountability and Data Analysis**

- Uses the performance accountability measures required under WIOA Section 116 to assess effectiveness
- Reviews performance results at the statewide level to monitor progress toward negotiated performance goals
- Analyzes data in conjunction with labor market information, participant characteristics, and regional economic conditions
- Conducts data validation and quality assurance activities to ensure accuracy, consistency, and reliability

#### **System Oversight, Monitoring, and Compliance**

- Conducts program monitoring, compliance reviews, and audits to ensure alignment with federal and state requirements
- Evaluates service delivery, fiscal management, data quality, and adherence to program policies and procedures
- Uses monitoring findings to inform corrective action, technical assistance, and policy clarification

#### **Alaska Job Center Certification and Service Quality Review**

- Uses Alaska Job Center certification and recertification processes to assess service quality, accessibility, and compliance with one-stop requirements
- Evaluates partner coordination, customer flow, and effectiveness of integrated service delivery
- Uses results to improve service models, strengthen partner integration, and enhance customer experience

#### **Stakeholder Engagement and Customer Feedback**

- Engages employers, industry partners, education providers, and community stakeholders through ongoing collaboration and sector partnerships
- Collects feedback through formal and informal mechanisms, including surveys and stakeholder engagement activities
- Uses feedback to identify service gaps, improve responsiveness, and inform system improvements

### **(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).

#### **Overview – State Strategy**

Alaska's state workforce strategy outlines how the State will achieve the strategic vision and goals described in Section II(b) by implementing coordinated, data-informed approaches aligned with the economic, workforce, and workforce system analysis presented in Section II(a). The strategy reflects Alaska's unique geographic, demographic, and economic conditions. It is guided by Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF), which provides a unified framework for aligning workforce, education, and economic development efforts.

The State's strategy emphasizes sector-based approaches, career pathways, and integrated service delivery models that respond to employer demand while expanding access to workforce services for all Alaskans. These strategies are designed to strengthen workforce participation, support skill development and credential attainment, and ensure that workforce investments are aligned with current and projected labor market needs.

Alaska's strategy also prioritizes equitable access to workforce services, particularly for individuals with barriers to employment identified in Section II(a), including individuals in rural and remote communities, Alaska Native populations, individuals with disabilities, youth, and other underserved populations. Through flexible service delivery models, partnerships, and targeted interventions, the State works to reduce barriers and improve employment outcomes across diverse populations and regions.

These strategies are implemented through coordinated efforts across core programs and partner programs, supported by shared planning, data-driven decision-making, and ongoing system evaluation to ensure continuous improvement and responsiveness to changing workforce and economic conditions.

#### **Key Elements – State Strategy**

- Sector-based strategies aligned with in-demand industries and occupations
- Career pathways and work-based learning, including Registered Apprenticeship
- Integrated service delivery and co-enrollment across workforce programs
- Targeted strategies to serve individuals with barriers to employment
- Expansion of access to workforce services in rural and remote communities
- Alignment of workforce, education, and economic development systems
- Data-driven decision-making, performance accountability, and continuous improvement

#### **Strategic Approach**

Alaska implements its workforce strategy through a set of coordinated approaches that collectively support workforce preparation, employer engagement, and system alignment.

#### **Sector-Based Strategies and Industry Engagement**

Alaska prioritizes sector-based strategies that align workforce development activities with in-demand industries and occupations identified through labor market analysis. Employers and industry partners play a central role in identifying workforce needs, informing training investments, and supporting workforce development initiatives. Sector partnerships are used to align training programs with industry demand, support priority sectors such as health care, construction, transportation, energy, maritime, and public services, and respond to emerging workforce needs, including those associated with large-scale infrastructure projects.

### **Career Pathways and Work-Based Learning**

The State promotes career pathways that connect education, training, and employment through structured, progressive opportunities for skill development and advancement. These pathways incorporate secondary and postsecondary education, occupational training, and workforce services aligned with employer demand.

Work-based learning strategies, including Registered Apprenticeship, on-the-job training, internships, and other employment-connected models, provide individuals with hands-on experience and industry-recognized credentials. These approaches strengthen workforce readiness, support career advancement, and align skill development with real-world job requirements.

### **Integrated Service Delivery and Co-Enrollment**

Alaska's workforce system emphasizes integrated service delivery through coordination among core programs and partner programs. Co-enrollment practices support access to multiple services and funding streams, particularly for individuals with barriers to employment.

The Alaska Job Center Network serves as the primary access point for workforce services and supports coordinated intake, assessment, referrals, and case management. Shared systems, including AlaskaJobs, facilitate information sharing, service coordination, and performance tracking across programs, supporting a more efficient and customer-centered workforce system.

### **Strategies for Populations with Barriers to Employment**

Alaska implements targeted strategies to address the needs of populations with barriers to employment identified in Section II(a). These strategies include:

- Expanding access to workforce services through flexible and culturally responsive service delivery models
- Coordinating supportive services to address barriers such as transportation, housing, and access to training
- Supporting English language acquisition and employment services for immigrant and refugee populations
- Enhancing access to services for individuals with disabilities through coordinated program delivery
- Expanding youth workforce development opportunities, including career exploration, training, and work-based learning

These efforts are implemented in coordination with partner programs and community-based organizations to improve access, participation, and employment outcomes.

### **Regional and Rural Service Delivery Strategies**

Alaska's strategy reflects the need to deliver workforce services across a large and geographically dispersed state. In rural and remote communities, service delivery relies on a combination of virtual services, itinerant staff, and partnerships with local organizations, including Alaska Native entities, educational institutions, and community-based providers.

These approaches support access to workforce services while accounting for regional capacity, infrastructure limitations, and community needs. The State continues to expand technology-enabled service delivery while recognizing ongoing challenges related to broadband access and digital literacy.

### **System Alignment and Cross-Agency Coordination**

Alaska aligns workforce, education, and economic development activities through coordinated planning and shared strategic priorities. AWF serves as the primary framework for aligning initiatives across agencies while maintaining program-specific authority and accountability.

Coordination across programs, including WIOA core programs, Career and Technical Education under Perkins V, and other partner initiatives, supports career pathways, sector strategies, and efficient use of resources.

#### **Data-Driven Decision-Making and Continuous Improvement**

Alaska uses data, performance outcomes, and stakeholder feedback to guide workforce system decision-making and continuous improvement. Performance accountability measures under WIOA Section 116, labor market information, and program data are used to assess effectiveness, inform strategy adjustments, and support resource allocation decisions.

Evaluation activities, monitoring, and stakeholder engagement further support continuous learning and system improvement. These efforts ensure that workforce strategies remain responsive to economic conditions, employer needs, and participant outcomes.

(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 in the WIOA section 3(7) and includes registered apprenticeship. “In-demand industry sector or occupation” is defined at WIOA section 3(23).

#### **Overview – State Strategy Framework**

To advance the strategic vision and goals described in this State Plan, Alaska has established a coordinated set of statewide workforce strategies that guide implementation across programs, partners, and regions. These strategies reflect the priorities of Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF), including strengthening sector partnerships, expanding work-based learning opportunities, improving access to services, modernizing system operations, and aligning workforce investments with regional economic needs.

These strategies are informed by the economic conditions and workforce trends identified in Section II(a), including sustained demand across key industries, workforce shortages, gaps in industry-recognized credentials, regional disparities in workforce access, and barriers to employment faced by priority populations. In response,

Alaska’s approach emphasizes employer-driven strategies, career pathway development, and coordinated service delivery to strengthen workforce participation, improve skill alignment, and support long-term economic growth. Alaska’s strategies are implemented through coordinated service delivery models, integrated intake and referral processes, and cross-program alignment across the Alaska Job Center Network, as described in Section III and Section II(c)(2). These mechanisms strengthen connections among workforce programs, education and training providers, and employers, supporting a seamless, customer-centered workforce system.

The strategies described in this section provide the framework for coordinated workforce development activities across the State and guide implementation across WIOA core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs, and workforce system partners. These strategies support a responsive workforce system that improves access to employment and training opportunities, strengthens connections between employers and job seekers, and promotes long-term economic mobility for Alaska’s workforce.

These strategies also advance the goals outlined in Section II(b), including expanding access to career pathways, increasing credential attainment, strengthening employer engagement, and improving employment outcomes for individuals across Alaska. Particular emphasis is placed on improving access and outcomes for individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, Alaska Native populations, individuals with limited English proficiency, justice-involved individuals, youth and young adults, older workers, and individuals in rural and remote communities.

## **Key Elements – State Strategy Framework**

### **Alignment With Economic and Workforce Analysis**

- Aligns strategies with economic conditions, workforce trends, and labor market demand identified in Section II(a)
- Addresses workforce shortages, credential gaps, and regional disparities
- Responds to both existing and emerging industry demand

### **Sector Partnerships and Employer Engagement**

- Strengthens sector partnerships in high-demand industries
- Engages employers in workforce planning, program design, and training alignment
- Supports demand-driven workforce investments

### **Career Pathways and Work-Based Learning**

- Expands career pathways aligned with in-demand industries and occupations
- Promotes registered apprenticeship and work-based learning opportunities
- Supports credential attainment and career advancement

### **Access for Populations With Barriers to Employment**

- Improves access to workforce services for priority populations
- Expands service delivery in rural and remote communities
- Coordinates supportive services to reduce barriers to employment

### **System Integration and Coordinated Service Delivery**

- Implements integrated intake, referral, and case management processes
- Strengthens coordination across Alaska Job Center Network partners
- Aligns workforce, education, and economic development activities

### **Connection to Statewide Strategy and Implementation**

- Advances the strategic goals outlined in Section II(b)
- Aligns with operational strategies described in Section II(c)(2)
- Supports implementation across WIOA core and partner programs

### **Transition to Operational Alignment**

The alignment strategies described in Section II(c)(2) operationalize these statewide strategies through coordinated program implementation, integrated service delivery, and cross-program collaboration across Alaska's workforce system. These efforts ensure that workforce system partners collectively address the challenges identified in Section II(a) while advancing the State's strategic priorities described in Section II(b).

### **State Strategy 1: Sector Strategies and Career Pathways**

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) implement statewide sector strategies and career pathway approaches aligned with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) to support a coordinated, employer-driven workforce system. These strategies advance the employer and industry workforce goals described in Section II(b)(2)(B) and support alignment between workforce services, education and training systems, and Alaska's economic priorities.

Sector strategies focus on industries that are critical to Alaska's economy and workforce demand. Priority sectors include health care, construction, energy, maritime, transportation and logistics, hospitality and tourism, information technology and cybersecurity, education, and mining. These sector strategies strengthen employer-driven alignment across education, training, and workforce programs and align with federal guidance emphasizing

system coordination, skills-based pathways, and labor market responsiveness, including the principles outlined in the U.S. Department of Labor's America's Talent Strategy.

These sector strategies directly respond to findings in Section II(a), which identified sustained demand across key industries alongside persistent workforce shortages, gaps in industry-recognized credentials, and regional disparities in workforce access. By aligning workforce services and training investments with these high-demand sectors, Alaska strengthens its ability to meet employer needs while expanding access to career opportunities for job seekers.

Alaska will utilize major infrastructure workforce planning efforts, including the Alaska LNG Workforce Development Plan, as a core component of sector strategy implementation. This plan provides data-driven projections of workforce demand, identifies priority occupations within the construction and energy sectors, and highlights training capacity considerations necessary to meet potential large-scale infrastructure needs. These insights support proactive, scenario-based workforce planning and strengthen alignment between workforce system strategies and projected industry demand, ensuring that Alaska is positioned to respond to emerging economic opportunities.

Through these strategies, AWIB and DOLWD engage employers and cross-sector partners, including K-12 education, postsecondary institutions, regional training centers, economic development organizations, labor unions, and other state agencies, to assess workforce demand, identify skill gaps, and inform the alignment of education and training investments. Sector partnerships support the ongoing refinement of workforce strategies at both statewide and regional levels and help ensure that workforce activities remain responsive to changing labor market conditions and employer needs.

Sector strategies are informed by labor market information and analysis produced by DOLWD's Research and Analysis Section, as described in Section II(a)(1)(A). Labor market data are used to identify in-demand occupations, assess current and projected workforce needs, and guide the development of career pathways that align education and training with employer demand. Employers are encouraged to collaborate with workforce and education partners in designing career pathways that support entry, advancement, and credential attainment across multiple levels of skill and experience.

Career pathways are designed to span secondary and postsecondary education and training and may include college and university programs, technical training, Registered Apprenticeship, short-term credential programs, industry certifications, adult education, and other work-based learning opportunities. These pathways are implemented within existing program authority and available resources during the PY 2026-2027 State Plan modification period and are intended to support multiple points of entry and advancement for individuals seeking employment or career progression.

This approach improves access to workforce opportunities for individuals facing barriers to employment. It supports skills-based career mobility consistent with WIOA priorities, AWF objectives, and national workforce policy that emphasizes expanded access to high-quality career pathways. This includes addressing barriers related to geography, access to training, and credential attainment, particularly for individuals in rural and remote communities and priority populations identified in Section II(a).

The Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN) supports sector strategies through employer engagement, business services, and participant services aligned with priority industries. AJCN career specialists and case managers apply an industry-sector framework to connect job seekers with training opportunities and employment within identified career pathways. Employer relationships developed through sector partnerships and the one-stop system support coordinated recruitment, training, and placement activities.

AWIB maintains oversight of sector strategies through regular labor market updates, employer engagement, and workforce system coordination activities. These efforts support shared accountability, system alignment, and continuous improvement across workforce, education, and economic development partners, strengthening Alaska's ability to meet current and future workforce needs.

Sector strategies are implemented through coordinated employer engagement, training investments, and career services delivered through the Alaska Job Center Network, including staff-assisted referrals to training providers, work-based learning opportunities, and apprenticeship pathways aligned with identified industry needs.

### **State Strategy 2: Registered Apprenticeship & Work-Based Learning Expansion**

Alaska expands Registered Apprenticeship and other work-based learning opportunities as a core workforce strategy to strengthen employer-driven training pathways and support the development of a skilled workforce. This strategy aligns with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) framework and supports the workforce preparation and employer engagement goals described in Section II(b)(2).

This strategy directly responds to findings in Section II(a), which identified workforce shortages in key industries, gaps in industry-recognized credentials, and the need for increased access to work-based learning opportunities that align training with employer demand. Expanding apprenticeship and work-based learning opportunities supports both workforce entry and advancement while strengthening alignment between workforce skills and industry needs.

Registered Apprenticeship programs provide structured, employer-led training that combines paid employment with related technical instruction. These programs help individuals gain industry-recognized credentials while allowing employers to develop a skilled workforce aligned with labor market demand. Expanding apprenticeship opportunities is a priority for Alaska's workforce system because it supports both workforce preparation and employer workforce development needs.

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) partner with the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship (OA) to support the development and expansion of Registered Apprenticeship programs across the state. These efforts focus on engaging employers, industry associations, labor organizations, education providers, and workforce partners to establish new apprenticeship programs and strengthen existing ones.

Apprenticeship expansion is closely aligned with Alaska's sector strategies, ensuring that work-based learning opportunities support industries experiencing workforce demand. Priority industries include construction, health care, energy, maritime, transportation, information technology, and other sectors identified through labor market analysis and employer engagement. This alignment ensures that apprenticeship investments are targeted to occupations and industries where demand exceeds available workforce supply.

Work-based learning opportunities are designed to support a continuum of workforce development experiences, including internships, on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeship programs, and Registered Apprenticeship. These approaches allow individuals to gain practical experience while developing skills that align with employer needs and career pathway opportunities.

These work-based learning strategies also support individuals with barriers to employment, including youth, individuals in rural and remote communities, and other priority populations identified in Section II(a), by providing accessible entry points into career pathways and opportunities to gain experience and credentials aligned with in-demand occupations.

Alaska expands multi-employer apprenticeship sponsorship models to increase access to work-based learning opportunities across key industries. This approach increases apprenticeship availability in industries and regions where individual employers may not have the capacity to sponsor programs on their own and supports broader participation across Alaska's diverse economic regions. These models are supported through coordination with industry partners, training providers, and the Alaska Job Center Network.

The Alaska Vocational Technical Center (AVTEC), a division of DOLWD, participates in apprenticeship expansion by serving as a statewide multi-employer apprenticeship sponsor and supporting related technical instruction for certain programs. These efforts help expand access to apprenticeship opportunities across multiple industries and geographic regions and support the development of training capacity aligned with projected workforce demand. Partnerships with the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) support alignment between secondary education, Career and Technical Education (CTE), and apprenticeship pathways. These partnerships help strengthen school-to-career transitions and expand opportunities for youth to enter apprenticeship programs following graduation.

Apprenticeship and work-based learning activities are also supported through federal funding initiatives, including the State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) grant, which promotes collaboration between education, workforce, and employer partners to strengthen work-based learning opportunities and apprenticeship pipelines. These initiatives focus on expanding access to apprenticeship pathways and supporting employer engagement across Alaska's regions.

The Alaska Job Center Network supports apprenticeship expansion by connecting job seekers with apprenticeship opportunities, assisting employers with workforce recruitment, and coordinating workforce services that support participation in apprenticeship programs. These efforts include staff-assisted referrals, career counseling, and coordination with training providers to support successful entry into and completion of apprenticeship programs.

Through these coordinated strategies, Alaska continues to expand apprenticeship and work-based learning opportunities that strengthen employer partnerships, support workforce preparation, and provide pathways to high-quality employment across priority industries. Apprenticeship opportunities are supported through coordinated referrals, employer engagement activities, and integration with Alaska Job Center services to connect participants to career pathways aligned with industry demand.

### **State Strategy 3: Alaska Job Center (AJC) Modernization**

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), in coordination with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), strengthens and modernizes the Alaska Job Center (AJC) Network to improve the customer experience, expand equitable access to services, and enhance system integration in alignment with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF). Modernization efforts emphasize a customer-centered, technology-enabled, and partner-integrated One-Stop delivery system that supports consistent, responsive service for job seekers, employers, and communities across Alaska.

This strategy directly responds to findings in Section II(a), including geographic barriers to service access, regional disparities in workforce participation, system navigation challenges, and the need for improved alignment across workforce programs. AJC modernization focuses on reducing fragmentation, improving access, and strengthening service coordination to meet better the needs of job seekers, employers, and priority populations.

These modernization efforts are operationalized through the service delivery framework described in Section III, including integrated intake, coordinated referrals, staff-assisted career services, and hybrid service delivery models.

### **Customer Experience and Service Delivery Redesign**

AJC modernization emphasizes coordinated intake and referral practices that reduce duplication, improve navigation across programs, and support timely access to appropriate services. DOLWD continues to review and refine AJC business processes, intake practices, and service sequencing to improve consistency and efficiency across locations.

These improvements support stronger alignment across WIOA core programs and partner programs and reinforce co-enrollment strategies that improve service outcomes and resource utilization.

Services are designed to prioritize WIOA priority populations and support access to career pathways leading to employment, re-employment, or postsecondary education and training. These efforts support consistent service delivery across regions while allowing flexibility to respond to local workforce conditions and customer needs.

#### **Digital Access, Virtual Services, and Rural Reach**

To address Alaska's geographic challenges and support equitable access, DOLWD continues to expand and refine virtual service delivery and digital access options. AJCs provide services through in-person, virtual, and hybrid models, enabling job seekers and employers, particularly in rural and remote communities, to access workforce services without traveling to physical locations.

These approaches directly address geographic and infrastructure-related barriers identified in Section II(a), including transportation limitations and access to services in remote areas.

These approaches build on lessons learned during the pandemic and ensure continuity of access where physical presence is limited, reducing geographic, transportation, and cost barriers.

#### **Workforce Preparation and Youth Engagement**

DOLWD collaborates with the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) to implement the Career Guide program, which supports students in making informed education and career decisions aligned with regional workforce needs, with an emphasis on rural communities.

Career Guides are placed within Alaska Job Centers and partner locations statewide and work directly with local school districts to provide services to high school students, including career exploration, work-based learning, internships, and job placements. These activities allow students to gain practical, real-world experience and strengthen alignment between secondary education, workforce services, and postsecondary pathways.

These efforts support early career pathway engagement and align with workforce preparation strategies described in Section II(b), including strengthening transitions from education to employment and expanding work-based learning opportunities.

#### **Employer Engagement and Innovative Talent Pipelines**

The Alaska Job Center Network strengthens employer engagement by aligning workforce services with employers' hiring needs and expanding access to innovative talent pipelines. Employer services emphasize customized recruitment assistance, sector-informed hiring strategies, and work-based learning partnerships that connect job seekers to in-demand occupations across industries and regions.

These efforts align with sector strategies described in State Strategy 1 and support the expansion of work-based learning opportunities described in State Strategy 2, ensuring that employer engagement activities are directly connected to training pathways and workforce supply strategies.

As part of this approach, DOLWD serves as a Department of Defense SkillBridge Industry Partner, providing transitioning service members with opportunities to gain civilian work experience through training, apprenticeships, or internships before separation from active duty. DOLWD currently offers approved SkillBridge

opportunities, including Employment Services Technician and Wage and Hour Investigator positions, and has successfully hosted participants from multiple military branches.

In addition, DOLWD supports employers in establishing their own SkillBridge programs, expanding access to a highly skilled talent pool, and strengthening workforce recruitment and retention strategies. Participation in SkillBridge activities is implemented consistently with program capacity and does not alter existing WIOA service eligibility, funding structures, or performance accountability.

#### **Partner Coordination and Staff Capacity**

DOLWD strengthens One-Stop partner coordination through ongoing cross-training and collaboration, including regional One-Stop Training Academies. These academies bring together required and non-required partners to share information, clarify roles, improve referral practices, and enhance coordination in serving shared customers.

These efforts support improved system alignment and reduce fragmentation identified in Section II(a) by strengthening communication, shared understanding of roles, and coordinated service delivery across programs.

AJC modernization also includes continued investment in staff training and professional development to support consistent service delivery, effective use of technology, and improved customer engagement. These efforts strengthen staff capacity and reinforce shared understanding of partner roles, referral pathways, and service integration across programs.

#### **Technology Integration and System Alignment**

AJC modernization efforts are coordinated with broader workforce technology initiatives, including the AlaskaJobs labor exchange and case management system, as well as grant and fiscal systems that support program administration. These efforts improve data quality, streamline reporting, and strengthen alignment across workforce programs within existing system architectures, consistent with AWF goals and TEGL 05-25 modernization expectations.

These technology investments support data-informed decision-making, improve service tracking, and enhance the ability to connect participants to in-demand occupations and career pathways identified in Section II(a).

#### **Outcome**

Through these combined efforts, Alaska's AJC Network continues to evolve into a more accessible, integrated, and customer-focused workforce system that supports equitable access, employer responsiveness, and continuous improvement statewide while maintaining full compliance with WIOA statutory and regulatory requirements.

#### **State Strategy 4: Target Populations & Equity**

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), in coordination with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), emphasizes equitable access to workforce services for individuals and populations that face barriers to employment. Consistent with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), including the definition of individuals with barriers to employment in WIOA Section 3(24), Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF), and the U.S. Department of Labor's America's Talent Strategy, this strategy supports coordinated, customer-centered approaches to improve access to career pathways, education and training, and employment outcomes across Alaska's diverse communities.

This strategy directly responds to disparities identified in Section II(a), including differences in labor force participation, educational attainment, access to training, and employment outcomes across populations and regions. These disparities reflect structural barriers, including geographic isolation, limited access to services, and gaps in credential attainment, which this strategy seeks to address through coordinated, system-wide approaches.

Services for target populations are delivered through the Alaska Job Center Network and coordinated workforce partners to support alignment across programs, reduce barriers to participation, and improve connections to employment and training. Equity-focused strategies emphasize improving access, reducing disparities, and supporting employment outcomes that advance economic self-sufficiency while maintaining program integrity and accountability.

#### **Prioritizing Services for Populations Facing Barriers to Employment**

The State of Alaska emphasizes equitable access to workforce services for individuals and populations facing employment barriers, consistent with WIOA requirements and Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF). This strategy is informed by disparities identified in Section II(a)(1)(B). It supports the goals described in Section II(b), including improving employment outcomes, expanding access to career pathways, and increasing credential attainment.

WIOA-funded programs emphasize outreach, coordinated service delivery, and alignment across partners to support access to career services, education and training, supportive services, work-based learning opportunities, job placement, and follow-up services, as appropriate and within available resources. These efforts are supported through collaboration with regional workforce partners and community-based organizations to improve reach and responsiveness across Alaska's diverse regions while supporting employer demand for a skilled and inclusive workforce.

These efforts are aligned with sector strategies and career pathway approaches described in State Strategy 1 and support participation in work-based learning opportunities described in State Strategy 2, ensuring that individuals facing barriers to employment have access to training and employment pathways aligned with in-demand occupations.

#### **Priority Populations Served**

Priority populations served through this strategy include, but are not limited to:

- Youth and young adults, including out-of-school youth and at-risk youth
- Alaska Native and American Indian populations
- Individuals with disabilities
- Rural and remote residents
- Older workers
- Veterans and transitioning service members
- Individuals with low incomes
- Justice-involved individuals and returning citizens
- Individuals experiencing homelessness

Note: Some populations are addressed within program-specific sections (e.g., youth strategies in Section II(c) and disability strategies in DVR-led content). This section highlights equity considerations that apply across the workforce development system.

#### **Services for Individuals with Disabilities**

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) serves as the lead agency for vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities. It works closely with Alaska's workforce partners to support access to employment, education, and training opportunities.

DVR collaborates with the Alaska Job Center Network and WIOA core program partners to improve service coordination, strengthen referral pathways, and support individuals with disabilities in accessing career services, training opportunities, and employment pathways aligned with labor market demand. DVR provides training and technical assistance to Alaska Job Center staff and partner organizations to increase awareness of available

services, improve referrals, and strengthen the workforce system's capacity to serve individuals with disabilities effectively.

DVR supports informed career decision-making for individuals with disabilities through vocational evaluation services, labor market information, and individualized employment planning. These services help individuals explore career pathways aligned with their interests and abilities, as well as in-demand occupations identified in Section II(a), including opportunities in work-based learning and Registered Apprenticeship programs. Alaska supports an Employment First approach, which identifies competitive integrated employment as the preferred outcome for individuals with disabilities. To support this goal, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development collaborates with the Alaska Department of Health Division of Senior and Disabilities Services and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) to coordinate services, improve transition supports, and expand employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

DVR also works with partner agencies to support access to benefits counseling and work incentive information. Tools such as Disability Benefits 101 help individuals understand how employment may affect Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and other public benefits. DVR coordinates with Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) projects and certified Community Work Incentive Counselors to ensure individuals receive accurate information that supports informed decisions about employment and career advancement.

DVR collaborates closely with education partners to support successful transitions from school to postsecondary education, training, and employment. Through Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), DVR provides services to students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. These services include job exploration counseling, work-based learning opportunities, counseling on postsecondary education and training options, workplace readiness training, and self-advocacy instruction.

DVR and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development co-chair the Alaska Interagency Transition Council, a statewide partnership that brings together education, workforce, Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation programs, and other stakeholders to improve coordination of transition services and strengthen career pathways for youth with disabilities.

Through these collaborative efforts, Alaska's workforce system ensures that individuals with disabilities have equitable access to workforce services, career pathways, and employment opportunities, while maintaining clear program roles and responsibilities consistent with WIOA and Vocational Rehabilitation program requirements.

#### **Services for Alaska Native and American Indian Populations**

DOLWD collaborates with Alaska Native organizations and workforce partners to expand access to workforce services that reflect the cultural, geographic, and regional needs of Alaska Native communities. These efforts emphasize coordination with education, training, and employment programs aligned with local labor market demand and community priorities and support culturally responsive pathways to employment and advancement.

These activities are implemented through coordination and service alignment within existing program authorities and available resources. They are intended to complement, not duplicate, services provided through Alaska Native organizations and other partners.

#### **Services for Justice-Involved Individuals and Returning Citizens**

DOLWD collaborates with state and local partners to support justice-involved individuals and returning citizens in accessing workforce services that promote successful reentry and employment outcomes. These efforts emphasize coordination with correctional and community-based partners to connect individuals to career services, training opportunities, and employment pathways that support long-term economic stability.

Workforce services for returning citizens focus on addressing barriers to employment, supporting skill development, and facilitating connections with employers willing to hire individuals with criminal justice involvement. These activities are implemented through coordination and referral mechanisms within existing WIOA authorities and available resources and do not create new program requirements or shared performance accountability beyond WIOA requirements.

#### **Services for Immigrants, Refugees, and English Language Learners**

DOLWD collaborates with community-based organizations, service providers, and workforce partners to help immigrants, refugees, and English language learners access workforce services that support employability and economic self-sufficiency. These efforts emphasize coordination with education and training providers, English language acquisition services, credential evaluation and navigation, and employment services, supporting skills-based, demand-aligned pathways into the labor market while maintaining program integrity.

As the State coordinates workforce alignment with Refugee Support Services (RSS), DOLWD, and AWIB work with RSS service providers on employment-related referrals, workforce information sharing, and service alignment consistent with each program's statutory authority and funding source. This coordination does not alter WIOA eligibility, service delivery requirements, or performance accountability and is intended to support access to employment pathways for eligible populations.

Coordination through DOLWD's Office of Citizenship Assistance supports lawful immigrants and refugees by facilitating access to workforce information, referrals, and employment-related resources. These efforts support alignment between RSS-funded services and WIOA-funded workforce programs and improve access to employment and training opportunities for eligible individuals, consistent with WIOA requirements and AWF equity objectives.

#### **Services for Veterans and Transitioning Service Members**

DOLWD works with military installations, veteran-serving organizations, and workforce partners to support veterans and transitioning service members in accessing employment and training opportunities aligned with civilian career pathways. These efforts emphasize coordination across workforce programs to support career exploration, skill translation, and access to in-demand occupations, including through employer partnerships. These activities are implemented consistently with veterans' priority of service requirements and within existing program authorities and available resources.

#### **Services for Rural and Remote Residents**

Alaska's geographic diversity presents unique challenges for workforce participation in rural and remote communities. DOLWD focuses on improving access to workforce services for rural residents through flexible service delivery models, regional partnerships, and coordination with education and training providers, including virtual and partner-based approaches where appropriate.

These strategies directly align with AJC modernization efforts described in State Strategy 3. They are implemented within available resources to improve access and service continuity while accounting for constraints related to infrastructure, staffing, and connectivity.

#### **Equity-Driven Coordination and Continuous Improvement**

Across all target populations, DOLWD integrates equity considerations into workforce planning, service delivery, and continuous improvement efforts. Data-informed analysis, partner coordination, and feedback mechanisms are used to identify disparities, improve access, and strengthen outcomes for individuals facing employment barriers.

These efforts support Alaska’s broader workforce vision by ensuring that workforce development activities are inclusive, responsive, and aligned with AWF priorities while preserving distinct statutory roles, funding responsibilities, and program accountability consistent with WIOA requirements.

#### **State Strategy 5: Partner Collaboration & Resource Alignment**

The State of Alaska advances workforce outcomes through coordinated planning and resource alignment across education, workforce, economic development, and human services systems, consistent with statutory authorities and guided by Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF). DOLWD and AWIB implement coordination mechanisms, including joint planning processes, shared performance review practices, and coordinated policy development, to align workforce, education, and partner resources.

Under the governance of the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) works with WIOA core programs and required and non-required partners to coordinate planning, align investments, and improve service delivery in support of AWF priorities and the workforce and economic conditions described in Section II(a). These coordination efforts are implemented through shared planning processes, integrated service delivery through the Alaska Job Center Network, and coordinated use of systems such as AlaskaJobs to support referrals, co-enrollment, and service alignment. Additional information on one-stop partners and system roles is provided in Appendix L – One-Stop Partners and System Resources.

These efforts directly support the strategic goals outlined in Section II(b), including improving access to workforce services, strengthening alignment between education and employment, increasing credential attainment, and supporting employment outcomes across Alaska’s regions and populations. Coordination strategies described in this section are further operationalized through alignment activities outlined in Section II(c)(2) and service delivery models described in Section III.

#### **Workforce System Partnership Framework**

This collaboration occurs within the workforce system partnership framework established under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which promotes coordinated service delivery through the one-stop delivery system and encourages alignment across education, workforce, and economic development programs.

Partnerships are structured to support shared workforce objectives, including:

- Improving access to services across populations and regions
- Aligning education and training with employer demand in in-demand industries and occupations
- Supporting career pathway development and work-based learning opportunities
- Promoting efficient and effective use of public resources

Collaboration occurs at both the statewide and regional levels, reflecting Alaska’s geographic diversity, varying labor market conditions, and the service access challenges identified in Section II(a).

#### **Cross-Agency Coordination and Resource Alignment**

DOLWD coordinates with state agencies responsible for education, economic development, health, corrections, and social services to align workforce strategies and leverage complementary funding streams. These coordination efforts support a comprehensive approach to addressing workforce needs and barriers to employment identified in Section II(a), particularly for populations facing employment challenges.

This coordination supports:

- Coordinated investment in education and training aligned with priority industries and sector strategies described in State Strategy 1

- Shared use of labor market information and performance data to inform planning, evaluation, and continuous improvement
- Streamlined service delivery through coordinated intake, referral, and case management practices, where appropriate
- Alignment of workforce, education, and supportive service systems to improve access and outcomes for individuals with barriers to employment, as described in State Strategy 4

These efforts support system integration while maintaining program-specific statutory and fiscal requirements. All coordination and resource alignment activities are conducted within existing statutory authorities and do not create joint funding obligations or shared performance accountability across programs.

#### **Tribal Partnerships and Alaska Native Organizations**

Alaska Native organizations and Tribal entities are essential partners in workforce development, particularly in rural and remote communities where access to services may be limited. These partnerships directly respond to regional and population-specific disparities identified in Section II(a).

Partnerships with Alaska Native regional employment and training organizations support:

- Culturally responsive service delivery
- Regional workforce planning aligned with local economic conditions
- Access to education, training, and employment opportunities for Alaska Native and American Indian populations

Many Tribal partners administer workforce and employment programs under federal authorities and play a critical role in delivering workforce services across Alaska's diverse regions. Coordination between state and Tribal workforce partners supports alignment of services, sharing of labor market information, and improved access to employment and training opportunities.

These partnerships ensure workforce strategies are locally informed, culturally appropriate, and aligned with regional economic priorities while supporting equitable access and outcomes consistent with State Strategy 4.

#### **Regional Collaboratives and Sector-Based Partnerships**

DOLWD and AWIB support employer-informed regional workforce collaboratives, sector partnerships, and employer-led initiatives that bring together employers, education providers, training institutions, labor organizations, economic development entities, and workforce partners.

These collaborations:

- Inform regional workforce priorities and training needs based on labor market trends identified in Section II(a)
- Support sector-based strategies and career pathway development described in State Strategy 1
- Align outreach, training investments, and employer engagement activities across partners
- Support expansion of work-based learning opportunities, including Registered Apprenticeship, as described in State Strategy 2

Regional coordination allows workforce strategies to remain responsive to local labor market conditions while supporting alignment with statewide workforce goals and strategic priorities outlined in Section II(b).

### **Representative Partner Network**

DOLWD collaborates with a broad network of partners across industries and systems to support coordinated service delivery and workforce development outcomes. Representative partners include:

- Alaska AFL-CIO and joint-administered training trusts
- Alaska Apprenticeship Training Coordinators Association and registered apprenticeship sponsors
- Alaska Association for Career and Technical Education
- Alaska Health Workforce Coalition and Alaska Primary Care Association
- Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
- Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and Alaska Youth Works programs
- Alaska Native organizations, the Alaska Native Coalition for Employment and Training, and Alaska Native regional employment and training entities
- Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
- Alaska Postsecondary Access and Completion Network and the Alaska Performance Scholarship Program
- Alaska Regional Economic Development Organizations
- Alaska Resource Education and Alaska Safety Alliance
- State agencies, including the Departments of Corrections, Health, Family and Community Services, Administration, Commerce, Community, Economic Development, and Education and Early Development
- Alaska Vocational Technical Center, regional training centers, and training providers such as Northern Industrial Training and Fairbanks Pipeline Training Center
- Alaska Works Partnership, Inc. and Alaska Literacy Programs
- Office of Citizenship Assistance – Refugee Assistance and Immigration Services
- Governor’s Council on Disabilities and Special Education
- University of Alaska system, including the Statewide Office for Workforce Development and community campuses
- U.S. Department of Labor Alaska Office of Apprenticeship
- Military transition and workforce partners, including Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Eielson Air Force Base, and Fort Wainwright

This network reflects the State’s comprehensive approach to workforce development and supports alignment across education, training, employment, and supportive services.

### **Reducing Duplication and Strengthening System Integration**

Partner collaboration under this strategy emphasizes improving coordination, reducing unnecessary duplication across training, outreach, and service delivery, and strengthening system integration.

These efforts include:

- Coordinating planning across programs and funding sources
- Leveraging shared infrastructure such as the Alaska Job Center Network, as described in State Strategy 3
- Supporting cross-training of staff and strengthening understanding of partner roles and responsibilities
- Promoting awareness of performance information and accountability expectations while preserving program-specific requirements
- Improving coordination of referrals, co-enrollment, and service sequencing across programs

These efforts support a more integrated workforce system while maintaining the distinct statutory roles, funding authorities, and accountability structures of participating programs.

### **Continuous Coordination and System Improvement**

Through ongoing collaboration across state agencies, Tribal partners, regional organizations, employers, and workforce stakeholders, Alaska continues to strengthen coordination across the workforce system.

These efforts support Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) priorities by:

- Improving access to services across populations and regions
- Aligning workforce investments with employer demand and economic conditions
- Strengthening career pathway systems and work-based learning opportunities
- Supporting data-informed decision-making and continuous improvement

Together, these strategies foster a responsive, coordinated statewide workforce development system that advances employment outcomes, improves access to opportunity, and supports long-term economic mobility for Alaska's workforce.

#### **State Strategy 6: Internal Process Streamlining & Technology Integration**

The State of Alaska continues to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of its workforce system by streamlining internal processes and integrating technology across programs and partners. In alignment with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF), this strategy focuses on reducing administrative burden, improving coordination and data use, and supporting consistent, customer-centered service delivery statewide.

Consistent with AWF and the U.S. Department of Labor's America's Talent Strategy, Alaska's approach to technology, data, and system modernization emphasizes improving access, reducing fragmentation, and using data to strengthen workforce outcomes for both job seekers and employers. These efforts directly address the workforce challenges identified in Section II(a), including geographic barriers, limited access to services, and the need for improved coordination across programs and systems.

Modernization efforts are designed to support equitable service delivery, informed decision-making, and efficient system coordination across Alaska's geographically diverse regions, while advancing the strategic goals outlined in Section II(b), including improved service access, stronger performance outcomes, and increased system effectiveness.

#### **Governance, Process Alignment, and Program Integration**

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), in coordination with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), provides oversight of workforce planning, policy development, and grant administration activities within its statutory authority. This governance structure supports coordinated planning, aligns workforce investments with statewide priorities, and promotes consistency across programs and regions.

As part of ongoing system alignment, DOLWD continues to review and refine internal workflows related to intake, eligibility determination, service sequencing, reporting, and fiscal oversight. Process mapping and workflow alignment efforts help reduce duplication, clarify roles, and improve efficiency for staff and partners while maintaining compliance with federal and state requirements.

These efforts align with integrated service delivery strategies described in State Strategy 3 and support improved coordination across programs as described in State Strategy 5.

#### **Grant Administration, Policy Alignment, and Accountability**

The AWIB grants unit administers key workforce programs, including WIOA Youth, apprenticeship initiatives, the State Training and Employment Program (STEP), Alaska Construction Academy (ACA), and the Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP). Centralized grant administration supports consistent application review, award decisions, monitoring, and technical assistance.

AWIB ensures integrity in the allocation and use of public resources through standardized solicitation processes, due diligence reviews, independent board recommendations, and clear appeal procedures. Ongoing policy review

supports alignment with WIOA requirements, AWF priorities, and evolving federal guidance while allowing flexibility to respond to regional workforce needs.

Within the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS) oversees the day-to-day operations of WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and other employment and training services delivered through the Alaska Job Center Network. DETS is responsible for program implementation, staff supervision, and service delivery in accordance with federal requirements and state policy.

This operational role is carried out in coordination with AWIB governance and DOLWD leadership, supporting a clear separation of policy development, grant administration, and service delivery while strengthening accountability and consistency across the workforce system.

### **Technology Integration and Data Capacity**

Technology integration is a core component of Alaska's workforce system modernization. DOLWD continues to leverage and enhance the AlaskaJobs system as the primary platform for labor exchange, case management, and reporting across WIOA Titles I, II, and III, as well as other applicable workforce programs.

Ongoing system improvements support:

- More consistent data collection across programs
- Shared intake functionality, where appropriate
- Improved coordination of referrals, co-enrollment, and service tracking
- Enhanced reporting capabilities to support performance accountability

In addition, DOLWD continues to assess opportunities to strengthen data alignment and limited interoperability across workforce, education, and partner systems where feasible and consistent with privacy, security, and program-specific requirements.

These efforts support:

- Standardized reporting and improved data quality
- Expanded use of labor market information to inform planning and service delivery
- Data-informed decision-making to guide performance management and continuous improvement

These activities directly support improved system coordination and performance outcomes described in Section II(b) and reinforce coordination strategies described in State Strategy 5.

### **Interagency Coordination and Administrative Streamlining**

DOLWD collaborates with partner agencies to streamline administrative processes and reduce the burden on providers and participants. These efforts support improved system navigation and more efficient service delivery, particularly for individuals facing employment barriers identified in Section II(a).

Coordination includes:

- Collaboration with the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education to support Eligible Training Provider compliance, reporting, and oversight
- Partnership with the University of Alaska and the Department of Education and Early Development to align education and workforce strategies
- Support for dual and concurrent credit opportunities, career and technical education pathways, and connections to apprenticeship and work-based learning

These efforts strengthen alignment between education and workforce systems and support the development of career pathways, as described in State Strategy 1 and State Strategy 2.

#### **Outcomes and Continuous Improvement**

Through internal process streamlining and technology integration, Alaska's workforce system is better positioned to achieve the following outcomes:

- Improve the customer experience for job seekers and employers
- Enhance coordination and the appropriate use of data across programs and partners
- Reduce administrative burden while maintaining program accountability
- Support data-driven planning and continuous performance improvement
- Improve access to services across Alaska's regions, including rural and remote communities

These efforts reinforce a unified, modern workforce system that improves access, strengthens coordination, and aligns with Alaska's Workforce Future while supporting the workforce development goals outlined in Section II(b).

#### **State Strategy 7: Regional Economic Alignment**

Alaska strengthens regional economic alignment within its workforce development system by using labor market information, performance data, and targeted modernization efforts to inform planning, improve service delivery, and support continuous improvement across core programs and workforce partners.

These efforts directly respond to the economic conditions and workforce trends described in Section II(a), including Alaska's steady but uneven employment growth, ongoing workforce shortages in key industries, and significant regional variation in labor market conditions. Demand remains strong in sectors such as health care, construction, transportation, energy, and other regionally significant industries. At the same time, workforce participation, access to training, and employment opportunities vary across urban, rural, and remote communities.

This strategy supports the goals outlined in Section II(b) by aligning workforce investments with employer demand, improving employment outcomes, strengthening career pathway systems, and increasing system responsiveness across regions and populations.

#### **Data-Informed Workforce Planning and Sector Alignment**

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), in coordination with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), uses labor market information, employer engagement, and sector input to identify in-demand industries, occupations, and skills.

Labor market analysis in Section II(a) indicates continued demand across multiple sectors, including health care, construction, transportation, and energy, driven by replacement needs, infrastructure investment, and regional economic activity. These findings inform workforce investment priorities and guide sector partnership strategies across the state.

This data informs:

- Statewide and regional workforce priorities aligned with industry demand
- Sector partnership and employer engagement strategies described in State Strategy 1
- Development of career pathways and training investments aligned with in-demand occupations
- Expansion of work-based learning opportunities, including Registered Apprenticeship, as described in State Strategy 2

This approach ensures that workforce strategies remain aligned with current and projected labor market demand while supporting long-term economic development goals.

### **Use of Performance Data for Continuous Improvement**

Performance data from WIOA core programs and partner programs are used to monitor outcomes, identify trends, and inform system improvements.

As described in Section II(b), Alaska prioritizes improving employment outcomes, credential attainment, and measurable skill gains across programs. Performance data are used to assess progress toward these goals and identify areas where additional support or system adjustments are needed.

AWIB and DOLWD use performance information to:

- Support accountability across workforce programs
- Guide technical assistance and program improvement efforts
- Identify service gaps, including disparities in outcomes across populations and regions
- Inform planning and resource allocation decisions

This approach allows the State to balance statewide performance expectations with regional labor market realities, including smaller participant populations and variability in employment opportunities across Alaska's regions.

### **Modernization and Data System Integration**

As part of Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF), the State continues to advance modernization efforts that strengthen the use of technology, data, and service delivery practices across the workforce system.

These efforts support challenges identified in Section II(a), including geographic barriers, limited access to in-person services in rural communities, and the need for improved coordination across programs.

Modernization efforts focus on:

- Improving access to workforce services through virtual and hybrid service delivery models
- Strengthening case management, reporting, and data collection tools
- Enhancing data usability for frontline staff, partners, employers, and job seekers
- Supporting integrated service delivery through shared systems such as AlaskaJobs

DOLWD continues to explore opportunities to strengthen data coordination and appropriate information sharing across workforce, education, and economic development systems, consistent with privacy, security, and program requirements.

These efforts improve system visibility, reduce duplication, and support more coordinated, efficient service delivery statewide.

### **Regional Labor Market Analysis and Place-Based Strategies**

Regional labor market conditions vary significantly across Alaska, reflecting differences in population size, industry composition, infrastructure, and access to services. As described in Section II(a), urban centers experience more diverse employment opportunities and higher workforce participation rates. At the same time, rural and remote communities often face limited job availability, higher costs of service delivery, and reduced access to education and training.

In addition, workforce challenges such as lower educational attainment levels, limited access to credentialing opportunities, and barriers to employment disproportionately affect certain populations and regions.

DOLWD regularly publishes and disseminates regional employment, wage, industry, and occupational data to support:

- Local and regional workforce planning
- Employer engagement and sector strategy development
- Workforce investment decisions aligned with regional economic conditions
- Identification of emerging workforce trends and skill gaps

These efforts support place-based workforce strategies that reflect regional economic realities and ensure that workforce services are responsive to employer demand and community needs.

#### **System Alignment and Continuous Improvement**

This strategy supports Alaska's broader assessment and continuous improvement framework by linking labor market information and program performance data to workforce planning and system improvement efforts.

Information gathered through:

- Labor market analysis
- Program performance outcomes
- Employer and partner engagement
- Stakeholder feedback

Is used to:

- Identify strengths and effective practices
- Address service gaps and disparities across regions and populations
- Inform adjustments to workforce strategies and investments
- Strengthen alignment across workforce, education, and economic development systems

By strengthening data-informed planning and aligning workforce investments with regional economic priorities, Alaska's workforce system supports job seekers, employers, and communities by connecting workforce development activities with evolving labor market demand and long-term economic opportunity.

#### **State Strategy 8: Youth Engagement & Access Pathways**

The State of Alaska prioritizes early and sustained engagement of youth and young adults to strengthen workforce attachment and support successful transitions into employment, education, and training. Aligned with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF), this strategy focuses on providing accessible entry points to workforce services, expanding access to career pathways, and coordinating education and workforce systems to meet the needs of Alaska's diverse youth populations.

This strategy directly addresses workforce challenges identified in Section II(a), including disparities in educational attainment, limited access to training and employment opportunities in rural and remote communities, and barriers to youth participation in the workforce. These efforts support the goals outlined in Section II(b), including improving employment outcomes, increasing credential attainment, and strengthening participation in career pathways.

#### **Immediate Access to Career Services and Entry Points**

WIOA Youth services emphasize timely access to career services for both in-school and out-of-school youth, including youth facing barriers to employment.

Entry points into services include:

- Outreach through schools and school districts
- Partnerships with community-based organizations
- Coordination with justice-involved and foster youth systems
- Access through the Alaska Job Center Network

Youth participants receive assessments, career exploration services, and individualized service planning to support informed decision-making and early connection to education, training, and employment opportunities.

### **Career Pathways, Work Experience, and Paid Learning**

Youth workforce strategies emphasize participation in career pathways that integrate education, training, and work-based learning aligned with in-demand occupations identified in Section II(a).

Services may include:

- Paid and unpaid work experience
- Internships and on-the-job training
- Work-based learning opportunities that build foundational employability skills and occupational awareness

Where available, youth may access:

- Pre-apprenticeship opportunities
- Youth apprenticeship models
- Apprenticeship-connected pathways that support entry into Registered Apprenticeship and postsecondary training

These approaches align with State Strategy 1 and State Strategy 2 and allow youth to gain hands-on experience while earning wages, developing occupational skills, and working toward industry-recognized credentials.

### **Strategies for Disconnected and At-Risk Youth**

The workforce system coordinates services for disconnected and at-risk youth, including:

- Out-of-school youth
- Youth exiting foster care
- Justice-involved youth
- Homeless and runaway youth
- Youth with disabilities
- Youth in rural and remote communities

These populations reflect disparities identified in Section II(a), including barriers related to access, education, and employment opportunities.

Services are designed to:

- Reduce barriers to participation through flexible service delivery approaches
- Provide supportive services that address transportation, housing, and other needs
- Coordinate with youth-serving partners and community organizations to improve engagement and outcomes

These efforts align with equity strategies described in State Strategy 4.

### **School-to-Work Partnerships and System Coordination**

Youth engagement strategies emphasize collaboration with K-12 education systems, postsecondary institutions, regional training centers, and employers to support effective school-to-work transitions.

Partnerships with education providers support:

- Career awareness and early exposure to workforce opportunities
- Work-based learning experiences aligned with industry demand
- Alignment of education pathways with workforce needs

These efforts include:

- Dual and concurrent credit opportunities, where appropriate
- Coordination with Career and Technical Education programs supported under Perkins V
- Alignment with sector strategies and career pathways described in State Strategy 1

All partnerships maintain distinct program accountability and funding authority while supporting coordinated service delivery.

### **Equity, Access, and Rural Reach**

Youth services prioritize equitable access for populations facing barriers to employment and education, particularly in rural and remote communities where service access may be limited.

Strategies include:

- Use of virtual and hybrid service delivery models to expand access
- Coordination with regional partners to improve service availability
- Flexible service approaches that account for geographic and infrastructure challenges

These efforts directly address access barriers identified in Section II(a) and align with modernization strategies described in State Strategy 6 and regional alignment efforts described in State Strategy 7.

### **Outcomes and Workforce Attachment**

Through these coordinated strategies, Alaska's workforce system seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- Support increased youth participation in career pathways aligned with in-demand occupations
- Improve employment, credential attainment, and education outcomes for youth participants
- Strengthen transitions from secondary education to postsecondary education, training, and employment
- Support long-term workforce attachment and economic mobility for young Alaskans

These outcomes directly support the strategic goals outlined in Section II(b) and contribute to a stronger workforce pipeline aligned with Alaska's economic needs.

### **Integrated Service Delivery and System Alignment**

Youth engagement strategies are implemented through coordinated service delivery across WIOA Title I Youth programs, the Alaska Job Center Network, education partners, and community-based organizations.

These efforts include:

- Referrals to education and training programs aligned with career pathways
- Access to work-based learning opportunities and apprenticeship pathways
- Coordination of supportive services based on participant needs
- Integration with broader workforce system strategies to support continuity of services

These coordinated approaches strengthen system alignment, improve service access, and support successful outcomes for youth participants across Alaska's workforce system.

(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 regarding weaknesses identified in section II(a)(2).

### **Overview – System Alignment and Integration**

Alaska aligns WIOA core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs, required and optional one-stop partners, and other workforce system resources to deliver fully integrated, customer-centered services consistent

with the State’s strategic vision and goals described in Section II(b). These alignment strategies support implementation of Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF) by improving service navigation, strengthening employer engagement, and expanding equitable access to workforce services across the state.

These strategies are designed to function as an integrated system, ensuring that workforce, education, and partner programs operate in a coordinated manner to improve access, service delivery, and outcomes. They directly address system challenges identified in Section II(a)(2), including service fragmentation, barriers to access in rural and remote communities, variability in service delivery capacity, and the need for stronger coordination across programs and partners.

Alaska operationalizes alignment through coordinated governance, integrated service delivery within the Alaska Job Center Network, formal agreements with one-stop partners, and collaborative partnerships with education, economic development, and human services programs. These efforts translate the statewide strategies described in Section II(c)(1) into coordinated program operations and service delivery practices across the workforce system.

Alignment is further strengthened through shared planning efforts tied to major economic development initiatives, including the Alaska LNG project. The Alaska LNG Workforce Development Plan provides a data-informed framework for projected workforce demand, priority occupations, and training capacity, supporting cross-program coordination and long-term workforce planning.

These alignment efforts support:

- Alignment of training resources with projected workforce demand
- Coordination of co-enrollment strategies across programs
- Development of integrated service delivery approaches that address both current and emerging workforce needs

Collectively, these strategies reduce system fragmentation, strengthen access to services across programs and regions, improve coordination of workforce and partner resources, and support consistent, customer-centered service delivery. All alignment activities are carried out while maintaining clear statutory roles, funding integrity, and program-specific accountability, consistent with WIOA requirements and the service delivery framework described in Section III.

Subsections II(c)(2)(A1)–(A5) further describe how Alaska coordinates programs and partners to improve access, address system weaknesses, strengthen cross-program alignment, and improve system efficiency and service delivery outcomes.

Alignment is operationalized through:

- Co-enrollment across WIOA core and partner programs
- Coordinated intake, assessment, and referral processes
- Shared data systems, including AlaskaJobs
- Staff-driven service coordination across programs and partners

These approaches ensure that individuals can access the full range of workforce services in a seamless, coordinated manner, while improving system efficiency and supporting better employment and training outcomes.

#### **Alignment Strategy 1: Core Program Integration Integrating WIOA Core Programs and SCSEP**

Alaska’s workforce system is administered through the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) and delivered through an integrated Alaska Job Center (AJC) Network that aligns WIOA Titles I–IV and the Combined Plan partner program, the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), to provide customer-centered services statewide. This integrated approach supports a modern, accessible, and equitable

workforce system that delivers consistent services regardless of geography, program entry point, or customer need.

This integration directly addresses system challenges identified in Section II(a)(2), including fragmented access to services, inconsistent service navigation, and barriers to service delivery in rural and remote communities. These efforts support the strategic goals outlined in Section II(b), including improving access to workforce services, strengthening employment outcomes, and increasing system effectiveness.

Integration occurs within the WIOA one-stop delivery system framework and is aligned with the statewide strategies described in Section II(c)(1). It is supported through a hybrid service model that includes Alaska's AJCs, Vocational Rehabilitation offices, and online service options, as well as coordinated business services through the AJC Business Connection. This approach strengthens access, reduces duplication, and improves service navigation for job seekers and employers.

#### **Governance, Management, and Cross-Program Coordination**

Core program integration is supported through DOLWD's organizational structure and the Alaska Workforce Investment Board's (AWIB) oversight role. Program leadership across Titles I-IV and SCSEP participates in regular coordination activities, including cross-program meetings, joint planning, shared training, and performance review processes.

These coordination mechanisms:

- Support alignment of policies, service strategies, and performance expectations across programs
- Reinforce consistent implementation across regions while allowing flexibility for local labor market conditions
- Strengthen coordination of services for priority populations identified in Section II(a)

AWF governance structures provide a framework for cross-program collaboration, ensuring that implementation aligns with statewide priorities, including sector strategies, apprenticeship expansion, youth engagement, and services for populations facing barriers to employment, as described in Section II(c)(1).

#### **Integrated Service Delivery through the Alaska Job Center Network**

Integrated service delivery is operationalized through the Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN), where staff from multiple core programs coordinate outreach, intake, assessment, referral, and service planning.

Service delivery includes:

- Individualized career services such as assessment, employment planning, and job search assistance
- Coordinated referrals to training, education, and supportive services
- Joint workshops and shared service delivery activities across programs
- Co-enrollment practices, where appropriate, to support access to multiple services

These integrated service delivery practices:

- Reduce duplication of services and administrative processes
- Improve customer navigation across programs
- Support more efficient and coordinated service delivery
- Address barriers to access identified in Section II(a)(2), particularly in rural and remote communities

#### **Technology-Enabled Integration and Geographic Reach**

Given Alaska's vast geography and diverse population, technology plays a central role in integrating core programs and expanding access to services.

Core programs leverage shared systems, including AlaskaJobs, where applicable, to support:

- Coordinated referrals and service tracking across programs
- Case management activities and documentation
- Performance reporting and data sharing, consistent with program requirements

Virtual and hybrid service delivery models:

- Expand access to services for individuals in communities without physical Alaska Job Center locations
- Reduce geographic, transportation, and cost barriers
- Support continuity of services across regions

To further extend reach, core programs coordinate with local infrastructure, including libraries, Tribal facilities, and community centers, to support access to internet-based workforce services. These partnerships help mitigate geographic barriers and support culturally responsive service delivery, consistent with strategies described in Section II(c)(1) and State Strategy 4.

#### **Community and Tribal Partnerships Supporting Integration**

Core program integration is strengthened through collaboration with Tribal organizations, Alaska Native entities, and community-based partners.

These partnerships support:

- Coordinated outreach and engagement across regions
- Shared or complementary service delivery approaches
- Access to supportive services, such as transportation and housing assistance, where appropriate

These collaborative relationships improve access to workforce services in rural and remote communities and ensure that workforce programs reflect local economic conditions and community priorities, consistent with regional strategies described in State Strategy 7.

#### **Outcomes and System Impact**

Through coordinated governance, integrated service delivery, and technology-enabled collaboration, Alaska's core programs and SCSEP operate as a coordinated workforce system that supports customer access, service navigation, and alignment with statewide workforce priorities, consistent with each program's statutory authority.

Collectively, these strategies support the following outcomes:

- Improve customer access and navigation across workforce programs
- Strengthen alignment with sector strategies and regional workforce priorities
- Expand access to workforce services in rural and remote communities
- Support equitable outcomes for priority populations
- Improve system efficiency and coordination across programs

These outcomes directly support the goals outlined in Section II(b) and reinforce Alaska's commitment to a coordinated, customer-centered workforce system aligned with Alaska's Workforce Future.

These integrated service delivery structures provide the foundation for addressing system challenges identified in Section II(a)(2) through targeted alignment strategies described in Section II(c)(2)(A2).

#### **Alignment Strategy 2: Addressing Weaknesses Identified in Section II(a)(2)**

### **Using Cross-Program Alignment to Address System Weaknesses**

This alignment strategy operationalizes the system challenges identified in Section II(a)(2) through coordinated cross-program responses designed to improve access, equity, and overall workforce system effectiveness statewide.

The State of Alaska uses alignment across WIOA core programs, the Combined Plan partner program (SCSEP), required one-stop partners, and other workforce and human services programs to address key system weaknesses identified in Section II(a)(2), including:

- Geographic barriers to service delivery
- The digital divide and limited access to technology
- Limited career pathway awareness and navigation challenges
- Employability skill gaps and personal barriers
- Limited access to training in rural and remote communities
- Barriers faced by individuals with limited English proficiency and foreign credentials

Consistent with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF), this strategy emphasizes coordinated, system-level responses rather than isolated program solutions. These responses are implemented through the integrated service delivery model described in Section III and aligned with the statewide strategies described in Section II(c)(1), particularly those related to access, work-based learning, and service to populations facing barriers.

### **Improving Access in Rural and Remote Communities**

As described in Section II(a)(2), Alaska's geography continues to limit access to workforce services, education, and training in rural and remote areas. To address these challenges, the workforce system aligns core programs and partners to expand access through coordinated use of technology, virtual service delivery, and locally based partnerships.

WIOA core programs coordinate service delivery through the Alaska Job Center Network using virtual and hybrid service models to supplement in-person services where physical locations are limited.

Aligned partnerships include:

- Local governments
- Tribal entities and Alaska Native organizations
- Libraries and community centers
- University of Alaska rural campuses

These coordinated approaches:

- Reduce barriers related to travel, transportation, and housing
- Expand consistent access to workforce services across regions
- Support culturally responsive and community-informed service delivery

This work aligns with State Strategy 4 (access and service delivery) and State Strategy 7 (regional strategies), reinforcing a geographically responsive workforce system.

### **Reducing the Digital Divide Through Coordinated Technology Strategies**

The digital divide identified in Section II(a)(2) remains a significant barrier to workforce participation, particularly in rural and remote communities.

To address this challenge, DOLWD aligns technology investments, service-delivery approaches, and partner resources to improve digital access and literacy across the workforce system.

Key system components include:

- AlaskaJobs as the primary labor exchange platform supporting case management and referrals across WIOA Titles I–III
- Mobile-friendly service access for individuals relying on smartphones as their primary internet source
- Virtual service delivery options to expand access where broadband or physical infrastructure is limited

Core programs and partners also coordinate:

- Digital navigation assistance
- Basic digital literacy skill development
- Support for accessing online workforce tools and services

These aligned efforts reduce technology-related barriers and improve participation in workforce services, directly addressing system weaknesses identified in Section II(a)(2).

#### **Expanding Career Pathway Awareness and Navigation**

Limited awareness of career pathways and training options was identified in Section II(a)(2) as a system challenge.

Alignment across core programs and partners supports:

- Consistent career pathway messaging across programs
- Shared use of labor market information
- Coordinated career navigation services

Career services emphasize:

- Sector strategies and in-demand occupations (aligned with State Strategy 1)
- Clear pathways from education and training to employment
- Exposure to work-based learning opportunities

Coordination with education partners, regional training centers, and employers supports:

- Career exploration and early exposure
- Work-based learning participation
- Informed decision-making for job seekers and students

These aligned strategies reduce fragmentation in career guidance and improve customer understanding of workforce opportunities.

#### **Addressing Employability Skills Gaps and Personal Barriers**

Employability skill gaps and personal barriers, including substance use, mental health challenges, housing instability, and limited support networks, were identified in Section II(a)(2) as factors affecting workforce participation and job retention.

Alaska addresses these challenges through coordinated service delivery and aligned referral strategies across workforce, education, and human services programs.

Aligned system responses include:

- Coordination of supportive services and wraparound resources
- Integration of work-based learning and transitional employment opportunities
- Use of individualized career planning across programs

These efforts:

- Strengthen foundational employability skills
- Support participant persistence in education, training, and employment
- Improve long-term workforce attachment

This approach aligns with State Strategy 2 (work-based learning) and State Strategy 8 (youth engagement and access pathways), particularly for populations facing barriers.

#### **Expanding Access to Training and Apprenticeship Opportunities in Remote Communities**

As identified in Section II(a)(2), access to training and apprenticeship opportunities remains limited in many remote areas due to instructor availability, employer density, and infrastructure constraints.

Through cross-program alignment, Alaska expands access by:

- Coordinating training investments across programs
- Leveraging distance-delivered and hybrid instruction where feasible
- Aligning work-based learning opportunities with regional capacity

Core programs coordinate with:

- Registered Apprenticeship sponsors
- Regional training centers
- Alaska Native organizations
- Employers and industry partners

These aligned strategies:

- Expand entry points into training and apprenticeship pathways
- Reduce duplication across programs
- Increase access while accounting for regional capacity constraints

This work directly supports State Strategy 2 (apprenticeship expansion) and strengthens connections to sector-based workforce development.

#### **Supporting Individuals with Limited English Proficiency and Foreign Credentials**

As identified in Section II(a)(2), individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) and those with foreign education or credentials face distinct barriers to workforce participation.

Alaska addresses these challenges by aligning adult education, workforce programs, and community partners.

Aligned efforts include:

- Integration of English language acquisition with workforce preparation
- Coordination of credential evaluation and recognition services
- Alignment of education, training, and supportive services

Coordination among WIOA Title II Adult Education, WIOA Title I programs, and partners supports:

- Access to career pathways for LEP individuals
- Improved recognition of prior education and work experience
- Increased economic self-sufficiency

These strategies maintain program integrity while improving equitable access to workforce opportunities.

### **System Impact and Connection to AWF**

Through cross-program alignment and coordinated responses to identified weaknesses, Alaska's workforce system strengthens access to services, improves workforce participation, and supports more equitable outcomes for job seekers and employers statewide.

These efforts:

- Address system fragmentation identified in Section II(a)(2)
- Align with statewide strategies described in Section II(c)(1)
- Support the strategic goals outlined in Section II(b)

Collectively, these strategies reinforce Alaska's Workforce Future priorities related to:

- System modernization
- Regional responsiveness
- Talent development and workforce participation

Alignment across the workforce, education, and partner programs ensures that Alaska's workforce system operates as a coordinated, responsive, and customer-centered system.

These coordinated responses are further operationalized through co-enrollment, unified intake, and shared service delivery processes described in Section II(c)(2)(A3).

### **Alignment Strategy 3: Co-Enrollment and Unified Intake**

Alaska advances alignment across core and partner programs by expanding co-enrollment practices and strengthening shared intake, assessment, and referral processes within the Alaska Job Center (AJC) Network. Unified intake and co-enrollment support workforce system modernization by simplifying customer navigation and enabling more timely, coordinated, and data-informed service delivery.

These strategies directly address system challenges identified in Section II(a)(2), including fragmented intake processes, inconsistent awareness of services, and barriers to navigating multiple programs. They also support the strategic goals described in Section II(b) and align with the statewide strategies in Section II(c)(1), particularly those focused on access, career pathways, and services to populations facing barriers.

### **Co-Enrollment Across Core and Partner Programs**

The State implements co-enrollment across WIOA Titles I-IV, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, and the Combined Plan partner program (Senior Community Service Employment Program, SCSEP), where appropriate and consistent with program eligibility, statutory requirements, and fiscal accountability.

Co-enrollment allows participants to access complementary services through coordinated service strategies rather than navigating programs independently.

Alaska Job Center staff:

- Initiate co-enrollment based on participant needs identified during intake and assessment
- Coordinate services across programs to ensure complementary, non-duplicative service delivery
- Support participants in accessing a broader range of services aligned with career goals

Current co-enrollment practices include, but are not limited to:

- WIOA Adult or Youth participants co-enrolled with Wagner-Peyser Employment Services
- WIOA Title I participants co-enrolled with Vocational Rehabilitation to support individuals with disabilities
- SCSEP participants receiving coordinated employment and supportive services through the AJC Network

Co-enrollment decisions are made on a case-by-case basis and are not required for participation in any program.

The State continues to refine policies, guidance, and standard operating procedures (SOPs) to promote consistent and appropriate co-enrollment practices across regions while preserving program integrity and ensuring compliance with federal and state requirements.

These efforts strengthen service coordination and improve outcomes for individuals with multiple barriers to employment, consistent with priorities identified in Section II(a).

#### **Unified Intake, Assessment, and Referral Processes**

Alaska is working to increase consistency in intake and assessment practices across the AJC Network to support earlier identification of multi-program eligibility and more effective service coordination.

Unified intake approaches are designed to:

- Efficiently capture core customer information
- Reduce duplicative data collection across programs
- Facilitate timely referrals to appropriate programs and partners

Unified intake and referral practices support:

- Improved customer experience and reduced administrative burden
- More consistent screening for priority populations and individuals with multiple barriers to employment
- Earlier identification of supportive services, education, and training needs

These efforts are particularly important in rural and remote communities, where access to multiple programs may be limited and streamlined navigation is essential to effective service delivery.

By improving intake consistency and referral coordination, Alaska reduces fragmentation in service delivery and strengthens alignment across programs, directly addressing challenges identified in Section II(a)(2).

#### **Systems and Data Support for Integrated Workflows**

AlaskaJobs serves as the State's primary labor exchange system and supports integrated service delivery across applicable programs.

System capabilities include:

- Shared intake fields and customer profiles
- Cross-program referrals and service tracking
- Visibility into participant engagement across applicable programs, consistent with confidentiality and data-sharing requirements

These capabilities support:

- Coordinated case management across programs
- More informed decisions regarding referrals, co-enrollment, and service sequencing
- Improved tracking of participant pathways and outcomes

Ongoing system enhancements and coordination with partner agencies support improved data quality, reporting, and analysis of customer pathways through the workforce system.

These efforts align with broader technology and data modernization strategies described in Section II(c)(1) and strengthen the State's ability to deliver integrated, data-informed services.

#### **Staff Training and Operational Alignment**

Effective co-enrollment and unified intake depend on staff capacity and shared understanding across programs. The State supports ongoing cross-training and technical assistance for AJC staff and partners to:

- Screen for eligibility across multiple programs
- Understand referral pathways and service coordination expectations
- Support coordinated case management and customer-centered service planning

Regional training and operational support:

- Reinforce consistent implementation statewide
- Allow flexibility to respond to local workforce conditions and partner capacity
- Strengthen alignment across programs and service providers

These efforts improve consistency in service delivery and ensure that staff are equipped to support integrated service models across the workforce system.

#### **Alignment with AWF and Identified System Needs**

Co-enrollment and unified intake strategies directly support Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by advancing a more integrated, customer-centered workforce system.

These alignment efforts address key weaknesses identified in Section II(a)(2), including:

- Fragmented intake and referral processes
- Limited awareness of available services
- Challenges coordinating services across programs and regions

Strengthening co-enrollment, shared intake, and integrated workflows:

- Improves system alignment and service coordination
- Expands access for priority populations
- Increases efficiency and responsiveness of workforce service delivery

These strategies support implementation of the sector strategies, career pathways, and targeted services described in Section II(c)(1), while improving coordinated access for individuals facing multiple barriers to employment.

These operational practices are supported by enabling systems, including technology, policy alignment, and shared resources, described in Section II(c)(2)(A4).

#### **Alignment Strategy 4: Technology, Policy, and Shared Resources**

Technology modernization, policy alignment, and shared resources provide the operational foundation for the alignment strategies described in Sections II(c)(2)(A1)–(A3). Alaska advances workforce system alignment through coordinated technology modernization, policy alignment, and strategic use of shared resources across WIOA core programs, the Combined Plan partner program (SCSEP), and one-stop partners within existing statutory authorities and available resources.

These enabling systems ensure that alignment strategies can be implemented consistently across Alaska's geographically diverse workforce system and directly support efforts to address system challenges identified in Section II(a)(2), including fragmented service delivery, inconsistent service navigation, and barriers to access in rural and remote communities.

#### **Technology Modernization Supporting Integrated Services**

Technology modernization is a foundational element of Alaska's workforce system alignment. Core programs leverage shared and interoperable systems to support coordinated service delivery, data-informed decision-making, and an improved customer experience.

AlaskaJobs serves as the State's primary labor exchange system and supports case management and service coordination for WIOA Titles I–III. AlaskaJobs also serves as the primary system for service tracking, referrals, and performance reporting across Titles I–III, supporting integrated service delivery and data-informed decision-making.

The system supports integrated workflows across applicable programs by enabling:

- Shared customer profiles and intake information
- Cross-program referrals and service tracking
- Access to labor market information, job matching services, and employer engagement tools

Other systems, including Adult Education data systems, Vocational Rehabilitation management information systems, and Unemployment Insurance and labor market information platforms, support complementary functions within their respective programs.

Alaska continues to pursue greater interoperability, data alignment, and consistent reporting practices across systems, consistent with the data modernization efforts described in Section III(b)(6).

Mobile-friendly access, virtual service delivery tools, and secure remote communication platforms:

- Expand access to workforce services in rural and remote communities
- Reduce barriers related to geography, transportation, and limited physical infrastructure
- Support continuity of services across programs and regions

These technology strategies directly support the integrated service delivery and co-enrollment approaches described in Sections II(c)(2)(A1)–(A3).

#### **Policy Alignment Supporting Integration and Accountability**

State policies and guidance provide the framework for consistent, integrated service delivery across the workforce system. Alaska aligns policies related to co-enrollment, shared intake, partner participation, and service coordination to support integrated customer services while maintaining statutory and fiscal accountability.

Key policy mechanisms supporting alignment include:

- Co-enrollment guidance and standard operating procedures that encourage coordinated service strategies across programs, consistent with eligibility and funding requirements
- Intake and assessment standards that promote early identification of multi-program eligibility and referral needs
- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs) that define one-stop partner roles, contributions, and methods of service delivery
- One-Stop Operator (OSO) agreements that support consistent service coordination, partner engagement, and performance accountability within the Alaska Job Center Network

These policies:

- Clarify expectations for program integration and partner participation
- Reinforce shared responsibility across programs and partners
- Support consistent implementation across regions while maintaining program integrity

Policies are reinforced through staff training, technical assistance, and ongoing monitoring to ensure consistent implementation statewide.

### **Shared Resources to Reduce Duplication and Improve Service Quality**

Alaska leverages shared resources across programs and partners to strengthen integration, improve efficiency, and enhance service quality.

Shared resources include infrastructure, staff capacity, training, and communications tools that support coordinated service delivery.

Examples of shared resource strategies include:

- Cross-trained staff who support multiple programs and facilitate coordinated intake, referrals, and service planning
- Joint training and professional development activities that promote shared understanding of program roles, eligibility, and service pathways
- Shared outreach materials and communications that provide consistent information to job seekers and employers across programs
- Co-located, itinerant, and virtual service models that maximize limited infrastructure and staffing resources, particularly in rural and remote communities

These shared approaches:

- Reduce duplication of services and administrative processes
- Strengthen coordination across programs and partners
- Improve the customer experience across the workforce system

These efforts directly support integrated service delivery and address fragmentation challenges identified in Section II(a)(2).

### **Connection to Alaska's Workforce Future and Identified System Challenges**

Technology modernization, policy alignment, and shared resource strategies directly support Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by advancing a more integrated, efficient, and customer-centered workforce system.

These efforts address key weaknesses identified in Section II(a)(2), including:

- Limited access to services in rural and remote areas
- Digital access and connectivity challenges
- Fragmented communication and inconsistent navigation across programs

Aligning technology, policies, and resources:

- Strengthens the operational foundation for integrated service delivery
- Supports implementation of sector strategies and career pathways described in Section II(c)(1)
- Reinforces co-enrollment and unified intake strategies described in Sections II(c)(2)(A2) and II(c)(2)(A3)

Operational details related to system implementation, policy execution, and data governance are further described in Section III(b).

These system-level enablers support not only internal program alignment but also coordination with external partners, as described in Section II(c)(2)(A5).

### **Alignment Strategy 5: Non-Combined Plan Partners**

Alaska strengthens workforce system integration by aligning required and optional one-stop partner programs that are not included in the Combined State Plan with WIOA core programs and Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF). Alignment with non-Combined Plan partners expands access to wraparound services that address housing,

income stability, reentry, language barriers, and behavioral health needs—critical components of equitable workforce participation.

These alignment efforts are implemented consistently with each program’s statutory authority and funding source and do not create shared funding obligations or performance accountability across programs.

Alignment with non-Combined Plan partners supports coordinated operation of workforce, education, human services, and economic support systems to improve access, reduce duplication, and support sustained employment outcomes. These efforts build upon the integration strategies described in Sections II(c)(2)(A1)–(A4) and extend system coordination beyond WIOA core and Combined Plan partner programs.

#### **Key Non-Combined Plan Partners Supporting Workforce Alignment**

Non-Combined Plan partners that are central to Alaska’s workforce strategy include, but are not limited to:

- Unemployment Insurance (UI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) and related work programs
- Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- Postsecondary education and training institutions, including the University of Alaska system and other training providers
- Human services agencies addressing housing, behavioral health, and family support needs
- Tribal organizations and Alaska Native entities
- Corrections and reentry partners
- Housing authorities and supportive service providers

These partners contribute services, expertise, and resources that complement workforce programs and help address barriers identified in Section II(a)(2), while maintaining distinct statutory roles and program accountability.

#### **Participation in the Alaska Job Center Network**

Non-Combined Plan partners participate in the workforce system through a variety of service delivery models aligned with Alaska Job Center Network operations, including:

- On-site or itinerant presence at Alaska Job Centers
- Virtual participation and referral coordination
- Regional or community-based service delivery aligned with AJC operations

Participation models are defined by:

- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)
- Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs)
- One-Stop Operator (OSO) Agreement

These agreements clarify partner roles, service contributions, and coordination methods while supporting consistent engagement across programs. They also allow flexibility to respond to regional capacity, geographic conditions, and community needs.

#### **Coordination, Referrals, and Shared Customers**

Alignment with non-Combined Plan partners supports coordinated service strategies for shared customers, particularly individuals with multiple barriers to employment identified in Section II(a).

Workforce programs coordinate referrals, information sharing, and service planning with partners to support access to:

- Income supports and employment transition assistance
- Education and training pathways aligned with career goals
- Supportive services such as housing, transportation, behavioral health, and reentry assistance

Where appropriate and consistent with program requirements, partners may support coordinated case management and co-enrollment strategies described in Section II(c)(2)(A3). Co-enrollment is supported through shared intake processes, coordinated case management, and cross-program referral protocols, with monitoring and guidance to ensure consistent implementation statewide.

These coordinated approaches:

- Improve service continuity across programs
- Reduce duplication of services
- Decrease the burden on customers navigating multiple systems

#### **Data Sharing and Information Alignment**

Non-Combined Plan partners contribute to system alignment by sharing relevant data, referrals, and labor market information in accordance with confidentiality and data-sharing requirements.

Workforce programs coordinate with partners to:

- Improve awareness of available services and eligibility pathways
- Support timely referrals and effective service sequencing
- Strengthen understanding of customer needs and outcomes across systems

These efforts complement the technology and data strategies described in Section II(c)(2)(A4) and support improved planning, coordination, and service delivery across the workforce system.

#### **Addressing System Weaknesses Through Partner Alignment**

Alignment with non-Combined Plan partners directly supports responses to weaknesses identified in Section II(a)(2), including:

- Substance use and behavioral health challenges affecting employability and job retention
- Housing instability and transportation barriers
- Limited digital access and technology literacy
- Language barriers and credential transfer challenges
- Reentry and reintegration needs for justice-involved individuals

By coordinating workforce services with human services, education, Tribal, and community-based partners, Alaska strengthens its ability to address these barriers through comprehensive, aligned service delivery strategies.

These efforts enhance workforce participation and support sustained employment outcomes, particularly for individuals facing multiple barriers to employment.

#### **Advancing Alaska's Workforce Future**

Alignment with non-Combined Plan partners advances Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by strengthening access, equity, system integration, and workforce readiness.

These partnerships:

- Extend the reach of the workforce system beyond core programs
- Support a unified approach to talent development
- Reflect Alaska's geographic, cultural, and economic diversity

Collectively, the alignment strategies described in Sections II(c)(2)(A1)–(A5) establish a comprehensive framework for an integrated, customer-centered workforce system in Alaska. By aligning programs, partners, policies, technology, and service delivery approaches, the State strengthens its ability to address workforce challenges, improve access to services, and support employment outcomes for individuals and employers across Alaska’s diverse regions.

These strategies ensure that Alaska’s workforce system operates as a coordinated and responsive network that reflects the State’s economic conditions, geographic realities, and commitment to equitable access and opportunity, consistent with Alaska’s Workforce Future and the requirements of WIOA.

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### III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

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

The strategies described in Section II(c), including integrated service delivery, co-enrollment, technology modernization, and partner alignment, are implemented through the operational structures, policies, and practices described in this section.

Alaska's workforce development system operates through a coordinated, integrated, and performance-driven service delivery model designed to ensure equitable access, regulatory compliance, and high-quality customer service across all programs and populations.

The Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN), in coordination with core programs and required partners, delivers workforce services through a unified system that aligns policy, operations, data systems, and partner collaboration. This structure supports consistent implementation of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requirements while addressing Alaska's unique geographic and economic conditions.

These operational elements directly support the alignment strategies described in Sections II(c)(2)(A1)–(A5), ensuring consistent statewide implementation across programs and partners. Across all components of Section III, Alaska emphasizes:

- Integrated service delivery across programs and partners
- Equitable access for all populations
- Data-informed decision-making and continuous improvement
- Consistent statewide implementation supported by policy, training, and monitoring

These policies and practices are reinforced through monitoring, performance reporting, and continuous improvement processes to ensure consistent implementation statewide. State performance goals and indicators are provided in Appendix C – Performance Goals. Continuous improvement processes use performance data, monitoring results, and partner feedback to refine service delivery and strengthen system outcomes.

Alaska's workforce system operates as an integrated, customer-centered network in which programs function as components of a unified service delivery system rather than as separate programs.

#### **(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., describe Board operational structures and decision-making processes to ensure such functions are carried out).

#### **Overview – State Board Functions**

As the Governor's designated State Workforce Development Board, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) provides statewide policy leadership, strategic direction, and oversight of Alaska's workforce development system under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Consistent with the responsibilities outlined in WIOA §101(d), AWIB establishes statewide workforce priorities, supports strategic planning, and oversees system performance, accountability, and coordination across programs and partners. These functions directly support implementation of the statewide strategies described in Section II(c).

Under the Alaska Workforce Future (AWF) governance framework, AWIB serves as the central convener and coordinating body, aligning workforce, education, and economic development strategies to support a unified, accessible, and results-driven workforce system. Workforce services are delivered through the Alaska Job Center Network using a coordinated service delivery model that includes initial intake, assessment of customer needs, referral to appropriate programs and services, ongoing case management, and follow-up conducted by Alaska Job Center staff. Alaska Job Center staff provide individualized career services, including employment planning, job search assistance, and referrals to training and supportive services based on participant needs. AWIB ensures implementation of statewide workforce strategies by establishing policy direction, monitoring performance outcomes, and guiding alignment of program activities across core and partner programs

This model supports co-enrollment across programs, as appropriate, and helps participants access comprehensive services aligned with their employment and training goals. Co-enrollment is initiated based on participant needs identified during intake and assessment and is facilitated through staff coordination and shared use of AlaskaJobs to ensure services are aligned, complementary, and non-duplicative.

#### **Key Elements – State Board Functions**

- Serves as the Governor’s designated State Workforce Development Board under WIOA §101(d) with responsibility for statewide workforce strategy, policy, and oversight;
- Provides statewide policy leadership, strategic direction, and oversight of the workforce system;
- Establishes statewide workforce priorities aligned with Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF);
- Oversees WIOA policy development, implementation, and system performance;
- Supports strategic planning and cross-agency coordination across core and partner programs;
- Guides workforce investment alignment and continuous improvement efforts;
- Promotes integration with education, economic development, and industry systems; and
- Ensures stakeholder engagement and oversight of State Plan development and implementation.

#### **Policy Leadership and System Governance**

AWIB sets Alaska’s statewide workforce vision, priorities, and policy direction consistent with WIOA and AWF. The Board is responsible for the development, approval, and ongoing review of statewide WIOA policies to ensure alignment across Titles I–IV and the Combined Plan partner program, the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). Through this role, AWIB promotes consistent standards, equitable service delivery, and coordinated implementation across programs and regions.

AWIB provides oversight of State and local workforce plan implementation, ensuring that strategies align with statewide goals for sector partnerships, career pathways, apprenticeship expansion, youth engagement, and services for priority populations. Labor market information, employer input, regional data, and stakeholder engagement inform policy leadership and strategic direction.

While AWIB establishes policy direction and oversight, operational responsibility for program administration remains with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) and the respective administering agencies.

#### **Oversight, Accountability, and Continuous Improvement**

AWIB carries out oversight and accountability responsibilities to ensure effective stewardship of public workforce resources. These functions include reviewing statewide performance outcomes under WIOA section 116, monitoring progress toward negotiated performance targets, and supporting continuous improvement across the workforce system within each program’s statutory and funding authority. Oversight activities are informed by performance reporting, data analysis, and regular review of program outcomes and service delivery practices.

The Board oversees Alaska Job Center (AJC) certification standards and system expectations to promote consistent, high-quality service delivery. AWIB also guides workforce investments, including aligning funding strategies with statewide priorities and reviewing system performance trends to inform policy and strategic adjustments. These oversight activities ensure that workforce programs are implemented consistently with statewide strategies and achieve measurable outcomes aligned with WIOA performance indicators.

#### **Strategic Planning and Cross-Agency Coordination**

AWIB plays a central role in statewide strategic planning by convening core programs, Combined Plan partners, required and optional one-stop partners, employers, and education and training providers. Through this convening role, AWIB supports the design, approval, and monitoring of strategic initiatives under AWF, including sector strategies, apprenticeship expansion, and youth and career pathway initiatives.

The Board integrates economic development insights, employer feedback, and regional labor market data into workforce strategy development to ensure responsiveness to Alaska's diverse regional economies and industry needs.

#### **Coordination Across Core and Partner Programs**

AWIB collaborates closely with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) and its divisions, including the Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS), Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), and Adult Education (AEFLA), as well as other workforce and education partners. This coordination supports aligned policy development, shared implementation strategies, and integrated service delivery across the Alaska Job Center Network.

Board committees focused on workforce readiness, apprenticeship and sector strategies, evaluation, and system performance support informed decision-making and ongoing oversight. These committees provide structured forums for cross-program coordination and stakeholder input, helping ensure consistent implementation of co-enrollment, referral processes, and integrated service delivery practices across the Alaska Job Center Network. Additional information on one-stop partners and system roles is provided in Appendix L – One-Stop Partners and System Resources.

#### **Alignment with Education and Economic Development Systems**

AWIB aligns workforce strategies with Alaska's education systems, economic development initiatives, and apprenticeship priorities to promote long-term workforce sustainability. The Board supports coordination with secondary and postsecondary education, career and technical education, registered apprenticeship, and industry-led training initiatives to strengthen pathways into high-demand occupations.

#### **Governance Structure and Operations**

AWIB members are appointed by the Governor in accordance with federal and state requirements and operate pursuant to the Board's bylaws and Alaska statutes. The Board elects a Chair and Vice-Chair and conducts business through full Board meetings and standing committees. An Executive Committee is authorized to act on behalf of the Board between meetings in accordance with the Board's bylaws.

AWIB is supported by professional staff housed within DOLWD who provide policy development, coordination, performance monitoring, and administrative support. Staff support ensures continuity, transparency, and effective implementation of Board decisions and strategic initiatives.

#### **Role in State Plan Development and Stakeholder Engagement**

AWIB oversees the development, review, and approval of Alaska's WIOA Combined State Plan and subsequent modifications. The Board ensures meaningful stakeholder engagement, including employers, education and training providers, community organizations, and workforce partners, throughout the planning process. Public

input and partner feedback are incorporated to strengthen plan alignment with workforce system needs and priorities.

Through these functions, AWIB fulfills its statutory responsibilities under WIOA §101(d) and serves as the primary policy and governance body guiding Alaska's 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 State Plan partner program included in this plan will implement the State's Strategies identified in II(c) above. This must include a description of—

*(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.

#### **Overview – Core Program Activities**

Alaska's core workforce programs implement statewide strategies through coordinated, integrated service delivery across WIOA Titles I–IV and the Combined Plan partner program, the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). These activities operationalize the statewide strategies described in Section II(c) through coordinated, cross-program implementation. These activities are implemented through coordinated service delivery across programs, including co-enrollment, shared intake and referral processes, and integrated case management.

#### **Key Elements – Core Program Activities**

- Provides integrated career services, training, and supportive services through the Alaska Job Center Network.
- Supports co-enrollment and coordinated case management across WIOA core programs and partners.
- Aligns services with career pathways, sector strategies, and employer demand.
- Expands access to employment and training opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment.
- Leverages data, labor market information, and performance outcomes to guide service delivery and continuous improvement.

Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) is implemented through coordinated activities funded and delivered by the WIOA core programs (Titles I–IV) and the Combined Plan partner program, the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). These activities advance an integrated, customer-centered workforce system that expands access, promotes equity, and responds to Alaska's workforce needs.

All core programs are administered within the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) and delivered through an integrated Alaska Job Center (AJC) Network, vocational rehabilitation offices, adult education providers, and community-based service locations. This structure supports aligned implementation of AWF strategies across regions while maintaining the statutory and fiscal integrity of each program.

#### **Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs**

WIOA Title I programs fund career services, training, supportive services, and work-based learning activities that directly support AWF sector strategies, career pathways, and priority populations. Services are delivered through the Alaska Job Center Network and WIOA Youth service providers using coordinated, customer-centered approaches.

Key activities include:

- Supporting sector partnerships and regional workforce strategies aligned with in-demand industries, including healthcare, construction, transportation, maritime, energy, and technology.
- Funding career pathway programs that integrate education, training, credentials, and employment, including short-term training, Registered Apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, and on-the-job training.
- Expanding work-based learning opportunities and employer-connected training models to address skill gaps and improve job placement and retention.
- Providing supportive services such as transportation, housing-related assistance, and tools to reduce barriers for individuals in rural and remote communities and for priority populations.
- Delivering youth services focused on out-of-school youth, career exploration, paid work experience, and transitions into postsecondary education, training, or employment.

Title I activities are aligned with co-enrollment strategies, unified intake practices, and integrated case management to reduce duplication and improve customer navigation, consistent with Sections II(c)(1) and II(c)(2). Alaska Job Center staff and WIOA Youth provider staff deliver these services through individualized career services, employment planning, case management, and coordinated referrals tailored to participants' needs.

#### **Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy (AEFLA)**

Title II programs support AWF by funding adult education, English language acquisition, and integrated education and training activities that align with career pathways and employer demand.

Core activities include:

- Delivering integrated education and training (IET) models that combine adult education, workforce preparation, and occupational skills training.
- Supporting English language learners through workforce-connected English instruction aligned with employment pathways.
- Coordinating with Title I and other partners to support co-enrollment, referrals, and transition into training and employment.
- Expanding distance-delivered and hybrid instruction to improve access in rural and remote communities.

These activities directly address gaps identified in Section II(a)(2) related to limited English proficiency, access barriers, and uneven availability of training opportunities. Adult education providers coordinate with Alaska Job Center staff and partner programs to support participant transitions into employment and training opportunities.

#### **Title III – Wagner-Peyser Employment Services**

Wagner-Peyser funds labor exchanges and employer services that serve as a primary entry point into the workforce system for job seekers and employers.

Key activities include:

- Alaska Job Center staff provide job search assistance, labor market information, and career counseling through the Alaska Job Center Network and virtual service platforms.
- Supporting employer engagement, recruitment, and placement services aligned with sector strategies and regional demand.
- Serving as a foundational partner in co-enrollment, referrals, and unified intake processes across programs.
- Leveraging AlaskaJobs to support job matching, referrals, and service coordination. AlaskaJobs is used by staff across programs to document services, manage participant records, support referrals between programs, and track participant progress. This shared system enables coordinated service delivery across

the Alaska Job Center Network. AlaskaJobs serves as the State's primary system for documenting services, facilitating co-enrollment, and supporting integrated case management across programs.

These activities strengthen access, improve service navigation, and support statewide system integration.

#### **Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)**

Vocational Rehabilitation funds services that support individuals with disabilities in preparing for, obtaining, and retaining competitive integrated employment.

Core activities include:

- Providing vocational counseling, training, assistive technology, and job placement services aligned with career pathways and sector strategies.
- Coordinating with Title I, adult education, and employer partners to support co-enrollment and shared service planning.
- Supporting Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for students with disabilities in coordination with education partners.
- Expanding virtual service delivery and community-based access points to reach individuals in rural and remote areas.

VR activities directly support AWF equity goals and address barriers identified in Section II(a)(2).

#### **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)**

As a Combined Plan partner, SCSEP funds transitional employment and supportive services for older workers.

SCSEP activities include:

- Providing paid community service assignments that build work experience and employability skills.
- Coordinating with AJC and DVR staff to support co-enrollment, referrals, and transition to unsubsidized employment.
- Aligning services with regional labor market needs and employer demand.

#### **Integrated Service Delivery and Shared Systems**

Core program activities are supported through shared technology and administrative infrastructure, including:

- AlaskaJobs, the State's labor exchange and workforce service platform supporting job matching, referrals, and service coordination across programs.
- EGrAMS for grants management and fiscal oversight.
- Shared training, policy guidance, and operational resources delivered through DOLWD systems.

These shared platforms promote integrated service delivery, support performance monitoring, and improve data-informed decision-making, consistent with modernization goals described in Sections II(c)(2) and III(b).

#### **System Impact**

Through coordinated core program activities, Alaska advances AWF by:

- Expanding access to workforce services statewide, including in rural and remote communities.
- Strengthening alignment with employer demand and sector strategies.
- Promoting equity and improved outcomes for priority populations.
- Enhancing coordination across the workforce, education, and partner programs.
- Delivering a more integrated, efficient, and responsive workforce system.

*(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.*

#### **Overview – Alignment with External Activities**

Alaska aligns workforce system activities with programs and initiatives outside the Combined State Plan to strengthen coordination, expand service impact, and holistically address workforce and economic needs. These alignment efforts support integrated service delivery, improve access to complementary resources, and enhance outcomes for individuals and employers while maintaining clear program roles and accountability. These alignment efforts are implemented through coordinated referrals, shared intake practices, co-enrollment strategies, and staff collaboration across programs and partners.

#### **Key Elements – Alignment with External Activities**

- Coordinates with state, federal, tribal, and community-based programs that support employment, education, and economic stability
- Aligns workforce strategies with economic development, education, and human services initiatives
- Leverages complementary funding streams and resources to expand access without duplicating efforts
- Supports integrated service delivery for shared populations, including individuals with barriers to employment
- Promotes information sharing, referrals, and collaborative planning while maintaining distinct program authority and accountability

Alaska's workforce system aligns WIOA core programs with activities and services administered by external agencies and partners, supporting a coordinated, customer-centered workforce development system consistent with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) and federal modernization expectations outlined in TEGL 05-25. These alignment efforts strengthen access, reduce fragmentation, and ensure that workforce, education, and human services operate in a complementary manner to support job seekers, workers, and employers statewide.

Alignment with activities outside the WIOA State Plan is achieved through shared governance structures, formal agreements, coordinated service delivery models, and integrated operational practices across workforce, education, human services, and economic development systems. These coordination efforts are implemented within existing statutory authorities and funding structures and do not create shared funding obligations or performance accountability across programs.

#### **Alignment with Registered Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning Systems**

WIOA programs align closely with Alaska's Registered Apprenticeship and work-based learning system to expand access to employer-driven training pathways that lead to in-demand occupations and family-sustaining wages. Core programs coordinate with apprenticeship sponsors, training providers, industry partners, and labor organizations to support participant recruitment, co-enrollment, supportive services, and job placement through the Alaska Job Center Network.

Industry partnerships play a key role in designing workforce solutions. For example, public-private partnerships supporting pipeline construction and maintenance training on Alaska's North Slope bring together contractors, labor organizations, joint apprenticeship training programs, and the State Training and Employment Program to provide hands-on training opportunities aligned with high-demand occupations.

Alaska Job Center staff and partner program staff support these efforts through participant recruitment, referrals, and coordination of supportive services aligned with apprenticeship and work-based learning opportunities.

In addition to these operational strategies, the State is assessing opportunities to strengthen apprenticeship governance and system capacity, including consideration of a potential transition to a State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) model, consistent with federal requirements and available authority. This work is intended to improve alignment between apprenticeship, workforce, and education systems, increase employer engagement, and expand access to apprenticeship pathways across industries and regions.

#### **Alignment with Career and Technical Education and Perkins V**

WIOA programs coordinate with Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and Perkins V activities to support aligned career pathways from secondary education through postsecondary training and employment.

Collaboration with the Department of Education and Early Development, postsecondary institutions, regional training centers, and the University of Alaska system supports career exploration and work-based learning. It transitions into training aligned with career exploration and work-based learning opportunities, then into training aligned with labor market demand.

These efforts improve career pathway awareness, support credential attainment, and reduce service duplication by leveraging complementary funding streams and shared planning processes.

#### **Alignment with TANF, SNAP E&T, and Human Services Programs**

WIOA programs align with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Tribal TANF, SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T), and other human services programs to support individuals with multiple barriers to employment. Alaska Job Center staff and partner program staff coordinate these activities to ensure that participants receive aligned, non-duplicative services across programs.

DOLWD coordinates with the Division of Public Assistance and Tribal partners to support shared intake, referrals, and co-enrollment strategies. In many locations, staff work directly with Work First/Families First programs and Tribal TANF providers to identify individuals for co-enrollment into WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Wagner-Peyser, and other appropriate services.

These efforts enable comprehensive employment planning that addresses barriers such as housing instability, transportation challenges, behavioral health needs, and limited work experience, while supporting progress toward sustainable employment.

#### **Alignment with Unemployment Insurance and Reemployment Services**

WIOA programs align with Unemployment Insurance (UI) and reemployment services to support rapid reemployment and labor force attachment. Coordination through the Alaska Job Center Network ensures that UI claimants have access to employment services, career counseling, training opportunities, and reemployment strategies.

Shared systems, coordinated workflows, and referral processes support labor exchange activities and service navigation, strengthening reemployment outcomes during periods of economic transition. This coordination includes alignment with Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) activities, where applicable, to ensure claimants receive timely and appropriate services. Alaska Job Center staff support these efforts by conducting assessments, providing career guidance, and connecting UI claimants with training and supportive services tailored to individual needs.

### **Alignment with Postsecondary Institutions, Training Providers, and Community Organizations**

WIOA programs coordinate with postsecondary institutions, eligible training providers, community-based organizations, and regional training centers to expand access to education and training opportunities aligned with regional workforce needs.

Coordination includes shared outreach, referrals, and, where appropriate, co-investment in training and supportive services to reduce barriers related to cost, geography, and access. Alaska Job Center staff and partner program staff support these efforts by conducting assessments, identifying appropriate training opportunities, and connecting participants to education, training, and supportive services aligned with their employment goals.

Eligible training providers and partner organizations collaborate with the workforce system to ensure training programs remain responsive to labor market demand and aligned with in-demand occupations identified through labor market information and sector strategies.

### **Alaska Job Center Network and Partner Coordination**

The Alaska Job Center Network serves as the central access point for integrated workforce services and plays a key role in aligning activities across partner programs. AJCs provide physical locations, partner linkages, virtual access, and itinerant services to ensure consistent, customer-centered service delivery across the state, including in rural and underserved areas.

Local coordination with partners, including housing agencies, correctional reentry programs, Alaska Native organizations, and regional training centers, supports cross-referrals and access to services that address barriers to employment and connect individuals to training and employment opportunities. Alaska Job Center staff coordinate with partner programs to facilitate referrals, co-enrollment, and access to supportive services based on individual needs. Additional information on one-stop partners and system roles is provided in Appendix L – One-Stop Partners and System Resources.

### **Shared Intake, Referrals, and Coordinated Case Management**

Alignment with activities outside the plan is supported through shared intake practices, co-enrollment strategies, and coordinated case management across workforce and partner programs. The Alaska Job Center Network serves as the primary intake point, where individuals receive initial assessments and are connected to appropriate services across programs.

The referral process is tailored to individual customer needs, with staff trained to understand eligibility requirements and service offerings across programs. Staff conduct initial assessments, identify appropriate services, and facilitate referrals to WIOA Title I programs, Wagner-Peyser services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Tribal programs, and other partner services. These processes support co-enrollment where appropriate to ensure individuals receive comprehensive and non-duplicative services.

Coordinated case management practices support ongoing service alignment across programs. Staff communicate and coordinate service delivery to ensure participants receive complementary services based on individual employment goals, while avoiding duplication of services and funding.

Coordinated data collection, resource mapping, and local partner networks support informed referrals and improve service navigation, while maintaining confidentiality and program integrity requirements.

### **SCSEP Coordination with External Systems**

As a Combined Plan partner, SCSEP aligns with workforce, human services, and education partners to support integrated service delivery and improved outcomes for older workers. SCSEP operates within the Alaska Job Center

Network and supports shared intake, co-enrollment, and coordinated case management with WIOA core programs, TANF, SNAP E&T, Tribal partners, and UI reemployment services.

SCSEP staff coordinate with Alaska Job Center and partner program staff to support participant assessments, service planning, and referrals, ensuring older workers are connected to appropriate employment and training opportunities based on individual needs. SCSEP's subsidized employment model provides participants with work-based learning experiences that build skills, improve employability, and support transitions to unsubsidized employment.

SCSEP also collaborates with Career and Technical Education programs, postsecondary institutions, and community-based organizations to support training, credential attainment, and pathways to unsubsidized employment aligned with labor market demand.

#### **System Impact and Alignment with AWF**

By aligning with external agencies and programs, Alaska's workforce system advances AWF priorities in access, equity, modernization, and results. These partnerships strengthen the State's ability to deliver comprehensive, coordinated, and customer-centered services that address complex barriers to employment while meeting employers' workforce needs across industries and regions.

These alignment strategies support the strategies outlined in Sections II(c)(1) and II(c)(2), address system challenges identified in Section II(a)(2), and reinforce Alaska's workforce system as a coordinated, integrated network that delivers consistent, high-quality services aligned with TEGL 05-25 expectations.

*(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.*

#### **Overview – Coordination of Services to Individuals**

Alaska delivers coordinated, customer-centered workforce services through an integrated system led by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD). As the administrative entity for all four WIOA core programs, as well as Wagner-Peyser, Unemployment Insurance (UI), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Veterans' services, and the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), DOLWD ensures alignment of policies, service delivery, and program operations across the workforce system.

Services are delivered through the Alaska Job Center (AJC) network, which serves as the primary access point for job seekers. Through co-enrollment, shared case management, and coordinated referrals, the system is designed to provide seamless, non-duplicative services, particularly for individuals with barriers to employment, those requiring supportive services, and individuals in rural and remote communities.

#### **Key Elements – Coordination of Services to Individuals**

- Core and partner programs coordinate service delivery through shared case management, co-enrollment, and integrated referrals
- Alaska Job Centers serve as centralized access points for in-person, virtual, and hybrid service delivery
- Policies and procedures support information sharing and coordinated service planning across programs
- Services are tailored to priority populations, including individuals with barriers to employment and those in rural communities

- Workforce partners collaborate to ensure access to supportive services and wraparound support
- Service delivery incorporates culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches

### **Integrated Service Delivery and Co-Enrollment**

DOLWD coordinates services across programs to ensure individuals receive comprehensive support aligned with their employment and training needs. Co-enrollment across WIOA Title I, Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and partner programs is encouraged to maximize access to services and improve outcomes.

Through shared case management practices, Alaska Job Center staff and partner program staff coordinate:

- Assessments and service planning
- Training and employment services
- Supportive services and referrals
- Progress monitoring and follow-up

These coordinated approaches support the delivery of comprehensive, non-duplicative services aligned with individual employment goals and program requirements. Coordination of services is guided by DETS/AWIB/DVR Policy 07-505.1, which establishes expectations for cooperative partnerships and supports the development of local procedures for co-enrollment and integrated service delivery across programs. Supporting policies governing co-enrollment and coordinated service delivery are included in Appendix D – Policy Inventory.

### **Alaska Job Center Network and Local Coordination**

Alaska Job Centers serve as the primary entry point for integrated, customer-centered workforce services and are operated through a network of state staff and partner organizations. Local management teams representing partner agencies collaborate to ensure services are aligned, coordinated, and responsive to local workforce needs.

These teams coordinate:

- Customer flow and service delivery models
- Shared resources and staffing
- Co-enrollment strategies and referrals
- Local initiatives and priority populations

The One-Stop Operator supports coordination across partner programs by facilitating communication, monitoring service integration, and promoting consistent service delivery practices statewide. This approach ensures that services are delivered efficiently, consistently, and without duplication across the workforce system.

### **Service Delivery for Priority Populations**

The workforce system prioritizes service delivery to individuals with barriers to employment, including:

- Veterans and eligible military spouses
- Individuals with disabilities
- Low-income individuals and public assistance recipients
- Out-of-school youth
- Alaska Native populations
- Individuals with limited work history or other employment barriers

Alaska Job Center staff and partner program staff collaborate to tailor services to meet the unique needs of these populations. Services may include individualized career services, training opportunities, and supportive services designed to address barriers to employment and support successful participation in the workforce.

### **Supportive Services and Wraparound Coordination**

Workforce partners coordinate access to supportive services necessary for successful participation in training and employment activities, ensuring alignment with individual service plans and program requirements. Supportive services may include transportation assistance, childcare, housing support, and other services provided through partner programs.

Alaska Job Center staff and partner program staff coordinate the delivery of supportive services to ensure participants receive comprehensive, non-duplicative assistance that supports engagement in training and employment activities and progress toward employment outcomes.

### **Rural, Remote, and Virtual Service Delivery**

Given Alaska's geographic challenges, the workforce system utilizes virtual and hybrid service delivery models to ensure access for individuals in rural and remote communities.

Services are delivered through:

- AlaskaJobs online tools and resources
- Virtual workshops, orientations, and case management
- Remote access to staff assistance and partner programs

Alaska Job Center staff and partner program staff use these delivery methods to ensure individuals across the state can access workforce services regardless of location, supporting equitable access to employment and training opportunities.

### **Education and Partner Program Coordination**

Alaska Adult Education (AAE) and other partner programs support coordination through structured intake processes, assessments, and career awareness activities. AAE collects information on employment status and training goals and provides instruction on career pathways and available workforce services, aligned with labor market demand.

Partner programs, including SCSEP, Vocational Rehabilitation, and others, coordinate with core programs to support referrals, co-enrollment, and transitions into employment and training opportunities. Alaska Job Center staff and partner program staff collaborate to ensure services are aligned, complementary, and responsive to individual needs.

### **Culturally Responsive and Trauma-Informed Practices**

Alaska incorporates culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches into service delivery to ensure services are accessible and effective for diverse populations.

Alaska Job Center staff and partner program staff are trained to recognize and respond to individual needs, including cultural considerations and barriers to participation, ensuring that services are delivered respectfully and inclusively, and in a manner that supports positive engagement and outcomes.

*(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, and 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.*

#### **Overview – Coordination of Services to Employers**

The State of Alaska coordinates services to employers through an integrated, employer-focused service delivery model led by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) and delivered through the Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN). This approach aligns workforce programs, staff, and resources to ensure that employer services are responsive to industry demand, informed by labor market information, and accessible across Alaska's diverse geographic regions.

Employer engagement is coordinated across WIOA core programs, Wagner-Peyser, apprenticeship, veteran services, and state-funded training programs. Through integrated service delivery and shared outreach strategies, employers experience a unified, system-wide approach that supports recruitment, training, retention, and long-term workforce development.

#### **Key elements – Coordination of services to employers**

- Employer services are delivered through an integrated, system-wide approach across workforce programs
- Business connection staff serve as primary points of contact and coordinate employer engagement across programs
- Sector-based strategies align services with high-demand industries and labor market needs
- Employers receive comprehensive services supporting recruitment, hiring, training, and retention
- Work-based learning strategies, including on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, and apprenticeship, support employer-driven skill development
- Labor market information supports employer decision-making and workforce planning
- Coordination with education, economic development, and industry partners strengthens sector strategies
- Digital tools and AlaskaJobs resources expand access to employer services statewide
- Targeted outreach supports veteran hiring and engagement with priority populations
- Continuous employer engagement and feedback inform service delivery improvements

#### **Business Connection Staff and Employer Engagement**

Business connection staff and partner program staff coordinate employer engagement across the workforce system. Staff monitor labor market trends, conduct outreach, and work directly with employers to connect them with qualified job seekers and workforce solutions aligned with business needs.

Services include:

- Coordinating recruitments and job fairs
- Posting job orders and pre-screening applicants
- Referring qualified candidates
- Providing recruitment space and logistical support
- Developing employer-driven training strategies, including incumbent worker training
- Sharing information on workforce programs, hiring incentives, and workforce trends

DOLWD prioritizes engagement with high-demand industries, including health care, education, transportation, oil and gas, and mining. Staff collaborates with employers and partners to identify workforce needs and develop sector-based workforce solutions aligned with Alaska's economic priorities.

### **Employer Services and Workforce Programs**

Employer services are delivered through the Alaska Job Center Network and coordinated across workforce programs to provide comprehensive workforce solutions.

Services and programs include:

- Veteran services delivered by Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER)
- Coordination with youth programs to support career pathway development and work experience opportunities
- Apprenticeship promotion and employer support
- On-the-job training (OJT) and incumbent worker training (IWT)
- State Training and Employment Program (STEP) grants
- Rapid response services for layoff aversion and business transitions
- Industry-specific recruitments and hiring events
- Labor market information and guidance on workforce trends and compliance
- Hiring incentives, including Work Opportunity Tax Credit and Fidelity Bonding
- Referrals to Alaska Adult Education and other partner programs

These services are coordinated to ensure employers receive consistent, non-duplicative support across programs.

### **Sector Partnerships and Employer Outreach**

Business connection staff and partner program staff cultivate long-term relationships with employers across Alaska through coordinated outreach and sector-based engagement strategies.

For example, DOLWD collaborates with mining employers and training providers, including the University of Alaska Southeast, to support workforce development through industry-aligned training initiatives such as underground miner training and haul truck simulator training. These partnerships support workforce readiness and placement into high-demand occupations.

Employer outreach is coordinated across programs, including apprenticeship, veteran services, WIOA, and STEP, to ensure consistent communication and avoid duplication of employer contacts. Employer onboarding materials and AlaskaJobs resources provide clear information on workforce programs, hiring incentives, and training opportunities.

### **Alaska Career Ready and Workforce Preparation**

Alaska Career Ready supports alignment between employer requirements and job seeker skills through ACT WorkKeys® assessments and the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC).

These tools provide:

- Verification of foundational workplace skills
- Identification of skill gaps and training needs
- A portable credential recognized by employers

This approach supports employers by improving candidate readiness and providing a standardized measure of workplace skills aligned with workforce needs.

### **Digital Access and Employer Resources**

DOLWD maintains employer-focused web resources and AlaskaJobs tools to improve access to workforce services and information.

Employers can access:

- Job posting and recruitment tools
- Workforce training and apprenticeship information
- Labor laws and compliance resources
- Workers' compensation and unemployment insurance information
- Rapid response and layoff assistance
- Services for individuals with disabilities

Digital access supports efficient service delivery and expands employer engagement across Alaska's geographic regions.

#### **Veteran Employment and Employer Recognition**

DOLWD supports employer engagement in veteran hiring by coordinating with veteran services staff and participating in initiatives such as the Honoring Investments in Recruiting and Employing American Military Veterans (HIRE Vets) Medallion Program.

Efforts include:

- Employer outreach and engagement through Business Connection and veteran staff
- Recognition of employers through public announcements and events
- Collaboration with chambers of commerce and professional associations

These activities support veteran employment and strengthen employer participation in workforce initiatives.

#### **System Impact and Coordination**

Through coordinated service delivery, shared employer engagement strategies, and alignment across workforce programs and partners, Alaska ensures that employers receive comprehensive, high-quality services that address current and projected workforce needs.

These efforts support sector strategies outlined in Section II(c)(1), align with system integration strategies in Section II(c)(2), and position the workforce system as a coordinated, employer-focused partner in supporting Alaska's economic growth.

*(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.

#### **Overview – Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions and Other Education and Training Providers**

Alaska's workforce system engages education and training providers through a coordinated, demand-driven approach that aligns training investments with employer needs, career pathways, and regional workforce priorities. These efforts support implementation of Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by strengthening partnerships across workforce, education, and industry systems, expanding access to training opportunities, and ensuring that education and training activities lead to employment outcomes.

Education and training providers, including postsecondary institutions, adult education programs, career and technical education (CTE) providers, and eligible training providers, are integrated into the workforce system as

active partners. Through coordinated planning, shared data, and ongoing engagement, providers contribute to a unified system focused on employment outcomes and workforce development priorities.

#### **Key Elements – Engagement with Education and Training Providers**

- Aligns training programs with in-demand industries, sector strategies, and employer needs
- Utilizes the eligible training provider list (ETPL) to ensure quality, performance, and accountability
- Integrates education, training, and work-based learning within career pathways
- Expands access through partnerships with postsecondary institutions, CTE programs, and community-based providers
- Supports continuous improvement through coordination, technical assistance, and stakeholder engagement

#### **Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and Program Alignment**

The State maintains an Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to ensure that training programs supported with WIOA funds meet established performance, quality, and accountability standards.

Alaska's ETPL policies and procedures were developed in collaboration with education and training providers, including the University of Alaska system and other stakeholders, through AWIB engagement and a formal public comment process. This collaborative approach ensures that ETPL requirements are responsive to provider capacity while maintaining accountability and program quality.

Engagement with ETPL providers includes:

- Ongoing consultation with training providers to align program offerings with in-demand industries and occupations
- Use of labor market information and employer input to inform program eligibility and continued inclusion on the ETPL
- Regular updates to ETPL policies and guidance to improve accessibility, reduce administrative burden, and strengthen program quality
- Technical assistance and guidance to support provider compliance and reporting requirements
- Use of tools such as the AlaskaJobs Provider Guide and ETPL Operating Guide to support system integration and provider onboarding

DETS coordinates with the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship to support the inclusion of registered apprenticeship programs on the ETPL and to ensure staff awareness of available training opportunities.

This approach positions the ETPL as both a compliance mechanism and a strategic tool for aligning training investments with Alaska's high-demand industries.

#### **Coordination with Postsecondary Institutions and Training Providers**

Alaska coordinates with postsecondary institutions, including the University of Alaska system, regional training centers, apprenticeship sponsors, and other eligible training providers to support workforce development priorities.

Engagement strategies include:

- Coordinating with postsecondary partners to align training programs with sector strategies and regional workforce needs
- Collaborating on program development, curriculum alignment, and credential attainment strategies
- Coordinating referrals, co-enrollment, and supportive services to improve participant success
- Expanding training opportunities in rural and remote communities through distance delivery and community-based models

The State also coordinates with the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education to ensure training programs meet consumer protection and quality standards.

These efforts ensure that training delivery is responsive to geographic, economic, and industry-specific conditions across Alaska.

#### **Alignment with Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Perkins V**

WIOA programs align with Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and Perkins V activities to support career pathways that connect secondary education, postsecondary training, and employment.

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), the Department of Education and Early Development, and the University of Alaska collaborate to:

- Align CTE programs with industry standards and workforce demand
- Expand career exploration and work-based learning opportunities
- Support transitions from secondary education to postsecondary training and employment
- Continuously review and refine CTE strategies to support AWF priorities

This alignment strengthens workforce pipelines and improves long-term employment outcomes.

#### **Integration with Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship**

Education and training provider engagement is closely aligned with work-based learning and apprenticeship strategies to ensure that training leads directly to employment.

Providers collaborate with workforce programs and employers to support:

- Registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs
- On-the-job training (OJT), customized training, and incumbent worker training
- Integrated education and training (IET) models combining education and occupational skills training
- Industry-recognized credentials aligned with sector strategies

Titles I and II programs continue to expand co-enrollment and develop integrated education and training (IET) models using braided funding to improve outcomes for adult learners.

This integration reduces fragmentation and strengthens career pathway progression.

#### **Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP) and State Investments**

Alaska leverages state-funded programs, including the Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP), to support education and training providers in delivering industry-aligned training.

TVEP supports:

- Industry-specific training aligned with high-demand occupations
- On-the-job training and classroom-linked job training
- Partnerships between training providers and employers

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board establishes priorities for TVEP, ensuring alignment with statewide workforce strategies and economic development goals.

State investments such as TVEP complement federal funding and expand the State's capacity to respond to workforce needs.

### **Ongoing Engagement and Continuous Improvement**

Alaska maintains ongoing engagement with education and training providers through formal and informal mechanisms, including:

- Regular meetings with postsecondary institutions, CTE coordinators, and training providers
- Stakeholder engagement through AWIB committees, public comment processes, and partner convenings
- Collaboration on policy development, including ETPL procedures and provider guidance
- Feedback from employers and industry partners to ensure training relevance

These mechanisms ensure that engagement remains data-informed, responsive, and aligned with economic conditions.

### **System Impact and Alignment with AWF**

Through coordinated engagement with education and training providers, Alaska strengthens implementation of AWF by:

- Expanding access to high-quality education and training opportunities
- Aligning training programs with employer demand and sector strategies
- Improving transitions between education, training, and employment
- Enhancing coordination across the workforce, education, and partner systems
- Supporting equitable access and outcomes for priority populations

Collectively, these strategies position Alaska's education and training system as an integrated component of a demand-driven workforce system that supports both immediate employment needs and long-term economic resilience.

*(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, portable, and stackable, such as certificates, licenses, or certifications.*

### **Overview – Postsecondary Credential Access**

Alaska improves access to postsecondary credentials through a coordinated, statewide strategy that aligns workforce, education, and industry systems to support credential attainment, career advancement, and employment outcomes. These efforts support implementation of Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by expanding access to industry-recognized, portable, and stackable credentials and strengthening career pathways aligned with in-demand industries.

This approach emphasizes reducing barriers to participation, particularly for individuals in rural and remote communities and those with barriers to employment, while ensuring that credential attainment is directly connected to workforce needs and employment opportunities.

### **Key Elements – Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials**

- Promotes industry-recognized, portable, and stackable credentials aligned with in-demand industries
- Integrates work-based learning and earn-and-learn models to reduce financial barriers
- Expands access through distance delivery, hybrid models, and regional training partnerships
- Aligns workforce and education systems to support credential attainment and career pathways
- Supports equitable access for rural populations and individuals with barriers to employment

### **System Alignment and Career Pathways**

Alaska's workforce development strategies emphasize expanding access to industry-recognized, portable, and stackable postsecondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates, that support career

pathways aligned with in-demand industries. These strategies improve workforce readiness and employment outcomes while addressing barriers related to geography, cost, and access.

These efforts operationalize the alignment strategies described in Section II(c)(2), including co-enrollment and integrated service delivery, data and technology coordination, and engagement with partner programs to expand access to credential attainment and support successful employment outcomes.

Through coordination among the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), the University of Alaska, and the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), Alaska aligns workforce and education systems to support credential attainment while maintaining each program's statutory authority, funding structure, and performance accountability.

#### **Work-Based Learning and Earn-and-Learn Models**

Alaska expands access to postsecondary credentials through work-based learning and earn-and-learn models, including Registered Apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, and employer-led credential programs.

These strategies allow participants to earn wages while gaining skills and credentials recognized by employers, reducing financial barriers to participation and supporting timely entry into employment.

#### **Rural and Remote Access Strategies**

To improve access for individuals in rural and remote communities, Alaska leverages distance-delivered instruction, hybrid training models, and regionally based training partnerships where feasible. Workforce programs coordinate supportive services, virtual service delivery, and localized access points to mitigate transportation, housing, and cost-related barriers that can limit participation in credential-bearing education and training.

These strategies ensure that individuals across Alaska can access credential pathways regardless of geographic location.

#### **Credential Portability and Stackability**

Alaska emphasizes credential portability and stackability to support career advancement, employment outcomes, and workforce mobility.

Workforce and education partners promote credentials that build toward higher-level certifications, degrees, or occupational endorsements, allowing individuals to progress along career pathways over time and respond to evolving labor market demand.

#### **Statewide Postsecondary Attainment Coordination**

DOLWD participates in statewide postsecondary attainment initiatives, including Alaska's Postsecondary Access and Completion Network, to support shared goals related to credential attainment and workforce participation.

Through coordination with education and workforce partners, Alaska promotes recognition of Registered Apprenticeship certificates, industry certifications, and occupational credentials within statewide attainment strategies and data reporting, consistent with each program's statutory authority.

#### **System Impact and Alignment with AWF**

Through coordinated strategies to improve access to postsecondary credentials, Alaska strengthens implementation of AWF by:

- Expanding access to industry-recognized credentials aligned with employer demand

- Reducing barriers to training participation and credential attainment
- Strengthening career pathways and workforce readiness
- Improving measurable employment and credential outcomes
- Supporting equitable access for rural and priority populations

Collectively, these efforts position credential attainment as a central component of Alaska’s workforce development system, supporting both immediate employment needs and long-term economic resilience.

*(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.*

#### **Overview – Coordination with Economic Development**

Alaska aligns workforce development with economic development priorities through coordinated, data-informed strategies that support industry growth, regional competitiveness, and workforce sustainability. These efforts support implementation of Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF) by integrating workforce planning with economic development initiatives, strengthening sector-based strategies, and ensuring that workforce investments are responsive to current and projected labor market demand.

This coordination ensures that workforce programs contribute to economic development goals while maintaining each program’s statutory authority, funding structure, and performance accountability.

#### **Key Elements – Coordination with Economic Development**

- Aligns workforce investments with regional economic development strategies and priority industries
- Integrates labor market information, employer input, and economic data into workforce planning
- Supports sector-based strategies and employer-driven talent pipeline development
- Coordinates with regional economic development organizations to address local workforce needs
- Maintains alignment while preserving distinct program authority, funding structures, and performance accountability

#### **Statewide Coordination and System Alignment**

Alaska coordinates workforce development activities with statewide and regional economic development efforts to align talent development, employer demand, and economic priorities. This coordination is guided by Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF) and implemented through collaboration among the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development (DCCED), Alaska Regional Development Organizations (ARDORs), and other economic development partners.

These efforts operationalize the alignment strategies described in Section II(c)(2), including sector partnerships and employer engagement, and ensure coordination across workforce and economic development systems. Workforce strategies are informed by economic development planning, labor market information, and employer input to support industry growth, economic diversification, and regional sustainability.

#### **Regional Economic Development Alignment**

Alaska Regional Development Organizations (ARDORs) serve as the State’s primary regional economic development entities and lead the development and implementation of Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDs). These strategies identify priority industries, infrastructure needs, and workforce considerations that inform regional economic growth planning.

Workforce planning and investment decisions are aligned, where appropriate, with these regional strategies through:

- Shared use of labor market information and economic data
- Engagement with employers and industry representatives involved in regional economic development efforts
- Coordination between workforce system partners and regional economic development organizations

This alignment supports responsiveness to regional economic conditions while allowing flexibility to address differences in capacity, infrastructure, and labor market dynamics across Alaska's diverse regions.

#### **Employer Engagement and Sector Alignment**

Coordination with economic development partners strengthens employer engagement by connecting workforce programs with businesses participating in regional and statewide economic initiatives.

Workforce partners collaborate with economic development organizations to:

- Identify current and emerging skill needs
- Inform training priorities and program design
- Implement sector-based strategies aligned with high-demand and emerging industries

Registered Apprenticeship, work-based learning, and other employer-connected training models support alignment between workforce development and economic growth priorities by linking training activities directly to employer demand.

#### **Supporting Regional Growth and Infrastructure Initiatives**

Workforce system coordination with economic development supports major infrastructure, industry expansion, and community development initiatives by aligning workforce planning with projected labor needs.

This includes collaboration related to:

- Energy development and resource-based industries
- Transportation and construction projects
- Health care expansion and other critical sectors

Workforce strategies support these initiatives by preparing workers through aligned training, credential attainment, and work-based learning opportunities while maintaining flexibility to respond to changing economic conditions and employer demand.

#### **Governance, Coordination, and Scope**

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board provides strategic oversight and supports coordination between workforce and economic development partners through its convening role and cross-sector representation.

DOLWD collaborates with DCCED, ARDORs, and regional partners to facilitate information sharing, employer engagement, and alignment of planning activities.

All coordination activities are implemented within existing statutory authorities and funding structures and do not create joint funding obligations or shared performance accountability across workforce and economic development programs. These efforts support alignment and responsiveness during the PY 2026–2027 State Plan modification period and are adjusted based on available resources, regional capacity, and evolving economic conditions.

### **System Impact and Alignment with AWF**

Through coordinated planning, employer engagement, and data-informed decision-making, Alaska's workforce system supports economic development priorities by:

- Aligning workforce investments with industry growth and regional strategies
- Strengthening employer engagement and sector partnerships
- Supporting workforce readiness for infrastructure and economic development initiatives
- Enhancing coordination across workforce and economic development systems
- Improving responsiveness to changing economic conditions

These strategies position Alaska's workforce system as a key partner in supporting economic resilience, regional development, and long-term workforce sustainability.

These operational structures support the implementation of statewide service delivery policies described in Section III(b), including Priority of Service for veterans, accessibility for individuals with disabilities, and language access for individuals with limited English proficiency. Together, these components ensure consistent, equitable, and compliant service delivery across the Alaska Job Center Network.

### **(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—

Alaska's workforce system operates through a coordinated, integrated, and performance-driven service delivery model that ensures equitable access, regulatory compliance, and high-quality customer service across all programs and populations.

The Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN), in coordination with core programs and required partners, implements policies and procedures that support consistent service delivery, accessibility, and continuous improvement. These policies align with federal requirements, including WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Section 188 nondiscrimination provisions, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and implementing regulations at 29 CFR Part 38.

Together, the following components: Priority of Service for veterans, accessibility for individuals with disabilities, and accessibility for individuals with limited English proficiency form a unified framework that ensures all individuals can access workforce services in a manner that is meaningful, effective, and nondiscriminatory.

(1) State operating systems that support coordinated implementation of State strategies (for example, labor market information systems, data systems, communication systems, case management systems, job banks, etc.).

### **Overview – State Operating Systems**

Alaska's workforce system is supported by integrated operating systems that enable coordinated service delivery, data sharing, and performance accountability across core programs and partners. These systems support implementation of Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by strengthening case management, improving access to services, enhancing data-informed decision-making, and ensuring efficient administration of workforce programs statewide.

These systems operationalize the alignment strategies described in Section II(c)(2), including co-enrollment, integrated service delivery, and data and technology coordination. Together, they support sector strategies, career pathways, and performance accountability while maintaining program integrity, data security, and federal reporting requirements within each program's statutory authority.

Alaska's workforce system is administered through a centralized structure in which the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), in coordination with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), provides statewide oversight of workforce programs and service delivery. The Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS) operates the Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN). It serves as the primary service delivery entity for WIOA Title I and Wagner-Peyser programs.

#### **Key Elements – State Operating Systems**

- Enables coordinated case management, service delivery, and reporting across core programs and partners
- Supports co-enrollment, referrals, and integrated service planning through AlaskaJobs and aligned program systems
- Provides labor market information and data tools to guide workforce planning and investment decisions
- Strengthens grant management, fiscal accountability, and performance tracking
- Expands access through virtual, mobile-friendly, and remote service delivery technologies
- Formal partner agreements (MOUs/IFAs) define roles, responsibilities, and cost-sharing across the system
- Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN) serves as the primary service delivery platform across physical, virtual, and partner locations

#### **Case Management, Job Bank, and Service Delivery Systems**

AlaskaJobs serves as the State's primary labor exchange, case management, and reporting system for WIOA Titles I-III, Adult Education (Title II), Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Veterans' programs, and apprenticeship-related activities, consistent with program-specific data and reporting requirements. As the State's primary workforce system, AlaskaJobs supports service tracking and performance reporting across Titles I-III, facilitates integrated service delivery and co-enrollment, enables coordinated case management across programs, and provides a common platform for documenting participant services and outcomes.

AlaskaJobs enables Alaska Job Center staff and service providers to maintain comprehensive participant records, including:

- Planned and actual services
- Training activities and supportive service costs
- Individual Employment Plans and Individual Service Strategies
- Referrals to partner agencies and co-enrolled services
- Case notes and funding sources across programs

AlaskaJobs functions as the system of record for eligibility determination, data validation elements, and required documentation, including measurable skill gains, credentials, training justification, training dates, and follow-up services, supporting accurate federal reporting through PIRL.

The system also serves as a virtual Alaska Job Center, allowing job seekers and employers to:

- Search and apply for jobs
- Post and review resumes
- Recruit and screen candidates
- Access labor market information and career exploration tools

AlaskaJobs interfaces with Unemployment Insurance wage records to support employment verification and performance reporting. Automated data exchange enhances coordination, supports co-enrollment, and improves service delivery statewide.

### **Program-Specific System Coordination**

Vocational Rehabilitation (Title IV) utilizes the AWARE management information system to support case management, financial tracking, and federal reporting requirements under the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

While VR operates within a distinct system, coordination with AlaskaJobs supports referrals, co-enrollment, and integrated service planning consistent with Section II(c)(2), ensuring alignment across core programs.

### **Labor Market Information and Planning Systems**

Labor market information is provided through the DOLWD Research and Analysis Section, which maintains access to wage records, employment data, and education and training data from the Department of Education and Early Development and the University of Alaska.

These systems support:

- Data-informed workforce planning and policy development
- Sector strategy implementation and career pathway design
- Training investment decisions aligned with labor market demand
- Performance analysis and continuous improvement

LMI tools, including Alaska Economic Trends and online data portals, provide accessible and actionable information for staff, partners, employers, and job seekers.

### **Grants Management and Fiscal Systems**

The Electronic Grants Administration and Management System (EGrAMS) supports the administration of state and federal workforce grants, including WIOA Youth, Adult Education, Apprenticeship, and SCSEP.

EGrAMS provides standardized processes for application, award, monitoring, and closeout, ensuring accountability and fiscal integrity.

A grants management module for AlaskaJobs is under development and will strengthen alignment between participant-level service data and grant-level financial and performance reporting, enhancing transparency and system interoperability.

### **Communication, Engagement, and Remote Service Tools**

The Semi-Autonomous Research Assistant (SARA) communication system supports participant engagement across WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs.

SARA supports service delivery through:

- Automated appointment reminders and follow-up communications
- Electronic document submission and collection
- Collection of training progress and employment information
- Post-exit engagement and data validation

SARA improves service access and continuity by allowing participants to communicate and submit documentation remotely. Integration with AlaskaJobs is underway and will expand to additional programs, including WIOA Youth and SCSEP.

### **Supporting Rural and Remote Service Delivery**

Alaska's operating systems support hybrid and virtual service delivery models essential for serving rural and remote communities.

These strategies include:

- Mobile-friendly platforms and online service access
- Remote communication and document submission tools
- Partnerships with libraries, tribal facilities, and community organizations

These approaches reduce geographic barriers and ensure equitable access to workforce services while maintaining consistent service quality statewide.

#### **Coordination with Data and Technology Strategies**

Operating systems described in this section align with data governance, privacy, and modernization efforts described in Section III(b)(6) – Program Data.

Together, these systems support:

- Secure data sharing across programs
- Accurate and timely performance reporting
- Continuous improvement and evaluation
- Evidence-based workforce planning

#### **System Impact and Alignment with AWF**

Through integrated operating systems, Alaska strengthens workforce system performance by:

- Supporting coordinated service delivery and co-enrollment
- Improving data quality, reporting accuracy, and program accountability
- Expanding access through virtual and remote service delivery
- Enhancing decision-making through labor market and performance data
- Strengthening alignment across workforce programs and partners

These systems provide the operational foundation for implementing Alaska's Workforce Future and delivering coordinated, customer-centered workforce services statewide.

[\(2\) 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 on State-administered one-stop partner programs' contributions to the one-stop delivery system, along with any additional guidance on one-stop partner contributions.](#)

#### **Overview – State Policy Framework**

Alaska's workforce system is supported by a comprehensive set of State policies that enable implementation of the strategies described in Sections II(b) and II(c), while maintaining program-specific statutory and regulatory requirements. These policies provide a framework for coordinated service delivery, shared accountability, and consistent administration across core programs and one-stop partners.

State policies are developed and maintained collaboratively across the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), including the Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS), the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), and the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). Policies apply to State staff and are incorporated into subaward agreements to ensure alignment and compliance among subrecipients.

Alaska's policy approach emphasizes flexibility, consistency, and alignment with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF), supporting integrated service delivery across urban and rural areas while allowing programs to operate within their respective statutory authorities.

### **Key Elements – State Policies**

- Enables coordinated service delivery, co-enrollment, and shared accountability across core programs and partners
- Supports consistent intake, referral, and case management processes across the Alaska Job Center Network
- Defines roles, responsibilities, and contributions of one-stop partners, including service delivery, infrastructure, and staffing
- Ensures universal access to workforce services, including accessibility for individuals with disabilities and those in rural communities
- Establishes standards for fiscal integrity, performance accountability, and data quality across programs
- Provides guidance for grant administration, subrecipient oversight, and compliance with federal and state requirements
- Supports integration of workforce strategies, including career pathways, sector partnerships, and work-based learning
- Promotes continuous improvement through policy communication, training, monitoring, and updates

### **Policies Supporting Integration, Co-Enrollment, and Service Alignment**

State policies support system integration and coordinated service delivery by establishing consistent expectations for co-enrollment, referrals, and, where appropriate, shared service strategies.

These policies:

- Support co-enrollment across WIOA core programs and partners where it enhances participant outcomes
- Enable coordinated intake, assessment, and referral processes across the Alaska Job Center Network
- Promote shared case management practices and documentation standards within AlaskaJobs
- Support alignment of services across career pathways, sector strategies, and work-based learning models

Co-enrollment is actively implemented through coordinated intake, shared case management practices, and the use of AlaskaJobs to document services and track participant progress across programs.

Policies such as co-enrollment, participant common exit, and data integrity ensure that programs coordinate services, maintain compliance with federal reporting and performance requirements, and support consistent service delivery across the workforce system.

Supporting workforce policies governing system operations, data sharing, and coordinated service delivery are provided in Appendix D – Policy Inventory.

### **Universal Access and One-Stop Partner Roles**

State policies establish expectations for one-stop partner contributions to the Alaska Job Center Network, including service delivery, infrastructure support, and access to services.

These policies support:

- Provision of career, training, and supportive services through the one-stop system
- Universal access to services, including accessibility for individuals with disabilities
- Coordination of partner staff and resources within Alaska Job Centers
- Delivery of services through in-person, virtual, and hybrid models

The One-Stop Operator Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) define partner roles, responsibilities, and cost-sharing arrangements consistent with WIOA Section 121(c). These agreements support coordinated service delivery, cross-training of staff, and ongoing system improvement through

structured collaboration. Additional details regarding the MOU and Infrastructure Funding Agreement are provided in Section III(a).

**Policy Communication, Implementation, and Oversight**

Alaska ensures that policies are effectively communicated, implemented, and monitored across all programs and service providers.

This is achieved through:

- Publicly accessible policy manuals and guidance posted on DOLWD and AWIB websites
- Incorporation of policy requirements into grant agreements and subrecipient contracts
- Staff training and technical assistance to support consistent implementation
- Monitoring, data validation, and oversight processes to ensure compliance
- Corrective action procedures and continuous improvement practices

Policies are reviewed and updated periodically to reflect federal guidance, program changes, and system improvement efforts, ensuring continued alignment with TEGL guidance and statewide workforce strategies.

**Core Program Policy Areas**

Alaska maintains a comprehensive set of policies that support program administration, service delivery, and accountability across WIOA Title I, Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and SCSEP.

Key policy areas include:

- Eligibility determination and priority of service
- Co-enrollment and integrated service delivery
- Supportive services and training investments
- Data collection, reporting, and performance accountability
- Fiscal management, allowable costs, and subrecipient oversight
- Equal opportunity, accessibility, and nondiscrimination
- Monitoring, audit, and corrective action procedures

**State Policy Inventory – Summary Examples**

The State maintains detailed policy inventories across all core programs and partners. Examples of key policies include:

Policy area	Example policy	Policy number
<b>Co-enrollment</b>	Co-enrollment policy	07-505.1
<b>Eligible training providers</b>	Eligible training provider list	07-501.2
<b>Data integrity</b>	Data integrity policy	07-541
<b>Supportive services</b>	Supportive services policy	07-521.2
<b>Rapid response</b>	Rapid response activities	07-545.1
<b>Priority of service</b>	Veterans' priority of service	07-509.1

These examples reflect the types of policies that support coordinated service delivery, accountability, and compliance across the workforce system.

**Full Policy Inventory and Public Access**

Detailed policy inventories, including comprehensive listings of policy titles and numbers for WIOA Title I, Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and SCSEP programs, are provided in Appendix D – State Workforce Policy Inventory.

These policies are maintained on publicly accessible State websites. They are incorporated into program guidance, administrative procedures, and subrecipient agreements to support consistent statewide implementation and compliance with applicable federal and state requirements.

#### **System Impact and Alignment with AWF**

Through a coordinated and comprehensive policy framework, Alaska supports implementation of workforce strategies by:

- Enabling integrated service delivery and co-enrollment
- Establishing clear expectations for partner roles and contributions
- Ensuring accountability, consistency, and compliance across programs
- Supporting equitable access to workforce services statewide
- Promoting continuous improvement and system performance

These policies provide the foundation for implementing Alaska's Workforce Future and ensuring coordinated, high-quality workforce services across the State.

#### [\(3\) 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.

#### **Overview – State Agency Organization**

Alaska's workforce system is organized through a coordinated state agency structure that defines clear roles for governance, program administration, and service delivery across core and partner programs. This structure enables integrated service delivery, strengthens cross-program coordination, and ensures compliance with statutory authority, funding requirements, and performance accountability.

Alaska's workforce development system is administered through a coordinated organizational structure that supports statewide planning, policy alignment, and service delivery consistent with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF). Core workforce programs and Combined Plan partner programs are administered by designated state agencies and delivered through the Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN), ensuring coordinated, customer-centered access to employment and training services.

#### **Key Elements – State Agency Organization**

Alaska's workforce system is organized through a coordinated state agency structure that:

- Defines clear roles for governance, program administration, and service delivery
- Aligns core programs and partner programs within the Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- Supports integrated service delivery through the Alaska Job Center Network
- Enables coordination, co-enrollment, and shared planning across programs and partners
- Maintains compliance with statutory authority, funding requirements, and performance accountability

#### **State Workforce Governance and Oversight**

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) serves as the State Workforce Development Board and provides strategic oversight, policy direction, and performance accountability for Alaska's workforce system. AWIB advises the Governor and Legislature, establishes statewide workforce policies, and supports alignment of workforce programs with economic and industry needs.

AWIB's role is focused on governance, strategic planning, and grant oversight. Responsibility for program operations, fiscal management, and service delivery remains with the administering state agencies, consistent with each program's statutory authority and funding requirements.

AWIB also provides oversight for additional statewide workforce initiatives, including the State Training and Employment Program (STEP), Alaska Construction Academies, and the Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP), supporting alignment of these initiatives with statewide workforce strategies.

#### **Administration of Core Programs**

Core workforce programs are administered within the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) as follows:

- **WIOA Title I – Adult and Dislocated Worker**  
Administered by the Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS), which is responsible for program operations, grant administration, performance accountability, and service delivery through the Alaska Job Center Network.
- **WIOA Title I – Youth**  
Administered by AWIB through competitively awarded subrecipients. Service delivery is coordinated through the Alaska Job Center Network and aligned with statewide workforce strategies.
- **WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)**  
Administered by DETS, with services delivered through competitively awarded providers. Adult education services are coordinated with workforce programs to support education, training, and employment pathways.
- **WIOA Title III – Wagner-Peyser Employment Services**  
Administered by DETS and delivered through the Alaska Job Center Network. Services include labor exchange, job matching, employer engagement, and career services for job seekers and employers.
- **WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation**  
Administered by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), which provides services to individuals with disabilities and coordinates with other workforce programs to support integrated service delivery and employment outcomes.

#### **Administration of the Combined Plan Partner Program**

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), known in Alaska as the Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training (MASST) program, is administered by DVR. SCSEP services are coordinated through the Alaska Job Center Network to support employment and training opportunities for eligible older workers, consistent with federal requirements.

#### **Service Delivery Through the Alaska Job Center Network**

The Alaska Job Center Network serves as the primary, integrated service delivery system for WIOA core and partner programs. Alaska operates a network of job centers and affiliated service sites across the state, providing access to workforce services in urban and rural communities.

Alaska Job Center staff deliver career services, training referrals, employer services, and supportive service coordination using a “no wrong door” approach that ensures customers are connected to appropriate services across programs. Referrals between programs are conducted as “warm hand-offs,” in which staff coordinate directly with partner programs to connect participants to services and ensure continuity of service delivery.

Service delivery includes:

- In-person services at job centers and partner locations
- Itinerant service delivery in rural and remote communities
- Virtual and technology-enabled services to expand access to services statewide

AJCs serve as access points for multiple programs, including Title I, Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education referrals, Vocational Rehabilitation, and SCSEP. Where programs are not co-located, standardized referral processes ensure coordinated access to services. Alaska Job Center staff provide individualized career services, including assessment, employment planning, job search assistance, and referrals to training and supportive services based on participant needs.

#### **Integrated Service Delivery and Customer Flow**

AJC staff conduct initial assessments to identify participant needs, skill levels, and barriers to employment. Based on this assessment, individuals are connected to appropriate services, including career services, training, education, or supportive services.

This coordinated approach supports:

- Co-enrollment across programs where appropriate
- Access to training, education, and work-based learning opportunities
- Connection to supportive services such as transportation and childcare
- Improved participant outcomes through aligned service strategies

Participants may also access self-service tools through AlaskaJobs, including job search, labor market information, and career exploration resources.

#### **Additional Programs and System Integration**

In addition to WIOA core programs, DETS administers several workforce- and employment-related programs, including Trade Adjustment Assistance, Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), Fidelity Bonding, Foreign Labor Certification, and Work Opportunity Tax Credit. These programs are integrated within the Alaska Job Center Network to support comprehensive service delivery.

Employer services are supported through dedicated Business Connection staff within AJCs, strengthening relationships with employers and aligning workforce services with industry needs.

#### **Organizational Structure and Reporting**

All core and Combined Plan partner programs operate within DOLWD, supporting coordination, alignment, and shared planning across workforce programs.

Reporting relationships, administrative responsibilities, and coordination structures are documented through:

- State policies and administrative guidance
- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs)
- One-Stop Operator (OSO) agreements
- Interagency coordination processes

An organizational chart depicting the State's workforce system structure, including governance and program administration, is provided in Appendix E – Organizational Chart Reference and is maintained by DOLWD. The organizational chart supports transparency and clarity in roles, responsibilities, and reporting relationships across Alaska's workforce system.

#### **Alignment with Alaska's Workforce Future**

This organizational structure supports Alaska's Workforce Future by enabling coordinated planning, aligned service delivery, and shared accountability across workforce programs. Clear delineation of governance, administration, and service delivery roles ensures efficient implementation of workforce strategies while maintaining compliance with WIOA requirements during the PY 2026–2027 State Plan modification period.

(B) *State Board.* Describe 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.

### **Overview – State Workforce Development Board**

Alaska's State Workforce Development Board, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), provides strategic leadership, policy direction, and oversight for the workforce system in accordance with WIOA requirements. The Board supports implementation of Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by aligning workforce, education, and economic development strategies, promoting continuous improvement, and ensuring accountability across core programs and partners.

AWIB operates in accordance with Section 101 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and 20 CFR Part 679. The Board provides statewide leadership while program administration and service delivery are carried out by State agencies, including the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) and partner programs.

### **Key Elements – State Workforce Development Board Functions**

- Establishes statewide workforce policies and approves the WIOA State Plan and modifications
- Provides oversight of performance accountability and continuous improvement under WIOA
- Ensures alignment across workforce, education, and economic development systems
- Engages business and industry to inform workforce strategies and sector priorities
- Maintains governance responsibilities while program administration remains with State agencies

AWIB's core functions, consistent with WIOA section 101(d), include development and approval of the State Plan, establishment of statewide workforce policies, oversight of performance accountability under WIOA section 116, and promotion of system alignment and continuous improvement. These responsibilities are carried out in coordination with DOLWD and partner agencies, consistent with statutory authorities and funding requirements.

### **Board Structure and Governance**

AWIB operates as a business-led board with membership that meets all composition requirements under WIOA section 101(b) and 20 CFR 679.110–120. Membership includes representatives from business and industry, workforce, education and training, economic development, labor organizations, and government agencies. This structure ensures that employer perspectives drive workforce strategy while supporting coordination across programs and systems.

The Board meets regularly to conduct official business, review performance outcomes, approve policies, and provide strategic direction. Meetings are conducted in accordance with Alaska's public meeting requirements, supporting transparency and stakeholder engagement.

### **Committees and Workgroups**

To carry out its responsibilities effectively, AWIB utilizes standing committees and ad hoc workgroups focused on key functional areas, including strategy development, performance and accountability, policy review, and system alignment.

These groups:

- Conduct detailed analysis and review of workforce system issues
- Engage stakeholders and subject matter experts
- Develop recommendations for Board consideration
- Support implementation of Board priorities and initiatives

Committees operate in an advisory capacity, and the full Board takes all formal actions in accordance with WIOA requirements. This structure supports focused oversight while maintaining alignment with the Board's statutory responsibilities.

#### **Coordination with Economic Development**

AWIB plays a central role in aligning workforce development strategies with statewide and regional economic development priorities. The Board coordinates with state and regional economic development entities to ensure workforce strategies support industry growth, infrastructure investments, and emerging economic opportunities.

This coordination includes:

- Integrating labor market information and economic data into workforce planning and policy decisions
- Aligning sector strategies and career pathways with priority industries and regional economic initiatives
- Supporting employer-driven workforce solutions that respond to current and projected labor demand
- Facilitating collaboration among workforce, education, and economic development partners to support talent pipelines

Through this coordination, AWIB ensures that workforce investments complement economic development efforts while maintaining clear separation of statutory roles, funding authority, and performance accountability.

#### **Oversight, Accountability, and Continuous Improvement**

AWIB carries out oversight and accountability responsibilities to ensure effective stewardship of workforce resources. These functions include reviewing statewide performance outcomes under WIOA section 116, monitoring progress toward negotiated performance levels, and supporting continuous improvement across the workforce system.

Performance data, labor market information, and evaluation findings inform Board decision-making and policy direction. These activities support data-driven planning, responsible resource use, and alignment with Alaska's Workforce Future framework.

#### **Board Support and Capacity Building**

DOLWD provides administrative, analytical, and technical support to AWIB to ensure the Board can effectively carry out its statutory responsibilities.

This support includes:

- Meeting coordination and administrative support
- Development of performance dashboards and briefing materials
- Policy analysis and technical guidance
- Access to labor market and economic data

Board members receive orientation and ongoing training to support informed participation, including briefings on WIOA requirements, workforce system performance, economic conditions, and emerging workforce trends.

These activities strengthen Board capacity, support effective governance, and ensure that Board members are equipped to carry out their responsibilities.

#### **Transparency and Public Access**

Information regarding AWIB membership, composition, and meeting materials is publicly available at:

<https://www.awib.alaska.gov>

A current roster of AWIB membership, including representation categories consistent with WIOA section 101(b) and 20 CFR 679.110–120, is provided in Appendix F – Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) and is maintained on the AWIB website.

This transparency supports stakeholder engagement, public accountability, and compliance with state and federal requirements, including WIOA and applicable open meeting laws.

#### [\(4\) 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 the other one-stop delivery system partner program services and the 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.

#### **Overview – Assessment Framework**

Alaska evaluates the effectiveness of core programs and one-stop partner programs through a coordinated, data-driven framework that supports performance accountability and continuous improvement across the workforce system. These efforts support implementation of Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF) by integrating performance metrics, monitoring processes, and stakeholder input to assess outcomes and inform system improvements, while maintaining program-specific statutory authority and accountability.

#### **Key Elements – Assessment of Core and One-Stop Partner Programs**

- Utilizes WIOA section 116 primary indicators of performance and related program accountability measures
- Integrates program monitoring, Alaska Job Center certification, and compliance reviews
- Applies labor market information and outcome data to assess system performance
- Incorporates stakeholder and customer feedback, as available
- Supports continuous improvement while maintaining program-specific statutory authority and accountability

#### **Assessment Framework and Scope**

Alaska assesses the effectiveness, quality, and continuous improvement of its workforce development system through a coordinated, data-driven approach aligned with the goals and priorities of Alaska’s Workforce Future.

Core programs, Combined Plan partner programs, and one-stop partner programs are assessed annually using WIOA performance accountability measures, program-specific requirements, and State monitoring processes during the PY 2026–2027 State Plan modification period.

Assessment activities evaluate:

- program performance against WIOA section 116 primary indicators
- quality and effectiveness of service delivery
- alignment with State and regional workforce priorities
- outcomes for participants and employers

Assessments are conducted at multiple levels, including statewide, regional, and provider levels, to ensure that program performance reflects local conditions, service strategies, and population needs. This approach supports evaluation of the coordinated service delivery and alignment strategies described in Section II(c)(2).

### **Assessment Methods and Tools**

The State employs multiple methods to evaluate program performance and system effectiveness, including:

- WIOA section 116 primary indicators of performance and related program accountability measures
- Program monitoring and compliance reviews conducted by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD)
- Alaska Job Center certification and recertification processes, consistent with WIOA and 20 CFR 678.800
- Analysis of labor market information and program outcome data
- Stakeholder and customer feedback, as available

These tools provide complementary perspectives on program effectiveness, service quality, and system alignment, supporting data-informed decision-making across the workforce system.

### **Local, Regional, and Provider-Level Assessment**

Alaska evaluates program performance and service delivery at the local, regional, and provider levels to ensure that workforce services are responsive to local labor market conditions and regional economic priorities.

This includes:

- Review of performance outcomes by provider and program
- Monitoring of service delivery quality and compliance at the provider level
- Assessment of alignment with regional sector strategies and workforce priorities
- Consideration of geographic factors, including rural and remote service delivery challenges

These assessments support targeted technical assistance, performance improvement strategies, and alignment with local and regional planning goals.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Assessment responsibilities are shared across the workforce system consistent with statutory roles.

- The Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) is responsible for program monitoring, performance reporting, and operational oversight of workforce programs
- The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) provides system-level oversight by reviewing statewide performance outcomes, monitoring progress toward negotiated performance levels, and supporting alignment with statewide workforce strategies
- Core programs and one-stop partners conduct assessment activities within their respective authorities and contribute to system-level evaluation through data reporting, coordination, and continuous improvement

This structure ensures clear separation between governance, oversight, and program administration while supporting coordinated system evaluation.

### **Continuous Improvement Approach**

Assessment results are used to support continuous improvement, quality assurance, and alignment with statewide workforce priorities. Findings inform:

- Technical assistance and capacity-building activities
- Policy clarification and updates
- Service delivery improvements and program design adjustments
- Strategic planning and resource alignment

These activities support continuous improvement within existing statutory and funding authorities and do not create new program requirements or performance obligations. This approach promotes accountability, transparency, and system effectiveness while maintaining flexibility to respond to evolving workforce and economic conditions.

*(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 years 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.*

#### **Overview – Prior Assessment Findings**

Alaska’s prior assessment activities identified key system-level themes that inform current workforce strategies and continuous improvement efforts across the workforce system. These findings support the implementation of Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF) by highlighting opportunities to strengthen coordination, expand access, and improve alignment with labor market demand.

#### **Prior Assessment Activities**

During the prior planning period, Alaska conducted ongoing assessment activities across core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs, and one-stop partner programs. These activities included:

- Review of performance outcomes using WIOA section 116 primary indicators
- Program monitoring and compliance reviews conducted by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD)
- Alaska Job Center certification and recertification processes
- Analysis of workforce system data and labor market information
- Consideration of stakeholder and customer feedback, as available

These assessments were conducted in accordance with WIOA requirements and aligned with Alaska’s Workforce Future framework. Findings from these activities provide the foundation for the assessment framework described in Section III(b)(4)(A).

#### **Key Findings from Prior Assessments**

Prior assessments identified several system-level findings related to service delivery, access, and system alignment, including:

- The importance of coordinated service delivery and co-enrollment to improve customer access, navigation, and outcomes
- Variability in service capacity across regions due to geographic, staffing, and infrastructure constraints
- The value of employer engagement and sector strategies in aligning training with labor market demand
- The need to strengthen equitable access for populations facing barriers to employment

These findings reflect system-wide trends observed across programs rather than program-specific compliance determinations.

#### **Use of Assessment Results**

Assessment results were used to inform workforce system improvements and strengthen service delivery across programs. Actions taken include:

- Policy clarification and guidance to support consistent implementation across programs and providers
- Targeted technical assistance and capacity-building activities for service providers
- Adjustments to service delivery models, including expanded use of virtual and partner-based services
- Refinement of statewide workforce priorities and strategies to better align with labor market demand

These actions supported improved coordination, service quality, and responsiveness to Alaska’s economic and workforce conditions.

### **Adaptation of Strategies Based on Assessment Results**

Findings from prior assessments directly informed the strategic vision, goals, and alignment strategies described in Sections II(b) and II(c). In particular, Alaska has:

- Strengthened coordinated service delivery and co-enrollment strategies across programs
- Expanded virtual and hybrid service delivery models to improve access in rural and remote communities
- Enhanced employer engagement and sector partnership strategies to align training with industry demand
- Increased focus on equitable access and service strategies for populations with barriers to employment

These adaptations reflect a data-informed approach to system improvement and support alignment with statewide workforce priorities.

### **Continuous Improvement and System Alignment**

Assessment findings continue to inform ongoing continuous improvement efforts during the PY 2026–2027 State Plan modification period. Alaska uses performance data, monitoring results, and stakeholder input to guide planning, policy development, and service delivery enhancements.

These efforts reinforce Alaska’s commitment to:

- Data-informed decision-making
- Continuous system improvement
- Alignment across workforce, education, and economic development systems
- Responsiveness to changing workforce and economic conditions

This approach ensures that Alaska’s workforce system remains effective, accountable, and aligned with federal and state workforce priorities while maintaining program integrity and respecting statutory roles and funding authorities.

*(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)).*

### **Overview – Evaluation**

Alaska conducts evaluations and applied research activities to assess the effectiveness of workforce programs, improve service delivery, and inform continuous improvement across WIOA core programs. Evaluation efforts are coordinated across State agencies, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), and program partners to ensure alignment with statewide workforce strategies and federal requirements under WIOA Section 116(e). The State’s evaluation approach emphasizes data-driven decision-making, cross-program coordination, and evidence-based practices to strengthen system performance and improve outcomes for participants and employers.

### **Key Elements – Evaluation Approach**

Alaska’s evaluation framework includes:

- Use of data and research to assess program effectiveness and participant outcomes
- Coordination of evaluation activities across WIOA core programs and partner programs
- Integration of evaluation findings into policy, program design, and service delivery
- Alignment with evaluation priorities established by the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education
- Use of both program-specific and cross-program evaluation strategies
- Collaboration with internal and external partners to ensure methodological rigor

- Continuous improvement through application of evaluation results

#### **Coordination of Evaluation Activities**

Evaluation and research activities are coordinated across core programs and partner agencies to ensure alignment with statewide workforce priorities and statutory requirements.

- The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) provides strategic oversight and supports alignment with statewide workforce strategies
- The Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), including the Research and Analysis Section, supports data analysis, research design, and evaluation implementation
- Core programs and partner agencies collaborate in the design and execution of evaluation activities within their respective program authorities

Evaluation activities are developed in coordination with State and program leadership and are informed by workforce system priorities, performance outcomes, and identified areas for improvement.

Alaska also coordinates evaluation efforts with federal evaluation activities conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Education, consistent with WIOA Section 116(e), to ensure alignment with national research priorities and methodologies.

#### **Re-employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Evaluation**

Alaska is evaluating its Re-employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program to assess the effectiveness of interventions to improve reemployment outcomes for Unemployment Insurance claimants.

UI claimants are selected based on location and identified employment barriers and are invited to participate in RESEA interviews conducted by Wagner-Peyser staff within the Alaska Job Center Network. These services support continued eligibility for benefits while connecting individuals to reemployment services, including referrals to WIOA Title I, Title II, Title III, and Title IV programs.

To strengthen evaluation rigor, Alaska has implemented a random-assignment evaluation design that compares outcomes between participants who receive standard RESEA services and those who receive an enhanced intervention.

Key elements of this evaluation include:

- Random assignment of participants into treatment and control groups
- Implementation of a second RESEA interview as the primary intervention
- Measurement of outcomes, including employment status, median earnings, duration of unemployment insurance benefits, and benefit expenditures

Alaska has adapted its evaluation design to address challenges associated with small population size and geographic dispersion. The evaluation is conducted in collaboration with Unemployment Insurance program staff, the Research and Analysis Section, and external evaluation partners, including Abt Global.

Implementation of the evaluation is ongoing, with continued refinement of methodology and timelines as resources allow. This approach supports reliable and actionable findings aligned with federal evaluation standards.

#### **Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort (EvalPLC)**

Alaska participates in the WorkforceGPS Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort (EvalPLC) to strengthen evaluation capacity and advance cross-program evaluation strategies.

Through participation in recent cohorts, representatives from all WIOA core programs and AWIB have collaborated to:

- Develop shared evaluation approaches across programs
- Strengthen cross-program communication and coordination
- Identify strategies to evaluate integrated service delivery and co-enrollment
- Align evaluation efforts with federal guidance and best practices

As part of this work, Alaska collaborated with U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration staff to develop an evaluation proposal that addresses challenges such as small sample sizes and geographic dispersion while maintaining alignment with WIOA Section 116(e).

#### **Cross-Program Evaluation and Continuous Improvement**

Alaska's evaluation activities support broader system improvement by informing policy development, program design, and service delivery across workforce programs.

These efforts:

- Support evaluation of integrated service delivery and co-enrollment strategies
- Promote consistent and coordinated evaluation approaches across programs
- Inform decision-making related to workforce investments and service strategies
- Strengthen evidence-based practices to improve participant and employer outcomes

Evaluation findings are incorporated into planning, policy development, and system improvements to ensure that Alaska's workforce system remains responsive, data-informed, and aligned with statewide and federal workforce priorities.

[\(5\) 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, describe the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—](#)

#### **Overview – Title I Formula Distribution**

Alaska distributes Title I Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker funds under its Single State Local Area designation through a coordinated, data-driven methodology that aligns funding decisions with regional economic conditions, workforce needs, and statewide priorities. This approach supports the implementation of Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by ensuring that workforce investments are made.

are responsive, equitable, and aligned with labor market demand across Alaska's diverse geographic regions. The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), in coordination with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), administers Title I funds statewide. Funding methodologies are established in Within-State Funding Allocation Policy 07-518.1 and are consistent with WIOA sections 128(b) and 133(b), as applicable, and implementing federal regulations.

Across all funding streams, Alaska applies objective labor market and demographic data, utilizes six economic regions for planning and analysis, and balances formula-based distribution with administrative flexibility to respond to changing economic conditions. This approach ensures that resources are directed to areas of greatest need while supporting statewide workforce strategies and service delivery across urban, rural, and remote communities.

### Key Elements – Title I Formula Distribution

- Single-state local area model: Title I funds are administered statewide to ensure coordinated planning, consistent policy implementation, and equitable access to services
- Data-driven allocation: Funding methodologies are based on WIOA statutory factors, labor market information, and demographic data to reflect regional need
- Six economic regions: Used to inform funding distribution, planning, and performance analysis
- Standard reservations: Each funding stream includes reservations for statewide administration (5 percent) and statewide activities (10 percent), with additional Rapid Response funding for Dislocated Worker programs
- Formula-based distribution: Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker funds are allocated using federally defined factors and weighted methodologies aligned with WIOA requirements
- Competitive and strategic investments: Youth funds are primarily distributed through competitive grants, while Adult and Dislocated Worker funds support both formula-driven and programmatic investments
- Alignment with AWF priorities: Funding supports sector strategies, work-based learning, career pathways, and services for priority populations
- Flexibility and responsiveness: The State retains the ability to adjust allocations and transfer funds between programs in response to economic conditions and workforce needs
- Support for rural and remote communities: Allocation methodologies account for geographic barriers and access challenges

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

Alaska distributes Title I Youth funds through a statewide, data-informed methodology that aligns funding decisions with regional need, workforce priorities, and program performance. This approach supports strategic investment in youth services, promotes equitable access, and strengthens alignment between funding, service delivery, and outcomes.

The State's methodology is established in Within-State Funding Allocation Policy 07-518.1, consistent with WIOA section 128(b) and 20 CFR 681.400.

Each program year:

- Five percent (5 percent) of funds are reserved for statewide administration
- Ten percent (10 percent) is reserved for statewide activities supporting AWF priorities

The majority of remaining funds are distributed through competitive grants, consistent with Alaska's Single State Local Area designation, to ensure statewide access, service quality, and alignment with workforce priorities.

For planning and analysis, funding distribution is informed by Alaska's six economic regions: Anchorage/Mat-Su, Gulf Coast, Interior, Northern, Southeast, and Southwest. Funds are evaluated using three factors, each weighted equally (33.3 percent):

1. Areas of substantial unemployment  
Relative number of unemployed individuals in areas with unemployment rates of 6.5 percent or higher
2. Excess unemployment  
Relative number of unemployed individuals in areas with unemployment rates of 4.5 percent or higher
3. Disadvantaged youth population  
Relative number of disadvantaged youth compared to the statewide total

This framework ensures that Youth funding is responsive to regional economic conditions and population needs while maintaining flexibility to support innovative service delivery models and priority populations.

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

Alaska distributes Title I Adult funds through a statewide, data-driven methodology aligned with labor market conditions, economic need, and workforce system priorities.

The State's methodology is established in Within-State Funding Allocation Policy 07-518.1, consistent with WIOA section 133(b)(2).

Each program year:

- Five percent (5 percent) of funds are reserved for statewide administration
- Ten percent (10 percent) is reserved for statewide activities

Remaining funds are distributed across Alaska's six economic regions using labor market data from the DOLWD Research and Analysis Section.

Funds are allocated using four factors, each weighted equally (25 percent):

1. Areas of substantial unemployment
2. Excess unemployment
3. Disadvantaged adult population
4. Employed individuals

Adult program funds support services, including Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), career services, and supportive services delivered through the Alaska Job Center Network.

The Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS) Director, or designee, may:

- Adjust allocations to ensure effective use of funds
- Respond to emerging workforce needs and regional economic conditions

Alaska permits transfer of up to 100 percent of funds between Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, with appropriate approval, to support system responsiveness.

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

Alaska distributes Title I Dislocated Worker funds through a coordinated, data-driven methodology that reflects economic conditions, employment disruptions, and regional workforce needs.

The State's methodology is established in Within-State Funding Allocation Policy 07-518.1, consistent with WIOA section 133(b)(2).

Each program year:

- Five percent (5 percent) of funds are reserved for statewide administration
- Ten percent (10 percent) is reserved for statewide activities
- Up to twenty-five percent (25 percent) is reserved for Rapid Response activities

Remaining funds are distributed across Alaska's six economic regions using labor market data from the DOLWD Research and Analysis Section.

Funds are allocated using four factors, each weighted equally (25 percent):

1. Insured unemployment
2. Unemployment concentrations (areas of substantial unemployment)

3. Long-term unemployment (15 weeks or more)
4. Employed individuals

Dislocated Worker funds support career services, training, Rapid Response, and reemployment activities delivered through the Alaska Job Center Network.

The DETS Director, or designee, may:

- Adjust allocations in response to dislocation events or emerging needs
- Coordinate funding with Rapid Response and employer engagement strategies

Alaska's ability to transfer funds between Adult and Dislocated Worker programs further enhances flexibility and responsiveness.

*(B) For Title II:*

#### **Overview – Title II Distribution**

Alaska distributes Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds through a competitive grant process that ensures direct and equitable access to eligible providers statewide. This approach supports the implementation of Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by aligning adult education services with workforce priorities, expanding access to education and training opportunities, and improving outcomes for individuals facing barriers to employment, in accordance with federal requirements.

#### **Key Elements – Title II Distribution (AEFLA)**

- Distributes AEFLA funds through a competitive grant process to eligible providers statewide
- Supports adult education, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE), and correctional education programs
- Ensures alignment with federal requirements and allowable activities under AEFLA
- Promotes equitable access to services across Alaska's regions, including rural and remote communities
- Aligns adult education services with workforce priorities, career pathways, and employment outcomes

*(i) Describe the methods and factors the eligible agency will use to distribute Title II funds.*

#### **Distribution of Funds**

Title II funds are awarded as multi-year AEFLA grants to eligible providers of adult education services. The Alaska Adult Education (AAE) office administers these funds through a competitive grant process to support the delivery of adult education activities statewide.

Regional AEFLA grants are awarded to providers serving Alaska's geographic regions, with separate competitions conducted for each region. In addition, statewide competitions are conducted for:

- Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE)
- Correctional education and education for other institutionalized individuals

Funding is contingent upon federal and state appropriations, federal allocations to the State, and approval of the Alaska WIOA Combined State Plan.

The AAE office ensures that no more than 20 percent of AEFLA funds made available for local activities are used for correctional education, consistent with WIOA Title II requirements and 34 CFR Part 463.

### **Funding Factors and Award Determination**

While AEFLA funds are awarded through a competitive process, the AAE office applies consistent factors to inform award amounts and ensure equitable distribution across regions. These factors include:

- Base funding level of \$100,000
- Average measurable skill gain (MSG) performance based on the three most recent full years of available data
- Average full-time student enrollment based on the three most recent full years of available data

Continuation of multi-year grants is contingent upon:

- Program performance during the previous grant cycle
- Compliance with applicable state and federal program requirements

These factors support equitable distribution while maintaining accountability for performance and outcomes.

(ii) Describe how the eligible agency will ensure “direct and equitable access 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”. [(WIOA Title II Section 231(c)(1)-(2)]

### **Eligible Providers and Competitive Process**

Eligible providers, as defined in WIOA section 203(5), include organizations with demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities.

The AAE office ensures direct and equitable access to AEFLA funds by:

- Issuing a statewide Request for Grant Applications (RGA) through Alaska’s public notice system
- Providing uniform application instructions, timelines, and requirements for all applicants
- Ensuring all applicants are evaluated using the same criteria and review process
- Conducting a competitive review process consistent with WIOA section 231(e) and 34 CFR 463.20–463.30

All eligible providers, including those not previously funded, are provided a fair and equitable opportunity to compete for funding.

Applications are evaluated in accordance with the 13 considerations identified in WIOA section 231(e), including demonstrated effectiveness, alignment with local and regional workforce needs, and the ability to serve individuals with barriers to employment.

### **Program-Specific Allocations**

#### **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE)**

The IELCE program is funded solely through federal AEFLA funds. Allocations are determined annually by the U.S. Department of Education and awarded through a statewide competitive process consistent with federal requirements.

#### **Correctional Education**

Correctional education and education for other institutionalized individuals are funded through AEFLA funds in accordance with WIOA Title II and 34 CFR Part 463.

Not more than 20 percent of funds available for local activities are used for these purposes. The AAE office allocates correctional education funding consistent with federal requirements and state-established funding and performance considerations.

*(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.

#### **Overview – Vocational Rehabilitation Fund Distribution**

Alaska administers the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program through a single designated State agency, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), within the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD). This structure supports implementation of Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by providing a unified approach to VR service delivery, ensuring consistent statewide access, and maintaining alignment with federal requirements under the Rehabilitation Act.

#### **Key Elements – Vocational Rehabilitation Fund Distribution**

- Administers VR services through a single designated State agency (DVR)
- Provides services to all eligible individuals, including individuals who are blind or visually impaired, within a combined agency structure
- Does not designate a separate agency for individuals who are blind under section 101(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Rehabilitation Act
- Does not require the distribution of VR funds among multiple VR agencies

Alaska has not designated a separate State agency to administer VR services for individuals who are blind under section 101(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Rehabilitation Act. As a result, all VR services, including those for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, are administered through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation as a combined agency.

Because Alaska operates a single VR agency, there is no distribution of VR funds between multiple VR agencies. Accordingly, the requirements of this section are not applicable.

#### **(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.

#### **Overview – Data Alignment and Integration**

Alaska's workforce system uses aligned data systems, coordinated governance, and standardized reporting practices to support integrated service delivery, performance accountability, and continuous improvement across WIOA core programs, Combined Plan partners, and one-stop partners. Consistent with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF), data alignment efforts emphasize improved access, equity, and system modernization while maintaining statutory program integrity, system security, and data privacy protections.

### Key Elements – Data Alignment and Integration

- Supports interoperability and exchange of common data elements across WIOA core programs
- Enables coordinated case management, co-enrollment tracking, and referral management across programs
- Ensures accurate and consistent federal reporting through standardized data elements, including PIRL
- Strengthens performance accountability through data validation, monitoring, and outcome analysis
- Protects confidential information through data-sharing agreements, user access controls, and privacy safeguards
- Supports evaluation, labor market analysis, and continuous improvement through integrated data systems

(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.

Alaska utilizes AlaskaJobs, the State's implementation of the Virtual OneStop (VOS) system, as the primary management information system (MIS) for WIOA Titles I–B (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth), Title II Adult Education, and Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, as well as Trade Adjustment Assistance and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit program. AlaskaJobs supports the collection, standardization, and exchange of common data elements required for assessment, evaluation, and federal reporting, including the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL).

WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services are administered through the AWARE case management system, which supports individualized service planning and federal reporting requirements. While AlaskaJobs and AWARE remain distinct due to differing statutory and programmatic requirements, Alaska supports interoperability through data-sharing agreements, standardized data elements, use of common identifiers where appropriate, and coordinated reporting protocols.

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Research and Analysis (R&A) Section facilitates cross-system data alignment through automated wage record matching using Unemployment Insurance (UI) data, and by coordinating with partner agencies, including the Department of Education and Early Development and the University of Alaska. These efforts support program evaluation, labor market analysis, and outcome reporting. Alaska's approach prioritizes functional interoperability and data alignment to support coordinated service delivery and performance accountability rather than full system consolidation.

### Data Collection, Validation, and System Use

Core program staff and subrecipients are responsible for collecting and entering participant data into applicable systems. While processes vary by program, data collection and reporting practices are aligned to support consistency, accuracy, and reporting integrity across the workforce system.

Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker programs utilize a paper application process, with data subsequently entered into AlaskaJobs by Alaska Job Center (AJC) or subrecipient staff. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development conducts quarterly data validation to verify accuracy and completeness and performs ongoing analysis of performance metrics to assess trends and outcomes. Results are shared with AJC leadership and program management to support continuous improvement.

The State is actively evaluating modernization strategies, including transitioning from paper-based applications to direct system entry using remote signature capabilities, to improve efficiency, reduce duplication, and enhance data timeliness.

Wagner-Peyser participants complete online registration in AlaskaJobs, with service information generated through system activity and supplemented by staff-entered services as needed. Adult Education providers collect participant data and enter it into AlaskaJobs to support case management and federal reporting.

Vocational Rehabilitation maintains participant data in AWARE, while SCSEP participant data are entered into the USDOL SCSEP Performance and Results Quarterly Performance Reporting (SPARQ/GPMS) system to ensure standardized reporting and program oversight.

(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.

Alaska continues to strengthen streamlined intake and participation tracking by leveraging AlaskaJobs as a shared entry point for employment and training services. AlaskaJobs supports unified customer registration, service tracking, and referrals across WIOA Titles I–III, enabling staff to identify eligibility, support co-enrollment, and reduce duplicative data collection.

Co-enrollment across programs is tracked through AlaskaJobs using participant-level records, service codes, and program enrollment indicators. These data allow staff and system administrators to monitor participation across multiple programs, assess service utilization, and evaluate outcomes associated with co-enrollment strategies. Vocational Rehabilitation maintains intake and case documentation in AWARE in accordance with federal requirements. Coordination across systems is supported through complementary tools and processes, including the Semi-Autonomous Research Assistant (SARA), which supports participant communication, appointment reminders, employment data collection, and post-exit follow-up.

These aligned systems improve customer navigation, particularly in rural and remote communities, and support earlier identification of service needs and the coordination of service planning across programs.

(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 Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) assists the Governor in aligning workforce technology and data systems through its oversight, policy, and coordination roles. AWIB supports system alignment by approving Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs), and the One-Stop Operator Agreement, which define partner roles, data-sharing expectations, and coordinated service delivery requirements. Additional details regarding the MOU and Infrastructure Funding Agreement are provided in Section III(a).

Through AWF governance structures, AWIB facilitates cross-program collaboration on data priorities, performance trends, and opportunities for system improvement. This coordination promotes transparency, reduces duplication, and reinforces shared accountability for outcomes while ensuring compliance with federal and state requirements.

(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)).

Alaska has established coordinated data systems and procedures to produce all reports required under WIOA Section 116(d)(2). Participant data for WIOA Titles I–III, Adult Education, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and partner programs are maintained in AlaskaJobs, supporting standardized reporting and minimizing duplication. Vocational Rehabilitation data are maintained in AWARE and reported in accordance with federal requirements.

AlaskaJobs generates quarterly and annual performance extracts used for federal reporting through the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS). The Research and Analysis Section produces performance dashboards, quarterly analyses, and negotiated performance reviews to support monitoring, compliance, and continuous improvement.

Eligible Training Providers submit program completion data through AlaskaJobs. Additional education data from the University of Alaska system and the Alaska Vocational Technical Center are matched with UI wage records to support outcome reporting and evaluation of training effectiveness.

#### **System Impact and Alignment with AWF**

- Supports improved access to services and performance tracking across programs and regions
- Strengthens equity through consistent identification and reporting of outcomes for priority populations
- Advances the modernization of workforce data infrastructure, including exploration of enhanced data-sharing tools, automation, and system improvements to support integrated service delivery and decision-making

These efforts support the strategies described in Sections II(c)(1) and II(c)(2) and provide the foundation for ongoing evaluation and continuous improvement across Alaska's workforce development system.

*(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 performance indicators.*

#### **Overview – Post-Program Success**

Alaska assesses participant outcomes using federally required WIOA performance indicators, integrated data systems, and supplemental state data sources to support performance accountability and continuous improvement across core programs. These efforts support implementation of Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by strengthening data-informed decision-making, improving alignment with labor market demand, and enhancing outcomes for participants, including individuals with barriers to employment.

#### **Key Elements – Assessment Of Participants' Post-Program Success**

- Primary measures include WIOA Section 116 performance indicators for employment, earnings, credential attainment, measurable skill gains, and effectiveness in serving employers
- AlaskaJobs serves as the core data system for participant tracking, exits, co-enrollment visibility, and outcome reporting across WIOA Titles I–III
- Post-exit outcomes are measured through wage record matching and administrative data to assess employment and earnings
- Supplemental data sources, including Unemployment Insurance wage records and, where appropriate, Permanent Fund Dividend data, enhance outcome analysis
- Performance results are reviewed by program leadership and the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) to inform system improvement
- Data are used to drive continuous improvement, strengthen alignment with labor market demand, and improve outcomes for priority populations

#### **Assessment Framework**

Alaska assesses the post-program success of participants exiting core workforce programs by combining WIOA primary performance indicators, integrated data systems, and supplemental state data sources. These activities are administered by lead State agencies responsible for WIOA Titles I–III and are aligned with federal performance accountability requirements.

This framework supports the evaluation of participants' ability to enter employment, retain employment, increase earnings, and transition into, or complete, postsecondary education and training aligned with in-demand industries.

#### **Use Of WIOA Performance Indicators**

Lead State agencies assess participant outcomes using the federally required WIOA primary indicators of performance, including:

- Employment in the second quarter after exit
- Employment in the fourth quarter after exit
- Median earnings in the second quarter after exit
- Credential attainment
- Measurable skill gains
- Effectiveness in serving employers, as applicable

These indicators provide a consistent and standardized framework for evaluating post-program success, including participants' entry into employment, retention in employment, wage progression, and completion of education and training programs aligned with workforce demand.

#### **Integrated Data Systems And Post-Exit Tracking**

Alaska leverages AlaskaJobs, the State's labor exchange and case management system, to track participant services, co-enrollment across programs, program exits, and outcomes across WIOA Titles I–III and other aligned programs. AlaskaJobs supports consistent data collection, cross-program visibility, and performance reporting aligned with Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) requirements.

Post-exit outcomes are assessed through Unemployment Insurance wage record matching, education and training completion data, and other administrative data sources. These processes are conducted in accordance with federal confidentiality requirements and data-sharing agreements.

Where appropriate, data integration supports analysis of participants' transition into postsecondary education, persistence in training, and attainment of industry-recognized credentials.

#### **Supplemental State Data Sources**

In addition to federally required data, Alaska uses supplemental state-level data sources to enhance understanding of post-program outcomes:

- Unemployment Insurance wage records include occupational information, supporting analysis of employment placement, job retention, wage progression, and alignment between training and employment outcomes
- Permanent Fund Dividend data, where permissible and appropriate, may be used to identify participant residency patterns and individuals who have exited the State following program participation

Use of these supplemental data sources is analytical in nature and does not affect program eligibility, benefits, or participant rights. These data provide additional insight into workforce mobility, occupational outcomes, and wage progression across Alaska's regional labor markets.

#### **Continuous Improvement And System Learning**

Assessment of post-program success informs continuous improvement efforts across the workforce system, within existing statutory authority and available resources. Performance data are reviewed by program leadership and the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) to identify trends, disparities, and opportunities for improvement, including:

- Alignment of training investments with labor market demand

- Service effectiveness for priority populations
- Regional differences in outcomes related to geography and access
- Opportunities to strengthen co-enrollment, work-based learning, and employer engagement strategies

PIRL-based performance data are reviewed regularly, including monthly and quarterly analysis, to assess progress toward negotiated performance levels and identify areas for improvement across regions. This ongoing review supports data-informed decision-making, enables high-performing regions to share best practices, and strengthens system-wide performance.

These assessment practices support AWF goals related to system modernization, accountability, and equitable access, and reinforce the data-driven strategies described in Sections II(c)(1) and II(c)(2).

*(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.)*

#### **Overview – Use of UI Wage Record Data**

Alaska utilizes quarterly Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records as a primary data source for workforce performance accountability, program evaluation, and labor market information (LMI) development. These data support the State’s ability to measure employment outcomes, inform workforce planning, and guide data-driven decision-making across core programs and partner programs.

The use of UI wage records is governed by federal and state law and supported by established data-sharing agreements, ensuring data is used responsibly and in compliance with confidentiality and privacy requirements. These practices align with TEGL 05-25 and TEGL 07-25 and support Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF) priorities related to system modernization, accountability, and continuous improvement.

#### **Key Elements – Use of UI Wage Record Data**

- Supports WIOA performance accountability and federal reporting requirements, including employment and earnings outcomes
- Provides a consistent data source for program evaluation and evidence-based workforce planning
- Supports labor market information development, including wage, employment, and industry trend analysis
- Operates under federal and state law, including 20 CFR Part 603 and AS 23.20.100, with formal data-sharing agreements
- Protects confidential information through established data governance, access controls, and privacy safeguards
- Recognizes data limitations and incorporates supplemental data sources to support comprehensive outcome analysis

#### **Use of UI Wage Records for Performance Accountability**

Alaska utilizes quarterly Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records as the primary source for performance accountability, program evaluation, and labor market analysis, consistent with federal requirements. These records are used to calculate and report WIOA primary performance indicators, including employment in the second and fourth quarters after exit and median earnings, providing a reliable and standardized source for measuring participant outcomes across workforce programs.

Wage record data are integrated into performance reporting processes through established data systems and reporting protocols, ensuring compliance with federal requirements and supporting accurate, outcomes-based accountability.

### **Use of UI Wage Records for Evaluation and Research**

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), through its Research and Analysis (R&A) Section, uses UI wage records to conduct program evaluation and workforce research. These analyses examine employment outcomes, wage progression, industry attachment, and occupational trends to assess program effectiveness and inform system improvements.

UI wage data support evidence-based evaluation aligned with Alaska's workforce strategies and AWF priorities, including sector-based strategies, training alignment, and improved outcomes for priority populations.

### **Use of UI Wage Records for Labor Market Information**

UI wage records are a key input to Alaska's labor market information system. The R&A Section uses these data to produce reports and analyses on employment trends, wage outcomes, and industry demand.

These data support:

- Workforce planning and sector strategies
- Identification of in-demand and emerging occupations
- Alignment of education and training programs with labor market needs

### **Data Governance and Legal Compliance**

Access to and use of UI wage record data are governed by federal regulations, including 20 CFR Part 603, and Alaska State law (AS 23.20.100). Data-sharing agreements and established protocols define how wage data may be accessed, used, and disclosed for authorized purposes.

UI wage records are only used for allowable purposes and are subject to strict confidentiality requirements. Data used for reporting, evaluation, and analysis are de-identified or aggregated unless otherwise permitted by law.

### **Data Limitations and Supplemental Sources**

While UI wage records provide a comprehensive source of employment and earnings data, they do not capture all employment. Limitations include:

- Federal employment not covered by state UI systems
- Self-employment and certain contract work
- Employment in other states not captured through state wage records

To address these limitations, Alaska uses supplemental data sources, including federal data exchanges, administrative datasets, and other available sources, to enhance analysis and provide a more complete understanding of workforce outcomes.

The State uses data, performance outcomes, and partner feedback to support continuous improvement of workforce system operations and service delivery, ensuring ongoing alignment with employer needs and participant outcomes.

[\(D\) 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.](#)

### **Overview – Privacy Safeguards Across the Workforce Development System**

The State of Alaska maintains comprehensive privacy safeguards to protect personally identifiable information (PII) and confidential data across its workforce development system. These safeguards apply to workforce program data, interagency data sharing, and performance reporting. They are grounded in federal and state legal requirements, including the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), WIOA section 116(i), and applicable State of Alaska statutes.

Privacy protections are embedded in system design, data governance practices, and staff responsibilities to ensure secure data handling, maintain public trust, and support responsible data use. These efforts align with TEGL 05-25 and TEGL 07-25 and support Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) priorities related to system modernization, accountability, and data integrity.

#### **Key Elements – Privacy Safeguards**

- Restricts access to confidential data through role-based permissions and controlled system access
- Protects data through encryption in transit and at rest, secure file transfer protocols, and restricted-access environments
- Limits sharing of personally identifiable information to authorized purposes and uses de-identified or aggregated data when possible
- Requires regular staff training on confidentiality, data handling, and applicable federal and state requirements
- Governs interagency data sharing through formal agreements and established legal frameworks
- Maintains oversight and monitoring processes to ensure ongoing compliance with privacy and data security standards

#### **Data Protection and System Safeguards**

Alaska applies multiple layers of protection to workforce data systems, including AlaskaJobs and other program-specific systems. Access to sensitive data is restricted based on staff roles and job responsibilities, ensuring that only authorized personnel can access or use confidential information.

Data are protected through secure system architecture, including encryption for data transmission and storage, secure file transfer protocols, and restricted-access data environments. Microdata are maintained in controlled environments with established file handling and access protocols to prevent unauthorized use or disclosure.

#### **Interagency Data Sharing and Legal Compliance**

Data sharing across the workforce, education, and partner programs is conducted in accordance with applicable federal and state confidentiality requirements, including WIOA, the Privacy Act, FERPA, GEPA, WIOA section 116(i), and Alaska Statute AS 23.20.100.

Formal data-sharing agreements and established protocols govern the exchange of data between agencies, ensuring that:

- Data sharing is limited to authorized purposes consistent with program requirements
- Confidential information is protected during transmission, storage, and use
- Personally identifiable information is disclosed only when permitted by law and necessary for program administration

Education data, including K-12 and postsecondary information, is handled in compliance with FERPA requirements to ensure student privacy protections are maintained.

#### **Performance Reporting and Data Confidentiality**

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) ensures that data used for performance reporting, evaluation, and public reporting are de-identified or aggregated to protect individual privacy.

Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage record data are securely transferred to the Research and Analysis (R&A) Section through controlled system extracts and secure processes. These data undergo quality control review and are stored in restricted-access environments.

Consistent with federal regulations, including 20 CFR 603.5, and state statute (AS 23.20.100), wage record data are released only in aggregated form unless otherwise authorized, ensuring that individual workers and employers cannot be identified.

#### **Staff Training and Data Handling Protocols**

Staff who access or manage confidential data, including PII, are required to complete regular training on data privacy, confidentiality, and secure data handling practices.

This includes:

- Annual confidentiality and data security training aligned with State of Alaska requirements
- Federal training opportunities, including those provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and other federal partners
- Ongoing guidance and reinforcement on proper data access, use, and disclosure

These requirements ensure staff maintain current knowledge of privacy standards, legal requirements, and best practices.

#### **Oversight, Monitoring, and Continuous Improvement**

Alaska maintains oversight processes to ensure compliance with privacy and data security requirements across the workforce system.

These include:

- Monitoring of data access, system use, and user permissions
- Review of data-sharing agreements and interagency data exchange practices
- Ongoing evaluation of system controls, safeguards, and emerging data security needs

These efforts support continuous improvement, strengthen system integrity, and reinforce the State's commitment to responsible data governance and protection of sensitive information. These policies and practices are reinforced through monitoring, performance reporting, and continuous improvement processes to ensure consistent implementation statewide.

#### [\(7\) 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.](#)

The state follows all Special Grant Provisions, Veterans' Program Letters (VPLs) including VPL 07-09 and VPL 05-24, USDOL/VETS Law 107- 288, and United States Code Title 38.

State policies ensure Priority of Service (POS) for all covered persons and that they are identified at the initial point of entry—whether in person at an Alaska Job Center (AJC) or through AlaskaJobs.

Following the enactment of the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288) and subsequent changes under WIOA, the state revised, published, and issued an updated Military Veteran Priority of Service Policy (07-509.1). This policy requires that veterans and other covered persons under Public Law 107-288 receive POS under all employment and training programs funded by USDOL.

Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) administers numerous programs covered by these laws, regulations, and policies, including:

- WIOA Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker programs

- Wagner-Peyser,
- Trade Act programs,
- National Emergency Grants,
- SCSEP,
- DVR,
- Helmets to Hardhats, and
- Disability Employment Initiative (DEI).

### **Staff Training**

All WIOA and Wagner-Peyser staff receive training including specifics about the Jobs for Veterans Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and other legislation that impacts veteran priority, preference, and employability. Additionally, all AJC staff must complete the National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI) course “*A Day in the Life of JVSG Staff in an American Job Center*” which provides an overview of Veterans State Grant (JVSG) staff operations within the AJC. AJC efforts focus on the initial assessment of veterans to facilitate delivery of career and training services, as well as conducting outreach to employers to promote the advantages of hiring veterans. POS education efforts include signage at all AJC entry points (reception/front desk and on DOLWD’s Veteran Services webpage), and all AJC staff provide initial contact, POS, and general information.

### **Priority of Service (POS) Definition**

POS means that eligible veterans and covered persons priority access to all programs funded in whole or in part by the USDOL. All recipients of WIOA funds for employment and training programs are required to identify those who are eligible for POS at the points-of-entry to programs, resources, and services. Once veterans or eligible persons meet a program’s eligibility requirements, AJC staff ensure covered persons receive POS, as specified. Other community service providers funded by WIOA or Wagner-Peyser agreements are aware of their requirement to provide POS to veterans and eligible persons.

### **AJC and AlaskaJobs**

Veteran POS posters are posted near the reception/front desk of all AJCs informing participants that POS is given to veterans and eligible spouses and that they should inform staff if they are a veteran of the U.S. military or an eligible spouse. Additionally, POS information is posted on DOLWD’s Veteran Services webpage. The postage includes specific definitions of veterans and eligible spouse in relations to POS and lists services offered under POS.

When a participant creates an account in AlaskaJobs, the system requires the individual to answer veteran/military spouse related questions so that it can clearly identify whether the individual is a veteran or eligible spouse. When the system identifies the individual as POS eligible a eligibility designation/alert is marked in their account letting staff know POS is in effect and staff act accordingly by informing the veteran or eligible spouse their entitlement to POS and what the entails. DOLWD provides POS by moving veterans and eligible persons to the top of sign-up lists for employment services, workshops, trainings, and placement services. As a result, veterans and eligible persons receive services and resources in all DOL funded programs before non-covered persons. The larger AJCs also have dedicated veteran computers.

### **(B) Describe how the State will monitor priority of service provisions for veterans.**

At the AJC regional managers monitor POS for veterans by frequent contact with the AJC managers and through weekly or monthly reports. The Statewide Veterans’ Coordinator (SVC) provides quality control and ensures that POS processes and procedures are implemented by regularly reviewing and analyzing data on services and outcomes for veterans. The SVC conducts monthly veteran program meetings with local management and veteran staff to review processes and identify necessary improvements to services to veterans. The SVC meets monthly with the Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS) Assistant Director to discuss veteran services, including POS, and any improvement measures that need to be implemented on a statewide level. Although the

SVC provides guidance and consultation to the AJC management and staff, it is ultimately the AJC's responsibility to implement and monitor POS.

[\(C\) 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.](#)

#### **Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)**

Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff are funded by the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG). The JVSG utilizes federal funding to hire dedicated staff to provide individualized career and training-related services to eligible veterans and other eligible individuals with employment barriers and assisting employers to fill their workforce needs with veterans. These staff members provide vital services to veterans and employers seeking employment-related assistance.

DOLWD complies with all federal guidance, such as VPL 05-24 and Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 03-24. The DVOP specialists are housed in AJCs located in areas with the highest veteran populations and provide in-depth interviewing and comprehensive assessments to identify employment goals, interim objectives, and appropriate services that will enable the veteran and/or other covered persons to meet their employment goals. DOLWD developed a referral process to direct veterans and other covered persons to the appropriate staff member to ensure a client-centered approach to the delivery of career and training services.

When a participant creates an AlaskaJobs account, the system identifies if they are a veteran or spouse eligible for POS and the screens for DVOP eligibility. If eligible for DVOP services, the system will prompt a question asking the participant if they are interested in one or more individual career service and if the participant marks yes then the system will assign a JVSG indicator with a JVSG priority level next to the participants name in the system. Also, a notification email is sent to the closest job center, so staff know how to reach out to the eligible veteran or eligible person who requests DVOP services.

Commented [SL1]: The sentence needs to be revised to make sense.

When job seekers, who do not already have the JVSG indicator on their AlaskaJobs account, indicate they are a veteran or other eligible person upon initial entry to an AJC, staff ask additional questions to determine if they are an eligible veteran or eligible person, have an eligible employment barrier, and are in want of individual career services. Staff use a one-page DVOP eligibility guide listing eligible employment barriers, along with the definitions of eligible veteran, eligible spouse, and other groups that are eligible for DVOP services. If a determination is made that the veteran is eligible and wants individualized career services, they are referred to the DVOP specialist for further assessment. If DVOP services are unavailable, the next available AJC staff member sees the veteran.

Veterans and eligible spouses who don't qualify for or want DVOP services are still entitled to priority of service and may be eligible for services under WIOA Title I for adults, dislocated workers, and youth or WIOA Title III for employment services under the Wagner-Peyser program. AJCs follow a team approach to serving customers, including serving veterans. Staff work together to support the roles of LVERs and DVOPs in providing services to all veterans, not just those eligible for DVOP services. All staff are trained to deliver services to veterans. DOLWD encourages staff to engage veterans and insists that all AJC staff are veterans' representatives, not just JVSG-funded staff.

[\(8\) 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 must also include a description of compliance, including staff training and support to address the](#)

needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

#### **Overview – Accessibility for Individuals with Disabilities**

Alaska ensures that individuals with disabilities can access workforce services through a comprehensive accessibility framework that includes physical, programmatic, and technological access. These efforts support compliance with WIOA Section 188, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and 29 CFR Part 38.

Reasonable accommodations are provided upon request to ensure individuals with disabilities can fully participate in workforce programs and services.

#### **Key Elements – Accessibility for Individuals with Disabilities**

- Physical accessibility of facilities and service locations
- Programmatic accessibility through accommodations and auxiliary aids
- Multiple service delivery methods, including in-person and virtual services
- Partner coordination to support specialized services
- Staff training and capacity building
- Monitoring and continuous improvement processes

#### **Accessibility Framework and Compliance**

- State policy establishes expectations for universal access
- Equal Opportunity Officer oversight ensures compliance
- ADA coordinators provide technical assistance
- Accessibility is integrated into AJC certification and monitoring

#### **Staff Training and Accountability**

- Staff receive training on accessibility and disability awareness
- Annual assessments identify and address accessibility barriers
- Managers ensure corrective actions are implemented

#### **Adaptive Technology and Accommodations**

- AJCs provide assistive technology and accessibility tools
- Accommodations are individualized based on participant needs
- Coordination with partners supports comprehensive service delivery

#### **Certification and Continuous Improvement**

- Accessibility is reviewed through AJC certification processes
- Monitoring ensures compliance and identifies improvements
- Continuous improvement supports evolving accessibility needs

[\(9\) 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 can 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.

#### **Overview – Accessibility for English Language Learners**

Alaska ensures meaningful access to workforce services for individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) through language access services, staff training, and partner coordination. These efforts support compliance with WIOA Section 188, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and 29 CFR Part 38.

#### **Key Elements – Accessibility for English Language Learners**

- Language access services support effective communication
- Service delivery includes in-person, virtual, and partner-supported models
- Staff are trained in communication strategies and culturally responsive practices
- Partner coordination supports English language instruction and workforce services
- Outreach ensures awareness of available programs

#### **Language Access Framework and Compliance**

- Interpreter services are available across service delivery points
- Policies support identification and response to language needs
- Equal Opportunity framework supports monitoring and complaint procedures
- These efforts ensure meaningful access consistent with federal guidance on limited English proficiency issued by the U.S. Department of Justice

#### **Language Access Services and Resources**

- Telephonic interpreter services are available
- Referral access to interpreter services is provided
- Translated materials are available as appropriate

#### **Access to Core Programs and Co-Enrollment Opportunities**

- Individuals are informed of available programs during intake
- Staff provide application assistance across programs
- AlaskaJobs supports referrals and coordination across programs
- Co-enrollment supports integrated service delivery and career pathways
- Staff are trained to identify co-enrollment opportunities during intake and case management, and AlaskaJobs supports cross-program referrals and tracking to facilitate coordinated service delivery

#### **Partner Coordination**

- Coordination with Adult Education supports English language instruction
- Workforce partners provide wraparound and employment services
- Collaboration supports career pathway development

#### **Equitable Access Across Alaska**

Across all populations, Alaska ensures workforce services are delivered in a coordinated, equitable, and accessible manner. Service delivery strategies reflect Alaska's geographic diversity and include in-person, virtual, and partner-supported approaches.

These efforts establish a unified accessibility and service delivery framework that ensures equitable access, strengthens service quality, and improves employment outcomes across Alaska's workforce system.

## 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.

### Overview – System Coordination

Alaska operates a coordinated, integrated, and performance-driven statewide workforce development system through shared governance, joint planning, aligned operational structures, and integrated service delivery across programs included in the Unified and Combined State Plan. Coordination among workforce, education, economic development, and human services partners ensures that individuals and employers receive seamless, customer-centered services regardless of program entry point, geographic location, or funding source.

This section describes how Alaska aligns strategies, resources, technology, and partnerships to implement the strategic vision, goals, and state strategies outlined in Section II and to meet the requirements of WIOA and 20 CFR part 678. These efforts are reinforced through monitoring, performance reporting, and continuous improvement processes to ensure consistent implementation statewide.

### Key elements – system coordination

- Governance: AWIB provides statewide oversight, policy alignment, and cross-program coordination under Alaska Workforce Future (AWF)
- Joint planning: core and partner programs participate in coordinated planning, implementation, and continuous improvement
- Operational alignment: MOUs, IFAs, and the One-Stop Operator (OSO) Agreement define partner roles, responsibilities, and service coordination
- Integrated service delivery: the Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN) supports co-enrollment, shared intake, coordinated case management, and referrals
- Partner coordination: alignment with required and optional one-stop partners, including education, human services, and economic development systems
- Technology and data: AlaskaJobs and aligned data systems support referrals, service tracking, and performance accountability
- Continuous improvement: system coordination supports access, equity, system modernization, and alignment with labor market demand

### Joint Planning and Shared Governance

Alaska's workforce system is governed through the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), which provides strategic oversight, policy guidance, and cross-program coordination in partnership with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD). Under the Alaska Workforce Future (AWF) framework, AWIB convenes core programs, Combined Plan partners, required one-stop partners, and key stakeholders to support joint planning, implementation, and continuous improvement.

Staff representing WIOA Titles I–IV, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), Vocational Rehabilitation, veterans programs, and the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) participate in structured interagency coordination. These efforts support the alignment of policies, performance accountability, the administration of the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), One-Stop Operator (OSO) oversight, and the implementation of statewide strategies.

The State Plan modification process reflects this joint planning approach and includes coordinated engagement with AWIB, DOLWD divisions, partner agencies, employers, training providers, tribal organizations, and regional stakeholders.

### **Operational Coordination and One-Stop System Alignment**

Operational coordination across programs is implemented through the Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN) using formal mechanisms, including Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs), the One-Stop Operator (OSO) Agreement, and regular partner coordination meetings at the state and regional levels.

Core and partner programs align service delivery, employer engagement, sector strategies, and career pathway development to ensure consistent, efficient service across regions. Alaska Job Centers serve as the primary access point for integrated services and are supported by itinerant, virtual, and partner-hosted service delivery models in rural and remote communities.

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), administered in Alaska as MASST, is integrated within AJCN operations and participates in coordinated service delivery, including employment services, supportive service alignment, and co-enrollment strategies for older workers.

### **Coordinated Service Delivery for Individuals**

Alaska coordinates service delivery across programs to reduce duplication, improve customer navigation, and support individuals with multiple barriers to employment. Integrated service delivery includes:

- Co-enrollment across WIOA Titles I-IV, Wagner-Peyser, and SCSEP, where appropriate
- Shared or standardized intake and assessment practices within the AJCN
- Coordinated case management and warm handoffs among partners
- Integration of supportive services through aligned workforce and human services programs

Staff are trained to identify co-enrollment opportunities during intake and case management, and AlaskaJobs supports cross-program referrals and tracking to facilitate coordinated service delivery.

Virtual and hybrid service delivery models expand access to services for individuals in rural and remote communities, complementing in-person services and supporting equitable access statewide.

### **Coordination with Required and Optional One-Stop Partners**

Alaska coordinates with required and optional one-stop partners, including Unemployment Insurance (UI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T), Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE), Adult Education, veterans programs, housing and human services agencies, tribal workforce programs, and corrections and reentry partners.

Alaska's experience responding to increased refugee arrivals demonstrates the strength of this coordinated system. Workforce programs collaborated with refugee resettlement organizations, human services partners administering Refugee Support Services and Cash and Medical Assistance, and education providers to support timely access to employment services and continuity of care. These coordination models continue to inform system design and inter-program alignment.

Partner roles, contributions, and expectations are defined through MOUs, IFAs, and the OSO Agreement and are reinforced through cross-training, referral protocols, and shared planning activities. This coordination supports wraparound services addressing barriers such as housing instability, limited English proficiency, behavioral health needs, reentry challenges, and digital access gaps.

All coordination activities are implemented within existing statutory authorities, subject to funding availability, and within program-specific accountability structures. These efforts do not create joint funding obligations or shared performance accountability across programs.

### **Alignment with Education, Economic Development, and Industry Systems**

Alaska's workforce system is aligned with K-12 education, postsecondary institutions, Career and Technical Education programs, the University of Alaska system, regional training centers, Registered Apprenticeship sponsors, and economic development organizations. These partnerships support sector strategies, career pathway development, work-based learning, and alignment of the talent pipeline with employer demand.

Statewide workforce planning is informed by labor market information and sector strategies, ensuring that workforce investments respond to current and projected employer needs while supporting economic development priorities.

### **Technology and Data Coordination**

Technology and data systems support coordination across programs through shared platforms, aligned policies, and data-informed decision-making. AlaskaJobs serves as the primary labor exchange and case management system for WIOA Titles I-III, supporting referrals, service tracking, and performance reporting.

Coordination with other program data systems, including Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Unemployment Insurance, as well as labor market information systems, supports integrated planning, cross-program analysis, and continuous improvement.

### **Link to Strategic Vision and Goals**

Through shared governance, coordinated operations, integrated service delivery, and aligned partnerships, Alaska ensures implementation of the strategic vision and goals outlined in Section II(b) and the state strategies in Section II(c).

This coordinated approach strengthens access, equity, system modernization, and performance outcomes, ensuring equitable access, strengthening service quality, and improving employment outcomes across Alaska's workforce system.

## V. COMMON ASSURANCES (for all core programs)

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (for all core programs) The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that:	Included
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 the public (including individuals with disabilities) with access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, as well as information regarding their activities, 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 administering 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) are members 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 made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;	Yes
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 comply 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 to direct eligible populations to DVOP services when appropriate.	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 it submits a Unified or Combined State Plan.

### Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I-B.

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following with respect to activities carried out under subtitle B—

#### (a) General Requirements

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

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

#### Overview – Single Statewide Local Area

Alaska operates as a single statewide local workforce development area under an approved waiver from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (USDOL ETA). This structure reflects Alaska's unique geographic scale, population distribution, and infrastructure constraints. It supports the implementation of Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by enabling coordinated planning, consistent policy implementation, and equitable access to workforce services across the State.

For planning, analysis, and stakeholder engagement, Alaska utilizes six state-designated economic regions. These regions support labor market analysis, sector strategy development, and regional coordination, but do not function as local workforce development areas under WIOA.

#### Key Elements – Single Statewide Local Area

- Local area designation: Alaska is designated as a single statewide local workforce development area approved by USDOL ETA
- Administrative structure: DOLWD administers WIOA Title I programs statewide, with AWIB serving as both the State and Local Workforce Development Board
- Regional framework: six economic regions are used for planning, analysis, and stakeholder engagement
- No sub-state areas: regions do not function as local workforce development areas under WIOA
- Rationale: Alaska's geographic scale, population distribution, and infrastructure constraints support a unified statewide system
- Outcome: promotes efficiency, consistency, and equitable access to workforce services statewide

#### Statewide Local Workforce Development Area Designation

USDOL ETA approves the State of Alaska as a single statewide local workforce development area, given its unique geography, population distribution, and labor market conditions. Alaska's vast geographic scale, remote and rural communities, and low population density make a single statewide designation the most effective and efficient structure for workforce planning, service delivery, and fiscal and performance accountability.

Under this designation, the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), in coordination with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), administers WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs statewide rather than through multiple local workforce development areas. This structure supports integrated planning, consistent policy implementation, and equitable access to workforce services across Alaska.

#### Regional Framework for Planning and Engagement

For planning, analysis, and non-administrative regional engagement, Alaska organizes workforce activities across six state-designated economic regions: Anchorage/Mat-Su, Gulf Coast, Interior, Northern, Southeast, and Southwest. These regions reflect Alaska's economic diversity, geographic scale, and labor market conditions.

These regions are used to support labor market analysis, sector strategy development, stakeholder engagement, and performance review. They do not have administrative authority and do not function as local workforce development areas under WIOA.

#### **Waiver and Governance Structure**

Alaska has maintained a single statewide workforce development area for more than a decade under an approved waiver. It continues to demonstrate that this structure promotes efficient use of resources, coordinated service delivery, and responsiveness to regional and statewide workforce needs.

Under this structure, AWIB fulfills both State Workforce Development Board and Local Workforce Development Board responsibilities in accordance with WIOA. This dual role supports streamlined governance, consistent policy direction, and alignment across core programs and partners.

#### **Alignment with State Strategy and System Efficiency**

The single statewide designation supports Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by enabling coordinated planning across programs, alignment with statewide and regional economic priorities, and consistent accountability for performance outcomes. This structure reduces administrative duplication, strengthens system integration, and supports more efficient use of limited resources.

It also enhances coordination with education, economic development, and human services partners in ways that reflect Alaska's geographic and operational realities, particularly in rural and remote communities.

#### **Cross-Reference to Waiver Authority**

Additional detail regarding Alaska's continued use of a single statewide workforce development area and associated waiver authority is provided in Section VI(e), Waiver Requests.

(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 elected chief officials to identify the regions.

#### **Overview – Designation Process and Consultation**

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) has established formal policies and procedures governing the designation and redesignation of Local Workforce Development Areas in accordance with Section 106 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These policies provide a consistent, transparent, and data-informed framework for evaluating local area requests and ensuring alignment with statewide workforce priorities under Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF).

Although Alaska currently operates as a single statewide local workforce development area under an approved waiver, the State maintains this designation framework to ensure it is ready to evaluate future requests in compliance with federal requirements.

#### **Key Elements – Designation Process, Criteria, and Consultation**

- Applies WIOA Section 106 criteria for designation and redesignation of local workforce development areas
- Requires demonstration of alignment with labor market areas and coherent economic regions
- Evaluates fiscal, administrative, and reporting capacity to administer WIOA Title I-B programs
- Assesses performance success and sustained fiscal integrity consistent with WIOA requirements
- Utilizes labor market and economic data to inform regional and planning area determinations
- Incorporates structured consultation with state agencies, chief elected officials, and stakeholders

### **Designation and Redesignation Criteria**

Local governing entities seeking designation or redesignation must submit a formal request to the AWIB demonstrating that the proposed area:

- Aligns with established local and regional labor market areas
- Represents a coherent economic development region
- Possesses sufficient federal and non-federal resources, including access to education and training institutions, to administer Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs under WIOA Title I-B
- Demonstrates the fiscal, administrative, and reporting capacity necessary to meet WIOA performance, financial management, and data reporting requirements

These criteria are applied consistently to support effective local governance, fiscal stewardship, and service delivery capacity.

### **Performance and Fiscal Integrity Determinations**

In accordance with WIOA Section 106(b)(2), a local area is considered to have performed successfully if it has met or exceeded negotiated levels of performance on the WIOA primary indicators of performance for the most recent two consecutive program years, as applicable.

Pursuant to WIOA Section 106(b)(3), sustained fiscal integrity is determined based on the absence of significant audit findings, disallowed costs, or unresolved fiscal monitoring issues, as well as demonstrated compliance with federal and state fiscal reporting and internal control requirements.

The AWIB supports these determinations through regular monitoring and oversight activities, including review of performance outcomes, fiscal records, and reporting systems, in coordination with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD). These processes are reinforced through ongoing monitoring, performance reporting, and continuous improvement activities to ensure compliance and accountability.

### **Regional Identification and Use of Data**

Regional and planning area determinations are informed by labor market and economic data produced by DOLWD's Research and Analysis Section. Factors considered include industry composition, commuting patterns, population distribution, geographic access, and regional economic conditions.

This data-driven approach supports alignment between workforce planning regions and Alaska's diverse regional economies while accounting for the State's unique geographic and demographic characteristics.

### **Consultation and Governance**

Designation, redesignation, and regional planning decisions are supported through structured consultation processes involving:

- The Alaska Workforce Investment Board, which provides policy oversight and recommendations
- DOLWD divisions, including the Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS) and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), to support operational and programmatic alignment
- Chief elected officials and local stakeholders, whose input is obtained through formal engagement opportunities, public board meetings, and stakeholder consultations

These consultation processes ensure compliance with WIOA Section 106(a) requirements and support transparent, inclusive decision-making aligned with statewide workforce priorities.

AWF governance structures reinforce these processes by ensuring that designation and regional planning decisions align with statewide workforce priorities, sector strategies, and long-term system goals, while preserving program-specific statutory roles and accountability.

### **Current Status**

During the most recent planning cycle, no requests for designation or redesignation of local workforce development areas were submitted. The AWIB will continue to maintain and apply its established designation framework and consultation processes to ensure readiness to evaluate future requests, consistent with WIOA requirements and Alaska's strategic workforce objectives.

While Alaska's local area designation framework supports effective regional governance under WIOA, certain structural and geographic considerations described elsewhere in this Plan may warrant targeted flexibility. Any such flexibility is addressed, where applicable, in Section VI(e).

[\(C\) Provide the appeals process and policy referred to in section 106\(b\)\(5\) of WIOA relating to the designation of local areas.](#)

### **Overview – Appeals Process**

The State of Alaska has established a formal appeals process for entities denied designation as a local workforce development area, consistent with Section 106(b)(5) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and 20 CFR § 683.640.

This process ensures that applicants have access to a timely, transparent, and fair review of designation decisions, including both State-level and federal review options.

### **Key Elements – Appeals Process**

- Provides a formal appeal process for entities denied local area designation
- Requires written notification of denial, including the basis for the decision
- Allows appeal to the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) for review and recommendation
- Establishes a 60-day timeline for State-level appeal decisions
- Provides access to federal review by the U.S. Secretary of Labor, if applicable
- Ensures all appeal determinations are documented and communicated in writing

### **Initial Determination and Notification**

The Governor may approve or deny a request for designation as a local workforce development area. The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) provides written notification to the applicant of the Governor's determination. If the request is denied, the notification includes the specific reasons for denial.

### **Appeal to the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB)**

An entity whose request for designation is denied may appeal the decision to the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB). Appeals must:

- Be submitted in writing to AWIB
- Address each issue cited in the written denial notification

Upon receipt of an appeal, AWIB reviews the appeal in accordance with its established procedures and provides an advisory recommendation based on the merits of the appeal.

### **State Review Timeline**

The State will issue a decision on the appeal within 60 days of receipt. If the appeal results in designation, DOLWD will notify the applicant in writing.

### **Federal Review**

If a decision is not issued within 60 days, or if the appeal to AWIB does not result in designation, the applicant may request a review by the U.S. Secretary of Labor under 20 CFR § 683.640.

### Communication of Decisions

All appeal decisions are communicated in writing to the applicant. Written determinations include the outcome of the appeal and information regarding any further review options available under federal law.

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

### Overview – Infrastructure Funding Appeals

Consistent with Section 121(h)(2)(E) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and 20 CFR §§ 678.750–678.755, Alaska has established a clear and transparent process for resolving disputes regarding one-stop infrastructure funding determinations under the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA).

This process applies solely to disputes concerning infrastructure cost allocation and partner funding responsibilities. It does not govern disputes arising under other provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or broader programmatic disagreements.

The appeals process emphasizes timely, good-faith resolution at the lowest possible level while ensuring that required one-stop operations and partner participation continue uninterrupted during the dispute period.

### Key Elements – Infrastructure Funding Appeals

- Applies to disputes related to one-stop infrastructure funding determinations under the IFA
- Requires good-faith informal resolution before initiating a formal appeal
- Establishes defined timelines for informal resolution and formal appeals
- Provides for written submission, review, and determination by the State
- Ensures continuity of one-stop operations and partner responsibilities during the dispute process
- Maintains consistency with WIOA Section 121(h)(2)(E) and applicable federal regulations

### Informal Dispute Resolution

Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN) partners are required to engage in good-faith informal negotiation and mediation to resolve infrastructure funding disputes before initiating a formal appeal. Partners will first attempt to resolve the issue collaboratively through discussion facilitated by the One-Stop Operator (OSO) or another mutually agreed-upon neutral party.

If the dispute is not resolved informally within five (5) business days, any affected partner may initiate a formal appeal.

### Formal Appeal to the Alaska Workforce Investment Board

A formal appeal must be submitted in writing to the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) Executive Director within fifteen (15) calendar days of the unresolved infrastructure funding determination. The written appeal must include:

- A description of the dispute
- Relevant supporting documentation
- The relief requested

Upon receipt, the AWIB Executive Director reviews the appeal and may request additional information from the parties involved. The Executive Director, in coordination with the AWIB Executive Committee as appropriate, issues a written determination within fifteen (15) calendar days of receipt of the appeal.

### **Final State Determination**

The written determination issued by AWIB constitutes the State's final decision on the infrastructure funding dispute and is binding on all AJCN partners involved in the IFA.

Throughout the appeal process, all partners remain responsible for fulfilling their roles, cost contributions, and service delivery obligations under the existing MOU and IFA to ensure continuity of one-stop operations.

### **Compliance with Federal Requirements**

This appeals process is implemented in accordance with WIOA Section 121(h)(2)(E) and 20 CFR §§ 678.750–678.755 and does not modify or expand statutory appeal rights under federal or state law. The process is designed to promote transparency, fairness, and timely resolution while preserving program integrity and uninterrupted customer access to services.

#### [\(2\) Statewide Activities.](#)

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

### **Overview – Statewide Workforce Activities**

The State of Alaska uses WIOA Title I-B statewide funds in accordance with section 134(a)(2) and 134(a)(3) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to support system-level activities that strengthen alignment, access, equity, and modernization across Alaska's workforce development system.

Statewide activities are designed to complement local service delivery by addressing cross-cutting needs that cannot be effectively met at the local level, particularly given Alaska's geographic scale, regional labor market variation, and workforce system capacity considerations.

Consistent with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF), statewide investments prioritize initiatives that improve system integration, expand access for populations facing barriers to employment, strengthen employer engagement, and support data-informed planning and decision-making. Statewide investments are periodically reviewed to ensure continued alignment with workforce system needs, performance outcomes, and statutory and regulatory requirements.

### **Key Elements – Statewide Workforce Policies and Use of Funds**

- Utilizes WIOA Title I-B statewide funds consistent with section 134(a)(2) and 134(a)(3)
- Supports system-level activities that complement local service delivery
- Prioritizes access, equity, and services for populations facing barriers to employment
- Advances employer engagement, sector strategies, and work-based learning
- Strengthens system integration, data alignment, and technology modernization
- Supports continuous improvement, monitoring, and accountability across programs

### **Statewide Investment Priorities Aligned with Alaska's Workforce Future**

Statewide workforce funds are used to advance AWF priorities by supporting:

- Access to workforce services for populations facing barriers to employment
- Expansion and modernization of Registered Apprenticeship and work-based learning
- Employer engagement and sector-informed workforce solutions
- System integration, data alignment, and technology modernization
- Continuous improvement, monitoring, and accountability across programs

These investments enhance the effectiveness of local workforce activities while maintaining compliance with WIOA requirements and fiscal integrity standards.

### Examples of Allowable Statewide Workforce Activities

Consistent with WIOA Title I-B, statewide workforce funds may be used to support activities that strengthen system alignment, expand access, and address statewide or cross-regional workforce needs that cannot be effectively addressed at the local level.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Targeted workforce initiatives for populations facing barriers to employment, including youth, individuals transitioning from institutional settings, veterans, and individuals in rural or remote communities
- Expansion and support of work-based learning and Registered Apprenticeship, including employer engagement, technical assistance, and system coordination
- Capacity-building activities that address statewide training bottlenecks, such as instructor development, curriculum alignment, or credentialing constraints in high-demand occupations
- Employer engagement and sector-informed workforce strategies aligned with statewide or regional labor market priorities
- Technology modernization and data alignment efforts that improve system integration, customer access, and performance accountability
- Continuous improvement, monitoring, and evaluation activities that support effective use of workforce funds and inform policy and system design

Statewide activities are selected and implemented based on demonstrated workforce needs, alignment with AWF priorities, and compliance with federal and state requirements.

### Policy Framework, Oversight, and Accountability

Statewide workforce activities are governed by Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) policies and administered by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) in accordance with WIOA and state requirements. Policies supporting statewide activities include, but are not limited to:

- Co-enrollment policy (07-505.1)
- Eligible training provider list policy (07-501.2)
- Priority populations policies (07-517.1, 07-503.3)
- Supportive services policy (07-521.1)
- Data integrity and monitoring policies (07-541, 07-523.2)
- Universal access and equal opportunity policies (07-516, 07-506.4)

Statewide workforce funds have historically supported the development and implementation of AlaskaJobs, the State's integrated labor exchange and case management system serving WIOA Titles I–III and partner programs. AlaskaJobs functions as core system infrastructure, supporting coordinated service delivery, reducing duplication, enabling remote and mobile access, and ensuring consistent performance reporting across the workforce system.

Through ongoing policy oversight, system governance, and alignment of statewide and local workforce activities, Alaska ensures that AlaskaJobs and other shared system assets continue to support AWF goals, strengthen system integration, and promote equitable access to workforce services across the state.

[\(B\) Describe how the State intends to use the 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.](#)

### Overview – Governor's Set-Aside Funds

The State of Alaska uses the Governor's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I-B statewide reserve (up to 15 percent) in accordance with WIOA section 134(a)(2)(B), section 134(a)(3), and 20 CFR § 682.200 to support required and allowable statewide workforce activities.

These funds support system alignment, performance improvement, innovation, and accountability across Alaska's workforce development system and are administered by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD). Investments are aligned with the strategic vision and goals outlined in Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF).

Governor's set-aside funds are used to address statewide and cross-regional workforce needs that cannot be effectively met solely through local funding, particularly given Alaska's geographic scale, regional labor market variability, and workforce system capacity considerations. Use of these funds is periodically reviewed and, as appropriate, adjusted to respond to changing workforce conditions, performance outcomes, and federal and state requirements.

#### **Key Elements – Governor's Set-Aside Funds**

- Utilizes up to 15 percent of WIOA Title I-B funds for statewide workforce activities
- Supports required and allowable activities under WIOA section 134(a)(2) and (3)
- Funds Rapid Response, ETPL maintenance, monitoring, and system infrastructure
- Supports system improvement, innovation, and employer-driven strategies
- Advances access and services for populations facing barriers to employment
- Strengthens data alignment, performance accountability, and continuous improvement

#### **Mandatory Statewide Activities**

Consistent with WIOA requirements, Governor's set-aside funds are used to carry out required statewide workforce activities, including, but not limited to:

- Rapid response activities to support workers and employers affected by layoffs, closures, or other economic disruptions
- Maintenance and dissemination of the eligible training provider list (ETPL)
- Monitoring, oversight, and fiscal integrity functions to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements
- Technical assistance and staff development for Alaska Job Center staff and one-stop partners
- Operation and maintenance of fiscal, performance, and management information systems
- Addressing performance deficiencies and supporting corrective action, as necessary

These activities ensure the foundational integrity, responsiveness, and accountability of Alaska's workforce system.

#### **Discretionary Statewide Investments Aligned with Alaska's Workforce Future**

In addition to required activities, Governor's set-aside funds are used to support allowable statewide initiatives that advance AWF priorities and strengthen system performance. These investments may include:

- System improvement and innovation efforts that enhance alignment across core and partner programs
- Expansion and modernization of Registered Apprenticeship and other work-based learning models, including employer engagement and system coordination
- Initiatives that address barriers to employment for priority populations, including youth, individuals in rural or remote communities, individuals transitioning from institutional settings, veterans, and others facing significant obstacles to workforce participation
- Regional and sector-based strategies that support employer-driven workforce solutions aligned with Alaska's economic needs
- Data alignment, analysis, and modernization efforts that improve transparency, performance management, and data-informed decision-making

Discretionary investments are selected based on demonstrated workforce need, alignment with AWF priorities, system capacity, and the potential to generate statewide or cross-regional impact.

### **Evaluation, Continuous Improvement, and Innovation**

Governor's set-aside funds support evaluation and continuous improvement activities designed to strengthen the effectiveness of Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. Alaska uses a combination of performance analysis, monitoring, and targeted evaluation to assess program outcomes and inform policy and operational improvements.

Evaluation activities include:

- Analysis of WIOA primary indicators of performance, including employment, earnings, credential attainment, and measurable skill gains
- Use of AlaskaJobs data and Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records to assess participant outcomes and system effectiveness
- Monitoring reviews and quality assurance processes to evaluate program design, service delivery, and compliance
- Identification of performance trends, service gaps, and opportunities for system improvement across regions and populations
- Targeted evaluation or pilot initiatives, as appropriate, to test innovative service delivery strategies or workforce interventions

Findings from evaluation and performance analysis inform policy updates, technical assistance, resource allocation, and continuous improvement efforts across the workforce system.

### **Oversight, Policy Alignment, and Accountability**

The use of Governor's set-aside funds is guided by Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) policy and administered by DOLWD in accordance with WIOA and applicable state requirements. Policies supporting these activities include those related to co-enrollment, priority populations, supportive services, monitoring, data integrity, and equal opportunity and universal access.

Through these investments and oversight mechanisms, Alaska ensures that governors' set-aside funds support AWF goals, promote equitable access to workforce services, strengthen system alignment, and enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the statewide workforce development system.

(C) Describe how the State will utilize Rapid Response funds to respond to layoffs and plant closings and coordinate services to aid companies quickly and their affected workers. States should also describe any layoff aversion strategies they have implemented to address at-risk companies and workers.

### **Overview – Rapid Response**

The State of Alaska delivers Rapid Response (RR) services as a coordinated, employer-focused, and worker-centered function of the statewide workforce system. Rapid Response activities are implemented through the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) and the Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN) to provide timely assistance to employers and workers affected by layoffs, closures, economic dislocations, or natural disasters.

These activities are carried out in accordance with WIOA section 134(a)(2)(A) and 20 CFR part 682, subpart D, and align with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by supporting system integration, equitable access, and economic stability across regions. Rapid Response serves as both an early intervention strategy and a primary entry point into Alaska's broader workforce development system.

Through coordinated engagement with employers, workforce partners, education providers, and economic development entities, Rapid Response supports efforts to avert layoffs where feasible. It assists affected workers in transitioning efficiently to reemployment, training, or other appropriate services.

### **Key Elements – Rapid Response Activities**

- Provides timely assistance to employers and workers affected by layoffs, closures, or workforce disruptions
- Utilizes multiple data sources, including WARN notices, Unemployment Insurance data, and partner referrals, to identify and respond to events
- Integrates Rapid Response with the Alaska Job Center Network and WIOA core and partner programs
- Supports layoff aversion strategies through employer engagement, workforce retention, and upskilling efforts
- Ensures access to reemployment services, training, and supportive services
- Promotes equitable access for workers in rural, remote, and underserved communities
- Applies Rapid Response quality principles, including timeliness, customer choice, seamless service delivery, and strong partnerships

### **Rapid Response Delivery And Coordination**

Rapid Response activities are initiated through multiple notification sources, including Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) notices, Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims data, direct employer contact, labor organizations, media reports, and referrals from workforce and economic development partners. Upon notification, Rapid Response staff coordinate with employers to assess workforce needs and determine appropriate intervention strategies.

Rapid Response services are provided for all qualifying dislocation events and are initiated when one or more of the following occur:

- Announcement or notification of a mass layoff (50 or more workers)
- A mass job dislocation resulting from a natural or other disaster
- Filing of a WARN notice
- Filing of a Trade Adjustment Assistance petition
- Announcement or notification of a permanent closure, regardless of size

Services are delivered through flexible on-site, virtual, and hybrid approaches to ensure access across Alaska's diverse geographic regions. Rapid Response meetings provide information on workforce services, Unemployment Insurance benefits, job search assistance, training and retraining opportunities, career planning, and referrals to partner programs and community resources.

Rapid Response teams include a statewide coordinator, regional representatives, and trained backup staff to ensure consistent statewide coverage and rapid deployment. Data from Unemployment Insurance and the Research and Analysis Section are used to identify potential layoffs early and support proactive response and planning.

### **Integration With The Alaska Job Center Network**

Rapid Response activities are fully integrated into the Alaska Job Center Network and coordinated with WIOA core programs, Combined Plan partner programs, and required one-stop partners. Rapid Response staff collaborate with AJCN staff to ensure that affected workers are promptly connected to career services, training opportunities, supportive services, and reemployment assistance.

This integrated approach supports seamless transitions from Rapid Response engagement to ongoing workforce services, reduces duplication, and improves service navigation for both employers and workers. Coordination with AJCN business services staff also supports continued employer engagement and alignment with regional labor market needs.

### **Layoff Aversion And Employer Engagement**

Layoff aversion is a core component of Alaska's Rapid Response strategy. DOLWD works proactively with employers, industry partners, and economic development entities to identify workforce challenges early and implement strategies to prevent or minimize layoffs where feasible.

Layoff aversion strategies are data-informed, targeted, and responsive to employer needs, and may include:

- Connecting employers with incumbent worker training and upskilling opportunities
- Supporting work-based learning, on-the-job training, and Registered Apprenticeship pathways
- Linking employers to financial resources, including state loan programs and workforce incentives
- Providing information on programs such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit to offset employment costs
- Coordinating with partner agencies to address operational or workforce challenges

These efforts support business continuity, reduce the duration of unemployment, and strengthen regional economic resilience.

### **Rapid Response Services And Worker Support**

Rapid Response services are tailored to the needs of each dislocation event and may include:

- On-site or virtual worker meetings with representatives from Unemployment Insurance, Employment Services, Career Support and Training Services, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and partner programs
- Job fairs and reemployment workshops focused on résumé development, interview skills, labor market information, and career transition planning
- Access to Alaska Job Center services, including assessments, training opportunities, supportive services, and employer connections
- Information on additional resources such as Pell Grants, the GI Bill, and other education and training supports

Rapid Response ensures that services are delivered in a manner that promotes equitable access, including for individuals with limited English proficiency, workers in rural or remote communities, and individuals with barriers to employment.

### **Policy And Continuous Improvement**

Alaska implements Rapid Response activities in accordance with State policy, including Rapid Response Activities Policy 07-554.1, which establishes procedures, service delivery expectations, and coordination requirements. Performance data, service delivery outcomes, and partner feedback are used to improve Rapid Response activities continuously. These efforts ensure alignment with federal requirements, responsiveness to employer and worker needs, and consistency in service delivery statewide.

### **System Impact And Alignment With Alaska's Workforce Future**

Rapid Response activities contribute to a more integrated, responsive, and equitable workforce system by supporting employer stability, facilitating timely worker transitions, and strengthening the State's capacity to respond to economic disruptions.

These activities complement other statewide workforce investments described in Section VI(a)(2) and support AWF goals related to system modernization, access, and economic opportunity for workers and employers statewide.

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

#### **Overview – Disaster Rapid Response**

Alaska's workforce system maintains the capacity to implement Rapid Response activities during natural disasters in accordance with WIOA section 134(a)(2)(A), 20 CFR part 682, subpart D, and applicable federal disaster guidance. These activities support impacted workers, employers, and communities and are a key component of statewide workforce preparedness and economic resilience.

Given Alaska's vast geography, regional diversity, and exposure to natural hazards including wildfires, flooding, earthquakes, severe storms, and other emergencies, disaster-related Rapid Response is integrated into the State's broader workforce and emergency response framework.

Rapid Response is coordinated with federal, state, and local partners to ensure impacted communities, businesses, and workers receive timely, appropriate, and non-duplicative services tailored to the specific characteristics of each disaster event.

#### **Key Elements – Disaster Rapid Response**

- Provides Rapid Response services to workers and employers affected by natural disasters
- Coordinates with federal, state, and local emergency management and recovery partners
- Delivers services through the Alaska Job Center Network using in-person, virtual, and hybrid models
- Supports access to Unemployment Insurance, Disaster Unemployment Assistance, and workforce services
- Utilizes National Dislocated Worker Grants, as appropriate, to support disaster recovery employment and training
- Ensures services are tailored to the scale, geography, and impact of each disaster event
- Maintains compliance with statutory authority, funding availability, and program accountability requirements

#### **Coordination With Emergency Management And Recovery Partners**

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) coordinates Rapid Response activities during natural disasters in collaboration with key partners, including the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Bureau of Land Management, the Alaska Interagency Coordination Center, and local community organizations.

This coordination ensures alignment between workforce response activities and broader emergency response and recovery efforts. It supports the timely deployment of services while avoiding duplication and ensuring that affected workers and employers are connected to appropriate resources.

#### **Disaster-Related Rapid Response Activities**

Rapid Response activities during natural disasters are tailored to the specific conditions, scale, and location of each event and may include:

- Worker outreach and information sessions delivered on-site, virtually, or through community-based access points
- Assistance with accessing Unemployment Insurance and Disaster Unemployment Assistance benefits
- Referrals to career services, training opportunities, and supportive services
- Coordination with employers experiencing workforce disruptions or temporary closures
- Deployment of staff to community locations, including resource tables or temporary service sites, to provide direct assistance and referrals

Services are delivered through the Alaska Job Center Network and regional workforce partners to ensure accessibility across urban, rural, and remote communities.

#### **Use Of National Dislocated Worker Grants**

When appropriate and subject to federal approval and funding availability, National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWGs) are utilized to support disaster-related employment and training activities. The Rapid Response Coordinator assesses disaster impacts and makes recommendations regarding NDWG applications based on workforce needs and recovery priorities.

NDWG-funded activities may include:

- Temporary disaster-relief employment to support cleanup, recovery, and humanitarian assistance
- Training and reemployment services for workers dislocated due to disaster events
- Supportive services to address barriers to employment during recovery

These activities are implemented in accordance with federal guidance and in coordination with emergency management and community partners to support recovery while avoiding duplication of services.

#### **Rapid Response Delivery And Community Engagement During Disasters**

Rapid Response services during disasters are delivered through flexible, adaptive strategies to meet community needs. Depending on the event, services may include formal Rapid Response meetings, participation in community recovery events, or deployment of staff to centralized locations to provide information and assistance.

Services may include information on unemployment benefits, Disaster Unemployment Assistance, temporary employment opportunities, workforce services, small business support resources, and referrals to partner programs. This approach ensures that workers, businesses, and communities have access to timely and relevant information during periods of disruption.

#### **Alignment With Alaska's Workforce Future And Program Guardrails**

Rapid Response during natural disasters is informed by labor market information, situational assessments, and interagency coordination to ensure responsive and effective service delivery. These efforts support Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by strengthening system flexibility, improving interagency coordination, and enhancing the workforce system's ability to respond to economic disruptions.

All disaster-related Rapid Response activities are implemented within existing statutory authorities, funding availability, and program accountability requirements. These activities do not alter program eligibility criteria, service delivery responsibilities, or performance accountability requirements, ensuring compliance while maintaining responsiveness during disaster events.

(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)).

#### **Overview – TAA Early Intervention**

Alaska supports early intervention and the timely dissemination of benefits and services to workers affected by trade-related layoffs through coordinated implementation of the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, Rapid Response (RR) activities, and WIOA Dislocated Worker services.

These activities are carried out in alignment with the Trade Act of 1974, as amended, and coordinated with WIOA Rapid Response and Dislocated Worker provisions to ensure affected workers receive accurate, timely, and transparent information, along with access to reemployment services. These efforts support Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) by promoting rapid reemployment, system integration, and equitable access to services.

Rapid Response funds are used to ensure that all worker groups covered by a TAA petition receive early intervention services and access to appropriate career services, regardless of petition outcome.

#### **Key Elements – TAA Early Intervention And Benefits Dissemination**

- Provides early intervention through coordinated Rapid Response and TAA engagement
- Supports development and submission of TAA petitions through technical assistance to employers and worker groups
- Aligns TAA activities with Rapid Response and WIOA Dislocated Worker services for integrated service delivery
- Ensures transparent and timely dissemination of benefits, services, and eligibility requirements
- Supports co-enrollment and integrated case management across programs
- Coordinates across TAA staff, Rapid Response teams, and Alaska Job Center staff
- Ensures continuity of services when TAA is not authorized through WIOA and partner programs

#### **Early Intervention And Petition Support**

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) coordinates early intervention activities when potential trade-related layoffs are identified. Rapid Response and TAA coordinators collaborate with employers, labor representatives, and worker groups to assess potential trade impacts and provide information on the TAA petition process, eligibility criteria, and available services.

Technical assistance is provided to support the development and submission of petitions, including guidance on documentation requirements and timelines. Early intervention activities are delivered in coordination with Rapid Response to ensure workers receive timely access to employment services, Unemployment Insurance information, and reemployment resources.

Career services, including initial assessments, job search assistance, and referrals, are initiated before petition determination to support early engagement and reduce delays in service delivery.

### **Benefits Dissemination And Worker Notification**

Following certification of a TAA petition, DOLWD provides affected workers with timely, accurate, and transparent information regarding available benefits and services through multiple channels, including written notifications, Rapid Response events, Alaska Job Center outreach, and online resources.

Information provided includes:

- Training and reemployment services
- Income support, including Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA), where applicable
- Job search and relocation allowances
- Supportive services and additional benefits available through TAA and WIOA programs

Notification processes include coordination with employers to obtain lists of affected workers and ensure direct communication of eligibility criteria, application timelines, required documentation, and available services.

These efforts ensure that workers have a clear understanding of available benefits and can make informed decisions regarding training and reemployment pathways.

### **Integrated Service Delivery And Co-Enrollment**

Workers affected by trade-related layoffs may be co-enrolled in TAA and WIOA Dislocated Worker programs, as appropriate, to support seamless access to services.

Co-enrollment supports:

- Integrated case management
- Coordinated delivery of training and supportive services
- Efficient use of program resources to support reemployment outcomes

Alaska Job Center staff, including Employment Service and Career Support and Training Services staff, coordinate service delivery and referrals to ensure continuity of services across programs.

### **Coordination With Rapid Response And Workforce Programs**

TAA activities are fully integrated with Alaska's Rapid Response framework. TAA coordinators participate in Rapid Response teams and collaborate with workforce staff to provide early intervention services before, during, and after layoff events.

Rapid Response activities for TAA-affected worker groups include:

- On-site and virtual worker orientations
- Coordination with employers to schedule informational meetings
- Delivery of workforce service information and referrals to TAA and WIOA programs

Rapid Response funds support these activities, ensuring that all worker groups covered by a TAA petition receive timely access to career services and reemployment support.

This coordination ensures consistent messaging, reduces duplication, and provides seamless access to services regardless of petition status.

### **Program Authorization And Continuity**

Alaska recognizes that TAA program availability is subject to federal authorization. While the program is currently in a termination phase and new petitions are not being accepted, the State continues to:

- Serve individuals eligible under previously certified petitions
- Provide information and support related to potential trade impacts
- Deliver Rapid Response and WIOA Dislocated Worker services to affected workers

When TAA benefits are not available, affected workers are served through WIOA Dislocated Worker and other partner programs to ensure continuity of services.

Information related to potential trade impacts continues to be collected to support future action in the event of federal reauthorization.

#### **Alignment With Alaska's Workforce Future**

Through coordinated early intervention, transparent dissemination of benefits, and integrated service delivery, Alaska supports trade-affected workers in navigating employment transitions and accessing reemployment services.

These efforts strengthen system alignment, promote equitable access, and support AWF goals related to rapid reemployment, workforce resilience, and alignment with labor market demand.

#### **(b) Adult and Dislocated Worker 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.

#### **Overview – Work-Based Training Models**

Alaska utilizes a range of work-based training models to connect job seekers with employment opportunities and support employers in developing a skilled and reliable workforce. These models, including On-the-Job Training (OJT), Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), transitional jobs, and customized training, provide flexible, employer-driven training solutions aligned with labor market demand.

Consistent with the statewide strategy described in Section VI(a)(2), work-based training serves as a core component of Alaska's workforce system by supporting rapid attachment to employment, advancement along career pathways, and employer-driven skill development. These models are designed to support high-quality training experiences that result in measurable skill gains, employment retention, and long-term, unsubsidized employment outcomes.

These strategies support Alaska's strategic priorities to expand work-based learning, strengthen employer partnerships, and align training investments with in-demand industries.

Work-based training models are particularly important in Alaska's rural and geographically dispersed communities, where employer-based training provides a practical and accessible pathway to skill development and employment.

#### **Key Elements – Work-Based Training Models**

- Provides paid, work-based skill development aligned with employer needs and occupational requirements
- Supports both entry into employment and advancement along career pathways
- Aligns training investments with in-demand industries and regional labor market conditions
- Integrates work-based training with career services and supportive services to promote participant success
- Applies funding parameters in accordance with WIOA requirements, including up to 20 percent for IWT and up to 10 percent for transitional jobs
- Utilizes Alaska Job Center staff to support employer engagement, participant assessment, training plan development, and ongoing monitoring
- Supports training quality through structured training plans, employer agreements, and performance tracking

### **On-The-Job Training (OJT)**

On-the-Job Training (OJT) is a primary strategy for supporting employment and skill development by providing participants with paid, hands-on training in a work setting. OJT enables employers to train individuals in the specific skills required for available positions while offsetting a portion of wage costs during training.

OJT supports both entry into employment and advancement along career pathways, including preparation for registered apprenticeships and for other in-demand occupations that require structured, employer-based training.

### **Implementation And Quality Assurance**

- Conducts screening and assessment of employers and participants to ensure appropriate match and training alignment
- Develops individualized training plans tied to occupational skill requirements and employer expectations
- Establishes clear training objectives, duration, and wage reimbursement structures through formal agreements
- Alaska Job Center staff are responsible for developing agreements, monitoring training, and ensuring compliance with WIOA requirements, while employers provide supervision and on-the-job skill development
- Provides regular progress monitoring and communication with both the employer and participant
- Conducts early follow-up, including contact within the first two weeks of the training period and, when feasible, on-site engagement

### **Incumbent Worker Training (IWT)**

Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) supports the upskilling of existing employees to improve business competitiveness, prevent layoffs, and advance career pathways for current workers.

Up to 20 percent of Adult and Dislocated Worker formula funds may be used for IWT, with funding levels adjusted annually based on employer demand, economic conditions, and workforce priorities.

### **Strategic Use And Employer Impact**

- Supports skill upgrades in response to technological, operational, or industry changes
- Helps employers retain workers and prevent layoffs
- Promotes internal advancement and career pathway progression
- Strengthens employer engagement and long-term workforce partnerships
- Employers apply or are identified through outreach, and training activities are approved based on alignment with business needs, worker skill gaps, and allowable cost requirements

### **Transitional Jobs**

Transitional jobs provide time-limited, subsidized work experience for individuals with barriers to employment, including those with inconsistent work histories or long-term unemployment. These positions are designed to support reentry into the workforce by combining structured work experience with career and supportive services. Transitional jobs may be subsidized up to 100 percent and are limited to no more than 10 percent of combined Adult and Dislocated Worker funds.

### **Participant Outcomes And Support**

- Provides work experience within an employer-employee relationship
- Builds work readiness, reliability, and foundational occupational skills
- Supports transition into unsubsidized employment through structured service pathways
- Integrates supportive services to address barriers to employment

### **Customized Training**

Customized training meets employers' specific workforce needs by designing programs tailored to the requirements of a particular job or group of jobs. Employers commit to hiring individuals upon successful completion of the training.

Customized training supports both new hires and existing workers and is implemented in partnership with employers and training providers to ensure alignment with business needs and industry standards.

### **Implementation And Employer Partnership**

- Develops training programs in collaboration with employers to address specific skill needs
- Requires employer commitment to employ participants upon successful completion of training
- Shares training costs between the employer and the workforce system in accordance with WIOA requirements
- Aligns training with career pathways and industry-recognized credentials where appropriate

### **Strategic Application And Continuous Improvement**

Alaska implements work-based training models as part of a coordinated workforce strategy that emphasizes employer engagement, sector alignment, and participant success. These models are continuously evaluated to support effectiveness in achieving employment, retention, and wage progression outcomes.

The State will continue to:

- Expand employer outreach and awareness of work-based training opportunities
- Align training investments with in-demand industries and regional workforce needs
- Strengthen integration with career services, supportive services, and co-enrollment strategies
- Monitor performance outcomes, including employment, retention, and earnings, to guide continuous improvement

### **Unified Impact**

Through the strategic use of work-based training models, Alaska helps participants gain relevant skills in real-world settings, while employers benefit from a trained, job-ready workforce. These models serve as a critical bridge between training and employment, supporting both immediate workforce needs and long-term economic growth.

[\(2\) 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).

### **Overview – Registered Apprenticeship Integration**

Registered Apprenticeship (RA) is incorporated into Alaska's WIOA service design and delivery as a priority workforce training strategy for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), in partnership with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), integrates Registered Apprenticeship into career services, training services, employer engagement, and sector strategies statewide.

Consistent with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) and the strategies outlined in Section II, Registered Apprenticeship supports expansion of work-based learning, strengthens employer partnerships, and aligns training with in-demand industries. RA serves as a key mechanism for delivering industry-driven training, supporting credential attainment, and advancing career pathway development.

### **Key Elements – Registered Apprenticeship Integration**

- Incorporates Registered Apprenticeship as a priority training strategy across WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs
- Integrates RA into career services, training services, and employer engagement activities
- Supports employer outreach, sponsor development, and technical assistance in coordination with the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship
- Promotes co-enrollment and supportive services for participants in RA programs
- Aligns RA with sector strategies and career pathways in high-demand industries
- Connects pre-apprenticeship and youth pathways to Registered Apprenticeship opportunities
- Utilizes AlaskaJobs to support participant identification, referrals, and performance tracking

### **Outreach To Sponsors And Employer Engagement**

AWIB and DOLWD conduct ongoing outreach to employers, industry associations, and prospective sponsors to expand Registered Apprenticeship opportunities statewide. Outreach activities include employer engagement, technical assistance, and support for program development aligned with sector strategies and workforce demand.

The State coordinates closely with the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship to support program registration, sponsor development, and ongoing technical assistance. DOLWD staff facilitate connections between employers and federal apprenticeship resources while supporting alignment with state workforce priorities.

### **Participant Identification And Referral Process**

Alaska Job Center staff identify potential participants for Registered Apprenticeship through intake, assessment, and career planning activities conducted within AlaskaJobs.

- Staff assess participant skills, interests, and employment goals to determine suitability for Registered Apprenticeship opportunities
- Eligible participants are informed of RA as a training option during career services and case management activities
- Staff initiate referrals to apprenticeship sponsors or related training programs based on participant readiness and employer demand

This process ensures that Registered Apprenticeship is consistently presented as a career pathway option within the workforce system.

### **Connection To Apprenticeship Opportunities And Co-Enrollment**

Participants are connected to Registered Apprenticeship opportunities through coordinated referrals, employer engagement, and partnerships with apprenticeship sponsors.

- Alaska Job Center staff coordinate with employers and sponsors to facilitate participant placement into apprenticeship programs
- Participants may be co-enrolled in WIOA programs to receive career services, case management, and supportive services while participating in Registered Apprenticeship
- Staff provide ongoing support to participants to promote retention and successful completion

This coordinated approach ensures that participants receive both training and supportive services necessary for successful outcomes.

### **Integration With Sector Strategies And Career Pathways**

Registered Apprenticeship is embedded within Alaska's sector strategies and career pathway models, particularly in high-demand industries such as healthcare, education, infrastructure, mining, and water and wastewater.

Programs are aligned with postsecondary education and support the attainment of industry-recognized credentials, strengthening connections between education, training, and employment. Registered Apprenticeship serves as both an entry point into employment and a mechanism for career advancement within defined career pathways.

#### **Connection With Pre-Apprenticeship And Youth Pathways**

AWIB and DOLWD support the development of pre-apprenticeship, school-to-apprenticeship, and youth apprenticeship pathways in coordination with secondary education systems, Job Corps, and postsecondary institutions.

These pathways:

- Prepare participants for entry into Registered Apprenticeship programs
- Support career exploration and skill development
- Expand access to apprenticeship opportunities for youth and individuals with barriers to employment

#### **Data Tracking, Reporting, And Continuous Improvement**

Participation and outcomes related to Registered Apprenticeship are documented in AlaskaJobs to support performance reporting, accountability, and continuous improvement.

- Tracks participant enrollment, progression, and outcomes
- Supports alignment with WIOA performance indicators
- Informs program design and resource allocation based on labor market demand

#### **Alignment With Federal Apprenticeship System**

Alaska is not currently a State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) and operates in partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship. AWIB and DOLWD coordinate closely with federal partners to support registration, oversight, and expansion of Registered Apprenticeship programs statewide.

If Alaska pursues SAA designation in the future, the State would use those authorities to enhance program alignment, expand technical assistance, and streamline integration of the apprenticeship system.

#### **Alaska Context And Strategic Impact**

Registered Apprenticeship plays a critical role in Alaska's workforce system, particularly in rural and geographically dispersed areas where work-based learning provides a practical pathway to employment and skill development.

Through coordinated outreach, participant identification, and integrated service delivery, Registered Apprenticeship strengthens employer engagement, expands training opportunities, and supports long-term workforce development aligned with Alaska's economic needs.

(3) [Training Provider Eligibility Procedure](#). Provide the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining the initial and continued eligibility of training providers, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

#### **Overview – Training Provider Eligibility**

Alaska's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) is a comprehensive list of training providers and programs that meet established performance, quality, and accountability standards under WIOA Section 122. The ETPL ensures that training programs supported with WIOA Title I funds are aligned with in-demand industries, demonstrate positive outcomes, and provide participants with pathways to employment.

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) establishes ETPL policy, and the Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS) administers the processes for eligibility determination, data collection, and performance

review. The ETPL is maintained within AlaskaJobs and is updated on an ongoing basis, with formal review of continued eligibility conducted biennially.

### **Key Elements**

Alaska's ETPL eligibility framework includes the following elements:

- Establishment of clear initial and continued eligibility requirements aligned with WIOA Section 122
- Requirement for training providers to maintain authorization or exemption through the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE)
- Use of standardized performance metrics, including employment, earnings, credential attainment, and completion rates
- Application of a structured scoring methodology to evaluate training provider performance
- Biennial review of continued eligibility based on performance outcomes and data validation
- Integration of Unemployment Insurance wage record data to assess employment and earnings outcomes
- Inclusion of Registered Apprenticeship programs as automatically eligible providers consistent with federal requirements
- Requirement for timely and accurate submission of student completer data
- Alignment of training programs with in-demand industries and occupations
- Enforcement of compliance with nondiscrimination, equal opportunity, and accessibility requirements
- Defined procedures for denial, removal, and appeal to ensure accountability and due process

### **Initial Eligibility Requirements**

To be considered for initial eligibility, training providers must meet state and federal requirements and submit a complete application. All providers must hold authorized or exempt status with the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE), as required by Alaska Statute 14.48.020, to ensure institutional quality, ethical practices, and fiscal responsibility.

Initial eligibility requirements include:

- Submission of a complete ETPL application
- Provision of up to three years of student performance data, if available
- Description of program structure, costs, and outcomes
- Demonstration that the program leads to a recognized postsecondary credential
- Alignment with in-demand industries or occupations
- Commitment to collect and report annual performance data

Initial eligibility is granted for at least one year.

### **Continued Eligibility Requirements**

Continued eligibility is determined biennially based on program performance and compliance with reporting requirements. Training providers must submit complete and accurate student data annually, which is matched with Unemployment Insurance wage records to evaluate outcomes.

Continued eligibility review includes:

- Performance outcomes based on employment, earnings, credential attainment, and completion
- Alignment with in-demand industries and occupations
- Timely and accurate submission of student completer data
- Consideration of information from other federal and state training programs, as available

### **Performance Criteria And Scoring**

Alaska uses standardized performance thresholds and a point-based scoring methodology to determine initial and continued eligibility for training providers.

- The methodology evaluates employment outcomes, earnings, credential attainment, completion rates, and alignment with in-demand industries
- Minimum performance thresholds are established for both initial and continued eligibility
- Distinct criteria are applied for:
  - Existing training programs with historical performance data
  - New training programs without prior completion data
- Performance standards are applied consistently across training providers to ensure fairness and accountability

Detailed scoring criteria, point values, and minimum thresholds are provided in Appendix G – ETPL Performance Criteria and Scoring Methodology.

Performance thresholds and scoring criteria are reviewed periodically and may be updated to reflect changes in economic conditions, labor market demand, and federal guidance.

#### **Registered Apprenticeship Programs**

Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs are automatically eligible for inclusion on the ETPL in accordance with WIOA Section 122. These programs are not subject to standard ETPL performance reporting requirements due to their federal registration and oversight by the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship.

RA programs are added to the ETPL upon the sponsor's request and remain on the list until they are deregistered, removed at the sponsor's request, or found to be noncompliant with applicable requirements. Deregistered programs are subject to the same eligibility and performance requirements as other training providers.

#### **Removal And Appeal Procedures**

Training providers and programs may be denied or removed from the ETPL for failure to meet eligibility or performance requirements. Grounds for removal include:

- Failure to submit required performance data
- Failure to meet established performance thresholds
- Loss of required ACPE authorization or exemption
- Submission of inaccurate information or violation of WIOA requirements
- Actions determined to cause harm to participants or the public

Providers are notified of denial or removal and may appeal within 30 calendar days. Programs remain on the ETPL during the appeal process.

Participants enrolled at the time of removal are permitted to complete their training. Providers may be required to repay WIOA funds received during periods of noncompliance, consistent with federal regulations.

#### **Compliance And Additional Requirements**

Training providers must comply with all applicable federal and state requirements, including nondiscrimination, equal opportunity, and accessibility provisions under WIOA and 29 CFR Part 38.

Providers must not misrepresent their status as approved workforce training providers.

Through these policies and procedures, Alaska ensures that ETPL programs maintain quality, accountability, and alignment with workforce needs while supporting participant success and responsible use of WIOA funds.

(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).

#### **Overview – Adult Priority Of Service**

Alaska implements priority of service for the WIOA Adult program in accordance with WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(E), which requires that recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient (including English language learners) receive priority for individualized career services and training services funded with WIOA Adult program funds.

Alaska Policy 07-517 establishes the requirements for implementing priority of service and reflects applicable federal guidance, including TEGL 19-16. All staff administering WIOA Title I-B Adult funds are required to apply priority of service in accordance with this policy.

Priority of service is an operational requirement embedded in eligibility determination, service assignment, and case management processes to ensure equitable access to services for individuals with barriers to employment.

#### **Key Elements**

Alaska's implementation of Adult Priority of Service includes the following elements:

- Application of priority of service in accordance with WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(E) and TEGL 19-16
- Prioritization of recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient
- Integration of veterans' priority of service requirements within the WIOA Adult priority framework
- Use of AlaskaJobs to capture, document, and apply priority of service determinations
- Application of priority during eligibility determination and before the provision of individualized career services and training services
- Requirement for documentation supporting priority status to be maintained in AlaskaJobs
- Ongoing monitoring, data validation, and performance analysis to ensure compliance
- Use of data to assess service levels for priority populations and inform outreach strategies
- Ongoing staff training and technical assistance to ensure consistent statewide implementation

#### **Implementation Of Priority Of Service**

Service priority is applied at the point of intake and throughout service delivery using Alaska's case management system, AlaskaJobs.

During eligibility determination, staff collect and document information necessary to determine whether an individual meets one or more priority categories, including:

- Receipt of public assistance
- Low-income status
- Basic skills deficiency, including English language proficiency

Service priority is applied before enrollment in individualized career services and training services funded under the WIOA Adult program. When such services are provided, staff must ensure that individuals meeting priority criteria are served first in accordance with federal requirements.

Consistent with TEGL 19-16, Alaska applies priority of service in the following order:

1. Veterans and eligible persons who are also recipients of public assistance, low-income, or basic skills deficient

2. Individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses but meet WIOA Adult priority criteria
3. Veterans and eligible persons who do not meet WIOA Adult priority criteria
4. Individuals outside of the above groups

AlaskaJobs supports consistent implementation by capturing eligibility data elements, documenting priority status, and maintaining supporting documentation within the participant record. Staff are required to verify and record priority status to ensure compliance with program requirements.

#### **Documentation And Case Management Requirements**

Staff must maintain documentation supporting priority-of-service determinations within AlaskaJobs.

Documentation requirements include:

- Verification of public assistance status, when applicable
- Income documentation to support low-income determinations
- Assessment results or other documentation supporting basic skills deficiency

Priority status must be recorded in the participant file and reflected in service planning and case notes. Case management activities must demonstrate that priority was considered and applied before providing individualized career and training services.

#### **Monitoring And Oversight**

Alaska monitors the implementation of the Adult Priority of Service through annual program monitoring and ongoing data validation.

Monitoring includes:

- Review of participant case files in AlaskaJobs to verify documentation of priority status
- Validation of eligibility determinations for public assistance, low-income status, and basic skills deficiency
- Review of service delivery to ensure priority populations receive appropriate access to individualized career and training services
- Analysis of participant characteristics, enrollment patterns, and service levels to assess whether priority populations are being effectively served

Monitoring findings are used to identify areas for improvement and inform corrective actions, technical assistance, and policy clarification. Follow-up monitoring ensures that identified issues are resolved and that compliance is maintained.

#### **Continuous Improvement And Staff Training**

Alaska uses data analysis and regional coordination to strengthen the implementation of Adult Priority of Service. Participation and outcomes for priority populations are regularly reviewed and compared to overall program performance to identify gaps and inform outreach and enrollment strategies.

Regional coordination meetings and performance reviews are used to discuss trends and implement strategies to improve service delivery to priority populations.

Staff receive training on Adult Priority of Service requirements during onboarding and through ongoing refresher training. Training includes:

- Eligibility determination and documentation requirements
- Application of priority within service delivery
- Use of AlaskaJobs to record and track priority status

Technical assistance is provided as needed to ensure consistent and compliant implementation across all service delivery locations.

(5) Describe the State's criteria regarding local area transfer of funds between the adult and dislocated worker programs.

#### **Overview – Transfer Of Funds**

Alaska uses transfer authority between the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker (DW) programs to ensure that resources are aligned with workforce demand, economic conditions, and program utilization across the state. In accordance with WIOA Section 133(b)(4), Alaska permits the transfer of up to 100 percent of funds between the Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams.

This authority is established through Alaska's WIOA Title I-B Within State Funding Allocation Policy 07-518.1 and Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) Resolution 16-06, which delegates approval authority to the Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS) Director or designee.

Funds may not be transferred to or from the Youth program.

#### **Key Elements**

Alaska's approach to transferring funds between Adult and Dislocated Worker programs includes the following elements:

- Authorization to transfer up to 100 percent of funds between Adult and Dislocated Worker programs in accordance with WIOA Section 133(b)(4)
- Formal policy framework established through Policy 07-518.1 and AWIB Resolution 16-06
- Delegated authority to the DETS Director or designee to approve fund transfers
- Prohibition on transferring funds to or from the Youth program
- Use of data-driven decision-making to assess funding needs across programs and regions
- Regular review of expenditure, enrollment, and performance data to identify under- or over-utilization of funds
- Alignment of funding decisions with economic conditions, including layoffs, industry demand, and workforce trends
- Coordination across regions to ensure equitable distribution of resources and responsiveness to workforce needs
- Documentation of transfer decisions and approvals in accordance with state policy and federal requirements

#### **Criteria And Decision-Making Process**

Fund transfer decisions are based on documented analysis of program performance, expenditure levels, and workforce demand. Alaska evaluates both quantitative data and qualitative factors to determine whether transfers are necessary to maintain effective service delivery.

Key criteria considered include:

- Expenditure rates and remaining fund balances across Adult and Dislocated Worker programs
- Participant enrollment levels and projected service demand
- Significant layoffs or dislocation events are increasing the demand for Dislocated Worker services
- Economic shifts, including industry growth, decline, or restructuring
- Workforce needs related to major projects, infrastructure development, or sector initiatives
- Employer demand for training, including upskilling and incumbent worker training
- Regional population changes affecting service demand

Transfers are considered during regular fiscal and program reviews and may be initiated when imbalances between funding availability and service demand are identified.

#### **Implementation Of Fund Transfers**

Alaska implements fund transfers between Adult and Dislocated Worker programs to ensure that resources are directed where they are most needed to support participants and employers.

Quarterly expenditure and performance reviews are conducted to assess spending levels, participant activity, and service utilization across programs and regions. These reviews inform decisions regarding fund transfers and help identify:

- Areas of under-expenditure or limited service utilization
- Regions or programs experiencing increased demand for services
- Opportunities to reallocate funds to maximize program effectiveness

Approved transfers are implemented through established fiscal processes and reflected in program budgets and financial tracking systems. All transfers are documented and maintained in accordance with state policy and federal cost principles.

#### **Monitoring And Oversight**

Alaska monitors the use of transferred funds through ongoing fiscal and program oversight to ensure compliance and effectiveness.

Monitoring activities include:

- Review of expenditure rates and fund utilization across Adult and Dislocated Worker programs
- Tracking of participant enrollment, service levels, and outcomes following fund transfers
- Evaluation of whether transferred funds are aligned with identified workforce needs and program priorities
- Verification that transfers are approved, documented, and implemented in accordance with state policy and federal requirements

Monitoring results are used to identify any issues related to fund utilization and to inform corrective actions or technical assistance, as needed.

#### **Continuous Improvement**

Alaska continuously evaluates funding distribution and transfer practices to improve responsiveness to workforce and economic conditions. Information from expenditure trends, economic data, and program performance is used to refine decision-making processes and ensure that resources are effectively aligned with statewide and regional workforce priorities.

This approach supports efficient use of funds, strengthens program performance, and enhances the State's ability to respond to changing labor market conditions.

[\(6\) 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\(a\)\(3\)\(i\).](#)

#### **Overview – WIOA–TAA Co-Enrollment & Staff Familiarization**

Alaska coordinates the delivery of Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker services through a structured co-enrollment approach designed to ensure that trade-affected workers receive comprehensive, coordinated support. Co-enrollment enables participants to access the full range of benefits and services available under both programs while minimizing duplication and improving service outcomes.

Co-enrollment between TAA and the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker program is the State's standard service delivery approach for eligible individuals, unless participants do not meet eligibility requirements or choose not to participate.

The State supports co-enrollment through policy development, coordinated case management, staff training, and system integration within AlaskaJobs. These efforts ensure consistent implementation across the Alaska Job Center network and promote alignment between TAA and WIOA Title I service strategies.

### **Key Elements**

Alaska's WIOA-TAA co-enrollment strategy includes the following elements:

- Co-enrollment between TAA and WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker is a standard practice for eligible participants
- Written policy guidance defining co-enrollment requirements, procedures, and staff responsibilities
- Coordinated case management to ensure participants receive all available benefits and services without duplication
- Use of AlaskaJobs to support integrated service delivery, data tracking, and reporting
- Ongoing staff training and technical assistance to ensure consistent implementation across programs

### **Implementation Of Co-Enrollment**

Alaska implements co-enrollment through coordinated intake, eligibility determination, and case management processes within the Alaska Job Center network.

- Individuals identified as potentially eligible for TAA are assessed for eligibility and informed of available benefits and services
- Eligible TAA participants are co-enrolled in the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker program to provide access to additional career services, case management, and supportive services
- Case managers coordinate service delivery to ensure alignment between TAA training, WIOA services, and participant employment goals
- Services are planned and documented in AlaskaJobs to support integrated case management and avoid duplication of services

This coordinated approach ensures that participants receive timely, comprehensive support that leverages the strengths of both programs.

### **Policy Development And Dissemination**

Alaska maintains written policy guidance governing WIOA-TAA co-enrollment, which is updated as needed to reflect federal requirements, including Trade Act Section 239(f), Section 235, and applicable regulations at 20 CFR 618.325 and 20 CFR 618.824.

Policy guidance is disseminated to local workforce system staff and required one-stop partners through multiple channels, including:

- Formal written policy and program guidance distributed to all Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) staff
- Initial training for staff during onboarding to ensure understanding of co-enrollment requirements
- Ongoing training and refresher sessions provided at least annually
- Technical assistance communications, including alerts, updates, and guidance memos
- Regular staff meetings and statewide coordination calls

Policy updates are communicated as they occur to ensure that staff remain informed of current requirements and expectations.

### **Monitoring And Oversight**

Alaska monitors implementation of WIOA–TAA co-enrollment to ensure compliance with federal requirements and effective service delivery.

Monitoring activities include:

- Review of participant case records in AlaskaJobs to verify co-enrollment where appropriate
- Validation of eligibility determinations and documentation for both TAA and WIOA programs
- Assessment of service coordination to ensure participants receive comprehensive and non-duplicative services
- Analysis of co-enrollment rates and participant outcomes to evaluate program effectiveness

Monitoring results are used to identify areas for improvement and inform corrective actions, technical assistance, and additional training as needed.

### **Continuous Improvement And Staff Training**

Alaska uses data analysis, performance reviews, and staff feedback to strengthen co-enrollment practices and improve service coordination between TAA and WIOA programs.

Staff receive training on co-enrollment requirements during onboarding and through ongoing professional development. Training includes:

- TAA eligibility and benefit structure
- WIOA Dislocated Worker eligibility and service delivery
- Co-enrollment procedures and case management coordination
- Use of AlaskaJobs to document and track co-enrollment

These efforts support consistent implementation, improve participant outcomes, and ensure alignment with federal requirements.

[\(7\) 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\(c\)](#)

### **Overview – Coordinated Service Delivery And Funding Strategy**

Alaska ensures that individuals co-enrolled in Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker program receive all necessary and allowable benefits and services through a coordinated strategy for service delivery and funding. This approach aligns program resources, eliminates duplication, and ensures that participants receive comprehensive support to achieve employment outcomes.

TAA serves as the primary funding source for approved training and related benefits under the Trade Act. At the same time, WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker funds are used to provide additional career and supportive services, as appropriate and allowable. This coordinated funding strategy ensures that participant needs are fully met while maintaining compliance with federal requirements.

### **Funding Coordination And Service Alignment**

Alaska employs a structured approach to funding coordination to ensure that co-enrolled participants receive all necessary services without duplicating benefits.

- TAA funds are used to support approved training, income support, and other Trade Act benefits
- WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker funds are used to supplement TAA services by providing career services, case management, and supportive services not otherwise available through TAA

- Funding decisions are made based on participant need, program eligibility, and allowable uses of funds under each program
- Staff coordinate funding sources to ensure that services are delivered efficiently and in compliance with federal cost principles

This approach ensures that participants receive the full range of services available under both programs and that no gaps in service delivery occur.

#### **Coordinated Case Management And Service Delivery**

Alaska uses a coordinated case management model to ensure that co-enrolled participants receive aligned and comprehensive services.

- Joint case management is conducted between TAA coordinators and WIOA Title I case managers
- A primary case manager is designated to provide a single point of contact for the participant
- Service plans are developed collaboratively to align training, career services, and supportive services
- Ongoing communication between programs ensures continuity of services and prevents duplication

Case management activities are designed to support participant progression through training and into employment while ensuring that all appropriate services are provided.

#### **System Integration And Service Tracking**

AlaskaJobs supports the coordination of TAA and WIOA services by integrating program data and case management functions within a single system.

AlaskaJobs enables:

- Coordinated program enrollment and eligibility tracking
- Shared case notes and participant records across programs
- Tracking of training progress, service delivery, and milestones
- Alignment of exit and performance reporting

This system integration supports real-time coordination between programs and ensures that participant services are documented, tracked, and aligned.

#### **Assurance Of Comprehensive Service Delivery**

Alaska ensures that co-enrolled participants receive all necessary benefits and services through coordinated funding, case management, and system integration.

- Participant needs are assessed holistically across both programs
- Services are provided based on eligibility and individual need
- Funding sources are aligned to ensure that all allowable services are delivered
- Staff coordinate to prevent duplication while ensuring no gaps in service

This comprehensive approach ensures that co-enrolled participants receive timely, appropriate, and fully coordinated services that support successful employment outcomes.

(8) Describe the State's process for familiarizing one-stop staff with the TAA program. 20 CFR 618.804(j), 20 CFR 618.305

### **Overview – Staff Familiarization Strategy**

Alaska ensures that one-stop staff are knowledgeable about the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program through a structured approach that includes training, ongoing communication, and technical assistance. This approach supports consistent identification of trade-affected workers, accurate eligibility determination, and effective coordination of services across programs.

### **Key Elements**

Alaska's approach to familiarizing staff with the TAA program includes the following elements:

- Designation of TAA program staff responsible for training and technical assistance
- Integration of TAA training into staff onboarding processes
- Ongoing training and refresher sessions to maintain staff knowledge
- Regular communication of program updates, policy changes, and guidance
- Availability of technical assistance to support staff in applying TAA requirements
- Alignment of TAA training with WIOA co-enrollment and service coordination practices

### **Training And Communication**

The TAA coordinator and program staff provide training and program updates to staff across the Alaska Job Center network, including:

- Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) case managers
- Rapid response staff
- Job center resource room staff

Training and communication are delivered through:

- Initial onboarding training for new staff to ensure familiarity with TAA program requirements
- Ongoing training and refresher sessions provided at least annually
- Regular staff meetings, including monthly or periodic meetings where TAA updates are shared
- Targeted training sessions provided as needed based on policy updates or identified training needs
- Technical assistance communications, including guidance, alerts, and program updates

### **Core Knowledge Areas**

Training ensures that staff understand:

- TAA eligibility requirements and petition processes
- Available TAA benefits and services, including training and income support
- Referral processes for individuals potentially eligible for TAA
- Co-enrollment requirements between TAA and WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker programs
- Coordination of services to ensure participants receive comprehensive and non-duplicative support

### **Ongoing Support And Continuous Improvement**

Alaska provides ongoing technical assistance to support staff in applying TAA program requirements and coordinating services effectively.

Staff knowledge and application of TAA requirements are reinforced through:

- Regular communication and access to updated guidance
- Monitoring activities that assess service coordination and program compliance
- Identification of training needs based on monitoring results and program performance

This approach ensures that staff maintain up-to-date knowledge of TAA requirements and are equipped to serve trade-affected workers effectively.

**(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. States 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.<sup>7</sup> 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.

#### **Overview – Statewide Youth Procurement and Award**

The State of Alaska establishes and applies statewide criteria for awarding Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Youth grants and contracts, consistent with WIOA statutory requirements, implementing regulations, and Alaska's designation as a single-area state.

These criteria ensure high-quality service delivery, fiscal accountability, strong performance outcomes, and alignment with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) priorities.

As a single-area state, Alaska applies these criteria statewide through the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB). The Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) administers youth funding on behalf of the State. It implements procurement, monitoring, and oversight activities in accordance with AWIB-approved policies, state procurement requirements, and federal regulations.

#### **State-Developed Award Criteria**

Alaska has established standardized statewide criteria used in awarding youth grants and contracts to ensure consistency, quality, and accountability across all service providers.

These criteria include:

- Demonstrated experience serving eligible youth populations, particularly out-of-school youth and individuals with barriers to employment
- Ability to deliver one or more of the 14 WIOA Youth program elements, either directly or through formal partnerships
- Organizational and fiscal capacity to manage federal funds and comply with applicable requirements
- Demonstrated ability to achieve performance outcomes aligned with WIOA section 116 primary indicators of performance
- Use of data-driven strategies to support participant success, including measurable skill gains, credential attainment, and employment outcomes
- Strategies to promote equitable access and serve priority populations
- Alignment with state workforce priorities, including career pathways, sector strategies, and work-based learning

These criteria are applied consistently across all procurement processes to ensure that selected providers can deliver effective, compliant youth services.

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<sup>7</sup> Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

### **Procurement And Award Process**

Youth service providers are selected through competitive procurement processes conducted in accordance with state procurement laws and WIOA requirements. Requests for Grant Applications (RGAs) or Requests for Proposals (RFPs) define required program elements, performance expectations, reporting requirements, and allowable costs.

In awarding youth grants or contracts, the State evaluates proposals based on the established statewide criteria and the provider's demonstrated ability to deliver high-quality services and achieve performance outcomes. Procurement processes are conducted in accordance with state and federal conflict-of-interest requirements to ensure fairness and transparency.

Hybrid service delivery models may be utilized to ensure statewide consistency while allowing for regionally responsive service delivery.

### **Performance Accountability In Award Decisions**

Performance accountability is a core component of Alaska's youth procurement and award process.

The State evaluates applicants based on their demonstrated ability to meet WIOA section 116 primary indicators of performance for the youth program, including:

- Employment or education in the 2nd and 4th quarters after exit
- Credential attainment
- Measurable skill gains
- Effectiveness in serving employers, as applicable

Past performance, when available, is considered in award decisions, including:

- Historical performance outcomes
- Monitoring results and compliance history
- Data quality and reporting accuracy

Performance expectations are aligned with negotiated levels and are not set above federal requirements. Performance outcomes inform contract renewal, corrective actions, and future funding decisions.

### **Determination Of Contracted Services Versus Direct Service Delivery**

As a single-area state, Alaska administers WIOA Title I Youth services through a combination of contracted providers and state-administered activities.

The State determines whether services are delivered through contracts or directly based on:

- Availability and capacity of qualified service providers
- Geographic considerations, including service delivery in rural and remote areas
- Ability to ensure consistent delivery of required program elements
- Cost-effectiveness and administrative efficiency
- Performance outcomes and provider effectiveness

The State provides guidance through procurement design, policy, and technical assistance to ensure that service delivery models support effective program implementation and compliance with WIOA requirements.

This approach allows Alaska to balance statewide consistency with flexibility to address regional workforce needs.

### **Alignment With Statewide Workforce Priorities**

Award decisions prioritize providers that demonstrate alignment with Alaska's Workforce Future, including:

- Integration of education, training, and work-based learning
- Coordination with education, economic development, and community partners

- Service models that address geographic, cultural, and systemic barriers to participation

### **Equity And Priority Populations**

Alaska emphasizes equitable access to youth services and prioritizes proposals that demonstrate strategies to reach and serve populations facing barriers to employment.

Priority populations may include:

- Rural and remote youth
- Youth with disabilities
- Justice-involved youth
- Youth experiencing homelessness
- Youth from low-income households

### **Continuous Improvement**

Performance outcomes, monitoring findings, and stakeholder feedback are used to refine procurement criteria, strengthen service delivery models, and improve outcomes for youth participants.

(2) Explain how the State assists local workforce boards in achieving 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.

### **Overview – Statewide Strategy For Youth Outcomes**

The State of Alaska supports improved outcomes for out-of-school youth (OSY) and in-school youth (ISY) through statewide policy, funding, technical assistance, and oversight led by the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD).

As a single-area state, Alaska fulfills the functions typically performed by local workforce boards through centralized planning, procurement, and program oversight. This structure enables the State to implement a unified, statewide approach to youth service delivery that emphasizes equitable access, consistent service quality, and outcomes-driven program design.

Consistent with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF), the State prioritizes improving access, participation, and outcomes for out-of-school youth while ensuring effective services for in-school youth.

### **State Support For Local Service Delivery And Outcomes**

Alaska assists local service providers in achieving results for OSY and ISY through coordinated statewide strategies, including:

- Establishing policy guidance that defines program expectations, service requirements, and performance standards
- Designing procurement processes that prioritize high-quality providers and evidence-informed service models
- Providing technical assistance and training to support effective program implementation
- Monitoring performance and program compliance to ensure accountability and continuous improvement
- Using data analysis to identify gaps in service, disparities in outcomes, and opportunities for improvement

Through these actions, the State ensures that youth service providers are supported in delivering effective services and achieving positive outcomes.

### **Equity Strategies For OSY And ISY**

To address disparities in access, participation, and performance, Alaska implements targeted strategies for youth facing barriers to employment.

Key strategies include:

- Targeting priority populations, including youth experiencing homelessness, foster care involvement, justice system involvement, disabilities, limited English proficiency, and those in rural or remote areas
- Supporting flexible service delivery models, including hybrid, virtual, and community-based approaches
- Conducting performance monitoring and equity analysis, including disaggregation by demographic and geographic factors
- Promoting culturally responsive service delivery through partnerships with Alaska Native organizations and community-based providers

These strategies support equitable access to services and improved outcomes for both OSY and ISY populations.

### **Promising Practices And Partnership Models**

Alaska identifies and promotes promising practices and partnership models that improve engagement, persistence, and outcomes for youth participants. Performance data, monitoring results, and provider innovation inform these practices.

Promising practices include:

- Pre-apprenticeship and work-based learning models aligned with Registered Apprenticeship pathways
- Rural and remote service delivery models using community-based, itinerant, and technology-enabled approaches
- Trauma-informed and wraparound service models addressing housing, behavioral health, and transportation barriers
- Partnerships with school districts, postsecondary institutions, and community organizations aligned with career pathways
- Targeted outreach strategies designed to engage disconnected youth

### **State Role In Supporting And Scaling Promising Practices**

The State supports the implementation and scaling of promising practices through:

- Technical assistance and training to support the adoption and replication of effective service models
- Use of data dashboards and performance reviews to identify high-performing practices and areas for improvement
- Facilitation of peer learning and communities of practice among youth service providers
- Alignment of funding and procurement strategies to incentivize effective and scalable approaches

These efforts enable the State to expand successful models and improve outcomes across the youth system.

### **Continuous Improvement And System Impact**

Alaska uses performance data, monitoring findings, and stakeholder feedback to improve youth service delivery and outcomes continuously.

Through this approach, the State:

- Improves access and outcomes for out-of-school youth and in-school youth
- Strengthens alignment between education, training, and employment
- Expands effective and evidence-informed service models
- Supports long-term workforce development goals aligned with Alaska's Workforce Future

(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.

#### **Overview – Innovative Youth Service Delivery**

The State of Alaska supports innovative and flexible models for delivering WIOA Title I Youth services to improve access, engagement, and outcomes statewide, particularly in rural and remote communities.

As a single-area state, Alaska assists local service providers through statewide policy, procurement, technical assistance, and oversight to ensure that innovative service models are implemented consistently and effectively. All service delivery models are aligned with WIOA statutory and regulatory requirements, Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) policy, and Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF).

#### **State Support For Innovative Service Delivery**

Alaska promotes and supports innovation in youth service delivery through:

- Establishing policy guidance that allows flexibility in service delivery models while maintaining compliance
- Designing procurement processes that encourage innovative, evidence-informed approaches
- Providing technical assistance and training to support the implementation of effective models
- Using monitoring and performance data to identify and promote successful practices
- Facilitating coordination among education, workforce, and community partners

These strategies enable providers to adapt service delivery to Alaska’s geographic, economic, and cultural context.

#### **Implementation Of The 14 Youth Program Elements**

The State ensures that all 14 WIOA Youth program elements are available statewide and accessible to each participant based on individual need, as required under WIOA section 129(c)(2).

Youth service providers are required to:

- Deliver program elements directly or through formal partnerships supported by written agreements
- Demonstrate, through procurement responses and program design, how each of the 14 elements will be made available
- Assess participant needs and provide appropriate program elements as part of the individual service strategy
- Maintain documentation in AlaskaJobs and participant case files to verify service delivery

The State verifies implementation of the 14 program elements through:

- Procurement review and contract requirements
- Ongoing program monitoring and case file review
- Data validation and performance reporting

This approach ensures that all participants have access to comprehensive services that support education, training, and employment outcomes.

#### **Innovative Youth Service Models**

Alaska supports the implementation of innovative service delivery models that improve engagement and outcomes for youth participants.

Examples of innovative models include:

- Hybrid and virtual service delivery models to increase access in rural and remote areas
- Cohort-based training aligned with in-demand occupations and career pathways
- Employer-connected work-based learning models that integrate training and employment
- Partnerships with school districts, postsecondary institutions, tribal organizations, and community-based providers

The State identifies effective models using performance data and monitoring results, and supports their replication through technical assistance and peer learning.

### **Work Experience As A Core Component Of Career Pathways**

Alaska prioritizes work experience as a key element of youth service delivery and as a central component of its career pathways strategy.

Consistent with WIOA requirements, at least 20 percent of WIOA Youth funds are expended on paid and unpaid work experience activities.

Work experience is integrated within career pathways to support:

- Development of occupational and employability skills
- Exposure to in-demand industries and occupations
- Transition to postsecondary education, training, or unsubsidized employment

Work experience activities may include:

- Summer employment opportunities
- Internships and job shadowing
- On-the-job training
- Pre-apprenticeship programs aligned with Registered Apprenticeship pathways
- Registered Apprenticeship-related activities

Youth service providers are expected to align work-experience opportunities with individual service strategies, career pathways, and labor-market demand.

The State monitors compliance with the 20 percent work experience expenditure requirement through fiscal reporting and program monitoring. Failure to meet the requirement may result in corrective action or technical assistance.

### **Oversight, Monitoring, And Continuous Improvement**

Alaska monitors youth program implementation to ensure compliance with WIOA requirements and effective service delivery.

Monitoring activities include:

- Review of program performance and participant outcomes
- Fiscal monitoring, including verification of work experience expenditures
- Case file review to ensure delivery of required program elements
- Assessment of service models and alignment with career pathways

Monitoring results are used to:

- Provide technical assistance to service providers
- Identify and scale effective practices
- Implement corrective actions, as needed

- Support continuous improvement across the youth system

(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.

#### **Overview – RAA and Statutory Context**

Consistent with section 129(a)(1)(B) and (C) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and 20 CFR §§ 681.290 and 681.310, the State of Alaska defines “requiring additional assistance” (RAA) as a discretionary eligibility criterion for in-school youth (ISY) and out-of-school youth (OSY) who face documented barriers to completing an educational program or securing and holding employment.

RAA is used to support equitable access to WIOA Youth services for individuals facing significant and demonstrable barriers, particularly in Alaska’s rural and remote communities. Use of RAA is governed by Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) policies and is subject to documentation, monitoring, and oversight requirements to ensure program integrity and consistent statewide application.

These criteria ensure consistent statewide application while allowing flexibility to address Alaska’s geographic, cultural, and economic conditions. RAA determinations are made on a case-by-case basis and may not be applied categorically or presumed based on a single characteristic or condition.

#### **State Policy Statement**

The State of Alaska has established formal policy defining “requiring additional assistance” (RAA) for both in-school youth (ISY) and out-of-school youth (OSY), consistent with WIOA section 129(a)(1)(B) and (C) and 20 CFR §§ 681.290 and 681.310. These criteria are implemented statewide through Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) policies and are binding on all WIOA Youth service providers.

#### **In-School Youth (ISY): Requiring Additional Assistance**

For in-school youth, RAA may be used only when no other statutory eligibility barrier applies and is subject to the five percent statewide cap established under WIOA. RAA determinations for ISY are applied sparingly and as a last-resort eligibility criterion.

Consistent with AWIB Policy 07-562, ISY RAA determinations must be supported by objective evidence demonstrating that the youth faces educational, employment, or personal circumstances that significantly impede academic progress or employment outcomes.

Qualifying barriers may include:

##### **Educational Barriers**

- low academic performance, credit deficiency, or risk of not meeting graduation requirements
- chronic absenteeism or disengagement from school
- enrollment disruptions, including alternative or nontraditional education settings

##### **Employment Barriers**

- limited or no work history or exposure to employment
- difficulty maintaining employment or lack of work readiness skills

**Living Arrangement and Social Barriers**

- housing instability or unsafe living conditions
- lack of stable adult support or caregiving responsibilities
- exposure to trauma, behavioral health challenges, or family instability

**Geographic and Cultural Barriers**

- residence in rural or remote areas with limited access to services
- cultural or subsistence obligations that affect participation in school or work

**Governor's Special Barriers**

- locally relevant educational, economic, or geographic conditions supported by documentation and defined in AWIB policy

The State tracks ISY RAA usage through AlaskaJobs and conducts regular monitoring to ensure compliance with the five percent limitation.

**Out-of-School Youth (OSY): Requiring Additional Assistance**

For out-of-school youth, RAA may be applied without a numerical cap, consistent with WIOA and federal regulations.

Consistent with AWIB Policy 07-563, OSY may be determined to require additional assistance when documented barriers limit access to education, training, or employment opportunities.

Qualifying barriers may include:

- Residence in rural or remote areas with limited service access
- Disengagement from education or prior non-completion of programs
- Limited work history or employability skills
- Difficulty maintaining employment
- Housing instability or homelessness
- Justice system involvement or reentry challenges
- Parenting or caregiving responsibilities
- Transportation or access barriers
- Referral from a partner agency identifying the need for additional support

**Relationship to Other Eligibility Criteria**

RAA is a discretionary, state-defined eligibility criterion and does not replace or override other statutory eligibility categories.

Consistent with AWIB Policy 07-550, RAA may not be used when another applicable eligibility criterion can be documented, including:

- Basic skills deficiency
- Disability status
- Foster care involvement
- Homelessness
- Justice system involvement

Case managers must assess all applicable eligibility pathways before determining RAA status. When multiple barriers are present, the most appropriate statutory eligibility category must be used.

### **Documentation and Verification**

All RAA determinations must be supported by clear, objective documentation in the participant's case file. Documentation must clearly support the determination that the identified barrier significantly limits the individual's ability to complete an educational program or secure and hold employment.

Acceptable documentation includes:

- School records, transcripts, or attendance records
- Employer or partner verification
- Case manager assessments and documented observations
- Referrals from partner agencies
- Other third-party documentation

Self-attestation may be used only when third-party documentation is not reasonably available and must be supported by detailed case notes and professional judgment.

All documentation must be recorded in AlaskaJobs and maintained in accordance with AWIB policy requirements.

### **Monitoring, Eligibility Validation, and Continuous Improvement**

AWIB oversees the application of RAA criteria through policy guidance, technical assistance, and monitoring activities.

RAA determinations are reviewed as part of eligibility validation during monitoring and data validation processes.

RAA usage is evaluated to ensure:

- Compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements
- Consistent application across providers and regions
- Adherence to the five percent ISY cap
- Appropriate use relative to other eligibility criteria
- Alignment with equity and access goals under Alaska's Workforce Future

Monitoring results inform corrective actions, targeted training, and policy clarification to support program integrity and continuous improvement.

**(d) Single-area State requirements.** In States with 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).)

### **Overview – Public Comment Process**

In accordance with section 108(d)(3) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the State of Alaska provided a meaningful opportunity for public comment on the Alaska Workforce Future (AWF) WIOA State Plan Revision.

The draft State Plan was made available for public review through multiple accessible channels to ensure transparency and statewide access. Public comment was solicited through:

- Public meetings of the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB)
- Written submissions through the State of Alaska's official online public notice system
- Additional outreach methods designed to ensure broad participation across urban, rural, and remote communities

The public comment process included advance public notice, accessible materials, and multiple methods for submitting comments to ensure meaningful engagement from stakeholders statewide.

#### **Summary of Public Comments Representing Disagreement**

All comments received during the formal public comment period were reviewed and considered by the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD).

No comments were received that represented disagreement with the State Plan, including objections, concerns, or recommended changes, as defined under WIOA section 108(d)(3).

Accordingly, no modifications to the State Plan were required in response to comments representing disagreement.

#### **Documentation and Ongoing Consideration**

The State maintains documentation of the public comment process and all comments received, consistent with federal recordkeeping requirements.

If comments expressing disagreement are received outside the formal public comment period, they will be documented and addressed in accordance with applicable federal requirements and, as appropriate, considered in future State Plan modifications or updates.

[\(2\) The entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds, as determined by the governor, if different from that for the State. \(WIOA section 108\(b\)\(15\).\)](#)

#### **Overview – Entity Responsible for Grant Fund Disbursement**

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) is the entity responsible for the disbursement of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I funds in Alaska's single statewide workforce development area, consistent with WIOA section 108(b)(15).

As a single-area state, Alaska does not designate separate local workforce areas. Accordingly, DOLWD performs both state-level fiscal management and local fiscal agent functions, ensuring centralized fiscal responsibility, consistent application of federal and state requirements, and alignment with statewide workforce strategies. DOLWD administers and disburses funds in accordance with WIOA statutory and regulatory requirements, federal cost principles under 2 CFR Part 200, and applicable state fiscal policies and procedures. Fiscal operations are supported by established internal controls, separation of duties, and alignment with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF).

#### **Designation of Responsible Entity**

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) is designated as the entity responsible for disbursing WIOA Title I funds.

Because Alaska is a single workforce development area, DOLWD fulfills both state-level fiscal management and local fiscal agent responsibilities for WIOA Title I programs.

#### **Fiscal Management and Disbursement Responsibilities**

DOLWD administers and disburses WIOA Title I funds in accordance with:

- WIOA statutory and regulatory requirements
- Applicable federal cost principles and administrative requirements under 2 CFR Part 200
- State fiscal policies and procedures governing the administration of federal funds

Fiscal responsibilities include:

- Processing payments and reimbursements to subrecipients and service providers
- Ensuring expenditures are allowable, allocable, and reasonable
- Maintaining financial management systems that support accurate accounting and reporting
- Implementing internal controls to safeguard federal funds and prevent misuse

#### **Internal Controls and Separation of Duties**

DOLWD maintains internal controls and organizational structures that ensure appropriate separation of fiscal and programmatic responsibilities.

These controls include:

- Separation of duties between program administration, fiscal operations, and oversight functions
- Review and approval processes for expenditures and drawdowns
- Monitoring and reconciliation of financial transactions
- Compliance with statewide accounting and financial reporting systems

These processes support accountability, transparency, and audit readiness, ensuring compliance with federal and state requirements.

#### **Governance and Oversight Alignment**

DOLWD carries out fiscal agent responsibilities in alignment with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF).

These responsibilities do not alter or diminish the statutory role of the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), which retains responsibility for:

- Policy development
- Strategic planning
- Performance accountability oversight

This structure ensures a clear delineation between fiscal administration and workforce system governance while supporting coordinated, statewide implementation.

[\(3\) A description of the type and availability of WIOA Title I Youth activities and successful models, including for youth with disabilities. \(WIOA section 108\(b\)\(9\).\)](#)

#### **Overview – WIOA Youth Activities and Statewide Availability**

The State of Alaska ensures statewide availability of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Youth activities for eligible in-school youth (ISY) and out-of-school youth (OSY), consistent with WIOA section 108(b)(9). Youth services are delivered through a coordinated, statewide service delivery framework administered by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) in partnership with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB).

As a single statewide workforce development area, Alaska provides equitable access to youth services across all regions through competitively procured providers, Alaska Job Centers, and partnerships with education, Tribal, and community-based organizations. Services are delivered directly, through partnerships, or via referral networks to ensure access for youth in urban, rural, and remote communities.

#### **Statewide Service Delivery Framework**

Alaska ensures statewide availability of WIOA Title I Youth activities through a coordinated service delivery structure administered by DOLWD, in partnership with AWIB.

Youth services are delivered across all regions through competitively procured providers, Alaska Job Centers, and coordinated partnerships with education, Tribal, and community-based organizations. Services are available statewide and are not limited by geography. Service delivery models include direct provision, partnerships, and referral networks to ensure access for eligible youth in urban, rural, and remote communities.

#### **Availability of the 14 Youth Program Elements**

WIOA Title I Youth providers ensure that all 14 required youth program elements described in WIOA section 129(c)(2) are available statewide.

Program elements may be delivered:

- Directly by the service provider
- Through formal partnerships supported by memoranda of understanding (MOUs) or other written agreements
- Through coordinated referral mechanisms that ensure timely access to services

This structure ensures that all required program elements are accessible to eligible youth regardless of location or provider structure.

Youth services are individualized based on assessed needs and are documented in each participant's individual service strategy (ISS), consistent with WIOA requirements.

#### **Types of Youth Activities Available Statewide**

Youth participants have access to a comprehensive set of services, including:

- Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion
- Alternative secondary school services and dropout recovery services
- Paid and unpaid work experiences, including summer employment, pre-apprenticeship, internships, job shadowing, and on-the-job training
- Occupational skills training aligned with in-demand industries
- Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation and training
- Leadership development opportunities
- Supportive services
- Adult mentoring
- Follow-up services
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including referrals for mental health and substance use services
- Financial literacy education
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Labor market and employment information
- Activities that support transition to postsecondary education and training

Not all youth participants receive every program element. Services are determined based on individual assessment, service needs, and career goals.

#### **Effective and Regionally Responsive Service Models**

Alaska supports a range of service delivery models that promote access and effectiveness across diverse regions.

Examples include:

- Work-based learning models that integrate paid work experience with occupational training aligned to employer demand
- Pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship-connected pathways that support entry into high-demand occupations

- Hybrid, virtual, and community-based service delivery models that expand access in rural and remote areas
- Trauma-informed and culturally responsive service approaches
- Partnerships with education providers, employers, Tribal organizations, and community-based organizations

These models support Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF) priorities by strengthening workforce attachment, supporting skill development, and aligning youth services with regional and statewide workforce needs.

**Youth with Disabilities and Coordinated Supports**

Youth with disabilities are supported through coordinated service delivery among WIOA Title I Youth providers, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), education partners, and other service agencies.

This coordination ensures access to appropriate services and supports, including:

- Pre-employment transition services
- Work-based learning opportunities
- Individualized accommodations and support services, consistent with program requirements

These efforts support equitable access, improved outcomes, and successful transitions to education, training, and employment for youth with disabilities.

**Statewide Access, Monitoring, and Continuous Improvement**

The State uses performance data, monitoring activities, and stakeholder feedback to assess the availability, accessibility, and effectiveness of youth services statewide.

Participation, services, and outcomes are documented in AlaskaJobs to support reporting, accountability, and data-informed decision-making.

Monitoring and data validation activities ensure:

- All 14 program elements remain available statewide
- Services are delivered in accordance with WIOA requirements
- Providers maintain equitable access across regions and populations

Findings from these activities inform continuous improvement, technical assistance, and enhancements to service delivery during the PY 2026–2027 State Plan modification period.

[\(4\) A description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.](#)

**Overview – One-Stop Partner Roles and Contributions**

In Alaska’s single-area workforce system, the roles and resource contributions of required one-stop partners are defined through the Alaska One-Stop Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA), executed in accordance with section 121(b) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

These agreements establish the framework for coordinated service delivery, shared responsibility, and integrated operations across the Alaska Job Center Network. As a single statewide workforce development area, Alaska ensures that partner roles and contributions are aligned statewide and support a consistent, customer-centered service delivery model.

### **Framework for Partner Roles and Contributions**

The MOU and IFA collectively define how required one-stop partners collaborate to deliver services, share resources, and support system operations.

These agreements:

- Establish partner roles and responsibilities for service delivery and system participation
- Define infrastructure and shared cost arrangements necessary to support Alaska Job Center operations
- Ensure inclusion of all required one-stop partners consistent with WIOA Titles I–IV and other applicable programs
- Support integrated service delivery through coordination, referral, and co-enrollment processes

This framework ensures that partner contributions are transparent, proportionate, and aligned with federal requirements.

### **Roles of One-Stop Partners**

Required one-stop partners include, at a minimum, programs authorized under WIOA Titles I–IV and other federally required partner programs, as applicable.

Each partner contributes to the workforce system in accordance with its statutory authority and program requirements.

Partner roles include:

- Providing access to career services, training services, and supportive services
- Delivering program-specific services to eligible participants
- Participating in coordinated intake, assessment, and referral processes
- Supporting co-enrollment and integrated service delivery, where appropriate
- Engaging in cross-program collaboration, staff cross-training, and system alignment activities
- Contributing to employer engagement and sector-based workforce strategies

These activities support a coordinated, customer-centered service delivery model across the Alaska Job Center Network.

### **Resource Contributions and Cost Sharing**

Resource contributions from one-stop partners are defined in the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) and may include:

- Infrastructure cost contributions to support Alaska Job Center facilities
- Shared services costs, including technology, equipment, and operational support
- Personnel and staffing contributions to support service delivery
- In-kind contributions that support system operations and participant access

Cost sharing is determined based on each partner's proportionate use of the system and relative benefit received, consistent with WIOA requirements and applicable federal cost principles under 2 CFR Part 200.

These contributions ensure that the Alaska Job Center Network remains accessible, functional, and responsive to the needs of job seekers and employers across Alaska's diverse geographic regions.

### **Coordination, Review, and Alignment**

Partner roles, responsibilities, and resource contributions are reviewed, negotiated, and updated through the MOU and IFA processes to maintain alignment with:

- Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) framework
- The One-Stop Operator (OSO) agreement

- Evolving workforce system needs and service delivery strategies

All partner contributions and coordination activities are implemented within existing statutory authorities, subject to funding availability, and consistent with program-specific accountability requirements.

(5) [The competitive process used to award the subgrants and contracts for Title I activities.](#)

**Overview – Competitive Procurement for Title I Services**

The State of Alaska administers Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I services through a combination of competitively procured contracts and direct service delivery, consistent with WIOA requirements, federal regulations, including 2 CFR Part 200.320, and applicable State of Alaska procurement laws and policies.

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), in coordination with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), conducts competitive procurement processes to select qualified providers for WIOA Title I Youth services. WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs are administered directly by the State, ensuring consistent statewide service delivery within Alaska’s single-area workforce structure.

This approach ensures that procurement processes are fair, transparent, and competitive where required, while maintaining alignment with statewide workforce strategies and operational consistency.

**Competitive Procurement Framework**

The State of Alaska awards WIOA Title I Youth contracts through a competitive procurement process consistent with WIOA requirements, federal regulations, including 2 CFR Part 200.320, and applicable State of Alaska procurement laws and policies.

DOLWD, in coordination with AWIB, conducts competitive solicitations to select service providers capable of delivering high-quality workforce services aligned with statewide and regional workforce priorities.

Competitive procurements are conducted through Requests for Grant Applications (RGAs) or Requests for Proposals (RFPs), as appropriate, to promote transparency, full and open competition, and accountability.

**Applicability of Competitive Procurement**

The competitive procurement process applies to WIOA Title I Youth Services.

WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs are administered directly by the State. They are not procured through competitive subawards, consistent with Alaska’s designation as a single statewide workforce development area.

This approach ensures that Youth program funds are awarded in a fair, transparent, and accountable manner while maintaining consistent statewide service delivery for Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.

**Procurement Process and Evaluation Criteria**

Competitive solicitations include clearly defined requirements, evaluation criteria, and scoring methodologies.

Evaluation criteria include:

- Organizational and administrative capacity
- Program design and service delivery approach
- Experience serving eligible youth populations, including priority populations
- Alignment with labor market demand and sector strategies
- Fiscal integrity and financial management capacity
- Past performance, where applicable

Awards are made based on the results of the competitive evaluation process and are subject to funding availability and compliance with all applicable federal and state requirements.

#### **Contract Terms and Renewals**

Contracts are awarded for defined periods consistent with State procurement practices and the State Plan cycle.

Contracts may include options for renewal or extension, subject to:

- Continued availability of funding
- Satisfactory program performance
- Compliance with applicable federal and state requirements
- Ongoing alignment with statewide workforce priorities

Any extensions are exercised at the State's discretion and do not replace required competitive procurement processes.

#### **Oversight, Monitoring, and Performance Management**

The State monitors contracted Youth service providers to ensure compliance with:

- WIOA program requirements
- Performance accountability standards under WIOA section 116
- Fiscal controls and allowable cost requirements
- Service delivery expectations

Monitoring activities include programmatic and fiscal reviews, data validation, and performance analysis.

Monitoring results inform contract management decisions, technical assistance, and continuous improvement efforts.

#### **System Impact**

Through this competitive contracting approach, Alaska ensures that WIOA Title I Youth funds are administered responsibly and that Youth services remain responsive to labor market conditions, employer needs, and the evolving needs of young people during the PY 2026–2027 State Plan modification period.

[\(6\) 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 the training approach.](#)

#### **Overview – Delivery of Training Services**

Alaska delivers Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I training services through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), contract-based training, and Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), consistent with WIOA section 134 and applicable federal guidance.

Training services are designed to support participant career advancement, meet employer workforce needs, and align with in-demand industries and occupations.

Training delivery is coordinated through the Alaska Job Center Network using a participant-centered approach that emphasizes career planning, informed customer choice, and alignment with labor market demand.

#### **Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)**

Alaska uses Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to provide eligible participants with access to training services that support entry into or advancement within in-demand occupations.

ITA service delivery is coordinated through Alaska Job Center case management staff, who work one-on-one with each participant to develop an Individual Employment Plan (IEP). The IEP identifies career goals, training needs, and the steps necessary to achieve employment outcomes.

Career exploration, assessment, and counseling activities provide participants with information on career pathways, training options, and labor market conditions.

Participants select training providers through Alaska's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), ensuring informed customer choice and access to approved training programs.

#### **Contract-Based Training**

In addition to ITAs, Alaska may utilize contract-based training in limited circumstances where it is determined to be the most effective approach, consistent with WIOA section 134(c)(3)(G).

Contract-based training may be used when:

- The training program is not available through the ETPL
- The training is designed to meet the specific needs of a group of participants (e.g., cohort-based or customized training)
- The training is aligned with employer demand and leads to employment opportunities

These contracts are procured in accordance with federal and state procurement requirements and are designed to ensure quality, cost-effectiveness, and alignment with workforce priorities.

#### **Incumbent Worker Training (IWT)**

Alaska provides Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) to support the retention and advancement of currently employed workers.

IWT is designed to enhance worker skills, increase productivity, and improve employer competitiveness. Employers identify training needs based on business operations and workforce requirements. When needed, staff guides employers in identifying appropriate training opportunities, including options available through the ETPL, the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education, and other recognized training providers.

#### **Coordination and Alignment of Training Services**

Training services delivered through ITAs, contract-based training, and IWT are coordinated to align with participant career goals, employer needs, and statewide workforce priorities.

Alaska Job Center staff, business services staff, and partner programs collaborate to:

- Support access to training opportunities
- Facilitate informed decision-making
- Align training investments with in-demand industries and occupations
- Promote co-enrollment and integrated service delivery, where appropriate

This coordinated approach supports Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) priorities by strengthening workforce readiness, advancing careers, and aligning training investments with labor market demand.

#### **Informed Customer Choice**

Alaska ensures that participants can make informed decisions about training services, regardless of the delivery method.

Participants receive access to:

- Career counseling and individualized guidance through case management
- Information on training provider performance, cost, and outcomes through the ETPL
- Labor market information on in-demand occupations and wage expectations
- Comparative information on available training options

These resources help participants select training programs that align with their career goals and lead to successful employment outcomes.

[\(7\) 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 review local applications submitted under Title II, consistent with WIOA sections. 107\(d\)\(11\)\(A\) and \(B\)\(i\) and WIOA sec. 232.](#)

### **Overview – Coordination Between Title I and Title II**

Alaska coordinates Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I and Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, AEFLA) programs to support integrated service delivery, career pathway development, and improved employment and credential outcomes for participants.

Coordination occurs through shared planning, co-enrollment strategies, referral processes, and integration of adult education services within the Alaska Job Center Network, consistent with each program's statutory authority and funding requirements.

This includes coordinated intake and referral processes, staff collaboration, and alignment of services to support seamless access to education and workforce services.

### **Program Alignment and Service Delivery**

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) facilitates coordination between Title I and Title II programs through:

- Regular inter-program communication and collaboration
- Joint participation in the workforce system and State Plan planning activities
- Alignment of service delivery strategies across programs

Title II providers deliver adult education, English language acquisition, and Integrated Education and Training (IET) activities that align with local and statewide labor market demand and are coordinated with Title I employment and training services.

Title II staff and I collaborate through shared workforce system activities within the Alaska Job Center Network, including coordinated outreach, intake, and service delivery where appropriate.

### **Referrals, Co-Enrollment, and Participant Support**

Participants may be referred between Title I and Title II programs and, as appropriate, co-enrolled to support skill development, credential attainment, and employment outcomes.

These coordinated strategies allow participants to access complementary services, including:

- Basic skills instruction and English language acquisition
- Occupational skills training and work-based learning
- Supportive services that promote retention and completion

All referrals and co-enrollment activities are conducted in a manner that maintains distinct eligibility determinations, performance accountability, and fiscal responsibility for each program.

### **Career Pathways and Integrated Education and Training**

Career pathways and Integrated Education and Training (IET) strategies are coordinated to support participant progression from foundational skill development to postsecondary education, training, and employment.

Title II providers work in coordination with Title I programs to:

- Align instructional content with high-demand industries
- Support transitions into occupational training and employment
- Connect participants to career pathways aligned with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) priorities

These efforts strengthen alignment between education and workforce services and support improved participant outcomes.

### **State Board Role in Title II Application Review**

In accordance with WIOA sections 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and section 232, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) fulfills the role of the Local Board and participates in the review of applications submitted under Title II (AEFLA).

The State Board reviews Title II applications to ensure alignment with:

- The State Plan and Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) framework
- Workforce system priorities and regional labor market needs
- Career pathway strategies and integration with Title I services

This review process supports coordination between adult education and workforce programs and ensures that funded activities contribute to a unified, aligned workforce system.

Final funding decisions remain consistent with AEFLA statutory requirements and applicable State administrative processes.

### **Governance and System Alignment**

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) provides oversight to ensure alignment between Title I and Title II programs within the broader workforce system.

This governance structure supports system-level coordination while preserving the distinct statutory roles, accountability structures, and administrative responsibilities of each program.

### **Data Coordination and Continuous Improvement**

Coordination between Title I and Title II programs is supported through shared performance goals, data-informed decision-making, and ongoing communication across programs.

Participation and outcomes are tracked through program-specific data systems. Performance trends, monitoring activities, and stakeholder feedback inform coordination strategies and continuous improvement efforts.

### **Program Integrity and Compliance**

All coordination activities are implemented within existing statutory authorities, funding availability, and program-specific requirements.

These activities do not alter eligibility determinations, service requirements, performance accountability, or fiscal responsibility for either Title I or Title II programs.

Coordination practices described in this section support Alaska's workforce system priorities during the PY 2026–2027 State Plan modification period.

(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.

#### **Overview – Cooperative Agreements for One-Stop Access and Integration**

Alaska ensures access to the one-stop delivery system through cooperative agreements that support coordinated service delivery, partner integration, and shared responsibility across required and optional one-stop partners.

These agreements establish the framework for collaboration among workforce, education, human services, and economic development partners, and entities administering Rehabilitation Act programs, including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), that participate in the Alaska Job Center (AJC) Network.

#### **Framework for Cooperative Agreements**

Alaska's cooperative agreements define how one-stop partners collaborate to provide integrated services and ensure access to the full range of workforce system services.

These agreements include:

- The One-Stop Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- The Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA)
- The One-Stop Operator (OSO) Agreement

Together, these agreements define partner roles, responsibilities, cost-sharing arrangements, and expectations for coordinated service delivery.

The State maintains executed agreements, and they are available for review in accordance with federal requirements.

#### **MOU and Infrastructure Funding Agreement**

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), in coordination with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), maintains a comprehensive One-Stop Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), including an Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA), that defines partner roles, service coordination, and cost-sharing requirements within the Alaska Job Center Network. This framework supports the integrated service delivery and partner alignment strategies described in Section II(c). Additional information on one-stop partners and system roles is provided in Appendix L – One-Stop Partners and System Resources.

AWIB, DOLWD, the One-Stop Operator (OSO), and required one-stop partners are actively engaged in developing and executing an updated MOU/IFA to ensure continued compliance and alignment during the PY 2026–2027 State Plan modification period and to support consistent statewide implementation of one-stop partner requirements. A comprehensive inventory of workforce policies supporting system alignment and coordinated service delivery is provided in Appendix D – Policy Inventory.

During this transition period, workforce services continue to be delivered in accordance with WIOA requirements and established operational procedures. This approach ensures uninterrupted access to services for customers and continued coordination among partners.

#### **Continuity of Operations and System Integration**

The One-Stop Operator (OSO) Agreement remains in effect through June 30, 2027, ensuring continuity of one-stop operations, partner coordination, and service integration while the updated MOU/IFA is finalized.

The updated MOU/IFA will be executed in accordance with WIOA statutory requirements and applicable federal guidance and will not alter program-specific eligibility, funding responsibilities, or performance accountability requirements, ensuring stability and continuity across the workforce system.

#### **Physical and Programmatic Access**

Cooperative agreements support both physical and programmatic access to one-stop services across Alaska.

Access is provided through:

- On-site partner presence at Alaska Job Centers, where available
- Itinerant and shared staffing models in communities without full partner co-location
- Virtual and technology-enabled service delivery
- Coordinated referral processes that ensure timely access to partner services

These strategies ensure that customers can access the full range of workforce services regardless of location, including in rural and remote communities.

#### **Partner Integration and Service Coordination**

Through cooperative agreements, one-stop partners coordinate service delivery to support shared customers and an integrated workforce system.

This includes:

- Shared intake, assessment, and referral processes
- Cross-program communication and coordination
- Alignment of services across programs
- Participation in system planning and continuous improvement activities

These efforts promote a seamless customer experience and reduce duplication of services across programs.

#### **System Governance and Program Integrity**

Through the MOU, IFA, and related cooperative agreements, Alaska ensures that one-stop partners:

- Contribute appropriate resources
- Coordinate service delivery
- Participate in system governance consistent with WIOA requirements

These agreements strengthen system integration while preserving distinct program roles, funding streams, eligibility requirements, and performance accountability structures.

[\(e\) 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:

#### **Overview – Waiver Request**

Alaska is requesting renewal of its previously approved waiver to operate as a single statewide workforce development area under WIOA Section 189(i)(3)(B).

This waiver allows the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) to function as both the State Workforce Development Board and Local Workforce Development Board, supporting a unified governance structure that enhances administrative efficiency, ensures consistent statewide service delivery, and improves access to workforce services across Alaska's geographically dispersed and rural communities.

The waiver supports Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) framework and aligns with federal priorities related to system integration, employer engagement, and workforce system modernization.

### Key Elements – Single Statewide Area Waiver Framework

Alaska’s waiver request is based on the following key elements:

- Operation as a single statewide workforce development area under WIOA §106(d) and §107(b)
- Designation of AWIB as both the State and Local Workforce Development Board
- Elimination of duplicative local governance structures to improve administrative efficiency
- Support for consistent statewide policy implementation and fiscal oversight
- Alignment of workforce strategies with employer demand and sector-based approaches
- Maintenance of equitable access to services across urban, rural, and remote communities
- Preservation of WIOA performance accountability under Section 116
- Use of data-driven monitoring and continuous improvement strategies
- Alignment with federal priorities, including TEGL 05-25 system modernization guidance

(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;

Pursuant to section 189(i)(3)(B) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the State of Alaska requests renewal of its previously approved waiver to operate as a single statewide workforce development area. The State is requesting continuation of existing waiver authority and is not seeking any expansion or modification of the previously approved waiver. This request is submitted as part of Alaska’s two-year State Plan modification for Program Years (PY) 2026–2027 under TEGL 07-25. The governance structure remains unchanged from the previously approved 2024–2027 State Plan framework.

### Statutory and Regulatory Requirements

This waiver relates to the following statutory and regulatory requirements:

- WIOA section 106(d) – Designation of local workforce development areas
- WIOA section 107(b) – Local workforce development board composition and functions
- 20 CFR §§ 679.210–679.240 and 679.270 – Local board designation, responsibilities, and single-area state provisions

Under this waiver, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) serves as both the State Workforce Development Board and the Local Workforce Development Board for the entire state. Alaska operates as a single-board, single-area workforce system.

This waiver is consistent with WIOA section 189(i)(3)(B) because it improves the statewide workforce development system, aligns with WIOA goals, and does not undermine worker protections, fiscal accountability, or performance requirements.

### Operational Context and Need for the Waiver

Alaska’s geographic scale, dispersed population centers, and limited administrative capacity in many rural and remote communities present structural challenges to operating multiple local workforce development areas.

Separate local governance entities would:

- Create duplicative administrative costs
- Fragmented, limited fiscal and staffing resources
- Impede consistent statewide policy implementation
- Introduce inequities in service capacity across regions

The single statewide structure addresses these constraints by consolidating governance functions while maintaining local engagement through:

- Geographic diversity in board membership
- Representation from business, labor, education, Tribal organizations, and local elected officials
- Ongoing outreach and stakeholder consultation across Alaska’s economic regions

The waiver does not eliminate local input, reduce service access, or alter participant eligibility. It ensures governance responsibilities are carried out in a manner that is operationally feasible, equitable, and fiscally responsible.

#### **Goals of the Waiver**

The goals of this waiver are to:

- Maintain administrative efficiency in a geographically large and sparsely populated state
- Ensure consistent statewide policy implementation and fiscal oversight
- Reduce duplicative governance structures that are not operationally sustainable in Alaska’s regional context
- Support coordinated statewide planning, employer engagement, and sector strategies
- Maintain consistent access to workforce services across urban, rural, and remote communities
- Preserve unified performance accountability under WIOA section 116

#### **Alignment with the State Plan and Federal Priorities**

This waiver supports the strategic vision and goals outlined in Sections II(b) and II(c) of this State Plan and advances Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF) framework.

The waiver aligns with federal priorities, including:

- Strengthening workforce system integration
- Enhancing employer engagement and sector partnerships
- Expanding access to services for underserved populations
- Supporting system modernization and data-informed decision-making

Alignment with U.S. Department of Labor priorities and expected outcomes is further described in Section 4 of this waiver request.

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

Before requesting renewal of this waiver, the State of Alaska conducted a comprehensive review of applicable statutes, administrative policies, governance structures, fiscal procedures, and service delivery models to identify any State or local barriers to implementation of the requested waiver.

This review confirmed that:

- Alaska statute authorizes the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) as the State Workforce Development Board
- The Governor has designated Alaska as a single statewide workforce development area
- Administrative policies support centralized fiscal oversight, monitoring, and performance accountability
- Service delivery is coordinated statewide through Alaska Job Centers, partner agencies, and contracted providers
- No State-level statutory, regulatory, administrative, or fiscal barriers impede the implementation of a single-area workforce system

The State also evaluated whether alternative governance structures, including multiple local workforce development areas, could be implemented through State-level policy or administrative changes. Based on this assessment, the State determined that establishing multiple local workforce development areas would not be operationally feasible due to geographic scale, dispersed population centers, administrative capacity constraints, and limited resources in rural and remote communities.

As a result of this review, the State determined that no additional State or local statutory or regulatory changes are necessary to support implementation of the requested waiver.

The remaining constraint is the federal statutory framework under WIOA sections 106 and 107, which cannot be modified through State action. Accordingly, a federal waiver is necessary to continue operating Alaska's single statewide workforce development area.

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

Continuation of this waiver is expected to support measurable improvements in system coordination, service consistency, and administrative efficiency. These outcomes are expected to be performance-neutral or performance-enhancing and aligned with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) framework and the strategic goals outlined in this State Plan.

**Expected Programmatic Outcomes**

If the waiver is granted, Alaska expects the following outcomes:

**Stable or Improved Performance Outcomes**

- Maintain or improve performance across the WIOA section 116 primary indicators of performance
- Ensure no adverse impact on performance outcomes resulting from the statewide governance structure

**Increased Consistency in Service Delivery**

- Ensure uniform eligibility determinations and policy implementation across all regions
- Reduce regional variability in program administration and service delivery

**Sustained or Improved Access for Rural and Remote Communities**

- Maintain equitable access to workforce services across geographic regions
- Increase participation among priority populations, including individuals in rural and remote areas

**Administrative Efficiency and Reduced Duplication**

- Streamline planning, reporting, and oversight processes
- Reduce administrative burden, costs, and delays associated with duplicative governance structures

**Employer Engagement and Alignment**

- Strengthen statewide sector strategies and industry partnerships
- Improve coordination of employer services and responsiveness to workforce needs

**Measurement and Data Sources**

Progress toward these outcomes will be measured using:

- AlaskaJobs system data
- WIOA section 116 performance reports
- Monitoring and compliance findings
- Fiscal oversight and program review reports

The waiver does not create new performance indicators or reporting requirements. Existing performance accountability systems will be used to assess outcomes and ensure continued program effectiveness.

### **Performance Neutrality Statement**

The State does not anticipate adverse impacts on participant outcomes, employer engagement, fiscal integrity, or compliance as a result of this waiver.

The continuation of the single-area governance structure is expected to maintain or improve system performance while enhancing coordination, consistency, and access across Alaska's workforce system.

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

Continuation of Alaska's waiver to operate as a single statewide workforce development area aligns with U.S. Department of Labor priorities, including system modernization and alignment principles outlined in TEGL 05-25. This waiver supports federal policy priorities in the following areas:

#### **Strengthening Workforce System Alignment and Integration**

- Promotes coordination across WIOA core programs and partner programs within a unified governance structure
- Supports integrated service delivery through the Alaska Job Center Network

#### **Enhancing Employer Engagement and Sector Strategies**

- Enables consistent statewide implementation of sector-based workforce strategies
- Strengthens coordination of employer services across regions and industries

#### **Expanding Access to Workforce Services**

- Supports equitable access to services for individuals in rural and remote communities
- Reduces disparities in service availability across geographic regions

#### **Improving Administrative Efficiency and Reducing Duplication**

- Eliminates duplicative local governance structures
- Streamlines planning, reporting, and oversight functions

#### **Advancing Data-Informed Decision-Making and Continuous Improvement**

- Supports consistent statewide performance tracking and monitoring
- Enables use of data to inform policy, program design, and resource allocation

#### **Supporting Job Quality and Career Pathways**

- Promotes alignment of workforce services with in-demand industries and career pathways
- Supports participant progression to employment, retention, and advancement

### **Conclusion**

By continuing this waiver, Alaska strengthens alignment with federal workforce priorities while maintaining a coordinated, efficient, and accessible workforce system that supports both participants and employers across the state.

(A) supporting employer engagement;

The continuation of Alaska's single statewide workforce development area strengthens employer engagement by ensuring that business representatives are consistently informed of statewide policy, planning, and investment decisions.

Operating under a single-board structure enables coordinated employer outreach, reduces fragmentation, and ensures that workforce strategies are aligned with statewide labor market demand rather than varying regional approaches.

This approach supports:

- Consistent employer engagement practices aligned with labor market demand
- Statewide sector strategies informed by industry needs
- Coordinated business services across workforce system partners
- Streamlined communication with employers through a unified workforce system
- Improved responsiveness to employer workforce needs across regions

Through this structure, Alaska can engage employers more effectively, align training investments with industry demand, and support job-driven workforce development strategies consistent with federal priorities.

**(B) connecting education and training strategies;**

The continuation of Alaska's single statewide workforce development area facilitates coordinated planning between workforce and education partners, supporting alignment across education, training, and employment systems.

This unified structure enables consistent implementation of career pathway strategies. It strengthens coordination among WIOA core programs, including Title I and Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act), as well as secondary and postsecondary education partners.

The waiver supports the Department's emphasis on integrated education and workforce strategies while maintaining program-specific accountability, eligibility requirements, and funding structures.

This model enables:

- Consistent development and implementation of career pathways aligned with in-demand industries
- Alignment with career and technical education (CTE) and postsecondary training pathways
- Coordination with secondary, postsecondary, and adult education partners
- Integration of education and training through strategies such as Integrated Education and Training (IET), where appropriate
- Improved transitions from education to employment through coordinated service delivery

Through this approach, Alaska strengthens connections between education and workforce systems, supports skill development aligned with employer demand, and improves participant outcomes.

**(C) supporting work-based learning;**

The continuation of Alaska's single statewide workforce development area enables coordinated implementation of sector-based strategies and work-based learning approaches, including Registered Apprenticeship, on-the-job training (OJT), and other employer-connected training models.

Centralized governance and oversight support consistent standards for policy implementation, monitoring, and fiscal accountability across the state, ensuring that work-based learning opportunities are delivered in alignment with employer demand and workforce system priorities.

This structure advances:

- Expansion of work-based learning opportunities aligned with employer demand
- Consistent policy implementation for on-the-job training, Registered Apprenticeship, and other work-based learning models
- Coordination of training strategies across regions and partner programs
- Increased access to earn-and-learn opportunities for participants, including priority populations
- Strengthened employer partnerships through direct involvement in training and skill development

Through this approach, Alaska supports job-driven training strategies that connect participants to employment, enhance employer engagement, and improve workforce system outcomes consistent with federal priorities.

**(D) improving job and career results, and**

The continuation of Alaska's single statewide workforce development area supports improved job and career outcomes by maintaining unified performance accountability, consistent statewide oversight, and coordinated service delivery across programs and regions.

While the waiver does not alter negotiated performance levels or indicators under WIOA Section 116, it strengthens the governance structure necessary to support effective performance management, data-driven decision-making, and continuous improvement.

This approach supports:

- Consistent implementation of policies and service strategies that contribute to employment and earnings outcomes
- Standardized monitoring practices to ensure program quality and compliance
- Coordinated service delivery across urban, rural, and remote communities
- Improved alignment of training and employment services with in-demand industries
- Enhanced ability to track and improve outcomes related to employment, credential attainment, and retention

Through this structure, Alaska improves its ability to deliver effective workforce services, support participant success, and achieve strong job and career outcomes consistent with federal performance expectations.

**(E) other guidance issued by the Department.**

The continuation of Alaska's single statewide workforce development area aligns with federal priorities for system integration, continuous improvement, and workforce system modernization, as outlined in guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Labor, including TEGL 05-25.

This structure supports a coordinated and adaptable workforce system that is responsive to evolving federal guidance while maintaining accountability and program integrity.

Consistent with federal guidance, this approach supports:

- System modernization and operational efficiency across workforce programs
- Centralized oversight of data systems, performance reporting, and accountability processes
- Statewide policy alignment across core and partner programs
- Integration of services to improve customer experience and system effectiveness
- Flexible service delivery approaches suited to Alaska's geographic and demographic realities

Through this structure, Alaska can implement federal guidance consistently, strengthen system performance, and support continuous improvement across the workforce development system.

(5) Describes the individuals affected by the waiver; and

The waiver affects individuals and employers served through Alaska's statewide workforce development system.

The waiver does not change eligibility criteria, priority of service requirements, or access to services for any population.

**Populations Affected**

The following populations are served through the workforce system and are affected by the governance structure supported by this waiver:

- Individuals with barriers to employment
- Residents of rural and remote communities
- Alaska Native populations and tribal communities
- Youth, adults, and dislocated workers
- Participants in partner programs, including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Employers across Alaska's industry sectors

No populations are excluded, restricted, or disadvantaged as a result of this waiver.

**Expected Benefits**

The waiver supports the following benefits for individuals and employers:

- Consistent statewide eligibility determination and service delivery
- Coordinated service delivery across workforce system partners
- Equitable access to services regardless of geographic location
- Reduced administrative fragmentation and duplication
- Improved alignment of services with employer workforce needs

**Mitigation Strategies**

Any potential reduction in localized governance is mitigated through:

- Diverse representation on the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), including geographic and stakeholder diversity
- Ongoing regional stakeholder engagement and consultation
- Monitoring of participation, service delivery, and outcomes across geographic areas
- Transparent processes for requesting local area designation, consistent with WIOA requirements

The waiver does not alter eligibility requirements, priority of service, performance accountability, or nondiscrimination protections under WIOA Section 188 and 29 CFR Part 38.

Monitoring and oversight of impacts to these populations are further described in Section 6 of this waiver.

(6) Describes the processes used to:

(A) Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;

The State will monitor implementation of the waiver through established programmatic, fiscal, and performance oversight processes designed to ensure compliance, consistency, and effectiveness across the statewide workforce system.

Monitoring activities include:

- Participant file reviews, including eligibility validation and documentation requirements
- Fiscal monitoring and subrecipient oversight to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements
- Performance dashboard analysis aligned with WIOA Section 116 indicators
- Data validation reviews to ensure accuracy and integrity of reported outcomes
- Implementation of corrective action procedures, as necessary

These monitoring activities assess compliance with WIOA requirements, equitable access to services, consistency of service delivery across regions, and progress toward achieving program outcomes.

**(B) Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;**

As a single-area state, Alaska does not have separate local workforce development boards. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) serves as both the State Workforce Development Board and the Local Workforce Development Board for the entire state.

Accordingly, there are no separate local boards requiring notification. However, AWIB members are informed of waiver-related actions and decisions through established governance processes, including board meetings, committee discussions, and regular communications.

This approach ensures transparency, stakeholder awareness, and appropriate oversight consistent with WIOA requirements.

**(C) Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;**

As a single-area state, Alaska does not have separate local workforce development boards. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) serves as both the State Workforce Development Board and the Local Workforce Development Board.

AWIB members are provided the opportunity to review and comment on the waiver request through formal board meetings, committee discussions, and established governance procedures.

In addition, the process for requesting designation as a local workforce development area remains publicly available. It is administered in accordance with WIOA and 20 CFR § 679.640, ensuring that stakeholders can request local designation and provide input on the workforce system structure.

**(D) Ensure meaningful public comment, including comments by business and organized labor, on the waiver.**

The State will ensure meaningful public comment on the waiver request by providing advance notice through established public notice procedures and conducting targeted outreach to stakeholders, including business representatives, organized labor, and workforce system partners.

The waiver request will be made available through accessible formats and multiple channels to support broad statewide participation. Stakeholders will be provided with sufficient time and multiple methods for submitting comments.

All substantive comments received during the public comment period will be reviewed and considered before submission to the U.S. Department of Labor, consistent with federal guidance. Where applicable, comments will be addressed and incorporated into the waiver request.

Documentation of public notice activities, comment periods, and responses will be maintained in accordance with state and federal record retention requirements.

[\(E\) Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report.](#)

The State will collect, track, and report information on waiver implementation and outcomes through established performance reporting and monitoring systems.

Waiver outcomes will be reported through:

- WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report
- WIOA Section 116 performance indicators, including employment, earnings, credential attainment, and measurable skill gains
- Monitoring and oversight documentation, including programmatic and fiscal reviews

These data sources will be used to assess the effectiveness of the waiver in supporting system coordination, service delivery, and participant outcomes.

The waiver does not create additional federal reporting requirements beyond those established under WIOA. These monitoring and reporting processes ensure ongoing accountability, transparency, and alignment with federal requirements throughout the waiver period.

[\(7\) 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.](#)

Alaska has successfully operated under an approved Single Statewide Workforce Development Area waiver in prior program years. During the most recently completed program years, the State has maintained compliance with WIOA statutory and regulatory requirements while operating under this governance structure.

Available programmatic, fiscal, and performance data indicate that operation as a single statewide workforce development area has supported consistent performance accountability, equitable service access, and administrative efficiency.

**Performance outcomes**

During the prior waiver period, Alaska:

- Maintained performance across WIOA Section 116 primary indicators
- Sustained compliance with federal reporting requirements for WIOA Titles I-IV
- Monitored performance outcomes statewide and by geographic region
- Implemented corrective actions, where necessary, through established monitoring processes

No adverse impacts to performance, compliance, or service delivery were identified as a result of operating under the waiver.

**Participation and Access**

- Maintained statewide participation, including in rural and remote communities
- Ensured access for priority populations
- Enabled flexible allocation of resources to meet regional workforce needs

**Employer Outcomes**

- Sustained employer engagement across industry sectors
- Supported sector strategies and work-based learning initiatives

- Maintained alignment between workforce services and employer demand

#### **Efficiency and Administrative Impact**

- Reduced duplication of governance structures
- Streamlined administrative and reporting processes
- Strengthened fiscal oversight and accountability

#### **Continuous Improvement**

Lessons learned through implementation of the waiver include:

- Importance of clearly defined governance roles and responsibilities
- Ongoing monitoring of geographic equity in service delivery
- Strong stakeholder engagement across regions and populations
- Use of data-driven decision-making to inform policy and program improvements

#### **Continued Relevance of the Waiver**

Alaska's geographic scale, dispersed population centers, and administrative context continue to support the need for a single statewide workforce development area.

The waiver continues to support:

- Effective stewardship of WIOA funds
- Equitable access to workforce services across all regions
- Consistent statewide accountability and performance management

#### **Conclusion**

These results demonstrate that the waiver has been effective in maintaining performance, ensuring access, and supporting efficient administration. The State, therefore, requests continuation of the waiver for the PY 2026–2027 State Plan modification period.

**TITLE I-B ASSURANCES**

<b>TITLE I-B ASSURANCES The State Plan must include assurances that:</b>		<b>Included?</b>
1.	The State has implemented a policy to ensure that Adult program funds are prioritized for delivering training and individualized career services to low-income individuals, public assistance recipients, and basic skills-deficient individuals.	<b>Yes</b>
2.	The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring eligible veterans with employment barriers to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist.	<b>Yes</b>
3.	The State has established a written policy and procedure that sets forth criteria for the appointment of local workforce investment board members by the chief elected officials.	<b>Yes</b>
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);	<b>Yes</b>
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;	<b>Yes</b>
6.	The State established a written policy and procedure for how individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help determine the methods and factors for distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State to determine distributions.	<b>Yes</b>
7.	The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7);	<b>Yes</b>
8.	The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA by formula, and no local area shall "receive an allocation percentage for a fiscal year that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the 2 preceding fiscal years" [(WIOA Section 133(b)(2)(A)(ii)];	<b>Yes</b>
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;	<b>Yes</b>
10.	The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.	<b>Yes</b>
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);	<b>Yes</b>

## Wagner-Peyser Act Program (Employment Service)

### (a) Employment Service Staff.

#### **Overview – Wagner-Peyser Employment Service (ES) Program**

The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service (ES) program in Alaska is administered by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) and delivered through the Alaska Job Center (AJC) network. Employment Service activities are provided by state merit staff and are fully integrated within Alaska's workforce development system.

The ES program provides labor exchange services to job seekers and employers, including job search assistance, job matching, employer recruitment, and reemployment services for Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants.

Consistent with WIOA, Wagner-Peyser services are integrated with Title I, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and other partner programs to support coordinated service delivery, co-enrollment, and improved workforce outcomes.

Service delivery is designed to ensure statewide access, including in rural and remote communities, through a combination of in-person, virtual, and hybrid service strategies.

(1) Describe the State's staffing model for the provision of labor exchange services using State merit staff. States covered by 20 CFR 652.215(b) (Colorado, Massachusetts, and Michigan) must describe the staffing model the State will use to provide labor exchange services under the Wagner-Peyser Act, including outreach to MSFWs.

Wagner-Peyser Employment Service (ES) labor exchange services in Alaska are delivered by state merit staff within the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), consistent with federal requirements under the Wagner-Peyser Act and 20 CFR Part 652.

State merit staff provide employment services to job seekers and employers through the Alaska Job Center (AJC) network and support integrated service delivery across workforce programs. Staffing is structured to ensure consistent, compliant, and accessible service delivery statewide, including in rural and remote communities.

#### **Key Elements – Staffing of Wagner-Peyser Labor Exchange Services**

- Wagner-Peyser labor exchange services are delivered exclusively by state merit staff
- ES staff are assigned to Alaska Job Centers and provide services to job seekers and employers
- Staff support integrated service delivery across WIOA core and partner programs
- Staffing models support in-person, virtual, and hybrid service delivery
- Staff are trained to coordinate with Unemployment Insurance (UI), WIOA, and partner programs

#### **Merit Staffing and Service Delivery**

State merit staff employed by DOLWD deliver all Wagner-Peyser labor exchange services in Alaska. These staff are responsible for providing core employment services, including job search assistance, job matching, employer engagement, and referrals to training and partner programs.

The use of merit staff ensures that services are delivered in compliance with federal requirements, administered under uniform personnel standards, and aligned with statewide policies and procedures.

### **Alaska Job Center Staffing Model**

ES staff are assigned to Alaska Job Centers and serve as primary providers of labor exchange services. In many locations, particularly in rural and remote areas, staff perform multiple roles to support efficient and comprehensive service delivery.

Responsibilities include:

- Assisting job seekers with employment services and job search activities
- Supporting employers with recruitment, job postings, and hiring needs
- Providing reemployment services to Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants
- Coordinating referrals and co-enrollment with partner programs

### **Integration with Workforce Programs**

ES staff work collaboratively with WIOA Title I, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Title II), Vocational Rehabilitation (Title IV), and other partner programs to ensure coordinated, seamless service delivery.

Staff are trained to understand program eligibility, services, and referral processes, enabling effective co-enrollment and connection to appropriate resources.

Coordination with the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program supports reemployment services, claimant engagement, and alignment with federal reemployment requirements.

### **Statewide Access and Service Delivery**

Alaska's staffing model supports a combination of in-person, virtual, and hybrid service delivery approaches. This model ensures that individuals and employers across the state, including those in rural and remote communities, have access to Wagner-Peyser labor exchange services.

The flexibility of this approach allows the State to address geographic barriers, respond to regional workforce needs, and maintain consistent service delivery across diverse communities.

[\(2\) Describe how the State will utilize professional development activities for Employment Service staff to ensure staff can provide high-quality services to both job seekers and employers.](#)

### **Overview – Professional Development for Employment Service Staff**

Alaska ensures that Employment Service (ES) staff receive comprehensive professional development to support the effective delivery of Wagner-Peyser services. Training is provided during initial onboarding and reinforced through ongoing development opportunities to ensure staff maintain the knowledge and skills necessary to serve job seekers, workers, and employers.

Professional development is designed to support consistent, high-quality service delivery across the Alaska Job Center network and includes training on workforce programs, customer service, system tools, and regulatory requirements.

### **Key Elements – Professional Development for Employment Service Staff**

- ES staff receive structured onboarding and ongoing professional development to support high-quality service delivery
- Training includes core competencies, workforce system knowledge, and program-specific requirements
- Staff receive cross-training to support multiple roles within Alaska Job Centers
- AlaskaJobs supports service delivery, tracking, and reporting of Wagner-Peyser activities
- Performance monitoring informs targeted training and continuous improvement

### **Training Framework and Delivery**

Employment Service staff participate in comprehensive training during their first year of employment, followed by ongoing refresher training to maintain and enhance their skills.

Most ES staff complete the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals' Five Core Competency Trainings, which include:

- Customer service methods
- Workforce diversity
- Labor market information
- Communication principles
- Workforce development structure, policies, and programs

In addition, staff receive training on:

- Program policies and procedures
- Partner programs and services
- Rapid response activities
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)
- Fidelity bonding
- Veterans' programs and priority of service
- Equal employment opportunity and disability awareness
- Job search techniques and employer engagement strategies

ES staff often serve in multiple roles within Alaska Job Centers and receive cross-training to ensure they can effectively support a range of service functions.

### **System Tools and Service Delivery Support**

AlaskaJobs provides the primary system platform for delivering, documenting, and tracking Wagner-Peyser services to job seekers and employers. Staff are trained on system functionality to ensure accurate service entry, case management, and reporting.

These tools support the Employment and Training Technical Unit (ETTU) in reporting service delivery outcomes at the quarterly and annual levels and help ensure data integrity across programs.

### **Performance Monitoring and Continuous Improvement**

The Employment and Training Technical Unit (ETTU) monitors staff performance through both quantitative and qualitative review processes.

Performance monitoring includes:

- Quarterly quantitative reviews through the Self-Appraisal System (SAS) for job seeker and employer services
- Annual qualitative assessments through onsite reviews using the Policy and Procedure Annual Self-Appraisal Checklist

Findings from monitoring activities inform targeted professional development. Staff receive additional training as needed through:

- Classroom instruction
- Webinars
- One-on-one technical assistance

This continuous improvement approach ensures that staff maintain compliance with program requirements and deliver consistent, high-quality services.

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

#### **Overview – Cross-Program Training and UI Eligibility Issue Identification**

Alaska ensures that Employment Service (ES) and WIOA staff are trained to understand Unemployment Insurance (UI) program requirements and to identify and refer potential UI eligibility issues. Through coordinated training, shared resources, and established referral processes, staff are equipped to support UI claimants while maintaining appropriate program boundaries.

Cross-program collaboration between UI, ES, and WIOA staff promotes accurate identification of eligibility issues, timely referrals, and improved outcomes for claimants navigating both workforce and UI systems.

#### **Key Elements – Cross-Program Training and UI Eligibility Issue Identification**

- ES and WIOA staff maintain a working knowledge of UI requirements and claimant responsibilities
- Alaska Job Center staff support UI claimants in meeting work registration and job search requirements
- UI staff provide ongoing training to workforce staff on eligibility issues and referral processes
- Established referral pathways allow staff to identify and report potential UI eligibility issues
- RESEA activities strengthen coordination between UI and workforce programs
- Shared training resources support continuous staff development and program alignment

#### **Staff Knowledge and Claimant Support**

Employment Service and WIOA staff maintain a working knowledge of UI program requirements, including claimant responsibilities such as registering for work in AlaskaJobs, maintaining an online résumé, and completing weekly work search activities.

Staff supports UI claimants by:

- Guiding individuals in meeting UI program requirements
- Directing claimants to online UI resources, including the claimant handbook
- Assisting individuals in contacting the UI Claim Center for detailed eligibility information

UI eligibility determinations are made exclusively by UI adjudication staff, ensuring appropriate separation of roles and responsibilities.

#### **UI Eligibility Issue Identification and Referral**

UI staff provides ongoing training to ES and WIOA staff to ensure they can recognize potential eligibility issues and refer cases appropriately.

Common referral topics include:

- Travel or availability limitations
- Illness or injury
- Childcare constraints
- School or training participation
- Self-imposed work restrictions

Staff refer potential issues through established processes that allow UI to assess Able and Available (A&A) requirements and support early identification of issues that may lead to overpayments.

### **RESEA Coordination and Continuous Improvement**

The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) team, composed of UI and ES staff, collaborates to support UI claimants, particularly veterans and individuals identified as most likely to exhaust benefits.

RESEA strategies include:

- Providing coordinated job search and reemployment services
- Implementing a required second interview following the initial RESEA appointment
- Aligning UI and workforce services to support successful reemployment outcomes

Staff training and continuous improvement are supported through:

- Recorded training sessions
- Presentation materials and guidance documents available through SharePoint
- Ongoing cross-program training to strengthen staff knowledge and coordination

[\(b\) 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.](#)

### **Overview – UI Claim Assistance in One-Stop Centers**

Alaska Job Centers (AJCs) provide coordinated support to individuals seeking assistance with filing Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims, consistent with WIOA requirements for providing meaningful assistance as a career service. UI claimants are considered priority customers within the one-stop delivery system and are supported through both in-person and remote service options.

Employment Service (ES) staff assist claimants in accessing UI resources, understanding filing processes, and connecting with UI staff, while maintaining appropriate boundaries regarding UI eligibility determinations. This approach ensures that claimants receive timely and accurate assistance while preserving the integrity of the UI program.

### **Key Elements – UI Claim Assistance in One-Stop Centers**

- UI claimants are served as priority customers within Alaska Job Centers
- AJCs provide access to UI resources, including computers, phones, and printed materials
- ES staff assist claimants with filing processes and accessing UI information
- Staff provide general guidance while referring detailed eligibility questions to UI adjudication staff
- Established referral pathways ensure timely connection to UI claim center staff
- Remote access options support claimants who are unable to visit AJCs in person

### **Access to UI Resources and Assistance**

UI claimants can access assistance through multiple channels, including in-person services at Alaska Job Centers, online resources, and telephone support.

AJCs provide dedicated resources to support UI claimants, including:

- Computers for online claims filing and job search activities
- Telephones for direct contact with UI claim center staff
- Fax machines and printed materials related to UI filing and eligibility

Public-facing UI resources, including the claimant handbook and online guidance, are also available to support individuals who prefer remote access or are unable to visit an AJC.

### **Staff Roles and Guidance**

To ensure accurate information and program integrity, ES staff receive clear guidance on their role when assisting UI claimants.

Staff responsibilities include:

- Providing general information on UI eligibility requirements and filing processes
- Directing claimants to official UI resources, including the claimant handbook
- Referring individuals to UI staff for detailed or case-specific eligibility questions
- Reporting potential UI eligibility issues to UI staff for follow-up

UI eligibility determinations are made exclusively by UI adjudication staff, ensuring appropriate separation of roles and responsibilities.

### **UI Referral Process and Priority Access**

Alaska Job Centers maintain designated phone banks for UI-related inquiries to ensure efficient and timely service. Claimants using AJC phone resources are routed to a priority phone queue, where trained UI claim center staff respond to inquiries and provide assistance.

This structured referral process ensures that claimants receive accurate information directly from UI staff while enabling ES staff to provide meaningful assistance in accessing UI services and navigating the workforce system.

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

#### **Overview – State Strategy for Reemployment Assistance**

Alaska's reemployment assistance strategy prioritizes Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants by providing coordinated, targeted services designed to support rapid reemployment. The Alaska Job Center (AJC) network delivers these services through Wagner-Peyser, the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program, and partner-funded programs.

The State's approach emphasizes early intervention, individualized service planning, and integration across workforce programs to reduce the duration of unemployment and improve employment outcomes for claimants.

#### **Key Elements – State Strategy for Reemployment Assistance**

- UI claimants are prioritized for reemployment services within the Alaska Job Center network
- The RESEA program provides structured, mandatory engagement for targeted claimants
- Data-driven selection identifies individuals most likely to exhaust UI benefits
- Individual reemployment plans guide service delivery and job search activities
- Coordination with workforce and partner programs expands access to services
- Targeted outreach and follow-up promote participation and compliance

#### **RESEA Program Design and Implementation**

The RESEA program is a central component of Alaska's reemployment strategy. The program supports rapid reemployment by providing structured engagement, eligibility assessments, and targeted reemployment services. RESEA services are delivered in Alaska's six largest job centers, Anchorage, Mat-Su, Juneau, Fairbanks, Kenai, and Ketchikan, where the majority of UI claimants are served.

Participants are required to attend an initial RESEA interview and may be scheduled for a second interview based on program criteria.

### **Targeting and Claimant Selection**

RESEA participants are selected using a statistical model approved by the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration. The model incorporates wage data, claimant characteristics, and economic indicators to identify individuals most likely to exhaust UI benefits.

Target populations include:

- Recently separated veterans
- Claimants identified as likely to exhaust UI benefits

This targeted approach ensures that resources are focused on individuals most in need of reemployment assistance.

### **Service Delivery and Individualized Planning**

During RESEA interviews, claimants participate in a comprehensive assessment and work with staff to develop an Individual Reemployment Plan (IRP). The IRP is based on:

- Eligibility assessment findings
- Work search activities
- Real-time labor market information
- Individual barriers and reemployment needs

Claimants selected for a second RESEA meeting develop an updated IRP that builds on progress made during the initial interview.

Staff provide at least one Wagner-Peyser countable service during each RESEA session and may refer participants to additional services funded through:

- Wagner-Peyser
- WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs
- Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)

### **Outreach and Claimant Engagement**

UI claimants selected for RESEA receive weekly notifications after their first UI payment, informing them of mandatory participation requirements and next steps.

Additional engagement strategies include:

- Automated transmission of selection data to AlaskaJobs
- Direct outreach by AJC staff to schedule interviews and provide reminders
- Resource materials, including mailed notices, informational booklets, and in-center materials
- Public awareness efforts, including media announcements and outreach at military installations

These efforts support timely participation and help claimants meet program requirements.

### **Coordination with Veterans' Services**

Veterans are a priority population within Alaska's reemployment strategy. Many RESEA participants are veterans, including those who have recently separated from military service or who face barriers to employment.

Coordination includes:

- Direct referrals to Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) staff in AJCs with on-site staff
- Phone-based referrals to itinerant DVOP staff in areas without on-site presence

This coordination ensures veterans receive specialized services tailored to their needs.

### **System Integration and Service Access**

AlaskaJobs serves as the central platform for delivering and tracking reemployment services. Claimants are required to register in AlaskaJobs, where they can access job search tools, workshops, and online orientation.

Within Alaska Job Centers:

- Claimants are guided through registration and résumé development
- Staff assess reemployment needs and connect individuals to appropriate services
- Dedicated resource room equipment supports access to UI and workforce services

All UI claimants are informed of available services through online systems, mailed communications, and interactions with UI staff.

### **Continuous Improvement and Staff Training**

Alaska supports continuous improvement of reemployment services through ongoing staff training and program refinement.

Training strategies include:

- Development of training materials informed by experienced staff
- Ongoing training for RESEA and AJC staff
- Access to recorded trainings, presentations, and guidance documents

These efforts ensure consistent service delivery and support adaptation to evolving program requirements.

### **(d) Describe how the State will use Wagner-Peyser Act funds to support UI claimants, and communication between the Employment Service 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;

### **Overview – Coordination of Labor Exchange Services for UI Claimants**

Alaska coordinates labor exchange services for Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants through the Alaska Job Center (AJC) network and the AlaskaJobs system, consistent with the Wagner-Peyser Act's requirement to provide such services. These services support UI claimants in meeting work search requirements and facilitate rapid reemployment.

Labor exchange services are fully integrated into the one-stop delivery system to ensure UI claimants have access to job-search assistance, employer connections, and workforce services aligned with labor market demand.

### **Key Elements – Coordination of Labor Exchange Services for UI Claimants**

- UI claimants are encouraged to apply for benefits promptly and engage in labor exchange services
- AlaskaJobs serves as the primary platform for job search, job matching, and service delivery
- AJC staff provide individualized assistance to support job search and reemployment
- Labor exchange services support compliance with UI work search requirements
- Services include job matching, résumé development, and interview preparation

### **Service Delivery And Claimant Support**

Alaska Job Center staff provide labor exchange services to individuals who are unemployed or working less than full-time. These services support UI claimants in securing employment while meeting program requirements.

Through AlaskaJobs and Alaska Job Centers, claimants have access to:

- Statewide job listings from Alaska employers
- Résumé development and job search assistance

- Job matching and referral services
- Employment application assistance
- Interview preparation, including workshops and mock interviews

Services are delivered through in-person, virtual, and hybrid models to ensure accessibility across Alaska's geographic regions.

#### **Alignment With UI Requirements**

Labor exchange services are aligned with UI program requirements to support claimant eligibility and compliance while promoting successful reemployment outcomes.

Unless specifically exempted by UI, claimants are required to:

- Actively seek work
- Be physically able to work
- Be available to accept suitable, full-time employment

AJC staff support claimants in understanding and meeting these requirements by providing guidance on effective job search strategies and connecting individuals to appropriate employment opportunities.

[\(2\) Registration of UI claimants with the State's employment service if required by State law;](#)

#### **Overview – Registration of UI claimants with the Employment Service**

Alaska requires Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants to register for work with the State's employment service as a condition of eligibility, unless specifically exempted. Registration is completed through AlaskaJobs, the State's labor exchange system, and is a core component of the State's reemployment strategy.

This requirement ensures that claimants are connected to job opportunities, workforce services, and employer referrals while actively seeking employment.

#### **Key Elements – Registration of UI Claimants with the Employment Service**

- UI claimants are required to register for work in AlaskaJobs within seven days of filing a new or reopened claim, unless exempt
- Claimants must create and maintain at least one active online résumé accessible to employers
- Registration supports job search activities, referrals, and reemployment services
- UI communicates requirements through the claimant handbook and formal notifications
- Failure to meet registration requirements may result in denial of UI benefits

#### **Registration Requirements and Claimant Responsibilities**

In Alaska, UI claimants are required to register for work in AlaskaJobs and post at least one online résumé within seven days of filing a new or reopened claim, unless specifically exempted.

Claimants must:

- Create or upload at least one résumé in AlaskaJobs
- Maintain their résumé in an active, online status accessible to employers
- Update their résumé as needed to reflect current skills and work history

Registration and résumé activity remain active while claimants are engaged in job search and referral activities and while receiving reemployment services from Alaska Job Center staff.

### **System Functionality And Claimant Support**

AlaskaJobs provides tools that allow claimants to create, upload, and manage résumés through the “My Resumes” feature. Claimants may complete these activities independently or with assistance from Alaska Job Center staff.

While AlaskaJobs does not enforce résumé posting through automated system restrictions, it provides clear messaging to inform claimants that maintaining an active résumé is required for UI eligibility.

UI communicates registration requirements through:

- The UI claimant handbook
- Mailed notices and reminders
- Online system messaging

### **Enforcement And Eligibility Implications**

Failure to meet registration requirements may impact UI eligibility.

If a claimant does not:

- Post a résumé within seven days of filing or reopening a claim, or
- Maintain an active résumé (including expiration after 365 days)

UI may issue a denial of benefits. In such cases, claimants receive a formal eligibility determination notice explaining the reason for denial.

[\(3\) 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](#)

### **Overview – UI Work Test and Job Placement Services for Claimants**

Alaska administers the Unemployment Insurance (UI) work test through coordinated efforts between Unemployment Insurance (UI), Employment Service (ES), and Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) staff. The work test ensures that claimants are actively seeking and available for suitable employment while receiving benefits.

Labor exchange services, job placement assistance, and structured reemployment activities help claimants meet UI eligibility requirements and return to work as quickly as possible.

### **Key Elements – UI Work Test and Job Placement Services for Claimants**

- UI requires claimants to seek work and document job search activities each week actively
- AlaskaJobs supports verification of work search activity and job applications
- Work search logs are used to document, assess, and support claimant job search efforts
- ES and RESEA staff support claimants in meeting work test requirements
- Potential able and available (A&A) issues are referred to UI for adjudication
- Job placement services support rapid reemployment and compliance with UI requirements

### **Administration of the UI Work Test**

UI claimants are required to actively seek work for each week they file for benefits, unless specifically exempted. Claimants must be able to work, available for suitable employment, and engaged in documented job search activities.

Applying for jobs through AlaskaJobs provides a verifiable record of work search activity. Claimants may also document job search efforts using a formal work search log or a personal log that includes all required elements.

### **Work Search Documentation and Verification**

Work search logs are a key tool for documenting and evaluating claimant compliance with UI work search requirements.

Work search logs are used to:

- Document weekly job search activities
- Support the development of individualized reemployment plans
- Assess the quality and appropriateness of job search efforts

ES and RESEA staff review work search logs for RESEA participants and guide them in improving the effectiveness of their job search strategies.

### **Identification and Referral of Eligibility Issues**

ES and RESEA staff play an important role in identifying potential eligibility issues related to the UI work test, particularly those associated with able and available (A&A) requirements.

When potential issues are identified, including failure to seek work or refusal of suitable employment:

- ES and RESEA staff notify UI through established referral processes
- UI adjudication staff review and make eligibility determinations

UI staff utilizes AlaskaJobs to verify claimant registration, résumé status, and work search activity, supporting accurate and timely eligibility review.

### **Job Placement Services and Reemployment Support**

Alaska Job Centers provide job search and placement services to help UI claimants return to work.

Services include:

- Job matching and referrals to open positions
- Résumé development and job search assistance
- Interview preparation and employment workshops
- Development of individualized reemployment plans through RESEA

These services are integrated with the UI work test to support both compliance and successful reemployment outcomes.

[\(4\) Provision of referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources.](#)

### **Overview – Referrals to Training and Education Programs**

Alaska ensures that Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants have access to training and education opportunities through coordinated referrals and application assistance across the Alaska Job Center Network. Employment Service (ES), Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA), and partner program staff collaborate to connect claimants with training resources that support reemployment and career advancement.

These efforts are supported by AlaskaJobs, labor market information, and established referral practices that promote informed decision-making and seamless service delivery.

### **Key Elements – Referrals to Training and Education Programs**

- UI claimants receive information on training and education programs through AlaskaJobs and Alaska Job Centers
- Workshops and orientations introduce claimants to available training opportunities and partner programs

- The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and labor market information support informed training referrals
- ES and RESEA staff assess claimant needs and make appropriate referrals
- Warm hand-offs ensure effective connections to partner programs
- Partner programs provide application assistance following referral

#### **Access to Training Information And Resources**

UI claimants receive information on training and education programs through both self-service and staff-assisted approaches within the Alaska Job Center Network.

Through AlaskaJobs, claimants can access:

- Workshops and orientations, including job center orientation, training orientation, GED preparation, and interview skills
- The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)
- Labor market information (LMI) and employment outcome data

These resources support informed decision-making and help claimants identify training opportunities aligned with in-demand occupations and career pathways.

#### **Assessment and Referral Through RESEA And ES Services**

ES and RESEA staff assess the claimant's needs to determine whether a referral to training or education programs is appropriate.

For RESEA participants, this includes:

- Discussion of skills, education, and career goals
- Use of assessment tools such as the Basic Skills Deficiency form and the Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) inquirer form

Based on this assessment, staff may refer claimants to WIOA Title I, Title II, Vocational Rehabilitation, or other partner programs.

#### **Referral Process and Application Assistance**

When a referral is appropriate and the claimant agrees, ES or RESEA staff initiate the referral in accordance with established job center practices.

Referral methods include:

- In-person warm hand-offs when partner programs are co-located
- Phone-based warm hand-offs when partners are not on-site

Following referral, partner program staff provide application assistance and guide claimants through enrollment and service access.

#### **Bidirectional Referrals and System Integration**

Referrals within the Alaska Job Center Network are bidirectional.

Partner programs, including Alaska Adult Education (AAE), Career Support and Training Services (CSTS), and Vocational Rehabilitation, may also refer UI claimants to Wagner-Peyser services to support job search and placement. These referral practices support co-enrollment and integrated service delivery across core programs.

This coordinated approach ensures that claimants receive comprehensive, aligned services that support both immediate reemployment and long-term career advancement.

**(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:

**Overview – Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP)**

Alaska develops and implements an Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP) in accordance with the Wagner-Peyser Act and WIOA requirements. The AOP outlines the State’s strategy for providing employment and training services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) and agricultural employers, ensuring equitable access to workforce services across the Alaska Job Center (AJC) network.

The AOP is developed every four years as part of the Unified or Combined State Plan and is informed by labor market conditions, MSFW population characteristics, and service delivery capacity. The plan identifies outreach strategies, service delivery approaches, and coordination efforts designed to meet the unique needs of MSFWs and agricultural employers in Alaska.

**Key Elements – Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP)**

- The AOP is developed in alignment with Wagner-Peyser Act requirements and WIOA State Plan guidance
- The plan describes strategies for serving MSFWs and agricultural employers
- Outreach efforts are tailored based on the size, location, and needs of the MSFW population
- Services are delivered through the Alaska Job Center network and partner programs
- The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) provides oversight of AOP implementation and service equity
- The AOP is informed by data, stakeholder input, and continuous improvement practices

[\(1\) 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.](#)

**Overview – Assessment of MSFW Needs**

Alaska’s agricultural economy is characterized by small-scale, seasonal, and geographically dispersed operations, which significantly influence the size, distribution, and service needs of Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs), as defined under Wagner-Peyser Act regulations.

Due to Alaska’s geographic isolation, high cost of travel, and limited large-scale agricultural production, the State experiences a relatively small MSFW population compared to other states. Based on AlaskaJobs data, U.S. Census sources, and field outreach conducted by Employment Service (ES) staff, MSFWs represent a small share of the workforce system population, accounting for less than two percent of total participants in recent program years.

In Program Year 2024, approximately 127 MSFWs were identified statewide. In addition, four employers were approved to hire 42 H-2A workers, primarily from Mexico and predominantly Spanish-speaking.

Despite the relatively small size of the MSFW population, these workers experience distinct barriers to accessing workforce services. Geographic isolation, seasonal employment patterns, and limited infrastructure create unique service delivery challenges that require targeted outreach and flexible service strategies.

**Key Elements – MSFW Population and Service Context**

- MSFWs represent a small share of Alaska’s workforce system population
- Agricultural employment is seasonal, short-term, and geographically dispersed
- Most agricultural operations are small and family-owned, with limited reliance on external labor
- H-2A workers represent a smaller but important subset of the MSFW population
- Geographic isolation and limited infrastructure create barriers to service access

### **MSFW Population Characteristics**

MSFWs in Alaska include domestic seasonal workers and a smaller number of migrant workers, including individuals employed through the H-2A visa program. Workers may face language barriers, limited familiarity with available services, and challenges accessing workforce resources due to remote job locations.

Employment in Alaska's agricultural sector is typically short-term and seasonal, often lasting two weeks or less. Positions may be filled by local workers, including students and temporary residents, further contributing to the relatively small MSFW population.

### **Assessment of MSFW Needs**

The State has identified the following primary needs across the service continuum:

#### **Employment and Training Needs**

- Access to job opportunities through AlaskaJobs and labor exchange services
- Assistance with job referrals and placement in agricultural and non-agricultural employment
- Access to training opportunities, particularly for workers seeking longer-term or non-seasonal employment pathways
- Coordination with partner programs for skill development and career advancement

#### **Supportive Service Needs**

- Transportation assistance, particularly in rural and remote areas
- Temporary housing information or referrals during peak agricultural activity periods
- Access to necessities and community-based support services, where available
- Referrals to health, social, and community services

#### **Language and Information Access Needs**

- Language assistance for workers with limited English proficiency, particularly Spanish-speaking H-2A workers
- Access to bilingual staff or qualified interpretation and translation services at no cost
- Clear and accessible information regarding employment services, worker rights, and available resources

#### **Worker Protections And Rights Awareness**

- Information on worker rights under applicable federal and state laws
- Access to the Employment Service Complaint System
- Assistance in filing complaints and understanding protections related to wages, working conditions, and housing

#### **Geographic and Seasonal Barriers**

MSFW needs in Alaska are shaped by the State's unique geographic and seasonal conditions:

- Agricultural activity is highly seasonal with short peak periods
- Worksites are often located in remote areas with limited access to workforce system offices
- Transportation between communities and job sites is costly and logistically challenging
- Housing availability near agricultural worksites may be limited or temporary

These factors create barriers to both initial access and ongoing engagement with workforce services.

#### **Service System Context and Gaps**

Due to Alaska's relatively small MSFW population, the State does not currently have a National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee. However, MSFWs may access services through the broader workforce system and coordination with public and community-based organizations.

The absence of an NFJP grantee increases the importance of integrating MSFW services within the Alaska Job Center system and leveraging partnerships to address gaps in outreach, training, and supportive services. Alaska continues to assess opportunities to strengthen coordination and expand service access where feasible.

#### **Connection to Outreach and Service Strategies**

The needs identified in this section directly inform Alaska's outreach strategies described in Section VI(AOP)(4) and service delivery approach described in Section VI(AOP)(5).

Specifically:

- Outreach strategies are designed to address geographic and access barriers by reaching MSFWs at worksites and in their communities
- Service delivery strategies emphasize equitable access to Employment Service and one-stop partner services, including virtual and remote options
- Worker protections and complaint system awareness are integrated into outreach and service interactions

The State will continue to refine its understanding of MSFW needs through ongoing outreach, data collection, and coordination with partners during the PY 2026–2027 State Plan period.

(2) Provide an assessment of the agricultural activity in the State: 1) identify 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) Identify any economic, natural, or other factors that are affecting agriculture in the State or any projected factors that will affect agriculture in the State.

#### **Overview – Agricultural Activity in Alaska**

Alaska's Agricultural Outreach Plan encompasses traditional agriculture, aquaculture (mariculture), and timber-related activities that meet the definition of agricultural employment under applicable federal regulations. These industries are characterized by strong seasonality, geographic dispersion, and limited but targeted labor demand, including for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs).

#### **Key Elements – Agricultural Activity And Workforce Context**

- Alaska's agricultural sector is small-scale, seasonal, and geographically dispersed
- Labor demand is limited but concentrated in specific regions and peak periods
- Employers rely primarily on local labor, with limited use of H-2A workers
- Workforce constraints include labor shortages, high costs, and competition from other industries
- Emerging sectors such as mariculture are expanding and increasing demand for specialized skills

#### **Labor-Intensive Agricultural Activities, Peak Periods, and Geographic Areas**

##### **Traditional Agriculture**

Primary labor-intensive crops and activities include:

- Bedding plants and flowers produced in greenhouses and nurseries
- Vegetable production
- Hay and barley production
- Small-scale specialty and hydroponic farming

Primary geographic areas include:

- Anchorage and the Matanuska-Susitna (Mat-Su) Valley
- Kenai Peninsula

- Fairbanks and the Interior region
- Delta Junction

Climate conditions drive seasonal patterns:

- Planting occurs between May and June
- The growing season spans May through August
- Harvesting occurs between June and October
- Greenhouse operations may begin as early as February and extend through October, with some year-round production

#### **Aquaculture (Mariculture)**

Aquaculture operations are concentrated in coastal regions of Southeast, Southcentral, and Kodiak Island. Additional information on the geographic distribution of aquatic farms and hatcheries is provided in Appendix H – Locations of Aquatic Farms and Hatcheries in Alaska, which illustrates regional clustering and access considerations for workforce and infrastructure.

Key characteristics include:

- Approximately 95 active aquatic farm operations statewide
- Expansion of permitted acreage from less than 350 acres in 2016 to more than 1,360 acres
- Rapid growth in kelp and seaweed cultivation

Primary labor-intensive activities include:

- Kelp and seaweed cultivation
- Shellfish farming (e.g., oysters, mussels, clams, scallops, sea cucumbers, and sea urchins)

Peak activity generally occurs in spring, summer, and early fall.

#### **Timber-Related Activities**

Timber harvesting and processing occur across Southeast, Southcentral, and Interior Alaska.

Labor-intensive activities include:

- Timber harvesting and logging operations
- Forest management and pre-commercial thinning
- Sawmill processing

Seasonality varies by region:

- Southeast: March through November
- Interior and Southcentral: winter harvesting using snow roads and ice bridges

#### **Employer Needs, Hiring Patterns, and Workforce Constraints**

Alaska's agricultural employers operate within a constrained labor market and rely primarily on local workers, supplemented by temporary and limited foreign labor.

Key characteristics include:

- Predominant reliance on local workers, including students and seasonal residents
- Short-duration employment, often lasting two weeks or less
- Limited availability of workers with specialized skills, particularly in greenhouse and hydroponic production
- Recruitment through informal networks, word of mouth, and AlaskaJobs postings

Use of H-2A workers is limited but targeted:

- Approximately 3 to 4 employers utilize the H-2A program annually
- H-2A workers are primarily employed in greenhouse and specialized agricultural operations
- Employers cite a lack of available domestic workers with the necessary skills as a primary driver

Key workforce constraints include:

- Limited local labor supply, particularly in rural areas
- Competition from higher-wage seasonal industries such as seafood processing and tourism
- High costs associated with housing, transportation, and travel
- Short growing seasons limit long-term employment opportunities

While most agricultural workers do not meet the definition of MSFW due to proximity to worksites, MSFWs are present in specific segments where non-local or H-2A labor is utilized.

#### **Economic, Natural, and Projected Factors Affecting Agriculture**

Several factors are expected to influence Alaska's agricultural sector over the AOP period:

##### **Economic and Market Factors**

- Continued growth in local food production and increased focus on food security
- Expansion of mariculture, particularly kelp and shellfish industries
- Ongoing challenges related to high transportation and distribution costs
- Market variability affecting timber industry activity

##### **Natural and Environmental Factors**

- Climate variability affecting growing seasons and crop yields
- Dependence on weather conditions for agricultural and timber operations
- Marine conditions influencing aquaculture productivity and expansion

##### **Policy and Infrastructure Factors**

- Changes in federal and state land management policies affecting timber harvest levels
- Increased investment and policy support for mariculture development
- Infrastructure limitations, including transportation and housing, affect workforce availability

##### **Workforce and Demographic Factors**

- Continued reliance on a limited, locally based labor pool
- Ongoing need for specialized skills in emerging sectors such as hydroponics and mariculture
- Potential for modest increases in H-2A utilization where domestic labor shortages persist

#### **Analytical Summary**

Alaska's agricultural sector is defined by small-scale operations, strong seasonality, and geographic isolation, resulting in limited but highly localized labor demand. These conditions reduce overall reliance on MSFW labor compared to other states but create targeted needs in specific sectors such as greenhouse production and mariculture.

The combination of short-term employment cycles, remote work sites, and competition from other seasonal industries necessitates flexible, employer-driven workforce strategies and targeted outreach. As mariculture and local food production continue to expand, demand for specialized skills and non-local labor may increase modestly, requiring continued coordination between workforce programs and industry partners.

These conditions directly inform the State's outreach, service delivery, and employer engagement strategies described in subsequent sections of the Agricultural Outreach Plan.

(3) Provide an assessment of the unique needs of farmworkers by 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 farm workers). 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 Employment and Training Administration.

#### **Overview – MSFW Population Characteristics**

Alaska’s Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) population is relatively small and geographically dispersed, reflecting the limited scale, seasonal nature, and regional variability of agricultural activity in the State. MSFW characteristics are shaped by Alaska’s geographic isolation, high cost of travel, and reliance on local labor for many short-duration agricultural activities.

Based on AlaskaJobs data, U.S. Census sources, and field outreach conducted by Employment Service (ES) staff, MSFWs represent a small share of the workforce system population, accounting for less than two percent of total participants in recent program years.

In Program Year 2024, approximately 127 MSFWs were identified statewide during peak season and approximately 24 during low season. Earlier data (PY22) estimated approximately 211 MSFWs during peak season and 56 during low season, reflecting variability driven by seasonal conditions, employer demand, and improvements in data collection.

#### **Key Elements – MSFW Characteristics and Trends**

- MSFWs represent a small but distinct population within Alaska’s workforce system
- The population includes both seasonal workers residing in Alaska and a smaller number of migrant workers
- MSFW activity is highly seasonal, with peak participation during spring and summer months
- H-2A workers represent a limited but important subset of the MSFW population
- Language access and geographic barriers significantly influence service delivery

#### **MSFW Population Characteristics**

MSFWs in Alaska include a mix of seasonal workers residing within the State and a smaller number of migrant workers who travel to Alaska for employment.

Key characteristics include:

- Seasonal workers residing within commuting distance of worksites who meet MSFW criteria based on employment patterns
- A limited number of migrant workers, including those participating in the H-2A program
- Workers concentrated in greenhouse operations, specialty agriculture, and timber-related activities

H-2A participation remains limited but targeted:

- Approximately 3 to 4 employers utilize the H-2A program annually
- Workers are primarily from Mexico and are predominantly Spanish-speaking

In the timber sector, certain activities such as tree planting and thinning have historically relied on migrant labor, including workers from Mexico and Central America. These workers often travel to remote worksites and reside in temporary or employer-provided housing during the season.

### **Language and Cultural Characteristics**

- Spanish is the primary non-English language among MSFWs, particularly among H-2A workers
- Alaska Job Center staff provide bilingual services where available
- Interpretation and translation services are provided at no cost when bilingual staff are not available
- MSFWs may require assistance in understanding workforce services, employment rights, and complaint procedures

### **Seasonal Patterns (Peak And Low Season)**

#### **Peak Season**

- Occurs primarily between May and September
- Increased labor demand in greenhouse operations, vegetable production, mariculture, and timber activities
- Presence of H-2A workers and other migrant workers is most likely during this period
- Outreach efforts are most critical during peak activity periods

#### **Low Season**

- Occurs during late fall and winter months
- Agricultural activity and MSFW presence are significantly reduced
- Some continued employment in greenhouse and timber-related activities
- Service delivery shifts toward maintaining access through Alaska Job Centers rather than intensive outreach

### **Barriers to Service Access and Unique Needs**

MSFWs in Alaska face several barriers that impact access to workforce services:

- Geographic isolation of worksites, particularly in rural and coastal regions
- Limited transportation options and high travel costs
- Short employment duration limits opportunities for sustained engagement
- Language barriers for workers with limited English proficiency
- Limited awareness of available workforce services and the complaint system
- Housing and logistical challenges associated with remote or seasonal work locations

These barriers contribute to intermittent engagement with the workforce system and require targeted outreach and flexible service delivery approaches.

### **Analytical Summary**

Although Alaska's MSFW population is small relative to other states, the combination of geographic isolation, seasonal employment patterns, and a concentration in remote worksites creates unique service-delivery challenges. MSFWs are more likely to require targeted outreach, language access support, and flexible service strategies to ensure equitable access to workforce services.

The presence of MSFWs in specific sectors, particularly greenhouse operations and timber-related activities, indicates that demand for services is localized and time-sensitive. Outreach and service delivery must therefore be aligned with peak activity periods and coordinated with employers and partners.

### **Connection to Outreach and Service Strategies**

The characteristics and barriers identified in this section directly inform Alaska's outreach and service delivery strategies described in Sections VI(AOP)(4) and VI(AOP)(5).

Specifically:

- Outreach strategies prioritize peak season engagement and target worksites where MSFWs are most likely to be present
- Language access services are integrated into outreach and service delivery
- Worker rights education and complaint system information are incorporated into outreach activities
- Service delivery includes both in-person and remote options to address geographic barriers

The State will continue to refine MSFW population data and characteristics through ongoing outreach, employer engagement, and coordination with DETS, the State Monitor Advocate, and partner organizations.

[\(4\) 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:](#)

#### **Overview – Outreach Activities**

Alaska's outreach strategy is designed to locate, contact, and provide services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) who are not reached through the Alaska Job Center Network's normal intake activities. Outreach activities are tailored to Alaska's unique geographic, seasonal, and industry conditions and are implemented in accordance with Wagner-Peyser Act requirements and applicable federal regulations, including 20 CFR 653.107.

Outreach efforts are coordinated through the Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS), Alaska Job Center staff, and oversight from the State Monitor Advocate (SMA). These efforts ensure that MSFWs receive equitable access to employment services, workforce protections, and information about their rights and available resources.

Outreach activities are aligned with the agricultural activity, MSFW characteristics, and seasonal patterns described in Sections VI(AOP)(2) and VI(AOP)(3). They are designed to ensure consistent, accessible, and effective service delivery across Alaska's diverse regions.

The following subsections (A–E) describe how Alaska implements outreach requirements under 20 CFR 653.107, including strategies for locating and contacting MSFWs, providing services, and ensuring equitable access.

#### **Key Elements – Outreach Activities**

- Targets MSFWs who are not reached through normal Alaska Job Center intake processes
- Tailors outreach strategies to Alaska's seasonal agricultural activity and geographic conditions
- Conducts outreach through trained Alaska Job Center staff and coordinates DETS efforts
- Provides information on employment services, worker rights, and available protections
- Ensures access to Wagner-Peyser employment services and referrals to partner programs
- Supports equitable access for MSFWs in rural, remote, and underserved areas
- Includes oversight and monitoring by the State Monitor Advocate to ensure compliance and effectiveness

(A) Contacting farm workers who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the employment service offices on an ongoing basis. The plan must identify the number of full-time and part-time outreach staff positions in the State. It must demonstrate that there are sufficient outreach staff to conduct MSFW outreach in each service area of the State and to contact a majority of MSFWs in the State annually. The plan must explain the materials, tools, and resources the SWA will use for outreach.

#### **Overview – Contacting Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs)**

Alaska is designated as a non-significant MSFW State. It utilizes Alaska Job Center Employment Service staff to conduct outreach to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) who are not reached through normal intake activities. The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) provides oversight and monitoring of outreach activities but does not serve as outreach staff, consistent with 20 CFR 653.107(a) and Training and Employment Notice No. 10-23.

Outreach is conducted on an ongoing basis using a targeted, seasonal, and regionally responsive approach that reflects where and when MSFWs are most likely to be present. Outreach activities are intensified during peak agricultural seasons, generally from May through September, with continued outreach during off-peak periods to maintain engagement and service continuity.

#### **Outreach Staffing and Coverage**

Alaska does not maintain dedicated full-time MSFW outreach worker positions. Instead, outreach responsibilities are carried out by trained Employment Service staff within Alaska Job Centers as part of their regular duties.

- Alaska has one dedicated MSFW outreach position that provides full-time outreach during the peak agricultural season and part-time outreach during the non-peak season. This position is based in the Anchorage Midtown Job Center, which serves the largest concentration of MSFW workers in the state.
- No part-time staff are solely assigned to MSFW outreach; however, multiple staff contribute to outreach efforts as part of integrated service delivery
- Staff are strategically located across service areas to support outreach coverage in regions with agricultural and seasonal worker activity

This staffing model reflects Alaska's designation as a non-significant MSFW State and is sufficient to conduct outreach across identified service areas and to contact a majority of MSFWs in the State annually.

#### **Outreach Locations and Target Areas**

Outreach efforts focus on regions with identified agricultural, mariculture, and timber-related activity, including:

- The Matanuska-Susitna Valley
- The Kenai Peninsula
- Interior Alaska
- Southeast coastal communities

Staff coordinates with employers, community organizations, and partner agencies to identify active worksites, appropriate outreach timing, and additional locations where MSFWs may live or gather.

#### **Outreach Methods and Strategies**

Due to Alaska's geographic scale and access limitations, outreach is conducted using a combination of in-person and remote methods to ensure coverage across both accessible and remote areas.

Outreach activities include:

- On-site visits to farms, greenhouses, aquaculture operations, and timber-related worksites where feasible
- Outreach at community gathering locations, including housing sites, community centers, faith-based organizations, health departments, restaurants, and local service providers
- Scheduled outreach trips coordinated with employer operations and seasonal workforce presence
- Remote outreach methods, including phone and virtual communication, when in-person contact is not feasible

Outreach staff may contact MSFWs at their homes, gathering places, or other assembly areas to ensure access to services outside of traditional job center settings.

#### **Services Provided During Outreach**

During outreach contacts, staff provide:

- Information on available Employment Service and workforce programs
- Assistance with AlaskaJobs registration and job search activities
- Referrals to agricultural and nonagricultural employment opportunities, training programs, and supportive services
- Information on worker rights, including the Employment-Related Law Complaint System
- Multilingual materials and language assistance services, including Spanish-language resources as appropriate
- Referrals to community-based organizations and partner agencies that provide additional support services

All information is provided in a manner that is culturally appropriate and, where possible, in the MSFW's preferred language.

#### **Outreach Tools, Materials, and Resources**

Outreach staff utilizes a variety of tools and resources to support effective engagement, including:

- AlaskaJobs for job search, registration, and service tracking
- Printed outreach materials and informational flyers
- Multilingual materials, including Spanish-language resources
- Mobile devices and remote communication tools to support outreach in remote areas
- Labor market information and job listings aligned with seasonal employment opportunities

#### **Documentation, Follow-Up, And Continuous Improvement**

Outreach staff documents all contacts, services provided, and referrals made during outreach activities. MSFWs are encouraged to engage with the Alaska Job Center Network for continued services and follow-up support.

Follow-up occurs through AlaskaJobs records, direct communication, and, as appropriate, coordination with partner agencies.

Outreach staff are encouraged to identify and propose new strategies to improve outreach effectiveness. Ongoing monitoring by the SMA ensures that outreach activities remain compliant with federal requirements and responsive to the needs of MSFW populations across the State.

[\(B\) Providing technical assistance to outreach staff.](#)

#### **Overview – Providing Technical Assistance to Outreach Staff**

The State provides ongoing technical assistance to outreach staff to ensure the effective, consistent, and compliant delivery of services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs), in accordance with 20 CFR 653.107

and 20 CFR Part 658 Subpart E. Technical assistance is designed to strengthen staff capacity, promote equitable service delivery, and ensure alignment with federal requirements and best practices.

#### **Technical Assistance Delivery Approach**

Technical assistance is delivered through a combination of formal training, ongoing guidance, resource sharing, and collaboration with partner organizations.

Topics include:

- Training on MSFW definitions, identification, and documentation requirements
- Guidance on the delivery of Employment Service (ES) services, including referrals to career services, training, and supportive services
- Instruction on the Employment-Related Law Complaint System, including complaint intake, handling, and referral procedures under 20 CFR Part 658 Subpart E
- Information on farmworker rights and protections, including terms and conditions of employment
- Training on providing services to individuals with limited English proficiency, including the use of multilingual materials and interpretation resources
- Coordination protocols with community-based organizations and other partners serving MSFWs
- Information on available employment opportunities and job development strategies

#### **Role of the State Monitor Advocate (SMA)**

The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) plays a central role in delivering technical assistance and training. The SMA provides instruction on federal MSFW program requirements, outreach responsibilities, effective outreach strategies, and best practices for serving MSFW populations.

Training topics include:

- Federal guidelines and regulatory requirements
- Outreach staff roles and responsibilities
- Effective outreach strategies and engagement techniques
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker program reporting requirements
- Best practices for addressing barriers to employment

The SMA also provides training to Employment Service staff to ensure a clear understanding of the Employment-Related Law Complaint System, including the rights afforded to MSFWs under applicable federal regulations and the Judge Richey court order. This includes guidance on ensuring that MSFWs receive services that are qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate to those provided to non-MSFW customers.

#### **Coordination and Continuous Improvement**

To support continuous improvement and alignment with federal expectations, the SMA coordinates with the National Monitor Advocate, Region 6 leadership, and State Monitor Advocates in other states. These collaborations support the sharing of resources, training opportunities, and best practices, and help ensure that Alaska's outreach and service delivery strategies remain current and effective.

#### **Summary**

Through ongoing training, technical guidance, and cross-agency collaboration, Alaska ensures that outreach staff are equipped to deliver high-quality, compliant, and culturally responsive services to MSFWs across the State.

[\(C\) Increasing outreach staff training and awareness across core programs, including the UI program and the training on identification of UI eligibility issues.](#)

#### **Overview – Cross-Program Training and Awareness**

Alaska ensures that outreach staff across workforce programs are trained to support coordinated service delivery

and to effectively identify Unemployment Insurance (UI) eligibility issues for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs). Cross-program training strengthens staff knowledge of available services, promotes appropriate referrals, and ensures that MSFWs receive comprehensive support through the Alaska Job Center Network.

Training efforts emphasize both program awareness and the ability to recognize potential UI eligibility issues and connect individuals to appropriate resources while maintaining clear program boundaries and roles.

#### **Core Program Training and Coordination**

Outreach staff receive training on WIOA core programs and partner services to support integrated service delivery and effective referrals.

Training includes:

- Overview of WIOA core programs and partner services available through the Alaska Job Center Network
- Identification of potential eligibility for employment, training, and supportive services
- Procedures for making referrals to appropriate program staff for eligibility determination and service delivery
- Coordination practices to support co-enrollment and integrated service strategies, where appropriate

#### **Unemployment Insurance (UI) Awareness and Referral Protocols**

Outreach staff receive general awareness training on UI eligibility requirements and processes to support informed referrals and early identification of potential eligibility issues.

This includes:

- Understanding basic UI eligibility requirements, including being able and available to work and work search expectations
- Recognizing potential UI eligibility issues, such as failure to meet work search requirements or refusal of suitable work
- Referring individuals to UI program staff for assistance when eligibility questions or concerns arise

Outreach staff does not make UI eligibility determinations or provide formal guidance on UI claims. All UI eligibility determinations, adjudications, and claims-related decisions are conducted exclusively by the UI program, in accordance with federal and state law.

#### **Supporting Program Integrity and Service Alignment**

Through cross-program training and clearly defined referral protocols, Alaska ensures that MSFWs are connected to appropriate services efficiently while maintaining program integrity and compliance with UI requirements. This coordinated approach supports consistent service delivery across programs and improves outcomes for MSFW participants.

[\(D\) Providing outreach staff professional development activities to ensure they can provide high-quality services to both job seekers and employers.](#)

#### **Overview – Outreach Staff Professional Development**

The State of Alaska supports ongoing professional development for outreach staff to ensure high-quality, culturally responsive, and effective service delivery to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs). Professional development activities are designed to enhance staff knowledge, strengthen outreach and service delivery skills, and ensure alignment with Wagner-Peyser requirements and MSFW equity provisions.

Outreach staff receive both general workforce system training and specialized training tailored to their roles in serving MSFW populations. Training is provided upon hire and throughout employment to ensure staff maintain the

knowledge and skills necessary to effectively deliver services and connect MSFWs to employment and training opportunities.

### **Core Professional Development and Training Topics**

Professional development includes foundational training in workforce systems and skill-based development in areas such as communication, service delivery, and employer engagement. Outreach staff participate in training available to all Alaska Job Center staff, promoting consistency and coordination across programs within the Alaska Job Center Network.

Training topics include:

- New staff onboarding and IntraLearn training modules
- Alaska Foundations of Workforce Professional Certification
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program training
- Business services and employer engagement training
- Career services, including resume development and interviewing
- De-escalation techniques and workplace safety
- Cultural competency, language access, and respectful workplace practices
- Disability awareness and accessibility training
- Veteran services and priority populations training
- Assessment tools and workforce system applications, including WorkKeys®

### **MSFW-Specific Training and Competency Development**

Professional development includes targeted training to support effective engagement with MSFW populations and compliance with federal requirements.

This includes:

- Strategies for outreach and engagement with MSFW populations
- Identification of barriers to employment specific to MSFWs
- Coordination of services with workforce partners and community-based organizations
- Understanding of MSFW employment conditions and service needs

### **Training Delivery and Continuous Improvement**

Training is delivered through a combination of internal learning systems, statewide training platforms, and partner-supported opportunities. Additional specialized training may be provided based on staff roles, regional needs, and emerging workforce priorities.

Professional development activities are continuously updated to reflect changes in federal guidance, workforce system priorities, and identified training needs.

### **Summary**

Through ongoing professional development and targeted training, Alaska ensures that outreach staff are equipped to deliver services that are accessible, equitable, and responsive to the needs of MSFWs across the State, while maintaining high-quality service delivery to both job seekers and employers.

[\(E\) Coordinating outreach efforts with NFJP grantees as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups.](#)

#### **Overview – Coordination With Partner Organizations**

Alaska does not currently have a National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee. However, the State coordinates outreach and service delivery with available public and private partners to support Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs), consistent with 20 CFR 653.107(e).

Coordination efforts are designed to ensure that MSFWs have access to employment, training, and supportive services through the Alaska Job Center Network and partner programs, despite the absence of a dedicated NFJP provider.

#### **Coordination Strategies and Partner Engagement**

Coordination efforts focus on leveraging existing relationships and resources to support comprehensive service delivery for MSFWs.

These efforts include:

- Engagement with community-based organizations and local service providers in areas with MSFW activity
- Coordination with employers and industry representatives to support outreach, job placement, and service delivery
- Referrals to education, training, and supportive service providers
- Collaboration with organizations serving rural and remote communities where access to services may be limited

#### **Addressing the Absence of an NFJP Grantee**

In the absence of an NFJP grantee, Alaska emphasizes coordination with organizations that provide complementary services to MSFWs, including workforce development, education, and community support. The State ensures that MSFWs are connected to available resources through established referral practices and partner collaboration within the Alaska Job Center Network.

#### **Ongoing Assessment and Partnership Development**

Due to Alaska's relatively small MSFW population, many partner organizations primarily support agricultural business development rather than direct farmworker services.

The State will continue to assess opportunities to strengthen partnerships, expand coordination strategies, and identify potential service gaps over the four-year Agricultural Outreach Plan period. This includes evaluating emerging needs and identifying potential partners that can enhance service delivery to MSFW populations.

#### **Summary**

Through ongoing coordination and strategic partnership development, Alaska works to ensure that MSFWs have access to available services and resources, regardless of geographic location or program availability.

[\(5\) Services provided to farm workers and agricultural employers through the one-stop delivery system.](#)  
Describe the State agency's planned activities for:

#### **Overview – Services Provided To Farmworkers And Agricultural Employers Through The One-Stop Delivery System**

Alaska delivers a comprehensive range of employment and training services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) and agricultural employers through the Alaska Job Center Network. Services are provided in alignment

with the Wagner-Peyser Act, WIOA Titles I–IV, and applicable federal regulations, including 20 CFR Parts 653 and 658.

Consistent with federal requirements and the principles of the Judge Richey court order, Alaska ensures that MSFWs receive services that are qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate to those provided to non-MSFWs.

Coordinated outreach efforts, integrated data systems, and partnerships across workforce programs and community organizations support service delivery. Outreach activities described in Section VI(AOP)(4) support identification and engagement of MSFWs, and referrals generated through outreach are directly connected to services delivered through the one-stop system.

Alaska’s service strategy reflects the State’s unique geographic, seasonal, and labor market conditions by utilizing a combination of in-person, remote, and partner-supported service delivery methods to ensure access for both workers and employers across urban, rural, and remote areas.

#### **Key Elements – Service Delivery for MSFWs and Agricultural Employers**

Alaska’s approach to service delivery for MSFWs and agricultural employers is centered on the following key elements:

- Provision of the full range of career, training, and supportive services to MSFWs through the Alaska Job Center Network
- Delivery of services that are qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate to those provided to non-MSFWs, consistent with federal requirements
- Integration of outreach and service delivery to ensure MSFWs identified through outreach are connected to workforce system services
- Coordination of services across WIOA core programs and partner programs to support comprehensive and seamless service delivery
- Delivery of employer-focused services, including recruitment, job order development, and labor market information, through Business Connection staff
- Administration and promotion of the Employment Service and the Employment-Related Law Complaint System to ensure worker protections and access to complaint resolution processes
- Promotion and utilization of the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) and other federal tools to support agricultural employer recruitment needs
- Use of multilingual materials and language assistance services to ensure equitable access for individuals with limited English proficiency
- Expansion of remote and technology-assisted service delivery methods to address geographic barriers
- Continuous evaluation and improvement of service strategies to align with federal requirements, workforce conditions, and Alaska’s labor market needs

(A) Providing the full range of employment services to the agricultural community, including both MSFWs and agricultural employers, through the one-stop centers. This includes:

(i) How career and training services required under WIOA Title I will be provided to MSFWs through the one-stop centers; and

#### **Overview – WIOA Title I Services for MSFWs Through the One-Stop System**

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) have access to the full range of career and training services available under WIOA Title I through the Alaska Job Center Network. Services are delivered through one-stop centers by Alaska Job Center staff and through referrals to appropriate program providers and partners, ensuring coordinated and comprehensive service delivery.

Alaska adheres to the principles of the Judge Richey court order, ensuring that services provided to MSFWs are qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate to those provided to non-MSFWs. The State prioritizes equitable access to services and supports for individuals with barriers to employment, including MSFW populations.

#### **Service Delivery Through the One-Stop System**

Initial career services are provided by Alaska Job Center Resource Room staff, who assist individuals with job search activities, labor market information, and access to employment opportunities.

For individuals requiring additional support, Career Support and Training Services staff deliver WIOA Title I-B services, including developing individualized employment plans that identify employment goals, career pathways, and associated training and supportive service needs.

#### **Career and Training Services Available to MSFWs**

Services available to MSFWs include:

- Initial and individualized career services, including job search assistance, labor market information, and resume development
- Referral to employment opportunities through AlaskaJobs and staff-assisted matching
- Development of individualized employment plans aligned with participant goals and labor market demand
- Referral to education and training services, including occupational skills training and work-based learning opportunities
- Referral to supportive services, including transportation, housing assistance, and other resources necessary to support participation in employment or training
- Referral to WIOA Title II Adult Education services for English language acquisition and high school equivalency preparation
- Access to interpretation and translation services at no cost to the participant

#### **Coordination With Core Programs and Partner Services**

Individuals who are English Language Learners or who require basic skills development are referred to WIOA Title II Alaska Adult Education programs for services such as English language acquisition and high school equivalency preparation. These services support participants in developing the foundational skills necessary to enter or advance in employment.

Through coordinated service delivery across WIOA core programs, Alaska ensures that MSFWs receive individualized, goal-oriented services that support entry into in-demand occupations and career pathways leading to family-sustaining wages.

[\(ii\) How the State serves agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such services.](#)

#### **Overview – Services to Agricultural Employers**

Alaska provides a range of services to agricultural employers through dedicated Business Connection staff within the Alaska Job Center Network. These services are designed to support employer workforce needs, facilitate recruitment, and strengthen connections between employers and available labor pools at the local, statewide, and national levels.

Business Connection staff work directly with agricultural employers to understand workforce needs, identify required skills, and develop effective recruitment strategies. Staff provide individualized assistance to ensure job orders are accurately developed, appropriately marketed, and aligned with employer expectations.

### **Employer Services Provided Through the One-Stop System**

Employer services include:

- Assistance with job order development and posting in AlaskaJobs and the National Labor Exchange
- Recruitment support, including candidate screening and referral of qualified applicants, including MSFWs as appropriate
- Coordination of customized hiring events and recruitment activities
- Provision of labor market information to support workforce planning and hiring decisions
- Assistance in navigating federal programs such as H-2A, including coordination of housing inspections and related processes

These services support timely and effective recruitment while promoting MSFWs' connection to agricultural employment opportunities.

### **Support for H-2A Employers**

To improve efficiency and responsiveness for H-2A employers, trained staff in Anchorage and Fairbanks conduct housing inspections in coordination with the Foreign Labor Certification Coordinator. This approach reduces travel requirements, streamlines inspection timelines, and improves service delivery for employers in key regions.

### **Strategies for Service Improvement (PY 2026–2029)**

Over the four-year AOP period (PY 2026–2029), Alaska will strengthen services to agricultural employers and MSFWs through the following strategies:

- Improving coordination between outreach activities and service delivery to increase successful referrals, placements, and enrollment
- Enhancing staff training on MSFW identification and service strategies to ensure consistent and equitable service delivery statewide
- Expanding the use of remote and technology-assisted service delivery methods to reach workers and employers in remote locations
- Strengthening employer engagement in sectors with seasonal workforce demand, including agriculture, mariculture, and timber-related industries
- Continuing to evaluate service access, employer satisfaction, and outcomes to ensure alignment with federal requirements and Alaska's workforce needs

### **Summary**

Through these efforts, Alaska will continue to enhance employer services, improve recruitment outcomes, and ensure that agricultural employers have access to the workforce resources needed to support their operations while promoting employment opportunities for MSFWs.

[\(B\) Marketing the Complaint System to farmworkers and stakeholders.](#)

### **Overview – Marketing the Complaint System**

Alaska ensures that Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) and other workers are informed of their rights and have access to the Employment Service (ES) and Employment-Related Law Complaint System in accordance with 20 CFR Part 658 Subpart E and WIOA Section 188. The State promotes awareness of the complaint system to support a safe, equitable, and non-discriminatory work environment.

### **Marketing and Access Strategies**

Marketing and access strategies include:

- Prominent display of complaint system posters in Alaska Job Centers in locations accessible to the public
- Distribution of complaint system information during outreach activities and service delivery interactions

- Availability of complaint forms and informational materials in plain language and in languages appropriate to the population served, including Spanish
- Verbal explanation of complaint rights and processes by trained staff during outreach and intake activities
- Access to interpretation and translation services at no cost to the individual filing a complaint
- Additional outreach through communication channels, including DOLWD social media platforms, as appropriate

#### **Staff Training and Complaint System Administration**

All Alaska Job Center staff are trained on complaint system procedures, including how to receive complaints, document information, and make appropriate referrals. Training includes guidance on handling both employment-service and employment-law-related complaints, as well as special considerations for serving MSFWs.

This includes:

- Providing additional time for MSFWs to respond to information requests
- Ensuring equitable access to the complaint process
- Delivering services in a culturally appropriate and accessible manner

Staff present complaint system information in a neutral and supportive manner and do not discourage individuals from filing complaints.

The complaint system is overseen by designated staff, including the Complaint System Coordinator, with additional oversight and involvement from the State Monitor Advocate (SMA), as appropriate. Job Center Managers provide local oversight to ensure consistent implementation across service locations.

#### **Summary**

Through these strategies, Alaska ensures that MSFWs and other workers are aware of their rights, understand how to access the complaint system, and are supported throughout the complaint process in accordance with federal and state requirements.

[\(C\) Marketing the Agricultural Recruitment System for U.S. Workers to agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such publicity.](#)

#### **Overview – Marketing the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS)**

Alaska informs agricultural employers of the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) and its availability to support the recruitment of U.S. workers, consistent with federal requirements. Alaska Job Center staff provide information on ARS as part of employer engagement and job order development activities to ensure employers are aware of available recruitment options.

#### **Marketing and Employer Engagement Strategies**

Marketing and support strategies include:

- Informing employers of the ARS during employer engagement and job order development activities
- Assisting employers with posting job orders in AlaskaJobs and the National Labor Exchange
- Providing information on federal job order systems, including [seasonaljobs.dol.gov](http://seasonaljobs.dol.gov), for H-2A and H-2B positions
- Supporting employers in accessing broader labor pools when local recruitment is insufficient

Alaska Job Center staff provide individualized assistance to employers to ensure job orders are properly developed, compliant with applicable requirements, and accessible to a wider audience, including national labor pools when appropriate.

### **Use of ARS in Alaska’s Labor Market Context**

Due to Alaska’s geographic isolation and relatively small agricultural workforce, utilization of ARS is limited. However, staff work with employers to assess whether ARS is an appropriate recruitment strategy based on their workforce needs, particularly when local or statewide recruitment efforts are insufficient.

### **Strategies for Improvement (PY 2026–2029)**

Over the four-year AOP period (PY 2026–2029), Alaska will continue to evaluate opportunities to increase awareness and appropriate use of ARS where it aligns with employer needs and workforce conditions.

Strategies include:

- Increasing staff awareness and training on ARS to support consistent messaging to employers
- Enhancing integration of ARS information into employer outreach and job order development processes
- Evaluating the effectiveness of ARS within Alaska’s unique labor market context
- Identifying opportunities to strengthen employer engagement and recruitment outcomes through expanded use of national labor exchange tools

### **Summary**

Through these efforts, Alaska will continue to promote appropriate use of the Agricultural Recruitment System, strengthen employer awareness, and support effective recruitment strategies that connect agricultural employers with available U.S. workers.

#### [\(6\) 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.*

### **Overview – Significant MSFW One-Stop Center Staffing**

Alaska is designated as a non-significant MSFW State and has no one-stop centers classified as significant MSFW one-stop centers under 20 CFR 653.111.

As such, the staffing requirements specific to significant MSFW one-stop centers are not applicable.

### **Statewide Staffing Approach and Compliance**

Although Alaska does not operate significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State ensures that all Alaska Job Center locations are staffed and trained to provide equitable and proportionate services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) in accordance with Wagner-Peyser requirements.

This includes:

- Training Employment Service staff to identify MSFWs and provide appropriate services
- Providing access to multilingual services and interpretation as needed
- Ensuring MSFWs receive the full range of services available through the one-stop delivery system
- Conducting outreach through trained staff to reach MSFWs not served through normal intake processes

### **Summary**

This approach ensures compliance with federal requirements while reflecting Alaska’s non-significant MSFW designation, relatively small MSFW population, and geographically dispersed service environment.

*(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).*

#### **Overview – Collaboration With MSFW Service Providers**

Alaska collaborates with federal, state, and local partners to identify, serve, and better understand the needs of Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs). Coordination supports data sharing, outreach, and service delivery in regions with agricultural, aquaculture, and forestry activity.

Although Alaska does not currently have a National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee, the State maintains collaborative relationships with a range of partner organizations to support MSFW populations and ensure access to workforce and supportive services.

#### **Current Collaborative Partnerships**

Current collaboration includes coordination with:

- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), including the Farm Service Agency and local field offices
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR), including the Division of Agriculture and Division of Forestry
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) and aquaculture-related programs
- Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) Research and Analysis Section
- Community-based organizations and legal service providers supporting worker populations

These partnerships support the identification of MSFW populations, analysis of workforce trends, and coordination of outreach and service delivery.

#### **Collaboration in the Absence of an NFJP Grantee**

Alaska does not currently have an NFJP grantee. The State ensures coordination with available partners to provide complementary services. It will continue to monitor opportunities to establish relationships with organizations serving farmworkers, including potential NFJP providers, should they become available in the future.

#### **Strategies to Strengthen and Expand Collaboration (PY 2026–2029)**

Over the four-year AOP period (PY 2026–2029), Alaska will build upon existing partnerships and expand collaboration through the following strategies:

- Strengthening coordination between outreach staff and partner organizations in regions with seasonal agricultural and resource-based activity (ongoing)
- Expanding engagement with employers to improve identification of MSFW worksites and service needs (ongoing)
- Increasing coordination with agencies and organizations serving rural and remote communities to improve access to services (PY 2026–2027)
- Evaluating opportunities to formalize partnerships through agreements or memoranda of understanding (MOUs) where service gaps are identified (PY 2027–2029)
- Identifying and engaging potential new partners, including organizations that provide workforce, legal, or supportive services to MSFW populations (ongoing)

#### **Summary**

Through ongoing collaboration and strategic partnership development, Alaska will continue to strengthen coordination, expand access to services, and improve outcomes for MSFWs across the State.

(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.

i. 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 allowed 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.

#### **Overview – Review and Public Comment Process**

Alaska conducts a formal and auditable public comment process for the Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP) in accordance with federal requirements. The State ensures that appropriate stakeholders are provided the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed AOP before submission.

Consistent with federal requirements, Alaska provides the proposed AOP to stakeholders at least 45 calendar days before submission and allows a minimum of 30 days for public comment.

#### **Public Notice and Distribution Process**

The State will:

- Publish the draft AOP as part of the WIOA State Plan modification on the State's public notice website
- Provide public notice through established communication channels, including distribution lists and partner networks
- Allow a minimum 30-day public comment period
- Distribute the draft AOP to NFJP grantees (if applicable), public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, advocacy organizations, and other interested stakeholders
- Maintain records of all entities notified and dates of distribution

#### **Targeted Stakeholder Outreach**

Targeted outreach for comment includes organizations representing:

- Agriculture, aquaculture, and forestry industries
- Worker advocacy and legal services organizations
- State and federal agencies engaged in agricultural workforce issues

Alaska currently has no NFJP grantee; however, organizations representing MSFW interests are provided the opportunity to review and comment on the AOP.

#### **Comment Review and Response Process**

All comments received will be:

- Logged and tracked through a centralized process
- Reviewed and considered in the development of the final AOP
- Addressed with written responses indicating whether comments were incorporated and, if not, the rationale

The State will inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons for that determination.

### **Documentation and Submission Requirements**

A summary of comments received, including recommendations and the State's responses, will be included in the final AOP submission in accordance with federal requirements.

### **Statement of Compliance**

Alaska confirms that NFJP grantees (if applicable), appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested stakeholders have been provided the opportunity to review and comment on the AOP in accordance with federal requirements.

*(D)Data Assessment. Review the previous four years of 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 to meet such goals.*

### **Overview – Data Assessment and Performance Review**

Alaska conducts ongoing analysis of Wagner-Peyser performance data to assess service delivery to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) and ensure compliance with federal requirements for quantitatively proportionate and qualitatively equivalent services.

The State reviews performance data from the most recent four years of Wagner-Peyser reporting to evaluate whether MSFWs are receiving services in proportion to their representation in the workforce system and whether services are delivered equitably.

### **Assessment of Quantitative Proportionality**

Based on a review of the most recent 4 years of available data, Alaska has met federal requirements for providing quantitatively proportionate services to MSFWs compared with non-MSFWs.

Findings include:

- MSFW participation remains low relative to the overall workforce population, reflecting the limited scale of agricultural activity in the State
- Service levels provided to MSFWs are proportionate to their representation in the Wagner-Peyser participant population
- Data quality and identification of MSFWs have improved through staff training and enhanced data entry practices

The State recognizes that small population size and seasonal variability may affect year-to-year comparisons; however, ongoing monitoring processes ensure continued compliance with federal requirements.

### **Continuous Monitoring and Improvement Strategies**

To support ongoing performance and continuous improvement, Alaska will:

- Continue staff training on accurate MSFW identification and data entry in AlaskaJobs
- Monitor MSFW service levels and outcomes on an ongoing basis
- Evaluate outreach effectiveness in identifying MSFWs not reached through normal intake activities
- Implement corrective actions if data indicate gaps in proportionate or equitable service delivery

### **Summary**

Through ongoing data analysis, staff training, and performance monitoring, Alaska ensures continued compliance with federal requirements and maintains a data-informed approach to improving services for MSFWs across the State.

(E) *Assessment of progress.* The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved, why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps in achievement in the coming year.

#### **Overview – Assessment of Progress**

Alaska evaluates progress under the Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP) through ongoing review of outreach activities, service delivery outcomes, and Wagner-Peyser performance data. This assessment identifies accomplishments, areas for improvement, and strategies to strengthen service delivery for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs).

#### **Accomplishments Under the Previous AOP**

Alaska has achieved the primary goals identified in the previous Agricultural Outreach Plan. Key accomplishments include:

- Increased awareness of agricultural, aquaculture, and timber-related workforce activity across the State
- Improved identification and tracking of MSFWs within AlaskaJobs
- Expanded staff training on serving individuals with limited English proficiency
- Strengthened implementation of the Employment Service Complaint System

#### **Areas Not Fully Achieved and Contributing Factors**

While significant progress has been made, some goals were not fully achieved. Contributing factors include:

- Geographic challenges and the remote nature of many agricultural and seasonal worksites, which limit consistent outreach coverage
- Seasonal variability in agricultural activity, resulting in fluctuating MSFW populations and reduced opportunities for engagement
- Variability in staff experience and training across service locations, affecting consistency in MSFW identification and service delivery

These factors reflect Alaska's unique geographic and labor market conditions and are considered in evaluating performance outcomes.

#### **Strategies to Address Gaps and Improve Outcomes**

To address identified gaps and strengthen performance in the coming year, Alaska will:

- Strengthen alignment between outreach activities and service delivery processes to improve participant engagement and enrollment
- Continue staff training and technical assistance to ensure consistent MSFW identification and service delivery statewide
- Expand outreach coverage in remote and seasonal worksites where feasible, including the use of remote and technology-assisted service delivery methods
- Utilize data to identify service gaps and inform targeted outreach and service strategies
- Maintain ongoing monitoring to ensure compliance, service quality, and continuous improvement

#### **Summary**

Through continuous assessment, targeted improvements, and strengthened coordination, Alaska will build on prior accomplishments and enhance the effectiveness of outreach and service delivery for MSFWs under the Agricultural Outreach Plan.

(F) *State Monitor Advocate*. The plan must contain a statement confirming that the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

**State Monitor Advocate Review and Approval**

The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) has reviewed and approved the Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP) and confirms that it is consistent with federal requirements and reflects Alaska’s approach to serving Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs).

**Ongoing Oversight and Responsibilities**

The SMA will continue to:

- Monitor implementation of the AOP
- Provide technical assistance and guidance to Alaska Job Center staff
- Review outreach activities and service delivery to MSFWs
- Ensure compliance with federal regulations, including 20 CFR Parts 653 and 658

**WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES**

<b>The State Plan must include assurances that:</b>		<b>Included?</b>
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));	<b>Yes</b>
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.	<b>Yes</b>
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	<b>Yes</b>
4.	SWA officials: 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services; 2) Determine that services need to be discontinued; 3) Determine 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 SWA’s behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and 7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party that requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for a hearing in writing before the hearing.	<b>Yes</b>
5.	The SWA has established and maintains a self-appraisal system for ES operations to assess progress toward goals and to correct performance deficiencies (20 CFR 658.601).	<b>Yes</b>

### Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the following as they pertain 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 (WIOA section 102(b)(2)(D)(ii)(I)).** 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)).

The Alaska Adult Education (AAE) Program has adopted and implemented state-specific standards that are developed to support the skills necessary for adult learners to achieve specific knowledge and skills to meet the demands of postsecondary training and employment. While the Alaska Content Standards provide a strong foundation for instruction, ensuring learners have access to instruction that supports them in developing the skills necessary for success, adult learners need specific knowledge and skills to meet the demands of postsecondary training and employment without needing remediation.

After a review of the national College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards to ensure alignment with Alaska's K-12 standards, the AAE Office determined the National CCR standards provide benchmark alignment with the standards and standardized academic content that do not meet the needs of Alaska students. The AAE Office contracted with the American Institute for Research (AIR) to write state-specific standards that better align with Alaska's K-12 standards and focus on advancing the unique cultural challenges that Alaskans face in education. In developing these standards, the project team conducted a close analysis of the Alaska English/Language Arts and Mathematics Content Standards to better understand the important adaptations made to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) to fit the specific needs of the Alaskan context more appropriately. That analysis served as the basis for the adaptations made to the CCR Standards for Adult Education.

The AAE Office, adult educators, and the AIR team continue to work on a five-year project to write and implement the Alaska Adult Education State Standards. The Alaska Adult Education Content Standards for English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Digital Literacy, English Language Proficiency, and Social Studies have been finalized and implemented with Science being implemented in the fall of 2026. The AAE Office and professional development staff at AIR will hold a statewide training event in fall 2026 to train on the complete implementation of the standards. As with the K-12 standards, the Alaska Content Standards do not specify what must be taught in the classroom; instead, these standards allow adult educators to understand where to focus their efforts and shape overall instruction. The standards must be translated into curriculum and lessons that can be used to provide rigorous instruction that will help students gain the knowledge and skills needed to be successful and competitive in the evolving job market.

Since the implementation of distance education in program year (PY) 2021, Alaska continues to allow adult education programs to target skills for the necessary alignment of Alaska Adult Education State Standards to synchronous and asynchronous learning activities. The ever-changing landscape of instructional methodology has evolved and reinforced the importance of interactions with students in distance learning environments. Programs will continue to be trained in effective implementation of Alaska Adult Education State Standards as related to distance education.

**(b) Local Activities.** Describe how the eligible agency will use 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, at a minimum, include 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 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 before using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

The Alaska Adult Education (AAE) program is a statewide instructional program that provides formal education for adults over the age of sixteen (16) seeking to enhance their postsecondary education skills to transition into employment. The AAE Program has been an institution in Alaska for over 45 years. Housed within the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS), the AAE office provides grant management for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds. The AAE Office is responsible for the administration and programmatic oversight of AEFLA funding distribution to eligible providers to offer adult education and literacy activities that fall within the scope of services required under state and federal regulations, policies, and laws. Due to limited funding, AAE programs rely heavily on partnerships and obtaining smaller grants that support the local adult education programs to successfully provide students with the educational advantages they need.

The mission of the AAE Program is to provide adult learners with the skills needed to prepare them for employment, vocational training, or post-secondary education to assist:

- Adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency;
- Adults who are parents or family members obtain the education and skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children and lead to sustainable improvements in economic opportunities for their family;
- Adults in attaining a secondary school diploma and in transition to postsecondary education and training including career pathways; or
- Immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in improving their English reading, writing,

speaking, and comprehension skills, mathematics skills, and acquiring an understanding of the American system of government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship.

In PY2025, Alaska awarded new competitive, six-year AEFLA grants to fourteen eligible adult education providers. The AAE office ensures, through the Request for Grant Application (RGA) process, regional adult education programs, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) grant, and Correctional Education grant are represented throughout the geographic regions of Alaska.

In PY2025, Alaska awarded providers a multi-year grant beginning in July 2025 contingent upon the local provider's ability to successfully implement the terms of the grant, meet performance expectations, and provide regional adult education and literacy activities. All grant awards are subject to availability of funds from the federal government and legislative appropriation. Alaska's current grant timeline is July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2031. The next RGA for grant competition will not begin until PY2031.

#### **Eligible Providers**

An applicant for AEFLA funding must be considered an eligible provider to be a recipient of adult education funds. According to federal definition, an "eligible provider" is an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities. Eligible providers may include, but are not limited to:

- Local educational agency;
- Community-based organization or faith-based organization;
- Volunteer literacy organization;
- Institution of higher education;
- Public or private nonprofit agency;
- Library;
- Public housing authority;
- Nonprofit institution that is not described in any of paragraphs (a) through (g) of this section and can provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals;
- Consortium or coalition of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described in any of paragraphs (a) through (h) of this section; and
- Partnership between an employer and an entity described in any of paragraphs (a) through (i) of this section. (WIOA, Title II, section 203[5]; 34 CFR 463.23)

#### **Request for Grant Application (RGA) Process**

The RGA process establishes a mechanism for the AAE office to determine suitable eligible providers of grant funds based on federal and state mandates and policies. DOLWD awards multi-year federal and state grant funding to regional eligible providers to support the delivery of adult education activities. The AAE Office ensures the RGA is completed in accordance with 34 CFR section 463 subpart C.

In accordance with WIOA section 231(e), the AAE Office issues one RGA for all Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funded grants. Adult Education AEFLA funds will be awarded based on a competitive application process. The final award for each grant will be approved by the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

The Commissioner reserves the right to revoke a Notice of Intent to Award if the decision was made based on inaccurate information provided in the application. A grant applicant that receives a Notice of Denial of Award may file a written request for reconsideration as outlined in the Alaska Division of Employment and Training Services policy Grant Award and Appeal Policy 07-507.

### **Direct and Equitable Access**

The AAE office ensures direct and equitable access to AEFLA funds, in accordance with WIOA 231(c), by continuing to conduct a competitive process that provides nondiscriminatory access. Grant publications are made available to a broad range of potential applications through expansion of outreach. The AAE office utilizes traditional and non-traditional publications, such as websites, public notices, and email blasts to inform current and potential eligible providers of the process. Technical assistance is provided to assist the grant applicants during the process. Frequently asked questions are compiled and posted on the AAE website. Organizations not previously funded are given a fair and equitable opportunity to apply for funding without hindrance.

### **Demonstrated Effectiveness**

An applicant must be able to demonstrate past effectiveness by providing performance data on their record of improving the skills of eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy, in the content domains of:

- Reading;
- Writing;
- Mathematics; and
- English as a second language (ESL) instruction.

An eligible provider must also submit information regarding the outcomes for participants related to:

- Employment;
- Attainment of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; and
- Transition to postsecondary education and training.

### **Past Effectiveness**

An eligible provider must be able to demonstrate past effectiveness by providing the last two years of performance data on their record of improving literacy of eligible individuals to meet state-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy.

Eligible providers must provide information regarding performance and transition data when applying for an AAE grant. Agencies must also provide the following data as indicated in the narrative or outcomes to demonstrate past effectiveness:

- Educational functional levels or grade level equivalent achievement;
- High school completion outcomes;
- Transition outcomes, including transition to employment, post-secondary education, and/or training;
- The student population reported, including number of students serviced per year;
- Assessments used and methodology for demonstrating student growth, including pre- and post-testing gains; and
- Policies and procedures for maintaining valid and reliable data.

### **Local Board Review Process**

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) functions as the local workforce investment board in the state of Alaska. As part of the State of Alaska's WIOA Combined Plan, AAE programs will conduct a needs assessment to determine local and regional needs. In accordance with WIOA requirements, the AWIB will review and score the Regional Needs Assessment and Regional Labor market Analysis for alignment with the Combined Plan. Upon receipt of the applications, the AAE Office will compile and submit the afore mentioned sections to the reviewer designated by the AWIB. The AWIB will provide comments and recommendations to the AAE office on how the sections of the application align with the Alaska WIOA Combined Plan. The comments and recommendations provided by the AWIB will be attached to the application and provided to the review panel for final review and consideration of the extent to which the application addresses the Regional Needs Assessment and Labor Market Analysis. The panel will integrate any comments made by the AWIB into the final rubric of the grant and provided to the applicant.

### Parts of the Application

The AAE Office has structured its application process to ensure local providers meet the needs established in their regions and operate programs that provide adult education and family literacy activities as identified in WIOA Section 203. The Alaska Adult Education Program uses WIOA Section 231, 225, and State Match Funding to fund the following activities:

- 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; and
- Integrated education and training

In addition to regional and basic information, the AAE RGA requires regional program applicants to describe their intended scope of work related to adult education and literacy activities and how they will meet the needs of their students. Applicants are required to submit their location and regional outreach plan, proposed budget, agency policies and programmatic information related to grant management.

Applicants are also required to outline their capacity for instituting the 13 considerations identified in Section 231(e) and other expectations as mandated in state and federal statute and regulation. Substantial consideration is given to programs who integrate the following into their application:

- Innovation in adult education practices or supportive activities that facilitate knowledge and skill development, secondary credential attainment, postsecondary credential attainment, and/or employment.
- Ability to describe intention to provide concurrent and contextual integrated education and training (IET). The service approach must detail the requirements and definitions set forth in 34 CFR § 463.37 and outline the overlap in services between adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training.
- As part of the grant application process, the Alaska RGA outlines the 13 considerations specified in WIOA 231(e). The grant applicants must respond in detail to how they will carry out each of the considerations in their respective programs throughout the grant period.
- Among the 13 considerations, programs must describe their ability to incorporate effective use of technology and distance education learning. Technology is not limited to the classroom, and distance learning can facilitate an interaction between the teacher and student that helps to eliminate barriers the student may be facing. Programs must have the ability to provide synchronous and asynchronous program delivery throughout the grant period.

Applicants are mandated to describe their curriculum and instructional materials in their RGA. Eligible providers must provide students with research-based curriculum that offers substantial rigor for students to achieve learning gains. Curricula must align with current state-adopted Alaska Adult Education State Standards. It must also include practices and rigor necessary for adult students to achieve gains and provide accommodations and modifications to support students with disabilities.

Once grant applications are submitted, they will be evaluated and scored by external reviewers using a rubric that aligns with the 13 considerations required in WIOA Section 231(e). The AAE Office will use the scores and feedback, along with the feedback received from the AWIB, to make final funding recommendations to the DOLWD Commissioner for final review and approval.

### **Local Administrative Costs**

Not more than five percent of a local grant to an eligible provider can be expended to administer a grant under Title II of WIOA. In cases where five percent is too restrictive to allow for administrative activities, the eligible provider must negotiate with the AAE office to determine an adequate level of funds to be used for non-instructional purposes (WIOA Section 233).

An eligible provider may consider costs incurred in connection with the following activities to be administrative costs:

- Planning: including budgeting; writing grant applications; clerical and/or bookkeeping work;
- Administration: including carrying out performance accountability requirements, salary related to data entry and rent/utilities where administrative staff are located;
- Professional development: including program coordinators, teachers, data entry staff, tutors, etc.;
- Providing adult education and literacy services in alignment with local workforce plans, including promoting co-enrollment in programs and activities under title I, as appropriate; and
- Carrying out the One-Stop partner responsibilities described in 20CFR§678.420, including contributing to the infrastructure costs of the One-Stop delivery system. 34CFR §463.26.

Programs negotiated administrative rates must be reasonable, necessary, allowable, and allocable. Annual grant applications are required for subsequent funding, and renewals are contingent on the grantee's ability to successfully implement the terms and conditions of the grant, meet performance expectations, and provide quality regional adult education and literacy activities. Each grantee is required to submit a one-year renewal application at the start of the fiscal year. Grantees must revise program and contact information, projected budget narrative, job descriptions for all positions funded under the grant, and program income rationale, if applicable. The renewal application also requires programs to outline steps taken to ensure equal access to education compliance with the principles of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). Finally, grantees are mandated to inform the AAE office of any proposed change in service or negotiated administrative limitations, and they must re-sign program assurances and grant terms and conditions.

### **Alaska Adult Education Activities (Section 203)**

Eligible providers receiving state and/or federal funding for the delivery of AEFLA activities are required to provide the following, as mandated by the State of Alaska Adult Education Program Office: adult education and literacy activities, English language acquisition activities, and workplace adult education and literacy. Providers may deliver the following optional services throughout the grant period: family literacy activities, integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation activities, and integrated education and training. Eligible providers receiving WIOA Title II state and/or federal funding must follow the Alaska Adult Education Assessment & Technical Assistance Manual with outlined policies related to enrollment, assessment, instruction, professional development, test taking, programmatic responsibility, and other policies as incorporated.

Alaska recognizes the ever-present need for digital literacy skills within adult learning programs. In PY2022, the state began requiring eligible providers to institute digital literacy activities to enable adult learners to succeed in workforce and academic settings. Alaska adult education providers integrate technology into instruction, including utilizing information and communication to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information digitally. Programs must use the Alaska Adult Education State Digital Literacy Standards to increase students' access to technology and, where applicable, leverage technology for innovative and personalized instruction and increasing access to internet and devices for students and families.

AAE regional programs will be awarded according to their capacity to conduct adult education and literacy activities defined as:

- Adult education as defined in Alaska as academic instruction below postsecondary education to assist adults in obtaining skills needed, including reading, writing, math, English language proficiency, and

problem-solving, for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, obtaining economic self-sufficiency employment, and/or transition to postsecondary education or training.

- Literacy as defined in Alaska as an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society.
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities as defined in Alaska as adult education and literacy activities offered by an eligible provider in collaboration with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or an off-site location that is designed to improve the productivity of the workforce.
- Family literacy activities as defined in Alaska as activities of sufficient intensity and quality to make sustainable improvements in the economic prospects for a family and that better enable parents or family members to support their children's learning needs, and that integrate all of the following activities:
  - Parent or family adult education and literacy activities that lead to readiness for postsecondary education or training, career advancement, and economic self-sufficiency;
  - Interactive literacy activities between parents or family members and their children
  - Training for parents or family members regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children; an
  - An age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.
  - Note: family literacy activities may be offered with approval by the AAE Office.
- English language acquisition as defined in Alaska as the process by which English learners and immigrant students attain English proficiency and achieve academic success. English language acquisition activities may vary depending on population served.
- Integrated English literacy and civics education (IELCE) as defined in Alaska as education services provided to English language learners under Title II section 231 of WIOA who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enable such adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition, instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation and may include workforce training.
- Workforce preparation activities as defined in Alaska as activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical-thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment.
- Integrated education and training (IET) as defined in Alaska as a service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement. The IET must include adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.
- Digital Literacy (state imposed) as defined in Alaska as the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills.

### **Integration with the One-Stop System**

Due to the size of Alaska, resource optimization is essential for program development. The AAE program relies on co-enrollment with the one-stop system to provide many supports that cannot be covered by AAE due to lack of funding or staff. Co-enrollment and/or referring students to other WIOA Titles provides students with more comprehensive services that might not be available through the AAE program. Smaller AAE programs are operating with only one teacher/program coordinator and lean heavily on other WIOA Titles to enhance participant outcomes and create alignment with career pathways. Whereas larger programs are able to braid resources available to students and coordinate joint case management.

AAE programs throughout the state have established promising practices to avoid duplication of services, while providing simultaneous participation in WIOA Titles. AAE and WIOA Youth currently have four joint programs throughout Alaska. The grantees work with out-of-school youth to coordinate funding and integrate service delivery, while maximizing the impact of essential education and career pathway skills to at-risk youth.

The AAE office is working with the Employment and Technical Unit manager on ways to increase co-enrollment between WIOA Title 1b Adult and Dislocated Worker clients. State-level policies on co-enrollment practices are being considered including the impact of memorandums of understanding, coordinated assessments, and shared tracking systems. Professional development on co-enrollment and program integration will continue between both programs to align program goals. The programs understand the importance of streamlining services and shared performance across programs to assist individuals advance more effectively towards sustainable careers.

#### **Integrated Education and Training and Workplace Literacy**

Due to the size of the many AAE programs in Alaska, Integrated Education and Training (IET) and workplace literacy models are extremely difficult to implement. The State AAE office continues to collaborate with eligible providers to build an IET and workplace literacy model that can be implemented across the state.

Working with AAE Program Coordinators across the state, the team has built a statewide IET model that offers hybrid IETs, when possible, to ensure that students in smaller programs still have access to IET models. AAE programs work to partner together to ensure resources are available and meaningful to all learners. This model involves both challenges and successes, including:

- IETs offered in adult basic education, secondary education, and IELCE programming;
- IETs offered in entrepreneurship, community navigators, healthcare (PATH) classes, paraeducators, introduction to veterinary careers, introduction to healthcare, science and terminology, and office administration;
- AAE programs continuing to expand IETs into apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, and occupations to accelerate transition of sustainable wages or credential attainment;
- Larger programs with available resources assist smaller programs by offering hybrid classes for their IET classes;
- Small providers with one to three staff who manage everything within the adult education space, from data entry and program coordination to intake, orientation, teaching, and partnering with providers, have the ability to offer IETs to their students through hybrid IETs with coordination with larger programs; and
- Programs able to focus on designing and implementing additional IETs since established IETs can be accessed by their students.

Workplace literacy programs have benefits to both employers and their staff that have shown to improve employability while reducing barriers. Alaska programs began working with employers to explore the benefits to effectively provide workplace literacy classes in the fields of healthcare, education, and fishery. The benefits to employers are vast, including assisting staff with basic skill development to increase accuracy and efficiency, engaging staff in understanding better communication methods; targeted curriculum that can reduce errors and lower compliance issues; and investing in the retention of staff. Some potential industries that AAE programs are targeting for workplace literacy programs are hospitality, construction, and continuing to expand into the seafood industry.

Alternative placement offers flexibility to traditional pre-/post-testing of adult learners, while still allowing states to measure measurable skills gains (MSGs) by students. Although traditional assessments, like standardized testing, provide teachers with a learner's education level, alternative placement offers states, like Alaska, a unique opportunity to deliver services to students in a contextualized method for career advancement. The AAE program offers alternative placement to implement IET, workplace literacy, and GED Fast Trackers. Alternative placement

students are assessment-based milestone or benchmarks that are established when creating IETs or Workplace Literacy plans.

#### **Special Funding Rule**

The AAE office will not award grant funding 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. Programs may use AEFLA funds for individuals under the age of 16 if providing programs, services, or activities related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, the AAE office shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

**(c) Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals (WIOA section 102(b)(2)(D)(ii)(III)(bb)).** 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 to reduce 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.

Using the criteria outlined in the Request for Grant Application (RGA) process above, Alaska Adult Education (AAE) will award Section 225 grant funds for correctional education and other institutionalized individuals. A competitive, multi-year grant cycle is required, and eligible providers will be subject to the same considerations as adult education regional grants.

In PY2021/PY2025, Alaska awarded a new competitive, four-year AEFLA grant to a statewide correctional education eligible provider. The AAE office ensures, through the RGA process, that correctional education programs are represented throughout the geographic regions of Alaska.

For the next current statewide RGA, Alaska will awarded a statewide multi-year grant beginning in July 2025 contingent upon the local provider's ability to successfully implement the terms of the grant, meet performance expectations, and provide adult education and literacy activities. Grant awards are subject to availability of funds from the federal government and legislative appropriation. Alaska's current grant timeline is July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2031. The next RGA for grant competition will not begin until PY2031. Eligible providers who demonstrate effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities may apply for WIOA Section 225 funding to provide correctional education activities.

#### **Request for Grant Application (RGA) Process**

The request for grant application (RGA) process establishes a mechanism for the AAE office to determine suitable eligible providers of grant funds based on federal and state mandates and policies. DOLWD awards multi-year

federal and state grant funding to regional eligible providers to support the delivery of adult education activities. The AAE Office ensures that the RGA is completed in accordance with 34 CFR section 463 subpart C.

Alaska issues one RGA for all Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funded grants, which will serve AAE students in Alaska Correctional Centers. No more than 20 percent of the 82.5 percent of the federal grant allotted is awarded statewide to service correctional education and institutionalized individuals. Historically, due to limited funding, the Alaska Department of Corrections (DOC) has partnered with AAE to offer educational services in all fourteen state correctional facilities.

The Commissioner reserves the right to revoke a Notice of Intent to Award if the decision was made based on inaccurate information provided in the application. A grant applicant that receives a Notice of Denial of Award may file a written request for reconsideration as outlined in the Alaska Division of Employment and Training Services policy Grant Award and Appeal Policy 07-507.

#### **Direct and Equitable Access**

The AAE office ensures direct and equitable access to AEFLA funds, in accordance with WIOA 231(c), by continuing to conduct a competitive process that provides nondiscriminatory access. Grant publications are made available to a broad range of potential applications through expansion of outreach. The AAE office utilizes traditional and non-traditional publications, such as websites, public notices, and email blasts to inform current and potential eligible providers of the process. Technical assistance is provided to assist the grant applicants during the process. Frequently asked questions are compiled and posted on the AAE website. Organizations not previously funded are given a fair and equitable opportunity to apply for funding without hindrance.

#### **Demonstrated Effectiveness**

An applicant must be able to demonstrate past effectiveness by providing performance data on their record of improving the skills of eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy, in the content domains of:

- reading;
- writing;
- mathematics; and
- English as a second language (ESL) instruction.

An eligible provider must also submit information regarding the outcomes for participants related to:

- Employment;
- attainment of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; and
- transition to postsecondary education and training.

#### **Past Effectiveness**

An eligible provider must be able to demonstrate past effectiveness by providing the last two years of performance data on their record of improving literacy of eligible individuals to meet state-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy.

Eligible providers must provide information regarding performance and transition data when applying for an AAE grant. Agencies must also provide the following data as indicated in the narrative or outcomes to demonstrate past effectiveness:

- educational functional levels or grade level equivalent achievement;
- high school completion outcomes;
- transition outcomes, including transition to employment, post-secondary education, and/or training;
- the student population reported, including number of students serviced per year;

- assessments used and methodology for demonstrating student growth, including pre- and post-testing gains; and
- policies and procedures for maintaining valid and reliable data.

#### **Local Board Review Process**

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) functions as the local workforce investment board in the state of Alaska. As part of the State of Alaska's WIOA Combined Plan, AAE programs will conduct a needs assessment to determine local and regional needs. In accordance with WIOA requirements, the AWIB will review and score the Regional Needs Assessment and Regional Labor market Analysis for alignment with the Combined Plan.

Upon receipt of the applications, the AAE Office will compile and submit the afore mentioned sections to the reviewer designated by the AWIB. The AWIB will provide comments and recommendations to the AAE office on how the sections of the application aligns with the Alaska' WIOA Combined Plan. The comments and recommendations provided by the AWIB will be attached to the application and provided to the review panel for final review and consideration of the extent to which the application addresses the Regional Needs Assessment and Labor Market Analysis. The panel will integrate any comments made by the AWIB into the final rubric of the grant and provided to the applicant.

#### **Parts of the Application**

The corrections narrative will focus on how adult education and literacy activities will be delivered throughout an integrated correctional system or within Alaska correctional institutions. The term correctional institution refers to prison; jail; reformatory; work farm; detention center; halfway house, community-based rehabilitation center; or any other similar institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders.

Alaska Adult Education Correctional Grantees may use allowable funding under Section 225 to provide the following academic programs in correctional and other institutions:

- 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.

In addition to regional and basic information, the AAE RGA requires correctional program applicants to in addition to regional and basic information, the AAE RGA requires correctional program applicants to describe their intended scope of work related to adult education and literacy activities and how they will meet the needs of their students. Applicants are required to submit their location and regional outreach plan, proposed budget, agency policies, and programmatic information related to grant management. Applicants are also required to outline their capacity for instituting the thirteen considerations identified in Section 231(e) and other expectations as mandated in state and federal statute and regulation. Substantial consideration is given to programs who integrate the following into their application:

- Innovation in adult education practices or supportive activities that facilitate knowledge and skill development, secondary credential attainment, postsecondary credential attainment, and/or employment.
- Ability to describe intention to provide concurrent and contextual integrated education and training (IET). The service approach must detail the requirements and definitions set forth in 34 CFR § 463.37 and outline

the overlap in services between adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training.

As part of the grant application process, the Alaska RGA outlines the 13 considerations specified in WIOA 231(e). The grant applicants must respond in detail to how they will carry out each of the considerations in their respective programs throughout the grant period.

Once grant applications are submitted, they will be evaluated and scored by external reviewers using a rubric that aligns with the 13 considerations required in WIOA Section 231(E). The AAE Office will use the scores and feedback, along with the feedback received from the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), to make final funding recommendations to the DOLWD Commissioner for final review and approval.

#### **Local Administrative Costs**

Not more than five percent of a local grant to an eligible provider can be expended to administer a grant under Title II of WIOA. In cases where five percent is too restrictive to allow for administrative activities, the eligible provider must negotiate with the AAE office to determine an adequate level of funds to be used for non-instructional purposes (WIOA Section 233).

An eligible provider may consider costs incurred in connection with the following activities to be administrative costs:

- Planning: including budgeting; writing grant applications; clerical and/or bookkeeping work;
- Administration: including carrying out performance accountability requirements, salary related to data entry and rent/utilities where administrative staff are located;
- Professional development: including program coordinators, teachers, data entry staff, tutors, etc.;
- Providing adult education and literacy services in alignment with local workforce plans, including promoting co-enrollment in programs and activities under title I, as appropriate; and
- Carrying out the One-Stop partner responsibilities described in 20CFR§678.420, including contributing to the infrastructure costs of the One-Stop delivery system. 34CFR §463.26.

Programs negotiated administrative rates must be reasonable, necessary, allowable, and allocable.

Annual grant applications are required for subsequent funding, and renewals are contingent on the grantee's ability to successfully implement the terms and conditions of the grant, meet performance expectations, and provide quality regional adult education and literacy activities. Each grantee is required to submit a one-year renewal application at the start of the fiscal year. Grantees must revise program and contact information, projected budget narrative, job descriptions for all positions funded under the grant, and program income rationale, if applicable. The renewal application also requires programs to outline steps taken to ensure equal access to education compliance with the principles of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). Finally, grantees are mandated to inform the AAE office of any proposed change in service or negotiated administrative limitations, and they must re-sign program assurances and grant terms and conditions.

Priorities for AAE students in correctional centers are increasing the number of incarcerated adults completing the Tests of General Education Development (GED®) and increasing the number transitioning into postsecondary education and training provided in the various correctional centers. Non-AEFLA funded programs in the correctional centers address other academic programs listed below. In some cases, AAE teachers may concurrently teach basic reading, writing, math, and ESL to students participating in one of the other programs.

The funds shall be used for the cost of educational programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions, and for other institutionalized individuals, including academic programs for adult education and literacy activities; special education, as determined by the eligible agency; secondary school credit, GED® testing preparation;

integrated education and training (IET); career pathways; concurrent enrollment; peer tutoring; and transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Eligible providers receiving funding under WIOA Section 225 will give priority of service to individuals likely to leave a correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. Correctional and institutionalized individuals will be given an opportunity to develop adult education and literacy skills for successful integration into society upon their release.

In addition to reporting required by the Adult Education Office, the grantee receiving funding under this section to service correctional education and institutionalized individuals will prepare and submit an annual progress report. The annual report will consist of, but is not limited to, activities carried out under this section; rate of recidivism; enrollment information; educational gains, including high school equivalency outcomes; and employment outcomes.

#### **Integration with the One-Stop System**

Alaska Department of Corrections (ADOC) is the current grantee and provides support and services in 13 correctional facilities statewide. Incarcerated individuals are referred to education programs based on risk-needs assessments conducted by probation officers or enrolled voluntarily. Recruitment occurs during facility orientations and through informational materials posted in housing units. ADOC has a rolling admission for Adult Education, and all participation is voluntary. Teachers that assist students in ADOC facilities also partner with the job center to provide collaboration with the one-stop system to prepare incarcerated individuals for employment. Alaska DOWLD and DOC have a joint initiative to brainstorm ideas in recidivism reduction. The team, including the AAE State Director, have a monthly meeting to discuss ways to partner together to successfully promote access to both agencies and changing policies, if needed, to support justice-involved individuals.

**(d) Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program (WIOA section 102(b)(2)(D)(ii)(II)(cc)).** 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.

According to the guidelines outlined in Section 243, Alaska's Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) program receives funding to prepare adults who are English language learners for employment and assist in the transition to unsubsidized employment in an in-demand occupation that will lead to economic self-sufficiency. One IELCE grant is funded to provide statewide support and activities related to Section 243. The Alaska Adult Education (AAE) program that receives IELCE funding is required to work with the local workforce development system to carry out the activities of the program. The grant application must clearly establish a

detailed description of supports and services available for the integration of concurrent and contextual English language acquisition activities and civics education.

In PY2025, Alaska awarded a new competitive, six-year AEFLA grant to a statewide IELCE eligible provider. The AAE office ensures, through the RGA process, that the IELCE program is represented throughout the state of Alaska.

In PY2025, Alaska awarded a statewide multi-year grant beginning in July 2025 contingent upon the local provider's ability to successfully implement the terms of the grant, meet performance expectations, and provide Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education. Grant awards are subject to availability of funds from the federal government and legislative appropriation. Alaska's current grant timeline is July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2031. The next RGA for grant competition will not begin until PY2031. Eligible providers who demonstrate effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities may apply for WIOA Section 243 funding to provide Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education activities.

#### **Request for Grant Application (RGA) Process**

The request for grant application (RGA) process establishes a mechanism for the AAE office to determine suitable eligible providers of grant funds based on federal and state mandates and policies. DOLWD awards multi-year federal and state grant funding to regional eligible providers to support the delivery of adult education activities. The AAE Office ensures that the RGA is completed in accordance with 34 CFR section 463 subpart C.

In accordance with WIOA section 231(e), the AAE Office issues one RGA for all Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funded grants, which will serve IELCE students. IELCE grants are awarded federal WIOA Section 243 funding based on a competitive application process. The final award for each grant will be approved by the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

The Commissioner reserves the right to revoke a Notice of Intent to Award if the decision was made based on inaccurate information provided in the application. A grant applicant that receives a Notice of Denial of Award may file a written request for reconsideration as outlined in the Alaska Division of Employment and Training Services policy Grant Award and Appeal Policy 07-507.

#### **Direct and Equitable Access**

The AAE office ensures direct and equitable access to AEFLA funds, in accordance with WIOA 231(c), by continuing to conduct a competitive process that provides nondiscriminatory access. Grant publications are made available to a broad range of potential applications through expansion of outreach. The AAE office utilizes traditional and non-traditional publications, such as websites, public notices, and email blasts to inform current and potential eligible providers of the process. Technical assistance is provided to assist the grant applicants during the process. Frequently asked questions are compiled and posted on the AAE website. Organizations not previously funded are given a fair and equitable opportunity to apply for funding without hindrance.

#### **Demonstrated Effectiveness**

An applicant must be able to demonstrate past effectiveness by providing performance data on their record of improving the skills of eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy, in the content domains of:

- Reading;
- Writing;
- Mathematics; and
- English as a second language (ESL) instruction.
- An eligible provider must also submit information regarding the outcomes for participants related to:
  - Employment;

- Attainment of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; and
- Transition to postsecondary education and training.

#### **Past Effectiveness**

An eligible provider must be able to demonstrate past effectiveness by providing the last two years of performance data on their record of improving literacy of eligible individuals to meet state-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy.

Eligible providers must provide information regarding performance and transition data when applying for an AAE grant. Agencies must also provide the following data as indicated in the narrative or outcomes to demonstrate past effectiveness:

- Educational functional levels or grade level equivalent achievement;
- High school completion outcomes;
- Transition outcomes, including transition to employment, post-secondary education, and/or training;
- The student population reported, including number of students serviced per year;
- Assessments used and methodology for demonstrating student growth, including pre- and post-testing gains; and
- Policies and procedures for maintaining valid and reliable data.

#### **Local Board Review Process**

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) functions as the local workforce investment board in the state of Alaska. As part of the State of Alaska's WIOA Combined Plan, AAE programs will conduct a needs assessment to determine local and regional needs. In accordance with WIOA requirements, the AWIB will review and score the Regional Needs Assessment and Regional Labor market Analysis for alignment with the Combined Plan.

Upon receipt of the applications, the AAE Office will compile and submit the afore mentioned sections to the reviewer designated by the AWIB. The AWIB will provide comments and recommendations to the AAE office on how the sections of the application align with the Alaska' WIOA Combined Plan. The comments and recommendations provided by the AWIB will be attached to the application and provided to the review panel for final review and consideration of the extent to which the application addresses the Regional Needs Assessment and Labor Market Analysis. The panel will integrate any comments made by the AWIB into the final rubric of the grant and provided to the applicant.

#### **Parts of the Application**

The IELCE program must provide education services to English language learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, to enable them to achieve competency in the English language. Instruction is designed to assist with the acquisition of basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Alaska requires instruction in literacy and English language acquisition, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, civic participation, and workforce training.

The eligible provider receiving funds through the IELCE program must provide services that:

- Include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation; and
- Are 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; and
- Integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

Alaska issues one IELCE RGA for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)-funded grants. Eligible providers wishing to incorporate IELCE services must demonstrate an ability to deliver services to assist English language learners and immigrants:

- To become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency;
- Who are parents or family members, to obtain the education and skills that are necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children and lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their family;
- In attaining a secondary school diploma or equivalent and in the transition to postsecondary education and training, including through career pathways;
- Improving their reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills in English and mathematics skills; and
- Acquiring an understanding of the American system of government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship.

Eligible providers are also required to demonstrate the method by which they will incorporate integrated education and training activities.

As part of the grant application process, the Alaska RGA outlines the 13 considerations specified in WIOA 231(e). The grant applicants must respond in detail to how they will carry out each of the considerations in their respective programs throughout the grant period.

In addition to basic information, the AAE RGA requires IELCE program applicants to describe their intended scope of work related to adult education and literacy activities and how they will meet the needs of their students. Applicants are required to submit their outreach plan, proposed budget, agency policies, and programmatic information related to grant management. Applicants are also required to outline their capacity for instituting the 13 considerations identified in Section 231(e) and other expectations as mandated in state and federal statute and regulation. Eligible IELCE applicants are specifically asked to address how their program will integrate the following components into their programs:

- Workforce preparation activities and integrated education and training (IET) to prepare English language learners for, and place them in, unsubsidized employment in an in-demand occupation that will lead to economic self-sufficiency as described in 34 CFR section 463.36;
- Instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation; and
- Instruction in literacy and English language acquisition, which includes the use of the Alaska English Language Proficiency Standards.

Furthermore, substantial consideration is given to programs who integrate the following into their application:

- Innovation in adult education practices or supportive activities that facilitate knowledge and skill development, secondary credential attainment, postsecondary credential attainment, and/or employment.

As part of the Alaska workforce development system, and to meet the needs of ESL learners, the IELCE program is required to provide Integrated Education and Training (IET) courses concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training as outlined in 34 CFR Part 463 Subpart D. During the RGA process, eligible providers seeking IELCE funds must identify occupational clusters in Alaska and the potential for growth in these occupations. Utilization of these data and partnering with workforce development services will provide students career pathways and employability skills while building on their English proficiency. The IELCE program will work with the AJCN, employers, and apprenticeship programs to build curriculum to support English language learners. Additionally, eligible providers seeking and receiving IELCE funding will be required to provide general information regarding their program to the AAE office, keep the program information up to date, and submit it with the RGA and additional grant awards. Information must include the following:

- Courses offered, including objectives and schedule of when available;
- Attendance requirements and program income fee structure, if applicable;
- Description of the integration of the components of the IET program and partnerships created to build successful career pathways, including:
  - ESL activities,
  - Workforce preparation activities, and
  - Workforce training.
- Identified postsecondary education or credentialing opportunities available to participants, ways to access them, and organizations who administer them.

As part of the application process, the provider must provide examples of IET training in the local workforce development system. To meet the needs of the students, IELCE programs must provide opportunities for co-enrollment with an adult education program and local job center for workforce training.

Eligible providers are required to design a program that integrates with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out program activities. Co-enrollment in Alaska is designed for the student to receive services concurrently to build supportive services and wrap-around case management for the student's benefit. Partnering with the Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN),

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), and Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), for example, enables the IELCE program to develop stronger career advancement opportunities within the community. English language learners can access services such as career counseling, job placement, training opportunities, and apprenticeships. Teachers work with the AJCN to develop a plan for employment and economic stability.

As part of the application process, the IELCE applicant will illustrate the extent to which the local provider will align activities with partner agencies. Activities must demonstrate strategies for alignment with core partners, both local and statewide, to integrate with the workforce development system as carried out by the statewide AWIB and the activities of the Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN).

Once grant applications are submitted, they will be evaluated and scored by external reviewers using a rubric that aligns with the 13 considerations required in WIOA Section 231(e). The AAE Office will use the scores and feedback, along with the feedback received from the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), to make final funding recommendations to the DOLWD Commissioner for final review and approval.

In addition to reporting required by the AAE Office, the grantee receiving funding under this section to service English language learners for employment and assist in the transition to unsubsidized employment in an in-demand occupation that will lead to economic self-sufficiency will prepare and submit an annual progress report, which consists of, but is not limited to, activities carried out under this section: enrollment information; educational gains, including high school equivalency outcomes; IET activities; and employment outcomes.

#### **Local Administrative Costs**

Not more than five percent of a local grant to an eligible provider can be expended to administer a grant under Title II of WIOA. In cases where five percent is too restrictive to allow for administrative activities, the eligible provider must negotiate with the AAE office to determine an adequate level of funds to be used for non-instructional purposes (WIOA Section 233).

An eligible provider may consider costs incurred in connection with the following activities to be administrative costs:

- Planning: including budgeting; writing grant applications; clerical and/or bookkeeping work;
- Administration: including carrying out performance accountability requirements, salary related to data entry and rent/utilities where administrative staff are located;
- Professional development: including program coordinators, teachers, data entry staff, tutors, etc.;
- Providing adult education and literacy services in alignment with local workforce plans, including promoting co-enrollment in programs and activities under title I, as appropriate; and
- Carrying out the One-Stop partner responsibilities described in 20CFR§678.420, including contributing to the infrastructure costs of the One-Stop delivery system. 34CFR §463.26.

Programs negotiated administrative rates must be reasonable, necessary, allowable, and allocable.

Annual grant applications are required for subsequent funding, and renewals are contingent on the grantee's ability to successfully implement the terms and conditions of the grant, meet performance expectations, and provide quality regional adult education and literacy activities. Each grantee is required to submit a one-year renewal application at the start of the fiscal year. Grantees must revise program and contact information, projected budget narrative, job descriptions for all positions funded under the grant, and program income rationale, if applicable. The renewal application also requires programs to outline steps taken to ensure equal access to education compliance with the principles of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). Finally, grantees are mandated to inform the AAE office of any proposed change in service or negotiated administrative limitations, and they must re-sign program assurances and grant terms and conditions.

The AAE office will continue to provide technical assistance and professional development to support efforts administered under Section 243.

#### **Integrated Education and Training and Workplace Literacy**

The State AAE office collaborates with the statewide IELCE provider to build IET and workplace literacy programs that can be implemented both locally and on a statewide model. The State AAE office continues to work closely with the provider on IET design by providing statewide professional development and one-on-one training, including assistance with designing IETs as needed. The biggest challenge with this model is providing IETs virtually. The provider has also implemented workplace literacy programs for local students.

Working with the State AAE office and Program Coordinators across the state, the statewide IELCE provider has designed several IET programs for English language learners (ELL) that are designed to integrate English instruction into the IET model. Successes include:

- Creating IETs that focus on growth in the ELL communities such as Entrepreneurship and Child Care Licensing;
- Expanding IETs offered in community navigators throughout the state;
- Partnering with healthcare providers to offer pre-apprenticeship IET;

Workplace literacy programs have benefits to both employers and their staff that have shown to improve employability while reducing barriers. Alaska's IELCE program is expanding into the healthcare field to work with employers to explore the benefits of effectively providing workplace literacy classes. The benefits to employers are vast, including assisting staff with basic skill development to increase accuracy and efficiency, engaging staff in understanding better communication methods; targeted curriculum that can reduce errors and lower compliance issues; and investing in the retention of staff. The IELCE program continues to explore other industries to expand workplace literacy programs into.

**(e) State Leadership (WIOA section 102(b)(2)(D)(ii)(III)).** Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out the required State Leadership activities under section 223 of WIOA.

Alaska Adult Education (AAE) utilizes State Leadership funds to enhance existing programming and develop innovative programming to prepare students for transition into postsecondary education, employment, or training. No more than 12.5 percent of the total adult education grant funds will be expended to carry out required and allowable activities as directed in Section 223 of WIOA. State Leadership funds are only calculated from adult education funding; this excludes funds explicitly set aside for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) activities.

#### **Alignment of Adult Education and Literacy Activities**

The AAE program is housed in the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The integration of all WIOA titles under one department has enriched partnership and provided a deeper comprehension of each title. Local providers and state representatives can align adult education and literacy with other WIOA core programs, including those provided through the Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN).

Through aligning adult education with core partners, Alaska has integrated career pathways with student learning. This model includes adult education as a vital entry point for Alaskans seeking to improve their basic academic skills. Alaska will continue to identify career pathway opportunities, professional development activities, and best practice approaches to increase career pathways for students that lead to sustainable employment.

At the state level, collaboration with senior management plays a vital role in alignment of core partners. The AAE office participates in WIOA strategic planning, division meetings, cross agency trainings, and WIOA-specific meetings to work in partnership on building a common career pathway vision. The AAE office provides professional development to key stakeholders on Title II-specific approaches, promising practices, and the integration of adult education into the workforce system. These meetings also provide contextual knowledge of core partners to build professional development for regional programs, related to topics such as in-demand jobs, available supports and services, regional contacts, and current employment trends.

AAE continues to align adult education with WIOA partners through the integration of a single log-on management system. Grantees are able to access information, reports, and student information quickly and easily. Programmers are modifying the adult education section to match state-specific needs. The system integration allows Alaska to continue its collaboration efforts.

AAE providers will continue to build Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs throughout Alaska. To meet the required three components, programs will work collaboratively with partners to provide concurrent and contextual services within the overall scope of a particularly well-planned IET program. Local programs will provide adult education and literacy activities in alignment with Alaska Adult Education State Standards. Programs will collaborate with local One-Stops, employers, universities, and apprenticeships to provide the workforce preparation activities and workforce training components. The overall scope of each IET will: provide sufficient intensity and quality; be based on the most rigorous research available, particularly with respect to improving reading, writing, mathematics, and English proficiency of eligible individuals; occur simultaneously; and use occupationally relevant instructional materials.

#### **Professional Development**

Alaska has an established an ever-growing professional development system that ensures training for all staff, including program coordinators, data entry clerks, teachers, and support personnel, is relevant to the growth of adult education. The AAE Office works with programs to establish high-quality professional development programming, including improving instructional practices, incorporating essential components of basic skill development, providing foundational support for data entry and outcome-based reporting, enriching instruction

provided by volunteers or by personnel of the state or outlying area, and disseminating information about models and promising practices related to such programs.

Alaska will continue to hold two annual meetings where staff from AAE programs receive training. The AAE Office has switched to a hybrid model to meet the needs of adult education staff. Though borne out of necessity, the integration of a hybrid meeting solution has had a positive impact on adult education programs. Some programs struggle to attend meetings due to inclement weather, transportation issues, and minimum grant funding. This hybrid solution has added the ability for more staff to attend professional development opportunities. The AAE Office will continue to host in-person mandatory meetings in Anchorage to foster collaboration for programs. The second meeting will be held for AAE management and program coordinators. These meetings focus on the dissemination of information about models and proven promising practices in overseeing regional programs. Adult education staff will also have an opportunity to participate in a statewide conference highlighting best practices and Alaska-specific needs; the AAE office will partner with the Alaska Adult Education Association to help coordinate the conference.

In an overall commitment to retention of program coordinators and teachers, the State AAE office is working on creating an onboarding system. Many local programs possess limited background knowledge of WIOA and adult education guidelines. Consequently, onboarding is not consistent, and teachers in some programs are not getting comprehensive or timely information. The AAE Office has worked with an advisory team to understand the onboarding needs related to professional development and will integrate it into AspireAlaska. The state's onboarding process will deliver adult education guidance and support in a centralized and consistent manner and be the source of continuous professional development for inexperienced staff.

Alaska will increase professional development through state and federal-specific trainings. The AAE office will focus on providing improved instruction, establishing career pathways, and expanding Integrated Education and Training programs. Currently, teachers are participating in trainings offered by several entities, including Data Recognition Cooperation, Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), General Educational Development (GED®) Testing Services, Literacy Information and Communication System, and the Alaska Career Information System (AKCIS).

#### **Technical Assistance**

Technical assistance is available to eligible providers to effectively enhance their program and fulfill the grant requirements. Technical assistance is initiated by: the eligible provider; findings associated with monitoring or evaluations; or information distributed from state or federal programs. Monthly meetings with the regional programs have been established to disseminate instructional and programmatic information through the program coordinators. Technical assistance topics include the following:

- Data management
- National Reporting System requirements
- Recruitment and intake
- Testing requirements and policies
- Updated federal and state policies
- Career pathways and transitioning to postsecondary education
- Use of technology

Providing technical assistance to the local programs is an ongoing activity. Assistance is provided through professional development presentations; webinars; phone assistance; teleconferences; on-site training; in-person conferences; and one-on-one counseling. Technical assistance has been changed to include a hybrid model available for all in-person mandatory meetings. Technical assistance will be provided until no longer required.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring procedures are thorough and well established in adult education. AAE will continue to monitor sites using a formal monitoring procedure. Program statistics are monitored on a regular basis, and desk audits of student records are conducted. AAE will continue to provide data monitoring, on-site visits and reviews, and desk monitors.

Quality improvement and monitoring goals:

- **Monitoring Schedules:** The AAE office will create a monitoring schedule at the beginning of each fiscal year to assess on-site visits and reviews; desk monitoring and data reviews; and self-assessment checks.
- **On-site Visits and Reviews:** The AAE office will work with the program on-site review protocols. Evaluators will observe classroom instruction, if available; tour the facility; interview staff; and monitor files. On-site reviews will also consist of programmatic and/or financial monitoring. Monitoring will include assessment of instruction, instructional materials, and Alaska Adult Education State Standards; evaluation of policies and procedures; quality of program administration; review of overall adherence to grant requirements; and financial data audit.
- **Pre-Award Risk Analysis Questionnaire:** The AAE Office requires programs to fill out a Pre-Award Risk Analysis Questionnaire prior to award of a grant [2 CFR 200.331(b)]. The risk analysis questionnaire requires programs to provide programmatic and financial documentation related to internal controls of the organization. The questionnaire and required documentation are analyzed to determine if the organization has the responsibility of programmatic decision-making and is therefore able to adhere to the state and federal rules and regulations.
- **Desk Monitoring and File Review:** The AAE office will work with programs in reviewing data entered into the management information system to promote program improvement. Desk monitoring and file review will consist of reviewing data collected from students, teachers, and program information.
- **Negotiated Performance Indicators:** The AAE office will negotiate annual performance targets with grantees at the beginning of each program year. Grantees will be required to provide a plan to meet or exceed the state performance targets. Programs that do not meet or exceed their targets for the program year may be placed on a Program Improvement Plan, and grant renewal funding may be affected.
- 

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

The AAE office reserves the right to utilize funding available under WIOA section 222(a)(2) for other permissible State leadership activities outlined in section 223, such as: support of state or regional networks of literacy resource centers; development and implementation of technology applications; development and dissemination of curricula, including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction; development of content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways; integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training; activities to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities; or development and piloting of strategies for improving teacher quality and retention.

(f) **Assessing Quality (WIOA section 102(b)(2)(D)(ii)(V)).** 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.

The Alaska Adult Education (AAE) office will assess the quality of each eligible provider based on their individual goals and outcomes provided in the Request for Grant Application (RGA).

## **Monitoring**

**Desk Monitoring and File Review:** The completeness and quality of student data submitted by programs will be assessed through ongoing desk monitoring and file review. Desk monitoring and file review are used for program accountability, identification of anomalies, program improvement, professional development, and informing change. The state AAE Office will randomly select samples of student data from the management information system to review accuracy and completeness. Desk monitoring and file reviews will consist of a review of data collected from students, teachers, and program information in alignment with their hard copy files. Each data element will be marked as Passed, Missing Information, Data Not Matched, or N/A, as appropriate. Programs must correct and document missing or erroneous data within 30 days of identification.

**On-site Visits and Review:** Each year, at least 20 percent of programs will be selected to receive an on-site visit and review. A formal review schedule is set at the beginning of the fiscal year. The AAE office will work with the program on-site review protocols. Evaluators will observe classroom instruction (if available), tour the facility, speak with stakeholders, and interview program staff, students, and coordinators. On-site reviews will also include programmatic and/or financial monitoring. Monitoring will include assessment of instruction, instructional materials, and Alaska Adult Education State Standards; evaluation of policies and procedures; quality of program administration; review of overall adherence to grant requirements; and financial data audit.

**Financial Review:** The comprehensiveness of financial data will be reviewed upon request for payment reimbursement. Expenditure reports and backup documentation must be complete and thorough. Financial data audits may be completed in conjunction with on-site monitoring.

**Negotiated Performance Indicators:** The AAE Office will negotiate annual performance targets with grantees at the beginning of each program year. Grantees will be required to provide a plan to meet or exceed the state performance targets. Programs that do not meet or exceed their targets for the program year may be placed on a Program Improvement Plan, and grant renewal funding may be affected.

**Statistical Data Review:** In addition to more formal monitoring, the AAE Office will determine the quality of eligible providers' recruitment and retention processes. Statistical data will be collected throughout the year from the management information system, which will help the AAE Office determine monitoring or technical assistance needs or identification of best practices in teaching.

**Recruitment and Partnership Evaluation:** Eligible providers are also monitored on recruitment activities and partnerships based on the overall success of their program and alignment with the outcomes provided in their grant agreement. Types of local partnerships developed (e.g., One-Stop Centers, career and technical education training centers, health and human services offices) to facilitate successful transition into postsecondary education, training, or employment are examined. Recruitment activities are also observed and have the possibility of triggering a technical assistance plan.

## **Professional Development**

**Intake and Orientation:** Effectiveness of Regional Programs' intake and orientation processes will be evaluated by the AAE Office during desk monitoring and on-site reviews. Attendance data will be used to determine the percentage of students who attend 12 or fewer hours.

**Assessment and Placement Protocol:** Timeliness of the administration of the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), WorkKeys®, and/or Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS), pre-test assessments as measured by the test date compared to the intake form date. The AAE Office will review the processes used by AAE programs in orientation and placement in a review of the AAE Desk Monitoring Tools and through observations and interviews that are conducted during site visits. Professional development and technical assistance will be planned based on the findings.

**Alternative Placement:** Effectiveness of regional programs accessing alternative placement for students in integrated education and training (IET), workplace literacy, or GED® Fast Track programs compared to traditional assessment and placement protocols. The AAE Office will review the process used by AAE programs in orientation and placement in a review of the AAE Desk Monitoring Tools and through observations and interviews that are conducted during site visits. Professional development and technical assistance will be planned based on the findings.

**Instruction:** Benefits of instruction to the student will be assessed during a review of students' average attendance, post-test rate, alternative placement, educational functional level gain, and GED® completion during site visits, desk monitoring, and/or interviews with programs. Furthermore, postsecondary education outcomes and job attainment or advancement will be assessed annually based on National Reporting System (NRS) data. Observation of instruction and review of program materials during site visits will be noted during on-site visit tours, interviews, and material review. The AAE Office will also assess the quality of professional development programs designed by eligible providers and presenters to improve instruction in the essential components of reading instruction; specific needs of adult learners; volunteers or paid personnel; and dissemination of information about models and promising practices.

**Annual Conference and Program Coordinator Training:** Alaska will continue to hold two annual meetings in Anchorage (with a virtual option), where staff will receive training. The annual conference will be open to adult education staff and will highlight best practices, instructional requirements, and Alaska-specific needs. The second meeting will be held for AAE management and program coordinators. These meetings will focus on the dissemination of information about models and proven promising practices in overseeing regional programs. The management team meetings will allow for networking and focus on holistic program change

**New Staff Training:** This training will target new program coordinators and will focus on federal and state policies, the NRS tables and data collection, and resources needed to run effective programs. This training is housed in AspireAlaska and assigned to new staff upon hire.

**Monthly Program Coordinator Teleconference:** To maintain program improvements, the AAE Office will continue monthly technical assistance teleconferences with regional program coordinators to inform them of program changes, deliver training opportunities, and provide question and answer sessions.

**Tech Alert Emails:** To keep programs up to date with information from the AAE Office, tech alert emails are sent out to targeted staff. Tech alerts keep the team abreast of changes that pertain to either the management information system or financial compliancy team. The tech alerts are also used as another medium for providing technical assistance to the group as a whole.

**Corrective Action Plan (CAP):** If non-compliance issues are identified, a CAP may be warranted. CAPs identify issues that need to be resolved and timelines for compliancy and are issued for programs that are not in compliance with state and/or federal regulations. Failure to comply or improve findings may result in additional monitoring, decline in grant funding, removal from grant, or exclusion from future grant solicitations. A final monitoring report will be issued.

**Suspension or Termination:** If an eligible provider violates or fails to comply with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and is in noncompliance with the CAP, suspension or termination may be possible. Eligible providers must be unable to substantiate full compliance and pursue other remedies that are legally available. Eligible providers who are facing suspension or termination of the grant in whole or in part will be notified fifteen calendar days prior to the action.

**Program Improvement Plan:** To support ongoing program improvement, program operations, and student outcomes, the AAE Office’s review process continually identifies matters needing attention or improvement. Based on the results of the findings, AAE programs will be given an audit report, and low-performing programs will be asked to submit a program improvement plan

**Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program Certifications**

<b>States must provide written and signed certifications that:</b>		<b>Included?</b>
1.	The plan is submitted by the State agency eligible to do so.	<b>Yes</b>
2.	The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;	<b>Yes</b>
3.	The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;	<b>Yes</b>
4.	All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law.	<b>Yes</b>
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;	<b>Yes</b>
6.	The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has the authority to submit the plan;	<b>Yes</b>
7.	The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and	<b>Yes</b>
8.	The plan is the basis for the State’s operation and administration of the program.	<b>Yes</b>

**Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program Assurances**

<b>The State Plan must include assurances that:</b>		<b>Included?</b>
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);	<b>Yes</b>
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;	<b>Yes</b>
3.	The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not “eligible individuals” within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA;	<b>Yes</b>
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	<b>Yes</b>

<b>The State Plan must include assurances that:</b>		<b>Included?</b>
	individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.	
5.	The eligible agency agrees that, in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, it will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).	<b>Yes</b>

**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 State of Alaska, as an employer and service provider, recognizes the need to respect and treat equally all people it hires and serves. The State of Alaska's concept of diversity is broad, extending beyond those categories formally recognized and protected by law. The State Alaska Adult Education (AAE) Office, funded in whole or in part by Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) administrative and leadership funding, complies with all federal and state laws, regulations, and policies pertaining to state and local program staff to continue to work in a positive environment that is free from discrimination based on gender, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status, changes in marital status, pregnancy, and parenthood.

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development ensures equal opportunity for students, teachers, and eligible providers that participate in any project or program administered through the AAE Office. All grantees funded, either in whole or part, through AEFLA monies are required to comply with General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) section 427. Eligible providers are required to comply with Federal statutes and regulations on nondiscrimination outlined in 34 CFR § 76.500.

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?*

Alaska issues one Request for Grant Applications (RGA) for all AEFLA funded grants. The RGA includes information regarding the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) program and providing adult education services to correctional education. Notice of availability of funds for Title II is published on the State of Alaska Public On-line Notice System and the Alaska Adult Education website to ensure equal access to application information. Parties who wish to receive notification of grant information via email may register on GovDelivery for notifications about grant and procurement opportunities.

As part of the initial RGA process and annual renewal application, eligible providers must complete a form indicating in what manner the program complies with General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) section 427. The form provides the Act for reference and allows the provider to describe the steps taken to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, federally assisted Alaska Adult Education (AAE) Programs. Providers must describe equitable access to, and participation in, the project or activity to be conducted, by addressing the access needs of students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers, including barriers based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability, age, and other protected classes outlined in Alaska. Based on local circumstances, the provider will determine whether these or other barriers may prevent students, teachers, etc., from such access or participation in the federally funded program. The Alaska AAE Office ensures eligible providers are providing equal opportunity for students, teachers, and eligible providers that participate in any project or program through monitoring and technical assistance procedures.

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?*

The Alaska AAE Office ensures equitable access and/or participation for gender, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status, changes in marital status, pregnancy, and parenthood through technical assistance, monitoring, and professional development activities. This includes addressing and promoting equity in recruitment, service design, implementation, and support services that aim to provide equitable access and outcomes to all communities seeking access to services. Alaska's overall geographic size and connectivity issues are the biggest barrier that impeded equitability of access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries. Although we cannot change the geographic size of the state or method of transportation, programs continue to find innovative ways to expand programmatic access. Connectivity issues rely on infrastructure changes that are beyond the scope of adult education. As the infrastructure grows in rural areas, programs can continue to expand services beyond what they currently provide.

The Alaska AAE Office utilizes state leadership funding to provide professional development to staff on topics such as implementing universal design strategies in the classroom environment, serving individuals with disabilities, serving the needs of English Language Learners, and aiding students with barriers to technological learning needs, including distance education. The Alaska AAE Office continues to work with partner agencies, such as the Alaska Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training (MASST) program, federally known as the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), to provide professional development opportunities on overcoming barriers. Technical assistance and professional development will continue to be monitored and provided during monthly meetings or the annual conference as appropriate.

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?*

The Alaska AAE Office will continue to address any barriers as they arise throughout each program year.

**Paperwork Burden Statement**

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no person is required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1894-0005. The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated at an average of 3 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the information collected. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain a benefit. If you have any comments regarding the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this individual collection, send them to [ICDocketMgr@ed.gov](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov) and reference OMB Control Number 1894-0005. All other comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual form may be addressed to either (a) the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section in the competition Notice Inviting Applications, or (b) your assigned program officer.

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>)

<b>APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>Enter information in this column</b>
Applicant's Organization	Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
<b>PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE</b>	<b>Enter information in this column</b>
First Name	Catherine
Last Name	Muñoz
Title	Commissioner
Email	<a href="mailto:Commissioner.Labor@Alaska.Gov">Commissioner.Labor@Alaska.Gov</a>

**Vocational Rehabilitation**

**Program-Specific Requirements for State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program**

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.** All VR agencies, except those with an independent consumer-controlled commission, must have a State Rehabilitation Council (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) It is an independent State commission.
- (B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council.

In accordance with Assurance 3(b), 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.

<b>Council Representative</b>	<b>Current Term Number/Vacant</b>	<b>Beginning Date of Term Mo./Yr.</b>
Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)	1	8/19/2024
Parent Training and Information Center	1	7/1/2024
Client Assistance Program	5	8/2022
Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor (Ex Officio if Employed by the VR Agency)	1	12/2023
Community Rehabilitation Program Service Provider	1	11/2023
Business, Industry, and Labor	1	8/2024
Business, Industry, and Labor	1	9/2023
Business, Industry, and Labor	Vacant	
Business, Industry, and Labor	1	11/2023
Disability Advocacy Groups	2	8/2024
Current or Former Applicants for, or Recipients of, VR services	1	10/2024
Section 121 Project Directors in the State (as applicable)	1	7/2025
State Educational Agency Responsible for Students with Disabilities Eligible to Receive Services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	1	5/2024
State Workforce Development Board	1	11/2025
VR Agency Director (Ex Officio)	1	8/2024

**(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.**

Alaska's State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is temporarily not in full compliance with the membership composition requirements set forth in Section 105(b) of the Rehabilitation Act due to a vacancy in the Business, Industry, and Labor representative seat. An applicant has been identified, and appointment by the Governor is anticipated in the coming months. The appointment timeline reflects the standard duration associated with Alaska's boards and commissions appointment process.

**(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.**

Input, revisions, and recommendations to be provided after public comment and SVRC review period.

**(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. List each recommendation/input followed by the VR agency response:**

Response to input and recommendations to be included after public comment and SVRC review period.

**(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;

According to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's (DVR) Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), completed in December 2023, DVR analyzed quantitative and qualitative data from multiple sources to identify the vocational rehabilitation service needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities (MSD) residing in Alaska. Analysis of the data identified seven primary service need areas affecting individuals with MSD, many of whom require Supported Employment services to achieve and maintain competitive integrated employment.

**Career Exploration and Vocational Planning:**

Data sources identified a need for comprehensive career exploration and individualized vocational planning for individuals with MSD that supports informed choice and leads to employment goals aligned with participants' strengths, interests, abilities, and support needs. Respondents emphasized the importance of career pathway development, including for individuals with MSD who require Supported Employment services, to ensure employment outcomes extend beyond short-term or entry-level placements.

**Education and Training Services:**

Education and training were identified as significant service needs for individuals with MSD to support successful employment outcomes. Respondents identified needs related to access to postsecondary education, job-specific skills training, and technology-related training. Data also reflected the importance of place-and-train service models for individuals with MSD receiving Supported Employment services, particularly when training occurs in conjunction with ongoing job coaching consideration.

**Transportation Services:**

Transportation supports were consistently identified as necessary for individuals with MSD to access vocational rehabilitation services and participate in employment, including Supported Employment. Transportation barriers were noted as particularly impactful for individuals with MSD who require consistent, reliable supports to sustain employment.

**Employment-Related Services:**

Respondents identified ongoing needs for employment-related services for individuals with MSD, including assistance with job applications, interview preparation, job placement, job coaching, and post-employment

services. These services were identified as critical components of Supported Employment for individuals with MSD to achieve employment stability and advancement.

**Behavioral Health Services:**

Multiple data sources identified access to behavioral health and mental health treatment services and supports as a significant need for individuals with MSD. Respondents noted that unmet behavioral health needs can limit participation in vocational rehabilitation services and reduce the effectiveness of Supported Employment interventions.

**Independent Living and Related Support Services:**

Respondents identified a need for independent living and related support services for individuals with MSD to support successful participation in employment. These services include housing-related supports, self-advocacy skill development, time-management skills, and supports for activities of daily living that enable individuals with MSD to engage fully in Supported Employment and competitive integrated employment.

**Supported Employment Services:**

Data sources consistently identified Supported Employment services as necessary for many individuals with MSD to achieve and maintain competitive integrated employment. Respondents noted challenges related to the availability of long-term supports, provider capacity, and access to qualified Supported Employment service providers across the state.

In addition to service needs, the CSNA identified several barrier areas that disproportionately affect individuals with the most significant disabilities and their access to Supported Employment and vocational rehabilitation services.

**Availability of Community Resources and Funding:**

Respondents identified limited availability of community resources and funding as a barrier to Supported Employment and vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with MSD. Identified gaps included limited Supported Employment capacity, access to assistive technology and training, employment opportunities in rural and remote areas, limited availability of specialized medical providers, and shortages of Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs). Workforce shortages within DVR and CRPs were also identified as impacting service delivery to individuals with MSD.

**VR Program and System-Related Barriers:**

Data sources identified barriers related to DVR and broader system processes that affect individuals with MSD, including perceived complexity of procedures, documentation requirements, and timelines that may not align with the needs of individuals requiring Supported Employment. Respondents also noted variability in service delivery practices across offices and counselors, which can affect continuity and quality of services for individuals with MSD.

**Individual-Level Barriers Related to Disability:**

Respondents identified individual-level barriers experienced by individuals with MSD, including limited self-confidence, concerns related to disclosure and stigma, and fears related to potential loss of public benefits, including Medicaid Waiver services that may be critical for long-term supports associated with Supported Employment. The need for self-advocacy and soft-skill development was also identified, particularly for youth with MSD transitioning to adult services.

**Transportation Barriers:**

Consistent with service need findings, lack of accessible and reliable transportation was identified as a significant barrier for individuals with MSD, particularly those participating in Supported Employment and residing in rural and remote areas of the state.

**Employer-Related Barriers:**

Respondents identified employer-related barriers that affect individuals with MSD, including limited understanding of reasonable accommodations, inaccessible hiring processes, misconceptions regarding the capabilities of individuals with MSD, and stigma related to disability and Supported Employment.

**Housing Instability:**

Lack of access to stable, affordable, and accessible housing was identified as a barrier that disproportionately affects individuals with MSD and can limit participation in Supported Employment and the ability to sustain competitive integrated employment.

**Information and Awareness of DVR and Supported Employment Services:** Finally, respondents indicated that DVR services, including Supported Employment, are not widely understood or recognized statewide among individuals with MSD, families, and community partners, which may limit timely access to vocational rehabilitation services.

**(B) Individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program;**

As part of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's (DVR) Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), DVR gathered and analyzed quantitative and qualitative data to identify employment barriers experienced by Alaskans with disabilities, VR service needs, populations that may be unserved or underserved, availability of community resources, and opportunities for program improvement. Data collection activities included surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews with a range of stakeholders.

DVR conducted six live focus groups with a total of 28 participants representing agency leadership, advisory bodies, and community partners, including professionals serving individuals who are blind or visually impaired, individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, DVR managers and staff, the State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee, and the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education.

DVR distributed a written survey to approximately 1,150 VR participants and received 275 completed surveys, representing a response rate of approximately 24 percent. DVR also received 12 completed surveys from Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) partners.

In addition, DVR conducted six key informant interviews with representatives from workforce and behavioral health systems identified as critical partners. Interviews were conducted using a standardized, semi-structured format, and responses were documented, transcribed, and analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. To preserve confidentiality, interview responses were aggregated with other data sources in the final CSNA.

Although the focus group and interview participants represented a broad range of partners and service providers, DVR recognizes that some community perspectives may not be fully reflected. Findings should therefore be considered within this context. Reflexive thematic analysis, including iterative review and coding, was applied to qualitative data and compared with quantitative findings from VR participant and CRP surveys. In total, responses from 321 individuals who participated in surveys, focus groups, or interviews (excluding employers) were aggregated and analyzed. This mixed-methods approach supported triangulation of data and strengthened validation of CSNA findings.

Through this process, stakeholders identified populations that may benefit from VR services but are not accessing services, or are accessing services at a lower rate relative to their representation in the community. Respondents most frequently identified youth, particularly those considered at risk or involved with the justice system, as potentially unserved or underserved. Individuals residing in rural and remote areas of the state were also frequently identified, with respondents citing Alaska's geographic challenges, including communities accessible only by air or water. Additionally, respondents identified individuals experiencing homelessness or living in poverty as facing significant barriers to accessing VR services, particularly due to limited access to stable and accessible housing.

Additional populations identified as potentially unserved or underserved included individuals with significant mental health conditions, individuals with substance use disorders, Alaska Native and Indigenous individuals, individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities, and older individuals with disabilities. These findings reflect stakeholder perceptions and qualitative input and do not necessarily represent DVR service utilization data. As such, they are considered alongside quantitative analyses and other CSNA findings to inform DVR's understanding of service gaps, outreach needs, and equity considerations.

**(C) Individuals with disabilities served through other components of the workforce development system; and**

According to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's (DVR) Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), key informant input related to community partnerships and other components of the workforce development system indicated that DVR maintains established working relationships with the Alaska Job Center Network and a range of employers across the state. Respondents noted that DVR actively engages with the business community and supports initiatives such as the Provisional Hiring Program in coordination with state hiring managers.

The CSNA findings underscore the importance of coordination among workforce development partners to expand employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. As part of the CSNA, employers were asked to identify concerns related to hiring individuals with disabilities. Employer responses indicated that perceived challenges related to workplace accommodations were a primary concern. Employers, particularly small businesses, reported uncertainty regarding their capacity to implement accommodations, especially in the context of ongoing staffing shortages. Some employers expressed concern that accommodations may be costly or difficult to implement, particularly when training and supervision resources are limited.

Employers also identified attitudinal and informational barriers that may affect hiring decisions. These included uncertainty about how to interact with individuals with disabilities, limited understanding of disability-related needs, fear of unintentionally causing offense, and the influence of personal biases or misconceptions. Respondents indicated that these concerns may contribute to hesitation in hiring individuals with disabilities, particularly in high-demand or resource-constrained work environments.

In addition, some employers perceived limited external resources to support the hiring and training of individuals with disabilities. Respondents noted that widespread staffing shortages may reduce organizational capacity to provide additional training, supervision, or individualized support, which can further discourage hiring.

Employer survey responses reflected concerns related to misunderstanding of disability, discomfort or uncertainty regarding interactions and accommodation needs, perceived financial and operational risks associated with accommodations, potential impacts on productivity, and the need for additional supervision. These concerns were reported most frequently among employers with limited prior experience hiring individuals with disabilities.

Employers who reported successful hiring and retention of individuals with disabilities indicated that the hiring process was generally comparable to that of other employees. These employers noted that early disclosure of accommodation needs during the interview or onboarding process supported successful employment outcomes by allowing accommodations to be implemented at the start of employment. Employers also identified the establishment of clear communication and mutual understanding of learning and work styles as contributing factors to job success. In contrast, employers reported that when accommodation needs were not disclosed, challenges related to performance or job retention were more likely to occur.

[\(D\) 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.](#)

Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is required to provide, or arrange for the provision of, pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) to eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities. Students eligible to receive Pre-ETS are generally between the ages of 14 and 21, or younger when determined appropriate by the student's transition team, are enrolled in an educational program, and are eligible or potentially eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

According to the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), the October 1, 2021 Special Education Child Count identified 5,609 students with disabilities between the ages of 14 and 21. During the reporting period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022, DVR provided Pre-ETS to 976 students with disabilities, establishing a baseline of just under 1000 students served.

Based on findings from DVR's Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), DVR has established a goal to provide Pre-ETS to at least 1,000 students with disabilities annually over the next three years. Over the previous three years, the average cost of Pre-ETS per student was \$1,523. Based on this average, DVR anticipates spending approximately \$1.523 million annually on required Pre-ETS activities, with remaining funds allocated to authorized Pre-ETS activities.

To assess the vocational rehabilitation service needs of youth with disabilities in transition, DVR solicited input from Pre-ETS staff, service providers, educators, parents, and other collaborators as part of the CSNA. In February 2022, DVR distributed a Special Education Teacher Survey to 363 teachers, special education directors, and correspondence school directors statewide. Eighty-three respondents provided input regarding student skill needs and barriers to achieving postsecondary education and employment goals.

Survey respondents identified the following skills as critical for students to successfully obtain and maintain employment: work readiness and soft skills (90 percent), problem-solving and decision-making skills (81 percent), access to job supports such as job development and job coaching (81 percent), work-based learning and work experience (76 percent), and literacy and numeracy skills (61 percent). These findings align with the required Pre-ETS activities and reflect the foundational skills needed to support successful transition to employment.

Analysis of qualitative data collected through focus groups, surveys, and key informant interviews identified several recurring themes related to the transition needs of youth with disabilities. Respondents noted limited employment opportunities for youth within their home communities, particularly in rural and remote areas. Findings also indicated strong alignment between the needs of Alaska's youth with disabilities and the scope of required Pre-ETS activities. DVR's Pre-ETS program was identified as a strength of the agency, while respondents also identified opportunities for improvement in service accessibility, relevance, and outreach.

Work readiness and independent living skills were consistently identified as the highest priority needs for students transitioning to employment. These skills include interpersonal communication, professional behavior, time management, problem-solving, and self-care skills necessary to meet employer expectations and function independently in the workplace and community. Survey responses indicated that many youth with disabilities in Alaska must leave their home communities to pursue education, training, or employment opportunities. Forty-four percent of respondents rated employment opportunities in students' home communities as poor, and respondents estimated that approximately 23 percent of students leave their communities to pursue vocational goals.

Respondents also identified barriers that limit youth with disabilities from achieving postsecondary education and employment outcomes. The most frequently identified barriers included lack of family support, transportation challenges, and unstable living situations. Additional barriers included limited community resources, challenges navigating statewide systems, and lack of programs tailored to specific disability-related needs.

Taken together, CSNA survey, focus group, and interview findings identified opportunities to strengthen Pre-ETS service delivery for youth with disabilities. Stakeholders most frequently recommended increasing outreach and awareness of Pre-ETS among students with disabilities and their families, improving the inclusiveness and relevance of Pre-ETS activities, and enhancing support for DVR counselors involved in Pre-ETS service delivery. CSNA data further indicated that awareness of DVR and Pre-ETS remains limited among youth populations, particularly high school students and recent graduates. When asked to identify groups who may be unaware of DVR services, 25 percent of respondents specifically identified schools, students, and young adults.

## [\(2\) Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State.](#)

Findings from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's (DVR) Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) indicate an ongoing need to establish, strengthen, and expand Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) capacity across Alaska to effectively meet the vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities (MSD) who require Supported Employment and long-term services.

CSNA survey respondents, focus group participants, and key informant interviewees consistently identified systemic challenges affecting the sustainability and effectiveness of CRPs and other service provider partners. Respondents reported that Alaska's economic conditions and limited funding availability constrain the ability of service providers—particularly small and nonprofit organizations—to cover operational costs, invest in staff development, and maintain service capacity. These financial pressures were described as contributing to service limitations and reduced provider availability in some communities.

Workforce challenges within CRPs were also identified as a significant concern. Respondents reported a low availability of qualified and trained staff, particularly in rural and remote areas, coupled with high staff turnover. These challenges were described as negatively affecting service continuity, institutional knowledge, and the ability of CRPs to deliver consistent, high-quality vocational rehabilitation and Supported Employment services. Staffing shortages were noted as especially impactful for individuals with MSD, whose service needs often require sustained, individualized, and skilled supports.

Participants further identified limited access to long-term supports as a critical gap in Supported Employment service delivery. Respondents noted that the absence of adequate long-term funding sources and coordinated supports can limit CRPs' ability to provide extended services necessary for individuals with MSD to achieve and maintain competitive integrated employment. This gap was identified as a barrier to both service effectiveness and provider participation in Supported Employment delivery.

In addition, respondents indicated that CRPs in some areas receive insufficient referral volume to maintain program viability, particularly in smaller or rural communities. Limited referrals, combined with staffing and funding challenges, were identified as factors that may discourage provider participation or expansion into underserved regions. Respondents also identified limited availability of CRPs in rural and remote areas of the state, resulting in reduced access to services for individuals with disabilities who reside in those communities. Taken together, CSNA findings indicate a need for DVR to explore opportunities to improve CRP capacity through provider development, technical assistance, workforce training, and strategies to support service sustainability. Strengthening CRP infrastructure was identified as particularly important for ensuring access to Supported Employment services and addressing the needs of individuals with MSD statewide.

Innovation and Expansion funds were not expended for the establishment or development of Community Rehabilitation Programs during the CSNA period.

**(c) Goals, Priorities, and Strategies.** Section 101(a)(15) and (23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to describe the State's goals and priorities 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 on the goals and priorities and any revisions; and

DVR is committed to the challenge of continuously improving both the organization's systems and the delivery of services to those individuals receiving vocational rehabilitation services. DVR utilizes the strategic planning process to develop a plan of action for continuous improvement. DVR has an on-going three-year strategic planning process coinciding with the federally required triennial Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA). Based on the information collected and analyzed from the CSNA, analysis of current Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) regulations, Common Performance Measures (CPMs), and input from DVR staff and the Alaska State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee (SVRC), the strategic planning team identifies improvements in service delivery, staff development, organizational efficiencies, and DVR's role in serving employers as the basis for the new strategic plan. A working version of the plan is updated biannually by the individuals responsible for specific activities. The information is utilized by the Leadership Team to determine if the agency is meeting its goals and priorities and if revisions are needed.

The strategic planning team is composed of the DVR management and leadership teams, the SVRC Executive Committee, including the representative from the Client Assistance Program (CAP) and the Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (TVR) 121 programs.

A summary of the goals and priorities for FFY2024-2027 include:

- Delivery of high-quality vocational rehabilitation services to all individuals with disabilities with priorities established for:
  - Transition age/at-risk youth involved in the Juvenile Justice System
  - Individuals with disabilities residing in rural Alaska
  - Individuals who are individuals with the Most Significant disabilities who require Supported Employment
  - Alaska Native/American Indian individuals with disabilities
  - Reduction of system barriers
  - Individuals who experience blindness or who have a visual impairment

- Individuals who experience deafness or are hard of hearing
- Staff development includes efforts in:
  - Training opportunities to maintain professional certifications and for staff development
  - Leadership development
  - Succession planning
- Organizational efficiencies and responsibilities:
  - Meet all Federal regulations
  - Report and meet negotiated Common Performance Measures
  - Utilize technology for system improvements
  - Ensure case management software is up-to-date and will generate federal reporting that meets the requirements of the RSA-911 data report
- DVR will prioritize the needs of Alaskan businesses:
  - Work with employers to expand employment opportunities
  - Collaborate with other core WIOA agencies to improve employment services to individuals with disabilities
  - Advocates for individuals with disabilities are represented on appropriate boards and committees

In January of 2024, DVR and the SVRC Executive Committee jointly developed, agreed to (and will review annually, as necessary) the goals and priorities as outlined in the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan. The goals, priorities, and strategies were based on an analysis of DVR's most recent CSNA and consideration of current and anticipated performance of CPMs as established under section 106 of WIOA as well as other goals and priorities that would improve services to and employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Three weeks prior to meeting with the SVRC, the members were provided DVR's CSNA and the Executive Summary along with an annotated draft Strategic Plan. The annotated draft Strategic Plan outlined how each proposed goal and priority aligned with findings within the CSNA. SVRC members were provided ample time and opportunity to review, question, comment, or disagree on the goals and priorities within the Strategic Plan. Each goal and priority were reviewed during the Strategic Planning Sessions and all input from the SVRC was accepted and was added in as either a priority or will be added to the working plan as action steps to achieve the goal and priorities.

In PY2024, Alaska's SVRC had 4 subcommittees including Executive; Policy and Program Evaluation; Assistive Technology; and Planning and Membership. Input from the subcommittees included:

A comprehensive review of the DVR website was conducted, and recommendations were provided to enhance its user-friendliness and accessibility. DVR fully implemented all of the SVRC's suggested improvements which included:

- Elevate critical information: Increase the prominence of resources for parents and teachers.
- Improve site navigation: Reduce clutter and excessive text to create a less overwhelming user experience.
- Alternate formats: Explore integrating video content to better serve users who prefer visual or auditory learning. Subsequent user-testing and a review by the Alaska Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired clearly indicated significant improvements to usability and accessibility.

During quarterly SVRC meetings, the Director, Chief, Deputy Chief, and Regional Managers provide updates on specific Strategic Plan goals and priorities.

(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, postsecondary 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.

**Goal 1 – Service Delivery: DVR will deliver high quality vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to assist them in obtaining employment consistent with their employment goals.**

This goal reflects DVR’s focus on continuous improvement of the VR service delivery system based upon the needs of Alaskans with disabilities as identified by the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA).

**Measures of success:**

- Review RSA Quarterly Dashboards to measure progress towards achievement of negotiated Common Performance Measures and other Measures that Matter.
- Utilize SurveyMonkey monthly to survey to all clients who were closed after a plan was developed to measure customer satisfaction with a satisfaction goal of at least 80% in all areas.
- Chief to use AWARE Reports weekly to measure ongoing progress of federal and state goals.
- Chief to use AWARE Reports weekly to review regional budgets to ensure adequate funding to serve all individuals seeking VR services.
- Use of pre and post-surveys to survey students with disabilities who received Pre-Employment Transition Services to measure effectiveness of services provided.
- Transition Coordinator uses the TransitionAlaska.org list-serve to survey teachers and school administration staff annually to measure effectiveness of Pre-Employment Transition Services to their students.

Priority 1.1: Improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities, including services needed to achieve meaningful employment.

**Strategies:**

- Conduct and Review Labor Market Research protocol to ensure validity and that it is occurring in cases at Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) development, as appropriate.
- Continue to support consumer training, as appropriate, and utilize all training opportunities and systems (i.e., AVTEC, UAA, UAF, and UAS, apprenticeships, Job Corps, Military Youth Academy, etc.).
- Identify consumer’s knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to match with employer’s needs and willingness to build upon those KSAs.
- Ensure vocational evaluation is used as a strategy for rapid engagement as well as career exploration to obtain meaningful employment.
- Ensure consideration of personal experience with disability and support skills in self-advocacy, especially for youth, including person centered planning.

- Provide pre-employment services, job supports, and other employment-specific services and financial life skills.

Performance Indicators:

- Case reviews indicate IPEs and documentation of case progress align with informed choice, knowledge, skills, and abilities, and support Labor Market Research.
- Increased percentage of individuals maintaining employment in same field 2 quarters after exit and 4 quarters after exit.
- Reduced number of IPEs per client.
- Continuous increase in hourly wages.
- Increases in credential attainment and measurable skill gains.
- Individuals receive career exploration services and secure meaningful employment.
- Plan development shows standards for best practices and self-advocacy.

Priority 1.2: Improve Supported Employment (SE) services to individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities, including youth with the Most Significant Disabilities.

Strategies:

- Determine ways DVR can improve services to individuals who require Supported Employment (SE).
- Increase understanding and knowledge regarding early engagement and available VR Services.
- Increase services to SE Youth, ensuring 50% of SE funds are expended on Youth
- Work with CRPs to increase staff available to provide SE Job Supports.
- Assure that staff are informed of available transportation options or potential complications that may exist.

Performance Indicators:

- DVR will provide training to Division of Senior and Disability Services (SDS) and long-term support providers.
- SDS will provide training to DVR staff.
- DVR and SDS will continue to meet quarterly to ensure quality services to this population.
- Technology will be explored and implemented as a way to provide distance delivery in circumstances where it may be appropriate.
- Ensure SE individuals have training on use of local transportation when appropriate.
- Increase Extended Services to MSD Youth.
- Individuals with MSD have higher hourly wages at exit.
- Individuals with MSD remain employed at 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.

Priority 1.3: Continue to provide quality services to rural locations.

Strategies:

- Continue to support Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) travel to rural locations.
- Develop rural travel expectations to ensure staff time is effectively utilized.
- Expand services to underserved hubs, including increasing coordination with partners.
- Attend events such as Alaska Federation of Natives, Native Youth Olympics, Southcentral Foundation Health Fairs, ASSEC, etc., to market DVR services.
- Invite Alaska Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (TVR) representation to attend rural services meetings.
- Expand DVR's use of technology in rural areas.
- Develop strategies for taking advantage of telework opportunities where transportation and lack of local employment opportunities are barriers as access to high-speed internet improves throughout the state.
- Utilize subsistence IPEs as appropriate.

Performance Indicators:

- Travel approved for a minimum of two trips a year to rural areas and travel with partners when possible.
- Travel Expectations document is used and adhered to.
- More utilization of rural hubs for reaching rural clients.
- TVR representation at Rural Services meetings.

- Technology is implemented and utilized.
- Individuals living in rural locations are able to remain in their communities while earning livable wages or by decreasing the cost of living due to subsistence.
- Individuals living in rural locations have increases in credential attainment and measurable skill gains.

Priority 1.4: Continue to deliver Pre-Employment Transition Services with an increased focus on At-Risk youth exiting the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) system.

Strategies:

- Increase work experience activities and sites.
- Work closely with CRPs and Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) vendors to align work experiences with high demand jobs.
- Ensure that expected number of students participating in Pre-ETS matches CSNA goal.
- Continue to recruit CRPs to provide Pre-ETS services.
- Continue to ensure At-Risk-Youth, including those involved with the Juvenile Justice System, are included in Pre-ETS activities and expand Pre-ETS within detention facilities
- Continue to coordinate services to At-Risk youth with disabilities in shelters or transitioning from treatment facilities.
- Continue to support travel for Transition Coordinator to travel to rural areas to evaluate Pre-ETS programs and build/maintain programs.

Performance Indicators:

- Additional work experiences are available.
- Work experiences more closely mirror high demand job industries.
- Meet or exceed expected number of Pre-ETS students provided services in the CSNA.
- Additional CRPs are available to provide Pre-ETS services.
- Programs within Juvenile Justice Detention facilities will continue to increase.
- Transition Coordinator travel occurs.
- Pre and post surveys of students show learning objectives have occurred.
- Students receiving Pre-ETS receive work experiences in high-demand jobs.
- Students who have received Pre-ETS show wage earnings in subsequent years.

Priority 1.5: Enhance Collaboration with Tribal VR (TVR) Partners.

Strategies:

- Continue to participate in face-to-face meetings when invited.
- Invite TVR Directors to quarterly Rural Services Meetings on a rotating basis.
- Invite TVR to DVR training opportunities.
- Create collaboration plan to increase referrals and shared cases.
- Identify contact in each region to share and communicate information.
- Identify clear chain of command for reporting issues.
- Review MOU and Contingency Plan and draft changes as agreed upon.

Performance Indicators:

- Increase in shared cases with TVR Partners.
- Increase in wages at exit for AN/AI.
- Increase in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter employment retention for AN/AI.
- Increase in MSGs and Credential Attainment for AN/AI.
- Increase in knowledge of DVR staff to better serve AN/AI individuals.
- Meeting occurs annually.
- Creation of a collaboration plan.
- MOU revised as necessary.

Priority 1.6: Improve usage and quality assurance of CRP services in all regions.

Strategies:

- Work with CRP Coordinator to develop a comprehensive CRP monitoring plan.
- Ensure Managers are involved in vetting new CRP applicants and in creating corrective action plans.
- Increase the number of CRPs who can provide distance delivery by leveraging technology where available to increase services to rural Alaska as noted in the CSNA.
- Increase training available to new and existing CRPs including training on Supported Employment as noted in the CSNA.
- Provide templates and other supporting materials.
- Facilitate CRP Community of Practice in an effort to share information including recruitment and retention strategies as staffing shortages were a concern in the CSNA.
- Improve consistency of expectations/communication between VRCs and CRPs and understanding of each's role in VR process from referral through period of service.
- Explore technological avenues and assess the use of software in improving service delivery and reporting.

Performance Indicators:

- Adherence to timelines.
- Process developed and followed for new CRPs and determining corrective action plans.
- Increase number of CRPs who are able to provide virtual services.
- Quality of services provided is improved.
- Individuals referred to CRPs receive services that improve employment outcomes.
- Individuals referred to CRPs receive satisfactory services from CRPs.
- CRPs are able increase staff numbers to adequately serve their communities.

Priority 1.7: Provide thorough information and referral services to ensure consumers are aware of how to access available community resources that increase probability of successful employment.

Strategies:

- Develop new avenues for providing Assistive Technology (AT) and other Technology Training to ensure appropriate AT is provided on the job.
- Cultivate relationships with specialist providers such as neuropsychologists for thorough diagnostics to determine rehabilitation needs.
- Assist individuals in seeking resources for Behavioral Health Services, including the most up-to-date long-term support services available, including those services offered that are beyond traditional sources, including 1115 Waiver Services.
- Referral to the PABSS agency, known as the Disability Law Center of Alaska, especially for youth with disabilities to better understand how work affects benefits.
- Refer individuals to appropriate Independent Living (IL) Services for any appropriate IL services.
- Assist individuals in securing transportation, including accessible transportation.
- Provide resources for individuals who are unhoused to increase access to VR Services, especially initial access to apply.
- Maintain seats on appropriate transportation boards to advocate for transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, especially in winter.

Performance Indicators:

- Participant income is greater at exit than at application, where measurable.
- Assistive Technology is secured and training is provided leading to improvements to 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter after exit CPMs.
- Increased specialists are used as vendors for thorough eligibilities and appropriate rehabilitation needs identified.
- Develop and maintain VR presence on boards/other guiding entities such as the Statewide Independent Living Council and the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education Employment and

Transportation Committee to advocate and educate on the employment needs of individuals with disabilities

- VR staff increase knowledge of how to effectively work with the unhoused population to secure employment while being able to refer individuals to other necessary local resources leading to increase participant income at exit.

Priority 1.8: Reduce internal DVR paperwork barriers for individuals seeking VR services.

Strategies:

- Establish internal committee to conduct an in-depth review of VR processes to identify areas that could be streamlined or made more efficient.
- Improve on-line referral process to expand access.
- Inform participants and stakeholders of reasons for breadth of information gathering and assure there is an understanding of the process and timelines.

Performance Indicators:

- DVR will maintain 90% of cases to eligible within 60 days or less.
- DVR will maintain 90% of cases to plan within 90 days or less.
- DVR will see an increase in on-line referrals leading to an increase in orientations by at least 10% annually.
- Streamlining is implemented where feasible to decrease time from application to plan and promote rapid engagement.

Priority 1.9: Evaluate and improve services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

Strategies:

- Evaluate current program to determine gaps and improvements that can be made to better serve this population including increasing successful closure rate.
- Improve consistency of identification of needs related visual impairments in terms of VR, and development and delivery of services.
- Support Blind Services Team program development and training, including travel for in-person meetings.
- Develop tools for assessing pathways to success, including regular case reviews.
- Blind Services Coordinator hosts bi-annual training for Division Statewide Assessment Team to increase effectiveness of evaluation services.
- Inform all regional offices about the BEP and opportunities for referrals.
- Update administrative codes to ensure BEP meets all regulatory requirements.
- Modernize existing sites' Micro-Markets.
- BEP evaluates site equipment as needed.

Performance Indicators:

- VR Blind Services Program evaluation is completed with recommendations for improvement.
- Increase in wages at exit for individuals who are blind.
- Increase in 2nd and 4th quarter employment retention for individuals who are blind.
- Increase in MSGs and Credential Attainment for individuals who are blind.
- Blind Services Team meets regularly and travels for annual in-person meeting.
- VR staff are trained on recognition of Vision-related VR needs, available resources, and case process development.
- BEP site equipment is updated and modernized.

Priority 1.10: Continue to support the employment needs of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Strategies:

- Continue to evaluate current program to determine gaps and improvements that can be made to better serve this population.
- Ensure the Model State Plan (MSP) for the Deaf remains up-to-date (links and content).
- Maintain a presence on the Deaf Professionals Network.

- Increase utilizing staff interpreting for rural participants, including providing travel budget for DVR staff interpreter.
- Deaf Navigator performs bi-annual training for Division Statewide Assessment Team to increase effectiveness of evaluation services.
- Increase Pre-ETS opportunities for students who are Deaf.

Performance Indicators:

- Increase in wages at exit for individuals who are deaf.
- Increase in 2nd and 4th quarter employment retention for individuals who are deaf.
- Increase in MSGs and Credential Attainment for individuals who are deaf.
- Work with contractor to keep MSP links and content up-to-date.
- Program evaluation is completed with recommendations for improvement.
- Maintain relationships with community partners.
- Comprehensive services are included on IPEs.
- Pre-ETS are delivered to students who are Deaf.

Priority 1.11: Promote Employment for Senior Alaskans, 55 and older.

Strategies:

- Reestablish standing committee between Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS) and DVR to determine activities to improve senior employment rates.
- Promote consistent partnership with Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training statewide through joint cases and case staffing.
- Develop scorecard for measuring performance.
- Increase employer awareness of the value of seniors with disabilities within employment.
- Explore relationships with other partner agencies such as Senior and Disability Services and the Alaska Commission on Aging to maximize employment potentials for seniors with disabilities.

Performance Indicators:

- DVR/DETS committee meets regularly to review data.
- Scorecard for performance is developed and evaluation of success is ongoing and measurable.
- DVR collaborates with other agencies to promote Senior Employment such as the Alaska Commission on Aging.
- Increase in wages at exit for individuals who are seniors with disabilities.
- Increase in 2nd and 4th quarter employment retention for individuals who seniors with disabilities.
- Increase in MSGs and Credential Attainment for individuals who seniors with disabilities.

**Goal 2 – Staff Development: DVR will recruit, employ, retain and train the most qualified and highly skilled rehabilitation staff.**

This goal reflects the value DVR places on well trained staff and the need for succession planning with the anticipated loss of key staff in the future.

Measures of success:

- Training Specialist uses SurveyMonkey to survey all staff post-trainings to measure overall effectiveness of training.
- Managers use a Competency Criteria Rating form for all VRA and VRC promotions with minimum score allowable in specific competency areas to achieve promotion.
- Training specialist maintains an employee list-serve and notifies management and staff of relevant training opportunities.
- Training Specialist maintains a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) list-serve and notifies agency CRCs of upcoming continuing education training to ensure all CRCs maintain their credentials.

- Case review results are compiled in aggregate form to determine staff training needs that are then provided during annual statewide training.
- 
- Priority 2.1: Ensure resources are available for hiring and retaining qualified staff.

Strategies:

- Schedule annual all-staff training sessions for professional staff.
- Utilize internship programs.
- Expand recruitment strategies to fill both VRC and VRA vacancies.
- Ensure all staff are aware of continuing education and advancement opportunities.
- Develop educational development plans for non-CRC VRCs.
- Stay abreast of changes to CRC requirements.
- Ensure all VRAs receive VRA Online Training.
- Support VRA higher education opportunities where feasible.

Performance Indicators:

- All-staff training occurs.
- Internship positions are utilized.
- Communication to staff occurs.
- All non-CRC VRCs have an Educational Development Plan.
- Training checklists are completed for all staff.

Priority 2.2: Ensure ongoing staff development and training.

Strategies:

- Stay informed on requirements for maintaining/obtaining CRC and make sure that candidates are informed of current requirements as part of hiring process.
- Provide specialized training: Field Administrative Support Team (FAST), Business Engagement Services Team (BEST), Blind Services, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Division Statewide Assessment Team (DSAT), etc.
- Provide ongoing training opportunities for VRAs.
- Keep modules for VRC training up-to-date.
- Develop ongoing education for eligibilities, severity of disability, plans, closures, etc.
- Regional Managers provide training on software and reporting.
- Ensure staff have access to the most current job forecasts by developing a distribution plan for “Trends” economic forecast magazine, economic development corporation info, etc.
- Specialized Training:
- Career pathways and expectations for employment and training outcomes.
- Conduct and understand Labor Market Research.
- Self-Advocacy including how to seek and benefit from training.
- CRP and VRC relations understanding and consistency and documentation.
- Behavioral Health best practices and where to find available resources.
- Training for working with clients who are unhoused or in poverty including available resources for those individuals

Performance Indicators:

- Links are posted on SharePoint.
- Specialized training is developed and delivered.
- Opportunities are communicated to VRAs.
- VR Modules are updated and delivered.
- Quarterly training opportunities for staff is scheduled and available.

Priority 2.3: Continue mentoring and succession planning.

Strategies:

- Senior VRCs (CRCs) are given opportunities to be in Regional Manager acting status.

- Develop specialized desk manuals for unique job duties.

Performance Indicators:

- Regional Manager Acting Status is delegated equally to senior VRCs.
- Desk manuals for unique positions are created and easily accessible for successors.
- Continued development of Management Manual.

**Goal 3 – Quality Assurance: DVR will continuously evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of organizational systems and identify opportunities to develop innovative solutions for necessary changes.**

This goal reflects DVR's commitment to continuous programmatic improvement and organizational efficiency.

Measures of success:

- Case Review tool is used annually to measure quality of VR services provided.
- Mini-case review tool is used quarterly by Managers to spot-check quality of VR services.
- Use of SARA to follow up with all clients one year after exit to measure Credential Attainment after exit.
- Review of RSA Quarterly Dashboards to measure progress towards achievement of negotiated Common Performance Measures and other Measures that Matter.
- Utilize RSA's RSA-911 Edit tool quarterly to ensure 100% data accuracy is reported on the RSA-911.
- Use of monthly reports from SaraWorks to measure SARA usage by both clients and staff.
- Use of Counselor list-serve to send quarterly reminder emails to staff to update educational goals in order to accurately capture Measurable Skill Gains and Credential Attainment.
- Use of quarterly tableau reports to measure achievement of 90% of cases to eligible in 60 days.
- Use of quarterly tableau reports to measure achievement of 90% of cases to plan in 90 days.
- Fiscal tool is used for managers to review 10% of all AFPs monthly.

Priority 3.1: Provide on-going Quality Assurance (QA) and program evaluation activities to ensure integrity of VR Services.

Strategies:

- Program evaluation results are reviewed by administrative and management staff.
- Consumer satisfaction responses are analyzed and disseminated to SVRC on a quarterly basis and sent to Managers monthly.
- Internal case review process and tool is developed and implemented.
- Case reviews are both qualitative and quantitative in nature.
- Develop internal controls that ensure fidelity and accuracy of data submitted to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA).
- Create reports in Tableau for Managers to review cases frequently.
- Help Desk staff will provide on-going support and training by participating in staff meetings and flying to Fairbanks and Juneau semi-annually to meet with staff.

Performance Indicators:

- Internal documentation revised as necessary based on QA results.
- Staff training developed as deemed necessary based upon case review results.
- Results are shared with appropriate staff.
- Case reviews are completed and scheduled on a regular basis and incorporate internal controls.
- All staff are trained on new procedures.
- Regional Managers will have access and be able to run reports when needed.
- Staff meetings are scheduled with Help Desk Staff on an on-going basis.

Priority 3.2: DVR will meet or exceed state and federal Common Performance Measures (CPMs).

Strategies:

- Establish baseline data for all WIOA required data elements and negotiate with RSA on required CPMs.

- Monitor data collection processes to ensure program fidelity.
- Work with National Clearinghouse to obtain additional education information.
- Work with Leadership to determine appropriate State Goals known as Missions & Measures.

Performance Indicators:

- Negotiation with RSA completed.
- All required federal reporting submitted on time and is accurate.
- Schedule established for sending/receiving data from the National Clearinghouse.
- Meet or exceed State Missions and Measures.
- Meet or exceed Federal CPMs.

Priority 3.3: Continue to update the AWARE case management system to provide quality data while reducing system barriers.

Strategies:

- Help Desk team actively participates in all AWARE user groups and Community of Practice group to ensure DVR's work flows are considered when Alliance is creating enhancements to the software.
- Help Desk team meet and thoroughly analyze impact to field and accounting staff with each iteration of RSA-911 data manual, upgrades to the AWARE system, or clarification of current regulations by RSA.
- Help Desk team works with the management team to ensure on-going, accurate data collection by field staff.
- Help Desk team coordinates all training of field and other staff and provides training in timely manner.
- Help Desk team routinely runs QA on AWARE data to ensure accuracy and consistency.
- Policy, Planning and Program Evaluation team (PP&P) to evaluate processes for moving to a paperless system. This includes hardware and software purchases that may be necessary and staff training.
- Incorporate SharePoint in all policy and procedure development.

Performance Indicators:

- All AWARE updates are reviewed and installed as required.
- Federal reports are produced on-time and accurately. Staff are notified and trained on any changes to AWARE.
- Required data is collected accurately.
- DVR services are not negatively impacted
- RSA-911 edit issues are resolved.
- Plan for moving to paperless is established with timelines and costs.
- Policies and Procedures are available on SharePoint.

Priority 3.4: Continue to support SARA communication system.

Strategies:

- Help Desk staff will continue support and provide training for SARA.
- Finalize improved AWARE to SARA integration.
- Continue training on new features and technology as it becomes available.
- Electronic signatures
- Concurrent case-noting and calendaring
- Single-Sign-On
- Outlook calendar and SARA calendar integration
- Train BEP staff and BEP Vendors on use of SARA
- Begin soft onboarding and training with CRPs into SARA.

Performance Indicators:

- New SARA interface and new system functionality is in place.
- Follow-up training at VR statewide training performed annually.
- Survey BEP vendors semi-annually and then annually determine if SARA communication is useful or needs further refinements.

- Collaborate with CRP Coordinator and survey staff and CRP vendors regarding effectiveness of SARA use with CRPs.

Priority 3.5: Explore and improve technology usage.

Strategies:

- Explore an internal or State of Alaska “accessibility” position.
- Explore additional social media opportunities to increase awareness and information about DVR and its services statewide.
- Assist staff and managers with the hybrid teleworking staffing environment, which continues to improve distance delivery of services, increases communication between VR Staff and clients/case services partners, and gives VR clients the option to choose their preferred meeting and communication methods.
- Continue to coordinate support with Information Technology regarding AT Equipment and other technology available for use by participants in field offices.
- Implement a paperless/electronic case file which includes attaching documents from sources other than the AWARE case management system.
- Performance Indicators:
- Accessibility hardware and software is supported and upgraded when applicable.
- Social media influence to show increased number of individuals served annually.
- VR offices transitioned to paperless/electronic case files by FY26.

Priority 3.6: Review existing Policies and Procedures.

Strategies:

- Revise existing policies.
- Obtain SVRC approval on policies related to service delivery.
- Revise client services procedures.

Performance Indicators:

- New policies written and all staff is trained.
- Policies are posted publicly.
- New procedures are written and all staff is trained on the procedures.

Priority 3.7: Review DVR case processes for efficiency and ease of navigation.

Strategies:

- Evaluate processes at each case status.
- Simplify documentation and promote a statewide path of workflow which all offices follow when possible
- Improve guidance materials and implement staff training.
- Develop committee to evaluate and suggest improvements (see Priority 1.8).

Performance Indicators:

- Clients are able to quickly and easily access DVR services.
- Redundancy is reduced.
- Consistency among offices achieved.

**Goal 4 – Alaska DVR will prioritize the needs of Alaskan businesses while leveraging other workforce partners.**

This goal represents DVR’s responsibility to the dual customer model as well as ensuring employment services are provided through other components of the Workforce development system.

Measures of success:

- Utilize ETA-9169 measure effectiveness in serving employers (awaiting baseline).

- Continue to use CSNA Employer Survey Tool to determine employer attitudes when hiring individuals with disabilities.
- Use SARA to measure number of co-enrolled clients who are also recipient of workforce services.
- Develop common referral tool for ease of use between workforce partners leading to an increase co-enrolled cases.
- Chief to review monthly AWARE employer services reports to measure employer outreach goals.

Priority 4.1: Work with employers to ensure vast opportunities exist in meaningful employment.

Strategies:

- Work with employers to ensure opportunities for DVR clients to succeed in high-demand jobs.
- Provide training to in-house job developers.
- Develop YouTube channel
- Develop standardized outreach materials for employers.
- Develop standardized and publicly available FAQs.
- The Business Engagement Services Team (BEST) will develop one-year plan for employer engagement and determine how to measure success.
- The BEST will develop an internal Strategic Plan to determine specific action steps required to achieve the goals of this section.

Performance Indicators

- Employers in high demand industries will hire DVR clients resulting in higher wages.
- Training program implemented for job developers.
- BEST will develop a one-year plan with goals and measures of success.

Priority 4.2: Work with WIOA Partners to strengthen services to individuals with disabilities.

Strategies:

- Develop a structured communication plan with Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS).
- Develop a structured communication plan within the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD).
- Advocate for VR representation on the Alaska Workforce Investment Board.
- Continue to co-enroll participants.

Performance Indicators

- Improved and increased communication, referrals, and cross agency collaboration.
- Improved and increased interdepartmental communication.
- SARA Communication System indicates co-enrolled participants.
- Develop a Universal Referral System.

Priority 4.3: Utilize “Employment First” initiative to promote hiring of individuals with disabilities across Alaska.

Strategies:

- Explore “rebranding” to increase the understanding of DVR and services provided.
- Increase Supported Employment opportunities.
- Increase the use of Provisional Hire within the State.
- Include training at the hiring manager level.
- Meet with other Division Directors to train on the Provisional Hire process.
- Create links to include Provisional Hire opportunities when new positions post.
- Use AWARE’s Job Ready page consistently in all regions and provide training, as needed.
- Create an employment related task-force

Performance Indicators:

- DVR’s services are more easily recognizable.
- DVR Staff is successful in making connections to enhance employment opportunities for Alaskans with disabilities.

- Increased successful Supported Employment closures, including higher wages and retention of employment.
- Increased Provisional Hire requests and placements.

**(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;

In accordance with sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act, the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) made substantial progress toward achieving its identified goals and priorities, consistent with the strategies outlined in the State Plan and informed by findings from the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA).

**Goal 1: Service Delivery**

DVR continued to deliver high-quality vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to support attainment of competitive integrated employment consistent with informed choice. Progress toward this goal was monitored through RSA Quarterly Dashboards, AWARE case management reports, customer satisfaction surveys, and fiscal oversight tools.

Performance data indicate that DVR met or exceeded most negotiated Common Performance Measures, including employment retention, measurable skill gains, but fell short of the negotiated credential attainment rate. Case review findings demonstrated increased alignment between Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs), current State labor market information, employer-validated competencies, and participants' knowledge, skills, abilities, and employment goals, consistent with WIOA planning priorities. DVR maintained customer satisfaction levels at or above the established target, indicating positive participant experiences with VR services.

DVR strengthened employment outcomes through continued emphasis on career exploration, vocational evaluation, education and training pathways, and employment-specific services. Wage progression, employment stability, and retention in career-aligned fields showed positive trends, reflecting the effectiveness of individualized service strategies. DVR continues to monitor emerging federal initiatives related to short-term, high-quality training programs and will coordinate with workforce and education partners as appropriate to support credential pathways aligned with labor market demand.

**Supported Employment and Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities**

DVR made measurable progress in improving Supported Employment (SE) services for individuals with the most significant disabilities (MSD), including youth with MSD. The agency ensured compliance with the requirement to support Extended Services for Youth with a Disability was provided to individuals who were under the age of 24 and needed extended supports. DVR expanded coordination with long-term support partners, including the Division of Senior and Disability Services (SDS) and the Alaska Association on Developmental Disabilities (AADD). DVR, AADD, and SDS have joined the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) and meet multiple times throughout the month to improve processes and systems to better serve individuals who are MSD. Additionally, DVR maintains quarterly interagency meetings with SDS, cross-training activities, and increased focus on early engagement supported improved service coordination and employment retention outcomes for individuals with MSD.

### ***Rural and Underserved Communities***

DVR continued to expand service access in rural and remote communities through counselor travel, increased use of technology, coordination with Tribal VR partners, and utilization of rural service hubs. DVR's modernization efforts support flexibility and innovation in service delivery, particularly for rural and remote communities. These strategies contributed to improved service reach, increased credential attainment, and enhanced employment opportunities for individuals residing in rural areas, including opportunities that support remaining in local communities through telework or subsistence-based employment strategies.

### ***Youth and Pre-Employment Transition Services***

DVR met its Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) participation targets consistent with CSNA goals and expanded services to at-risk youth, including youth involved in the juvenile justice system. Increased work-based learning opportunities, improved alignment with high-demand industries, and enhanced collaboration with schools, CRPs, and juvenile justice partners contributed to positive skill development outcomes for students with disabilities. Pre- and post-service survey data demonstrated measurable gains in work readiness and career awareness.

### ***Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP)***

DVR improved the quality and consistency of CRP service delivery statewide through enhanced monitoring, training, and technical assistance. The agency expanded virtual service capacity, facilitated a CRP Community of Practice, and strengthened communication between counselors and providers. These efforts contributed to improved service timeliness, quality assurance, and employment outcomes for individuals referred to CRPs.

### **Goal 2: Staff Development**

DVR made significant progress toward recruiting, retaining, and developing a highly skilled rehabilitation workforce. Comprehensive training initiatives, succession planning strategies, and expanded professional development opportunities supported staff competency and preparedness. Post-training evaluations and case review findings informed continuous improvement of training curricula. DVR maintained support for Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) credentialing and ensured training pathways for both counselors and rehabilitation assistants.

### **Goal 3: Quality Assurance and Systems Improvement**

DVR strengthened internal quality assurance processes and data integrity through routine case reviews, enhanced use of RSA-911 edit tools, and improved reporting capabilities within AWARE and Tableau. Data accuracy, timeliness, and compliance with federal reporting requirements were maintained. DVR continued modernization efforts, including expanded use of electronic systems, SARA communication tools, and movement toward paperless case files, improving efficiency and accessibility for both staff and participants. Policy and procedure reviews resulted in updated guidance, increased consistency across regions, and reduced administrative barriers for individuals seeking VR services. These efforts support a more integrated, navigable workforce system by improving coordination among DVR, WIOA core partners, and education and training providers.

### **Goal 4: Employer Engagement and Workforce Partnerships**

DVR strengthened its role within the workforce development system by expanding employer outreach, increasing presentations on the use of the Provisional Hiring Program, and promoting the Employment First philosophy. Collaboration with WIOA partners increased co-enrollment and referral activity, as reflected in SARA and AWARE data. Employer engagement strategies emphasized industry-driven workforce solutions, including alignment with high-demand sectors and occupations identified through State labor market information and employer feedback.

### **Summary**

Overall, DVR demonstrated meaningful progress toward achieving its goals and priorities during the most recently completed program year. Data-driven decision-making, strengthened partnerships, expanded Supported Employment capacity, and targeted improvements in service delivery and quality assurance contributed to

improved outcomes for individuals with disabilities across Alaska. DVR's emphasis on wage progression, employment stability, and retention reflects a commitment to accountability and outcome-driven investment, consistent with WIOA performance expectations.

In order to be considered a successful closure when exiting the DVR, an individual must obtain competitive integrated employment and maintain that employment for a minimum of 90 days. In PY2024 the number of individuals who maintained competitive integrated employment was 288, including 218 in the private sector; 56 in Federal, State or Local Government; and 14 who were self-employed. Federal Common Performance Measures rate a state's success based upon employment retention and median wages at second quarter after exit and employment retention at fourth quarter after exit. DVR continues to place a heightened emphasis on the quality and appropriateness of an employment outcome rather than the number of individuals exiting the program to encourage long-term employment opportunities for clients. DVR has seen the quality and retention of an individual's employment continue to increase as shown by the increase in average wages at exit.

DVR assists individuals with disabilities by providing career and training services to alleviate and/or remove barriers to employment related to a disability and helps those individuals find competitive integrated employment that offers livable wages, benefits, and career pathways to create self-sufficiency. The average wage of individuals exiting DVR in PY2024 was \$21.51 per hour, which is \$9.06 above Alaska's minimum wage of \$11.91.

Determining the eligibility of an individual with a disability for vocational rehabilitation services within 60 days of application is required by federal regulation and also represents responsive customer service. The determination of eligibility is the point at which counselors and individuals can begin vocational rehabilitation (VR) planning and determine the most appropriate employment goal. Decisions that cannot be made within the 60-day period can be due to an individual's need to participate in a Trial Work assessment, which is an allowable reason for an eligibility extension beyond the 60 days. In PY2024 95% of eligibility determinations were made in 60 days or less.

An Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is considered successfully completed when an individual receives the necessary rehabilitation services identified on the IPE, has obtained employment, and the employment is maintained for 90 days. This measure speaks to the efficiency and effectiveness of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) process.

IPEs are extremely comprehensive and must be developed thoughtfully and in conjunction with the individual or their representative. The IPE delineates the employment goal, the type of rehabilitation services required to reach the employment goal, the estimated costs of those services, who will provide the services, and the length of time anticipated for the individual to complete the plan. Successful plan implementation requires the expertise of qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors; active involvement by the individual; labor market research; and consideration of the individual's strengths, resources priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. In the state of Alaska, the labor market, unemployment rate, access to healthcare, and overall economic trends can drastically affect this rate.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act of 2014 requires IPEs to be developed within 90 days, unless the individual agrees to an extension. DVR has seen an increase in this percentage due to increased training of VR staff, and early assessments and evaluations to ensure the most appropriate vocational goal is chosen in a timely manner. DVR continues to provide training to all staff on strategies for developing IPEs within 90 days, including using specialized software designed to enhance communication and engagement. In PY2024 91% of IPEs were developed in 90 days or less.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are services designed to assist students with disabilities, ages 14-21, in preparing for the transition from secondary school into the workforce and/or post-secondary opportunities. Pre-ETS includes: (1) job exploration counseling; (2) work-based learning experiences; (3) counseling on

opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education; (4) workplace readiness training and independent living; and (5) instruction in self-advocacy and peer mentoring. DVR is required to expend 15 percent of its federal award on Pre-ETS. Alaska DVR has been able to make significant strides in providing Pre-ETS throughout the state of Alaska by building relationships with school districts and community partners, and DVR continuities to be at the forefront of Pre-ETS service delivery on a national level. In PY2024, DVR was able to provide services to 1,484 students with disabilities from 116 Alaskan communities.

(2) Performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA for the most recently completed program year, reflecting actual and negotiated levels of performance. Explain any discrepancies in the actual and negotiated levels; and

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2022 Actual Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	54.0%	54.9%	54.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	49.8%	50.3%	52.2%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5,252	\$5,473	\$6,964
Credential Attainment Rate	43.3%	48.0%	40.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	60.3%	63.4%	63.9%

DVR met or exceeded three performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA including Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit, Median Earnings, and Measurable Skill Gains, but fell short in the areas of Credential Attainment Rate and Employment Second Quarter After Exit. Over the last four years, DVR has placed significant focus on the importance of Common Performance Measures (CPMs) and document collection. DVR continues to place significant emphasis on increasing applications, eligibilities, and plans in order to improve numbers and percentage in all CPMs. Meeting or exceeding state and federal CPMs is priority 3.2 DVRs 2024-2027

Strategic Plan which include strategies such as:

- Establish baseline data for all WIOA required data elements and negotiate with RSA on required CPMs.
- Monitor data collection processes to ensure program fidelity.
- Work with National Clearinghouse to obtain additional education information.
- Work with Leadership to determine appropriate State Goals known as Missions & Measures.

(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).

DVR allocates a portion of funds allotted under Section 110 of the Act for development and implementation of innovative approaches to improve the provision of VR services, particularly for individuals with the most significant disabilities. In PY2025 and PY2026, DVR will use funds for innovation and expansion activities to fund the 2027-2030 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) and to support the State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee (SVRC) as outline in the SVRC Resource Plan.

The SVRC is a full and active partner in the development of agency policies, regulations, and procedures, and they collaborate with DVR to hold public meetings in different areas around the state four times a year. These meetings allow for DVR to identify needs and to gather trend information for ongoing strategic planning.

SVRC PY2024 funds were used for expenses related to quarterly meetings. Four quarterly meetings were held via video conference. Meeting costs included the use of a court reporter and the provision of accessibility options for the public and members with disabilities.

Innovation and Expansion Activities budgeted for PY2025:

- Support of the SRC: \$19,840
- Support of the CSNA: \$29,644

Innovation and Expansion Activities budgeted for PY2026:

- Support of the SRC: \$22,500
- Support of the CSNA: \$37,055

Innovation and Expansion Activities budgeted for PY2027:

- Support of the SRC: \$22,500

Innovation and Expansion Activities budgeted for PY2028:

- Support of the SRC: \$22,500

PY2026 and PY2027, SVRC Resource Plan funds will be used to support the SVRC’s quarterly meeting expenses, including expenses for a Zoom account. Additional costs include a court reporter, a sign language interpreter for public testimony, and meeting accessibility needs of the public and members. If able, funds will also be used to pay for travel, room and board, and conference registration for two members to attend a National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC) conference.

**PY2025 Estimated Budget (SVRC and CSNA)**

	Travel	Contractual	Commodities	Totals
<b>Kenai Peninsula Reporting</b>		\$ 15,000		
<b>Annual Report</b>		\$ 200		
<b>Teleconferences (Zoom)</b>		\$ 1,500		
<b>Quarterly Meetings</b>				
<b>Interpreters</b>		\$ 2,640		
<b>Supplies</b>			\$ 500	
<b>Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment</b>		\$29,644		
<b>Totals</b>	\$ -	\$ 48,984	\$ 500	\$ 49,484

Alaska’s SVRC has 4 subcommittees including Executive; Policy and Program Evaluation; Assistive Technology; and Planning and Membership. PY2025 and PY2026 goals of the subcommittees include:

- Executive: Help all members and subcommittees work effectively as a team and plan the SVRC quarterly meetings.
- Policy and Program Evaluation: Provide guidance and recommendations to DVR on their policies and to analyze the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation’s functions, services, and outcomes
- Planning and Membership: Collaborate with DVR on the preparation and renewal of the WIOA Combined State Plan, the triennial Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, and DVR’s Strategic Plan, as well as recruiting new SVRC members.
- Assistive Technology: Provide consumer-responsive and consumer-driven input and feedback on how the federal AT Act funds are used in the state of Alaska.

Because Alaska DVR is no longer the Designated State Entity (DSE) responsible for oversight of the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) and the corresponding Resource Plan are developed by the SILC in coordination with its designated DSE, the Division of Senior and Disability Services (SDS).

**(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:

(A)  VR agency requests to receive Title VI funds.

(B)  VR agency does NOT elect to receive Title VI funds and understands that supported employment services must still be provided under Title I.

(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.

DVR will provide Supported Employment (SE) services to eligible individuals and will set aside 50 percent of the SE award to provide services to youth with the most significant disabilities.

SE services can be provided to any individual if that individual has been determined eligible for VR services, has a most significant disability, and for whom SE has been identified as the appropriate service delivery method based on a comprehensive assessment of rehabilitation needs. Title VI funds will only be spent on individuals with the most significant disability who is employed, requires on-going services, and will require Extended Supports in order to successfully maintain employment.

(3) Supported employment services may be provided with Title I 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.

Supported Employment (SE) is a specialized vocational rehabilitation service delivery model for individuals with the most significant disabilities (MSD) who require intensive, individualized supports to obtain and maintain competitive integrated employment or self-employment. SE is intended for individuals who have not historically achieved stable competitive integrated employment and who, due to the severity and functional impact of their disability, require ongoing supports, including Extended Services, to sustain employment outcomes.

Pursuant to Titles I and VI of the Rehabilitation Act, dedicated funding is available to support the provision of SE services to eligible individuals with MSD who require intensive services to achieve employment and Extended Services to maintain employment. The defining characteristic of SE is the individual's demonstrated need for Extended Services beyond Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) case closure. Absent such long-term supports, individuals with MSD would be unable to secure or maintain competitive integrated employment.

SE service delivery emphasizes individualized job development and placement in competitive integrated employment that is consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. Employment outcomes are informed by comprehensive assessment of rehabilitation needs, including vocational assessment activities, labor market considerations, and employer engagement. Employment placement is not contingent upon completion of pre-placement training or attainment of predefined skill benchmarks; however, vocational assessment activities are utilized, as appropriate, to support informed vocational goal selection and individualized employment planning.

DVR provides time-limited Ongoing Support Services, as documented in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), for a period not to exceed 24 months. Ongoing Support Services include assessment of employment stability

and the provision and coordination of services necessary to maintain employment, delivered at or away from the worksite as appropriate. Monitoring of employment stability must occur at least twice monthly, either on-site or, under limited circumstances and with the individual's consent, off-site. Comparable benefits are considered when identifying funding sources; when no other source is available, DVR funds Ongoing Support Services from the time of job placement through transition to Extended Services. In exceptional circumstances and with joint approval by the VR Counselor and VR Manager, the duration of Ongoing Support Services may be extended beyond 24 months to achieve the employment outcome identified in the IPE.

Upon achievement of job stabilization, DVR facilitates a coordinated transition from Ongoing Support Services to Extended Services provided by an external entity or through identified natural supports. DVR maintains the case in open status for a minimum of 90 calendar days following stabilization to ensure continuity of services and a successful transition. For youth with MSD who do not have access to Extended Services at the time of stabilization, DVR may provide Extended Services for up to four years or until the individual reaches age 25, whichever occurs first, in accordance with federal requirements.

SE services may be provided to any individual who is determined eligible for VR services, has a most significant disability, and for whom SE has been identified as the appropriate service delivery method based on a comprehensive assessment of rehabilitation needs. DVR must have a reasonable expectation that the individual will require Extended Services to maintain employment, regardless of whether such services are in place at the time of IPE development. While the anticipated source of Extended Services should be identified during IPE development whenever possible, the provision of SE services may not be delayed or denied solely because a source of Extended Services has not yet been secured. Placement on a waiver waitlist or the individual's documented intent to pursue long-term supports constitutes a reasonable expectation that Extended Services will become available.

In communities where no long-term service providers exist, DVR first explores the availability of natural supports prior to IPE development. If Extended Services cannot reasonably be anticipated, DVR may proceed with a non-Supported Employment IPE, allowing provision of the full range of VR services while acknowledging the limitation on SE service delivery.

When Extended Services are provided by an entity other than DVR, a Supported Employment Long-Term Support Agreement must be executed. This agreement documents the individual served, the Extended Service provider, the funding source, and access to financial reporting, and must be signed by both DVR and the Extended Service provider. Providers may utilize DVR's standard agreement or submit equivalent documentation that includes all required elements.

SE cases are closed as successfully employed when the individual is working in the employment outcome identified on the IPE, earning at least minimum wage in a competitive integrated setting, has achieved job stability, meets or is reasonably expected to meet the hours of employment specified in the IPE, and has Extended Services in place through a source other than DVR.

Alaska law prohibits the payment of subminimum wages. Accordingly, DVR does not support employment on a short-term basis as defined in 34 CFR § 363.1(c). All Supported Employment services in Alaska are designed to achieve and maintain competitive integrated employment outcomes in full compliance with federal and state requirements.

(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 to provide supported employment services. The description must include, as applicable, extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with 34 CFR 363.4(a) and 34 CFR 361.5(c)(19)(v).

DVR has a Cooperative Agreement with the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS), Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) Unit. This agreement was renewed in September of 2021 to reflect regulatory changes to employment services provided under the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waivers and DVR's updated Supported Employment (SE) policy. This partnership enhances coordination, increases referrals, and improves quality of services provided to individuals receiving SE services, independent living, and other waiver-based services to increase employment outcomes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. DVR and SDS have a taskforce that meets quarterly to discuss employment issues impacting individuals who experience I/DD. Additionally, the taskforce developed a DVR/SDS crosswalk to ensure field staff from both agencies have a better understanding of terminology and service delivery of each other's programs. DVR and SDS have provided cross training to each other's staff, most recently in January 2024, to improve service delivery and increase understanding of both programs.

Extended Services are long-term support services and other appropriate services that are needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability (including a youth with a most significant disability) in supported employment. They are provided and funded by an entity or person other than DVR, which may include Senior and Disability Services, mental health providers, private nonprofit organizations, the employer/co-workers, or any other appropriate resource including family members. When no other funding source is available, DVR may fund Extended Services for a youth with a most significant disability for a period of time not to exceed four years, or until such time that a youth reaches the age of 25, thus no longer meeting the definition of a 'youth with a disability,' whichever occurs first. In all other situations, funding for Extended Services shall come from sources other than DVR.

DVR may provide referral and VR services not covered by HCBS Waiver, such as Job Search/Placement with Title I funds. DVR services will be provided to the extent they are required for successful transition to stable employment. Time-limits of services provided will be determined on an individual case by case basis but will typically not exceed 24 months. All efforts will be made by the VR Counselor to identify and utilize long-term supports at the earliest point possible to maximize supported employment funds to all eligible individuals. DVR provides vocational rehabilitation services for eligible VR clients focused on competitive, community-based integrated employment.

DVR considers an individual to be successfully employed when the individual:

- 1) has been working for 90 days and is stable in a job that is satisfactory to both the individual and the employer;
- 2) has met the goal for hours of employment as stated in the IPE;
- 3) is earning minimum wage;
- 4) is working in an integrated setting; and
- 5) has extended supports in place through SDS or other identified long-term funding sources.

DVR significantly strengthened and expanded its coordination with long-term support system partners, including the Division of Senior and Disability Services (SDS) and the Alaska Association on Developmental Disabilities (AADD), recognizing that effective vocational rehabilitation outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities (MSD) depend on seamless, cross-system collaboration. DVR, SDS, and AADD jointly participate in the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN), a structured, national framework focused on advancing competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. Through regular, multi-monthly SELN meetings, the partners engage in coordinated planning, data-informed problem solving, and systems-level process

improvement to reduce service fragmentation, clarify roles and responsibilities, and align policies and practices across agencies. This sustained collaboration strengthens service continuity, enhances shared accountability, and supports the development of more responsive and effective pathways to employment for individuals with MSD, directly advancing DVR's statutory mission and statewide employment priorities.

**(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 CFR § 361.29(b), annual estimates must include the following projections:

(1) Estimates for the 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)
<b>MSD</b>	<b>1,250</b>	<b>1,250</b>	<b>\$1,700,000</b>	<b>NA</b>
<b>SD</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>\$973,000</b>	<b>NA</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>\$109,000</b>	<b>NA</b>

(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)
<b>MSD</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>\$779,000</b>	<b>NA</b>

**(g) Order of Selection.**

- The VR agency is **not** implementing a selection order, and all eligible individuals will be served.
- The VR agency is implementing a selection order in which one or more categories are closed.

\* VR agencies may maintain an order of selection policy and priority of eligible individuals without implementing or continuing to implement an order of selection.

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.

(1) For VR agencies that have defined priority categories, describe—

(A) The justification for the order;

No order of selection is being implemented at this time.

(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

No order of selection is being implemented at this time.

(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.

No order of selection is being implemented at this time.

(2) Has the VR agency elected to serve eligible individuals outside of the order of selection who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment?

Yes

No

No order of selection is being implemented at this time.

**(h) Waiver of Statewideneess.** 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 CFR 361.26. If the VR agency is requesting a waiver of statewideneess or has a previously approved waiver of statewideneess, describe the types of services and the local entities providing such services under the waiver of statewideneess and how the agency has complied with the requirements in 34 CFR 361.26. If the VR agency is not requesting or does not have an approved waiver of statewideneess, please indicate "not applicable."

Not applicable.

**(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 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 and type of personnel that the VR agency employs in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, including ratios of qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors to clients;
- (B) The number of personnel currently needed by the VR agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and
- (C) Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who the VR agency will need 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
Director	1	1	1
Chief	1	1	1
Deputy Chief	1	1	1
VR Manager	4	4	4
VR Counselor	24	35	40
VR Assistant	18	23	25
BEP Staff	3	3	3
Transition Coordinator	1	1	1
CRP Specialist	1	1	1
In-house ASL Interpreter	0	1	1
Client Services Admin.	6	6	6
Client Services non-Admin	6	8	8

(D) Ratio of qualified VR counselors to clients: 1: 58

(E) Projected number of individuals to be served in 5 years:

Program Year	Number of Clients Served
PY2030 Projected	2,295

(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.

The Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) relies on partnerships with out-of-state institutions of higher education to support the preparation of vocational rehabilitation (VR) professionals, as Alaska currently lacks in-state rehabilitation counseling degree programs.

These institutions provide education and training aligned with national certification standards, including programs that prepare individuals for certification as Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRC) and related professional credentials.

Institute of Higher Education	Type of Program	No. of Students Enrolled	No. of Prior Year Graduates
Idaho State University	MCoun in Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling	Unknown	Unknown
Portland State University	MS in Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling	42	8
Portland State University	Graduate Certificate in Orientation and Mobility	52	17
Western Oregon University	MS in Rehabilitation Counseling	55	13
Western Washington University	MA in Rehabilitation Counseling	39	16

(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.

Alaska does not have any postsecondary institutions that offer Rehabilitation Counseling Programs; therefore, Alaska DVR utilizes opportunities with out-of-state institutions.

Alaska DVR has seven (7) counselors enrolled/to be enrolled for the graduate-level programs from PY2023 to PY2027. Among them, two graduates earned their CRC certification in PY2024; one with a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and one with a Master's Degree in Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling. DVR also has one counselor scheduled to take the CRC Exam in March 2026, holding a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling. In addition, twelve (12) VR counselors renewed their CRC certification during PY2023 and PY2024, and nine (9) will renew their certification in calendar years 2026 and 2027.

DVR evaluates its personnel needs annually as part of the strategic planning process. The recruitment of qualified rehabilitation personnel has been historically challenging in Alaska due to lack of Rehabilitation Counseling programs within Alaska's university system, as well as the Division of Personnel regulations, which mandate that

several unsuccessful in-state recruitment searches occur prior to out-of-state recruitment efforts becoming an option. DVR developed positive relationships with several Rehabilitation Counseling Education programs to enable entry level and journey level counselors to obtain the necessary qualifications through distance education and intensive on-the-job supervision. This strategy is effective with paraprofessional staff as well. DVR recruits from various entities, including tribal vocational rehabilitation and human service agencies, and offers paid and non-paid internships to rehabilitation counseling graduate students who are interested in relocating to Alaska.

In accordance with Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), DVR offers preferential hire to individuals with disabilities to enhance their access to meaningful and gainful employment and to ensure that individuals with disabilities receive employment services in the most community integrated setting. Alaska relies upon educational institutions that deliver curriculums via distance education. Relationships with educational institutions fluctuate based on availability of long-term training grants and staff needs.

DVR has developed a strong working relationship with Virginia Commonwealth University, University of Kentucky, University of Washington, and West Virginia University. Although DVR does not always have active students at these universities, DVR's Training Specialist maintains relationships for future needs. Currently, DVR has counselors studying at University of Massachusetts Boston, University of Wisconsin-Stout, and Texas Tech University's CRCC-approval degree programs to prepare them to become a CRC. To reach a wider applicant market outside of the traditional in-state recruitment, DVR vacancies are advertised at the UAA Career Development Center, University of Washington Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation (CCER), and other university partners. Qualified individuals are identified through the on-going relationship with academic programs throughout the nation.

Alaska DVR is also undergoing a class-study by the Classification Services component of the Division of Personnel. Classification provides consultation and expertise in job analysis while administering fair and equitable job classification and pay structures to support the State of Alaska's civil service. The class-study and corresponding salary alignment should assist DVR with improving recruitment and retention of all levels of staffing.

(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.

In PY2024 Alaska DVR provided the following training to its employees for the Annual Statewide Training:

- Assistive technology
- Autism
- Conflict resolution and management
- Roles and functions of specialty DVR teams
- Ethics
- Generational diversity

Continuing Education, such as -

- Ethics

- CPR and Narcan training
- Improving VR outcomes using intersectionality
- Employment network fundamentals
- ADA and sensitivity training for the Blind Services Team
- AWARE case management training
- Language deprivation and etiological considerations
- Visually Speaking (ASL 101)
- Randolph-Sheppard virtual training
- Reducing recidivism and reentry conference
- Statewide special education conference
- Innovation Inspiration Expo
- IPAT-16pf for DSAT team
- Exploring the AI summit
- Emerging leaders training
- Leadership training

In PY2025

- AWARE case management and SARA
- Collaborating with VR clients
- Improving client outcomes and consumer engagement
- Counseling and guidance
- Motivational interviewing
- Bridges Out of Poverty
- Self-care: trauma and compassion
- YesLMS: An Introduction to a New Training Platform for VR Employees

Continuing Education, such as -

- Virtual transition conference
- Supported employment
- Discover sign language
- Statewide special education conference
- Full Lives conference
- Innovation Inspiration Expo
- Mental health first aid
- Team building through art
- Frontline leadership
- Avoiding burnout
- VRTAC-QE training series
- Strategies to support individuals with mental health conditions
- Trauma-informed care
- LeadVR leadership development
- Windmills training
- Addressing complex behaviors
- Employer engagement training series
- Alaska Disability 101 – Youth in transition
- Introduction to motivational interviewing
- Apprenticeship toolkit training
- National symposium on quality employment

DVR's Training Specialist seeks out and disseminates training related to amendments to WIOA such as Rapid Engagement, Section 511 training, Apprenticeship training, Ticket-to-Work, WIOA Desk Reference, and WIOA Youth.

DVR coordinates training with the Assistive Technology of Alaska (ATLA) to provide Assistive Technology (AT) training to DVR in areas such as an overview of AT for employees with disabilities, how to conduct an AT needs assessment, and common cognitive barriers and AT strategies. Training on Rehabilitation Technology is frequently provided to staff in conjunction with much of the AT training, including topics such as "Independent Living through AT" which describes how AT can aid someone in transitioning to independent living. During PY2024, ATLA provided four training sessions to DVR employees.

(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.

The State of Alaska does not currently mandate licensure for rehabilitation counselors. As a result, DVR has adopted the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) academic degree requirements as its standard. Strategies that DVR employs to ensure an adequate supply of qualified vocational rehabilitation professionals are:

- Participating in local job/career fairs, such as Employment First Conference.
- Formation of an in-house training and staff development team, such as Blind Services, Business Engagement, and Assessment Team.
- Offering paid and non-paid graduate internships.
- Supporting rehabilitation counseling as an employment goal for DVR participants.
- Supporting staff in fulfilling academic requirements to qualify for Certified Rehabilitation
- Seeking out training to help staff achieve CRC recertification and professional growth.
- Utilizing training resources and support of University of Washington- Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation; University of Arkansas- Center for the Utilization of Rehabilitation Resources for Education, Networking, Training, and Service; University of Alaska Center for Human Development; Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Employment; and YesLMS
- Developing a career advancement system that integrates education, training and credential requirements for initial hire and future promotion.

The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) establishes the educational standards required to sit for the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) examination. Typically, this means earning a master's degree in Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling or Rehabilitation Counseling from a program accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). In some cases, the Commission also accepts master's degrees in closely related fields, provided the individual completes additional coursework and gains supervised experience under a CRC.

At Alaska DVR, these standards are introduced early and reinforced consistently. During New Hire Orientation, all counselors who are not yet CRC-credentialed receive a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) packet. This packet includes a memo from the Chief of Rehabilitation Services explaining that Alaska DVR has

formally adopted the competency standards established by the CRCC. Staff are expected to carefully review and understand their educational responsibilities and to sign an acknowledgment confirming their awareness of CSPD requirements. Signed acknowledgments are maintained in the employee's personnel file, the Training Specialist's training records, and the employee's office file.

Training and professional development are central to DVR's mission. The Division recognizes that a skilled and well-supported workforce is essential to providing effective vocational rehabilitation services, and it actively supports ongoing education and training for its employees, including academic coursework when appropriate.

Educational benefits are available to regular, full-time employees who work a standard schedule and who have completed at least 180 days of employment. Employees may also qualify if they are required to complete a master's degree or additional graduate-level coursework to meet CSPD standards. Before enrolling in any course or academic program, employees are expected to work closely with their supervisor to ensure the coursework aligns with their role and professional development needs. Supervisory approval, including approval of costs and course timelines, must be obtained in advance.

Once a program or course is identified, employees submit the required training and academic reimbursement forms to the Training Specialist for review. Final budget approval rests with the Chief of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, regardless of whether the costs are paid by the Division, an external funding source, or a university-based scholarship. Employees are generally expected to complete coursework outside of regular working hours, although exceptions may be made when course schedules are limited and supervisory approval is granted. Any travel associated with on-campus coursework must follow established state travel procedures.

When academic coursework or a degree program is required to meet CSPD standards, an Employee Development Plan (EDP) is developed to formally document training needs. The Training Specialist prepares the EDP in collaboration with the employee and supervisor, and all parties sign the plan to confirm expectations. To be eligible for reimbursement, coursework must be directly connected to CSPD compliance, preparation for the CRC exam, the employee's current job duties, or the operational needs of the Division. Courses that enhance job performance, support essential job functions, or prepare an employee for advancement within the Division may also qualify. General prerequisite courses unrelated to job requirements are not eligible.

Employees who are pursuing a required master's degree are expected to apply for available RSA scholarships through their university. Any scholarships, grants, or other financial aid are applied directly to tuition and fees, and employees must keep the Training Specialist informed of funding awards. When a required master's program is not supported by an available RSA scholarship, the employee assumes responsibility for those costs. For employees who are required under CSPD to enroll in a master's degree program, the Division covers approved education-related expenses, including tuition, fees, required textbooks, program costs, and necessary travel.

The Division also supports professional credentialing by covering CRCC fees for eligible employees, including application, examination, certification, and recertification costs. When travel is required to take the CRC exam, those expenses are covered as well. Employees must confirm that they are not in default on state or federal student loans in order to receive academic reimbursement, and they are required to attest to this as part of the reimbursement process.

When training is required by the Division and occurs during an employee's regular work hours, limited use of work time and equipment may be approved, provided it does not interfere with customer service or the Division's overall mission. Supervisory approval is required, and training time is capped at a maximum of 3.75 hours per week. Employees who are unable to attend approved training after registering are expected to notify the Training Specialist as soon as possible so arrangements can be adjusted. In rare and extenuating circumstances, reimbursement decisions are made at the discretion of the Chief.

When training funds are limited, the Division prioritizes employees who are required to complete a full master's degree or additional graduate-level coursework to remain in compliance with CSPD standards. This approach ensures that DVR continues to meet federal requirements while investing strategically in its workforce.

**(4) Method(s) the VR agency uses to ensure that personnel can communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.**

DVR has a full-time American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreter position to facilitate communication with participants and staff who use ASL. The agency has also supported employees who are interested in becoming proficient in ASL to increase communication with hard of hearing and deaf participants. Tele-interpreting is widely used. VR counselors who serve individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing may use the text messaging software, SARA, as a way of accommodating their participants' needs.

For individuals with limited English proficiency, the Department of Labor maintains a roster of employees fluent in various languages; staff may purchase the services of professional interpreters when needed. DVR relies heavily on Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation programs to educate state staff regarding culturally appropriate methods of communication with Alaska Native participants.

Other tools used to address individual communication needs include:

- IP-Relay: TTY/TDD system connects callers to an operator who then reads their messages to the recipients and transcribes their messages back to the callers.
- Video Phone allows users to access videos, IP Relay services, and instant messaging services.
- Captel Phone allows users to see the text of a phone call in real-time while hearing it.
- Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART) to provide real-time captioning.
- JAWS, Dragon, Fusion, CCTV Readers allow users to access screen content.
- Zoom video conferencing offers a closed caption feature.

**(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.**

The Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) coordinates its Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) with personnel development activities conducted under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) through ongoing collaboration with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED). This coordination ensures that vocational rehabilitation personnel and education professionals share a common understanding of transition requirements, service roles, and effective practices to support students with disabilities as they move from secondary education to postsecondary training and employment.

DVR maintains structured communication and collaboration between VR counselors and education personnel to support coordinated service delivery and aligned professional development. VR counselors within each regional office are assigned to specific schools to facilitate consistent engagement, streamline referrals, and support participation in Individualized Education Program (IEP) development when appropriate. At a minimum, DVR maintains regular contact with assigned schools throughout the year to ensure educators are informed of DVR services, referral procedures, and transition-related supports. For rural and village schools, coordination occurs through special education staff and DVR personnel assigned to those regions, including staff who travel to remote communities as needed.

To promote consistent implementation of transition services statewide, the DVR Transition Coordinator convenes bi-monthly teleconferences with VR counselors involved in transition activities. These forums support staff development by providing opportunities to share information, discuss emerging practices, address challenges, and refine strategies for effective delivery of pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) and related VR services.

DVR personnel are trained and supported to deliver the five required Pre-ETS activities to students with disabilities ages 14 through 21, or until the student's 22nd birthday, as appropriate. These activities include job exploration counseling; work-based learning experiences; counseling on opportunities for enrollment in postsecondary education or comprehensive transition programs; workplace readiness training focused on employability and independent living skills; and instruction in self-advocacy, including peer mentoring. In addition to direct service delivery, DVR staff provide pre-employment transition coordination, including participation in IEP meetings for VR applicants and involvement in person-centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

DVR integrates IDEA-related professional development into its CSPD through required participation in statewide education training events. VR counselors are required to attend and actively participate in the Alaska Statewide Special Education Conference to maintain an ongoing dialogue with school districts and remain informed of current developments in special education, including disability-related issues, assistive technology, classroom accommodations, legislative updates, and IDEA requirements. The DVR Transition Coordinator participates annually as a presenter and exhibitor, providing training on the implementation of Pre-ETS and strategies to prepare students for post-secondary education and employment.

Through conference breakout sessions and collaborative training opportunities, DVR contributes to joint personnel development by supporting educators' understanding of transition planning, including assessment, job development, job accommodations, and employment supports. Training also addresses the development of functional, compliant transition plans; coordination with postsecondary and adult service systems; and awareness of statewide resources that support successful transition outcomes. These joint training efforts strengthen cross-system capacity and promote consistent, coordinated transition practices across education and vocational rehabilitation systems.

#### **COOPERATION, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION (Section 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act)**

**(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.**

The Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) maintains established plans, policies, and procedures to ensure effective coordination with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) and local education agencies (LEAs) to support the transition of students with disabilities from school-based services to vocational rehabilitation (VR) services, including pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS).

DVR has a Transition Services policy that defines the scope and timing of services for students transitioning from education to employment. Consistent with this policy, DVR prioritizes the timely development of Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs), with the expectation that IPEs are completed within 90 days of eligibility determination or, for students in their final semester, prior to graduation. This practice is intended to promote continuity of services and reduce gaps between the completion of educational programming and the initiation of VR services.

DVR also maintains a comprehensive Pre-Employment Transition Services policy and has invested in training staff on the delivery of the five required Pre-ETS activities and effective coordination with education partners. DVR works collaboratively with state and local education officials to support early referral and engagement of students with disabilities, including both potentially eligible and eligible students, to ensure access to Pre-ETS and facilitate seamless transition into VR services, when appropriate.

To support consistent and transparent referral practices, DVR and DEED utilize shared tools and resources that guide schools, families, and students through the referral process. The Transition Tools for Teachers, Parents, and Students on DVR's webpage provides clear guidance on DVR referrals, including a fillable referral form, frequently asked questions, and a School Contact page that identifies the DVR Counselor assigned to each school. These tools support early outreach, improve communication, and strengthen coordination at the local level.

DEED and DVR have a longstanding collaborative relationship in the development, implementation, and expansion of Pre-Employment Transition Services statewide. This collaboration is supported in part through the Alaska Interagency Transition Council (AITC), a multi-agency body focused on improving secondary transition outcomes for students with disabilities. Through AITC, DVR and DEED jointly engage in activities that promote higher graduation rates and improved post-school outcomes, including secondary transition teacher training, data collection and analysis, and coordinated planning for the statewide delivery of Pre-ETS. This partnership has also been instrumental in DVR's ability to continue delivering Pre-ETS and related training through distance and virtual platforms, with the agencies braiding funding and resources to develop content and delivery systems that ensure continuity of services, particularly in recent years.

DVR leadership and transition staff maintain an active presence in statewide education forums. The DVR Transition Coordinator or the Chief of Rehabilitation Services regularly presents at the Special Education Director Annual Conference, providing special education administrators from Alaska's 54 school districts with information on DVR services, referral processes, and opportunities for collaboration. In coordination with AITC, DVR also conducts targeted outreach to special education directors throughout the year, including presentations on VR services, guidance on IEP participation and referrals, availability of technical assistance to support Pre-ETS implementation, and training on secondary transition practices.

DVR further contributes to statewide and regional transition initiatives through participation on interagency boards and workgroups, including the University of Alaska Anchorage Center for Human Development, the Alaska Interagency Transition Council, the Statewide Independent Living Council, and the Alaska Mental Health Trust Employment Initiative. These collaborative efforts support the development of policies, initiatives, and strategies that improve employment outcomes for students with disabilities. DEED disseminates relevant initiatives to school districts and special education officials, while DVR communicates initiatives internally to regional managers and counselors to support consistent local implementation.

In addition to policy and systems coordination, DVR implements evidence-based transition programs that directly support students with disabilities in achieving competitive integrated employment. DVR operates Project SEARCH in three regions of the state—Fairbanks, Anchorage, and the Mat-Su Valley. Project SEARCH provides students with significant intellectual disabilities with immersive, real-world work experiences, employability and independent living skills training, job coaching, and ongoing feedback from educators, trainers, and employers. The program is designed to support successful placement into competitive, integrated employment in complex and non-traditional occupations upon completion.

Through these coordinated policies, structured referral processes, joint training and planning efforts, and evidence-based transition programs, DVR and DEED work collaboratively to ensure students with disabilities experience a timely, well-coordinated transition from education services to vocational rehabilitation services, with a sustained focus on competitive integrated employment outcomes.

(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 CFR 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. It 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 outlined in 34 CFR part 397 regarding students and youth with disabilities who are seeking subminimum wage employment; and

(F) Assurance that, in accordance with 34 CFR 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 CFR 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.

As of December, 2024, the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has entered a current, formal interagency cooperative agreement with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), Division of Innovation and Education Excellence (IEE). The agreement establishes a statewide framework for collaboration to support the effective transition of students with disabilities from secondary education to postsecondary education, training, and competitive integrated employment, including the coordinated delivery of pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) and other vocational rehabilitation (VR) services.

#### **Consultation and Technical Assistance**

In accordance with 34 CFR §361.22(b)(1), DVR provides ongoing consultation and technical assistance to DEED/IEE and local educational agencies (LEAs) to assist in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities. Consultation and technical assistance are provided throughout the school year and may occur through in-person meetings, video conferencing, conference calls, email, or other alternative means of participation.

Consultation and technical assistance activities include, but are not limited to:

- Descriptions of DVR services, including Pre-ETS and VR eligibility criteria;
- Referral and application procedures for VR services;
- Coordination of transition-related activities and work-based learning experiences;
- Participation in statewide and local transition planning forums and conferences; and
- Cross-training of DVR and educational personnel to improve statewide service coordination.

DVR maintains active participation in statewide transition initiatives, including annual meetings with DEED/IEE leadership, the Alaska Interagency Transition Council, and statewide special education and transition conferences.

#### ***Transition Planning and IEP Coordination***

DVR and DEED/IEE collaborate to support transition planning that facilitates the development and implementation of individualized education programs (IEPs) in accordance with Section 614(d) of IDEA. ADVR may participate in IEP meetings for shared students with disabilities when invited and available, either in person or through alternative means such as teleconference or video conference. When DVR is unable to attend an IEP meeting, follow-up communication occurs to ensure alignment between IEP transition goals and vocational rehabilitation planning.

DVR, in collaboration with DEED/IEE, provides or arranges for the provision of Pre-ETS to students with disabilities who are identified as needing such services. The five required Pre-ETS activities—job exploration counseling; work-based learning experiences; workplace readiness training; counseling on opportunities for postsecondary education; and instruction in self-advocacy—are made available statewide and delivered based on individual student need.

For students who apply for and are determined eligible for VR services, DVR develops an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) that is consistent with, and takes into consideration, the student's IEP and transition goals.

#### ***Roles, Responsibilities, and Financial Responsibilities***

The cooperative agreement clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities of DVR and DEED/IEE, including financial responsibilities, and identifies ADVR as the designated State agency responsible for the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program.

DEED/IEE retains responsibility for the provision and funding of transition services that are required under IDEA to ensure a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Nothing in the agreement reduces or shifts DEED/IEE's obligation to provide or pay for services that are considered special education or related services under IDEA.

DVR is responsible for the coordination, funding, and delivery of Pre-ETS and VR services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act that are not the responsibility of LEAs under IDEA. Each agency designates qualified personnel at the state and local levels to serve as points of contact for coordination, dispute resolution, and policy development related to transition services and Pre-ETS.

#### ***Outreach and Identification of Students with Disabilities***

The agreement establishes procedures for early and ongoing outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who may need transition services and Pre-ETS. Outreach activities occur as early as possible during the transition planning process and include collaboration with LEAs to identify students receiving special education services, students with disabilities served under Section 504, and students in nontraditional or alternative education settings.

Outreach includes, at a minimum, information provided to students with disabilities and their families regarding:

- The purpose of the vocational rehabilitation program;
- Eligibility requirements for VR services;
- Application and referral procedures; and
- The scope of Pre-ETS and VR services available to eligible and potentially eligible individuals.

With appropriate consent, LEAs share documentation necessary to verify student disability status and support service coordination in accordance with data-sharing agreements and confidentiality requirements.

**Coordination Related to Subminimum Wage Documentation**

DVR and DEED/IEE coordinate to ensure compliance with documentation requirements under 34 CFR Part 397 for students and youth with disabilities who are seeking or considering subminimum wage employment. Coordination includes information sharing, consultation, and documentation practices necessary to ensure that required transition services, Pre-ETS, and VR services are provided and documented prior to any consideration of subminimum wage employment, consistent with federal requirements.

**Assurance Regarding Subminimum Wage Employment**

In accordance with 34 CFR §397.31, DEED/IEE provides assurance that neither the State educational agency nor any local educational agency will enter into a contract or other 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 in which a youth with a disability is engaged in work compensated at a subminimum wage.

**Confidentiality**

DVR and DEED/IEE ensure the confidentiality of all student records and information shared under the agreement is in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

**(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 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.

In accordance with section 101(a)(11)(E) of the Rehabilitation Act, the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) coordinates with employers statewide to identify competitive integrated employment opportunities and meaningful career exploration experiences that support the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services, transition services, and pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) for students and youth with disabilities. DVR's employer engagement efforts are aligned with the State's workforce investment strategy and are guided by five strategic pillars: employer engagement, sector-based workforce development, talent preparation, system coordination, and continuous improvement.

**Employer Engagement and Labor Market Responsiveness**

DVR actively engages employers by prioritizing outreach to federal contractors and industries with high workforce demand. Employer engagement activities are informed by labor market information, review of employer needs through the Employer module in AWARE, and regular Job X meetings. Job X meetings provide employers with a structured forum to describe their workforce needs, hiring processes, and workplace culture directly to regional job developers and partner agencies. This approach ensures that DVR services are responsive to real-time employer demand and aligned with business needs.

DVR's Business Engagement Services Team (BEST) serves as the primary liaison between DVR, employers, and community rehabilitation providers (CRPs). BEST staff collaborate with CRPs to identify businesses that may benefit from technical assistance, training, or customized recruitment strategies, and to expand employment opportunities for individuals served by DVR. BEST staff conduct ongoing outreach to new businesses each month and provide services designed to strengthen employer partnerships and improve hiring outcomes.

**Sector-Based Workforce Development**

DVR supports sector strategies by working with employers, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and employer-funded trade associations to align training and placement activities with priority industries. DVR coordinates with employer-sponsored training providers to offer short-term, industry-specific training that reflects current workforce needs. These opportunities allow students and VR participants to explore

careers, gain hands-on experience, and develop skills that align with in-demand occupations, including pathways to postsecondary education, apprenticeships, and industry-recognized credentials.

#### ***Talent Preparation and Career Exploration***

DVR works with employers to support early exposure to the world-of-work for students with disabilities through coordinated Pre-ETS activities. Employers participate in in-person and virtual transition camps, career exploration events, and instructional sessions where students learn directly from businesses about workplace expectations, job requirements, and career pathways. When feasible, employers also provide worksite tours that allow students to observe real work environments and better understand occupational demands.

Students with disabilities also participate in in-school and summer work experience programs that provide structured work-based learning opportunities with Alaska businesses. DVR and its partners work directly with employers to identify appropriate candidates, define job duties, and coordinate supervision and expectations to ensure positive outcomes for both students and employers.

#### ***System Coordination and Public Sector Partnerships***

DVR coordinates closely with State of Alaska Human Resources and federal human resources partners to promote Provisional Hire and Schedule A hiring opportunities. These partnerships support streamlined hiring processes and expand access to competitive integrated employment within public-sector workplaces, while ensuring compliance with applicable hiring standards.

DVR's employer coordination efforts are integrated across regional offices and workforce partners to promote consistency, shared communication, and efficient service delivery. Employers benefit from a single point of contact and coordinated support, while students and VR participants gain access to a broader range of employment opportunities.

#### ***Continuous Improvement and Innovation***

DVR continuously evaluates employer engagement strategies and adapts service delivery methods to reflect changing workforce conditions and employer needs. The use of virtual platforms, distance-based training, and statewide coordination has expanded access to employer-led instruction, work-based learning, and career exploration opportunities, particularly in rural and remote communities.

Through these coordinated efforts, DVR works with employers to strengthen Alaska's workforce by connecting businesses with qualified talent, supporting career exploration and skill development for students with disabilities, and facilitating access to competitive integrated employment that meets both employer demand and workforce system goals.

**(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;**

DVR maintains a Collaborative Agreement with Assistive Technology of Alaska (ATLA) to carry out the required activities of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. As the State's designated lead agency under the AT Act, DVR is responsible for administrative oversight and coordination, while ATLA serves as the implementing entity responsible for the direct provision of assistive technology services. This partnership supports DVR participants by

ensuring access to assistive technology devices and services that enhance independence, employment readiness, and successful participation in competitive integrated employment.

In its administrative capacity, DVR facilitates the Assistive Technology Advisory Council as a standing component of the State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee, as required under the AT Act. DVR staff convene bi-monthly videoconference meetings with Advisory Council members and the ATLA Director to support ongoing communication, coordination, and review of program activities. In addition, DVR facilitates an annual half-day virtual meeting with the Advisory Council and ATLA leadership to provide structured consumer input, program oversight, and strategic guidance related to ATLA's implementation of AT Act activities.

These coordinated activities ensure accountability, promote continuous improvement, and strengthen alignment between assistive technology services and vocational rehabilitation goals across the state.

#### (2) Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture;

DVR does not coordinate with any programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture, as many of these programs support home loans, community facilities, and energy assistance

#### (3) Non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth;

improve employment and post-secondary outcomes for youth transitioning from the juvenile justice system and DVR collaborates with the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and the Office of Children's Services (OCS) to improve employment and post-secondary outcomes for youth transitioning from the juvenile justice system and foster care. While no formal written cooperative agreements are currently in place, established referral and coordination practices support timely access to vocational rehabilitation services, career exploration, and employment-focused supports for eligible youth. These partnerships emphasize early identification, continuity of services, and coordinated planning to reduce barriers to employment as youth transition to greater independence.

DVR also coordinates with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth program providers, including Nine Star Enterprises and Covey Academy, to align vocational rehabilitation services with workforce development activities. Through this coordination, youth can access complementary services such as work readiness training, paid and unpaid work experiences, occupational skill development, and supportive services that promote engagement in education, training, and employment pathways.

In addition, DVR partners with Covenant House, a community-based organization serving runaway and homeless youth. DVR maintains a consistent on-site presence at Covenant House, providing outreach, referral, and vocational guidance to connect youth with employment services, career planning, and supportive resources. This collaboration supports early engagement with vulnerable youth and facilitates access to competitive, integrated employment opportunities tailored to individual goals and readiness.

#### (4) State use contracting programs;

DVR does not have any state use contracting programs.

#### (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.);

DVR maintains an existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Division of Public Assistance (DPA) that outlines coordination to support beneficiaries in achieving competitive integrated employment outcomes. While

the MOU remains in effect, updates have been delayed as DPA addresses significant operational backlogs and ongoing litigation.

In anticipation of future implementation, DVR has developed a draft updated agreement that incorporates current strategies and best practices for supporting Medicaid recipients in pursuing meaningful employment, while preserving informed choice in the selection of employment goals. DVR continues to prioritize strengthening interagency partnerships to expand opportunities for competitive integrated employment when agencies are able to advance formal updates.

#### (6) State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities;

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS) establishes a coordinated framework for the delivery of employment services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Grounded in federal and state statutes, including the Rehabilitation Act, WIOA, and the Social Security Act, the agreement clarifies agency roles and responsibilities to promote efficient use of resources, informed choice, person-centered planning, and improved competitive integrated employment outcomes for individuals jointly served by both programs.

The agreement reflects a shared philosophy that individuals with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities, can achieve meaningful, competitive integrated employment when appropriate services and supports are aligned. DVR and SDS commit to collaboration in assessment, planning, and service delivery to avoid duplication, ensure timely access to services, and respect individual preferences. Information sharing and coordination occur with appropriate consent and in compliance with confidentiality requirements.

The MOU outlines funding and service coordination responsibilities, with DVR supporting time-limited vocational rehabilitation services leading to employment through Individualized Plans for Employment, and SDS providing long-term and extended supports through the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waiver when needed to maintain employment. The agencies utilize braided funding strategies, where appropriate, to support job development, supported employment, and ongoing employment stability in integrated settings earning at least minimum wage.

To support implementation, DVR and SDS establish mechanisms for regular collaboration, technical assistance, and dispute resolution. This includes joint training, shared expertise, coordinated referrals, and defined processes for resolving funding and service responsibility issues at the lowest administrative level possible. Through this partnership, DVR and SDS work to ensure seamless service delivery and sustained employment outcomes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities across Alaska.

#### (7) State agency responsible for providing mental health services;

DVR and the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) maintain a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) originally executed in August 2018. The agreement establishes the terms and conditions governing the partnership between DVR and DBH and reaffirms a coordinated framework for developing, expanding, and improving access to competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities served by both agencies, including individuals with the most significant disabilities associated with behavioral health conditions.

Under the agreement, both agencies commit to ongoing, system-level strategic planning, problem-solving, consultation, and technical assistance to support effective implementation. DVR and DBH, in collaboration with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA), will convene a standing workgroup that meets at least quarterly to address policy and procedural matters, including eligibility determination, defined agency roles, service coordination, funding alignment, special initiatives, best practices, and information sharing. Services supported

through this collaboration include employment-related supports for adults and youth who are unhoused or at risk of homelessness.

The agreement ensures that all services are delivered in compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

[\(8\) Other Federal, State, and local agencies and programs outside the workforce development system; and](#)

#### ***Returning Citizens***

DVR collaborates with the Alaska Department of Corrections, Division of Probation and Parole, to provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities transitioning from correctional settings into the community. DVR also coordinates with the Anchorage Mental Health Court and Wellness Court, which divert individuals with qualifying behavioral health conditions from incarceration into community-based treatment and support services, including vocational rehabilitation, as appropriate. These collaborative efforts support successful reentry and sustained employment.

At the local level, DVR field offices coordinate with reentry initiatives in Juneau, Fairbanks, Anchorage, and the Mat-Su Borough, as well as with the statewide Re-Entry Committee. While these collaborations are informal and not governed by formal agreements, they support coordinated planning and service delivery to improve employment outcomes and reduce recidivism for individuals returning to the community.

#### ***At-Risk Youth***

DVR works with the Division of Juvenile Justice to expand access to vocational rehabilitation services for youth with disabilities who are involved in or exiting the juvenile justice system. DVR takes a lead role in ensuring these youth receive appropriate VR services to support successful transition to employment and greater independence.

#### ***Post-secondary Programs***

DVR collaborates with the University of Alaska system to support individuals with disabilities who are pursuing post-secondary education and industry-recognized credentials that lead to competitive integrated employment. DVR coordinates with University of Alaska campuses and campus-based disability services to ensure students with disabilities have access to appropriate accommodations, academic supports, and vocational rehabilitation services necessary to successfully participate in and complete education and training programs.

Through individualized planning, DVR provides counseling and guidance, vocational training support, assistive technology, and other VR services that promote persistence, credential completion, and successful transition from postsecondary education to employment. These collaborative efforts are designed to align postsecondary education pathways with students' individualized employment goals and workforce needs within Alaska, supporting measurable skill gains and credential attainment consistent with WIOA performance expectations.

#### ***Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation***

DVR partners with the Alaska Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (TVR) Consortium, which includes 13 American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS) grant recipients. A current formal Cooperative Agreement outlines coordinated service delivery, shared resources, joint planning and evaluation, technical assistance, and staff development. DVR and AIVRS programs also maintain a Contingency Plan to ensure continuity of services. DVR and the TVR Consortia will renew the Cooperative Agreement and Contingency Plan in PY2025. Additionally, a representative from the TVR Consortium serves on the State Vocational Rehabilitation Council as the Section 121 representative.

### **Developmental Disabilities System**

The DVR Chief of Services serves on the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education and participates on the Employment and Transportation Committee, which includes partner agencies working to improve employment outcomes for youth and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This coordination supports aligned strategies, shared goals, and increased access to competitive integrated employment.

DVR leadership also coordinates with developmental disability and behavioral health providers, advocates, employers, the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, and state agency partners to strengthen employment pathways for individuals with developmental disabilities and behavioral health conditions.

### **Independent Living Programs**

DVR collaborates with Independent Living Centers across the state, including Access Alaska, Southeast Alaska Independent Living Center, Kenai Peninsula Independent Living Center, and Arctic Access in Nome, to coordinate services for individuals with disabilities, including individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI). DVR's Community Rehabilitation Program Specialist represents the agency on the Statewide Independent Living Council. While formal MOUs are not in place, DVR provides letters of support and coordinates services as needed.

### **Veterans Services**

DVR maintains an Interagency Agreement with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program to coordinate vocational services for veterans with disabilities. Through shared case coordination and regular communication, including monthly meetings attended by a designated DVR vocational rehabilitation counselor, DVR and VR&E work to maximize employment opportunities and support successful employment outcomes for veterans.

### **(9) Other private nonprofit organizations.**

DVR maintains agreements with qualified private nonprofit Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) to deliver specific vocational rehabilitation services that support competitive integrated employment outcomes. Only CRPs that meet the qualifications outlined in DVR's Standards for Community Rehabilitation Providers and have an executed agreement with DVR are authorized to provide services. CRP applications may be submitted on a rolling basis and must be renewed every two years.

DVR has implemented a structured CRP approval framework that clearly defines probationary requirements, standardizes service rating levels, and enhances oversight while providing flexibility for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRCs) and Managers (VRMs). Qualification requirements incorporate a combination of education, experience, training, and demonstrated performance. CRPs are classified under Standard, Provisional, or Exception status, with clear criteria established for each designation.

To support service quality and workforce competency, DVR partners with the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) to ensure statewide access to ongoing training for CRPs. UAA is nationally accredited by the Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) to provide employment services training. DVR requires CRPs to complete a minimum of 40 hours of ACRE-accredited training to meet baseline qualifications for delivering vocational rehabilitation services. Additional training and certification opportunities are encouraged for CRPs seeking approval to provide advanced services.

CRP agreements and applications require:

- Criminal background checks for all CRP staff with unsupervised contact with DVR participants, along with documentation of education and relevant work experience;
- Established fee schedules for services across probationary and standard levels, with negotiated rates for Provisional and Exception CRPs when necessary to address regional or rural service needs;

- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities, including scope of services, performance expectations, reporting, and billing requirements; and
- Compliance with standards related to organizational structure, personnel qualifications, fiscal management, health and safety, accessibility, and insurance and indemnification requirements.

The DVR CRP Specialist is responsible for approving CRP agreements, maintaining provider records in the AWARE case management system, and negotiating changes related to key personnel or service rates. Consistent with the principles of informed choice, information regarding approved CRPs—including services offered and fee structures—is made available to DVR participants.

DVR conducts ongoing monitoring of CRPs throughout the term of each agreement. Monitoring activities include review of service reports, verification of services and invoices against authorized services, fiscal review by central office staff prior to payment, and assessment of report timeliness. DVR also conducts biannual case reviews that include samples of cases utilizing CRP services to evaluate referral processes and service quality.

The CRP Specialist regularly reviews CRP performance data to ensure compliance with approved services, rates, and timelines, and maintains routine communication with VR Managers to assess regional service needs and provider performance. When performance concerns are identified, DVR works with CRPs to address issues through technical assistance or corrective action plans, and may suspend or terminate agreements when necessary to ensure service quality and compliance.

Data related to CRP capacity and performance are incorporated into DVR's Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) to inform provider development and system improvement efforts. DVR continues to enhance provider engagement through updated online resources, training opportunities, and the development of communities of practice.

## VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

### 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 outlined 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:

<b>The State Plan must provide assurances that:</b>	
1.	<p><b>Public Comment on Policies and Procedures:</b> The designated State agency assures compliance 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.</p> <p>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.</p>
2.	<p><b>Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its Supplement:</b> The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements about 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 C.F.R. 76.140.</p> <p>The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements regarding 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), 101(a)(22), 101(a)(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 the submission of a Combined State Plan; and 34 CFR 76.140.</p>
3.	<p><b>Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan:</b> The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:</p> <p>(a) the establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(b) Either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(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).</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(f) as applicable, the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(g) statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as outlined in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(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.</p>

<p>(i) all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(j) The requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as outlined in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(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 outlined in section 101(a)(18)(A).</p> <p>(m) the submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p>
<p>The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:</p> <p><b>3. a.</b> The establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p><b>3. b.</b> Either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p><b>3. c.</b> 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.</p> <p><b>3. d.</b> 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) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p><b>3. e.</b> 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.</p> <p><b>3. f.</b> As applicable, the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p><b>3. g.</b> Statewide and waivers of statewide requirements, as outlined in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p><b>3. h.</b> The requirements for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11), 101(a)(24)(B), and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p><b>3. i.</b> All required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p><b>3. j.</b> The requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development are outlined in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p><b>3. k.</b> 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.</p> <p><b>3. l.</b></p>

	<p>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 outlined in section 101(a)(18)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p><b>3.m.</b> The submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p>
4.	<p><b>Administration of the Provision of VR Services:</b> The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:</p> <p>(a) comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(E) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(d) determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(e) comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(j) With respect to students with disabilities, the State:</p> <p>(i) has developed and will implement,</p> <p>(A) strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and</p> <p>(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</p> <p>(ii) has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15), 101(a)(25), and 113).</p> <p>(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.</p>
	<p>The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:</p> <p><b>4. a.</b> Comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(E) and 101(a)(20) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p><b>4. b.</b></p>

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.

**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 provision 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, in accordance with sections 101(a)(15), 101(a)(25), and 113 of the Rehabilitation Act.

**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.	<p><b>Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement to the State plan:</b></p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(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 collect the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.</p>
	<p><b>5. a.</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p><b>5.b.</b></p> <p>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 collect 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.</p>
6.	<p><b>Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program (Title VI):</b></p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(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.</p>
	<p><b>6. a.</b></p> <p>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 that 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.</p> <p><b>6.b.</b></p> <p>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</p>

	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.	<p><b>Provision of Supported Employment Services:</b></p> <p>(a) The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(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.</p>
	<p><b>7. a.</b></p> <p>The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p><b>7.b.</b></p> <p>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 section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act, and that an individualized plan for employment meeting the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act 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.</p>

**CERTIFICATIONS**

<b>CERTIFICATIONS States must provide written and signed certifications that:</b>	
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, <sup>8</sup> and its State Plan supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act;
	Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

<sup>8</sup> Public Law 113-128.

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 (enter the name of designated State agency or the designated State unit when the designated State agency has a designated State unit) <sup>9</sup> 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 <sup>10</sup> , the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.13(b) and (c), and all applicable regulations <sup>11</sup> , 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;
	Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
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 <sup>12</sup> , the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations <sup>13</sup> , policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;
4.	The designated State 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 title of State officer 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;
	Director of the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

<sup>9</sup> All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> 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 CFR part 361.

<sup>12</sup> 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.

<sup>13</sup> Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 4, as well as the Supported Employment program regulations at 34 CFR part 363.

8.	The (enter title of State officer below) has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services;	
	Director of the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	
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.	
	<b>Signatory information</b>	<b>Enter Signatory information in this column.</b>
	<b>Name of Signatory</b>	Kathryn Duder
	<b>Title of Signatory</b>	Director, Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
	<b>Date Signed</b>	March 3, 2026

DRAFT

## VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM

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.<sup>14</sup> 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.

### 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.)

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), known statewide as Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training (MASST), operates within Alaska’s unique economic and geographic environment, which presents both opportunities and challenges for older workers.

#### Economic Context and Regional Factors

Regional variation, seasonal employment patterns, and reliance on key industries, including healthcare, construction, transportation, tourism, and resource development, characterize Alaska’s economy.

Many communities, particularly in rural and remote areas, face limited employment opportunities, infrastructure constraints, and higher costs of living. These conditions can disproportionately impact older individuals seeking employment and require targeted service delivery strategies to ensure access to training and employment opportunities.

#### Projected Industry Demand

Long-term employment projections developed by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development indicate continued demand across several key sectors. Growth and replacement needs are expected to sustain employment opportunities in:

- Healthcare and social assistance
- Construction and infrastructure development
- Transportation and logistics
- Leisure and hospitality, including tourism
- Resource industries, including oil, gas, and mining

In addition to growth, a significant share of projected job openings is driven by replacement needs, creating consistent opportunities for entry-level and re-entry workers, including older individuals.

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<sup>14</sup> 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 would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers them.

### **Occupational Opportunities For Older Workers**

These industry trends translate into demand for occupations that align well with SCSEP participants' skills and experience, including:

- Office and administrative support
- Healthcare support occupations
- Food preparation and service
- Building and grounds maintenance
- Retail and customer service roles
- Transportation and material moving

These occupations provide accessible entry points, opportunities for part-time or flexible work, and pathways to unsubsidized employment.

### **Labor Market Demand and Employer Needs**

Alaska's labor market continues to experience workforce shortages across multiple sectors, particularly in positions requiring reliability, customer interaction, and adaptability. Employers increasingly seek workers with strong interpersonal skills, dependability, and a willingness to learn—qualities commonly demonstrated by SCSEP participants.

SCSEP supports employer demand by preparing participants with transferable skills and connecting them to job opportunities aligned with regional workforce needs.

### **Demographic Trends**

Demographic trends further reinforce demand for SCSEP services. Alaska's population aged 55 and older continues to grow, increasing the number of individuals seeking to remain in or re-enter the workforce due to financial necessity, evolving retirement patterns, and a desire to remain engaged in their communities.

### **Program Alignment with State Strategy**

SCSEP aligns with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) and the strategies outlined in Section II(c) of this plan by preparing participants for employment in high-demand sectors through targeted training, community service assignments, and coordinated engagement with the workforce system.

SCSEP functions as a talent pipeline for older workers, aligning community service-based training with employer demand and facilitating transitions into unsubsidized employment.

SCSEP is integrated within the Alaska Job Center network and works in coordination with WIOA Title I programs, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, and Vocational Rehabilitation to support participant access to comprehensive services, including referrals, co-enrollment opportunities, and employment placement. Through this alignment, SCSEP supports older workers in transitioning to unsubsidized employment, while increasing labor force participation and meeting Alaska's workforce needs.

[\(2\) Discuss how the long-term job projections discussed in the economic analysis section of the 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\(d\)\)](#)

SCSEP aligns training and service strategies with the long-term job projections identified in the economic analysis section of this plan. These projections inform the types of unsubsidized jobs for which participants are prepared and guide the development of skill training that supports entry into in-demand occupations.

SCSEP is fully integrated into Alaska's broader workforce development system and aligns with activities carried out under WIOA core programs. Program services are delivered in coordination with the Alaska Job Center Network, ensuring that SCSEP participants have access to a comprehensive array of employment and training services that support transition to unsubsidized employment.

#### **Core Services Available to Participants**

SCSEP participants access a range of services designed to prepare them for employment, including:

- Career assessment and individualized employment planning
- Job search assistance and job readiness training
- Occupational skills training and short-term credentialing opportunities
- Supportive services to address barriers to employment
- Work-based learning through community service assignments

These services are structured to support participant progression from initial assessment through skill development and transition to unsubsidized employment.

#### **Alignment With Unsubsidized Employment Opportunities**

Consistent with long-term projections, SCSEP services are aligned with unsubsidized employment opportunities in high-demand industries identified in this plan, including healthcare, administrative support, retail, food service, facilities support, and transportation.

Participants are prepared for occupations such as:

- Office and administrative support roles
- Healthcare support positions
- Food preparation and service occupations
- Building and grounds maintenance
- Retail and customer service roles
- Transportation and material moving occupations

These roles provide accessible entry points for older workers and reflect both projected growth and replacement needs across Alaska's economy.

#### **Training Strategy and Skill Development**

Training strategies are informed by long-term labor market projections and designed to equip participants with the skills required to enter in-demand occupations. SCSEP emphasizes:

- Short-term, stackable credentials aligned with industry needs
- Digital literacy and basic technology skills required across sectors
- Workplace communication, customer service, and employability skills
- Sector-specific skills aligned with high-demand industries

Community service assignments function as structured work-based learning opportunities, allowing participants to develop and apply these skills in real-world settings while building experience directly relevant to unsubsidized employment.

#### **System Coordination and Co-Enrollment**

SCSEP coordinates with WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, and other partner programs to support co-enrollment and service alignment. Through the Alaska Job Center Network, participants are connected to additional training resources, labor exchange services, and supportive services.

This integrated service delivery model expands access to training and employment opportunities while promoting efficient use of workforce system resources and improving participant outcomes.

#### **Host Agency Partnerships**

SCSEP collaborates with community-based organizations, nonprofit agencies, and public sector partners that serve as host agencies for community service assignments. These partnerships provide participants with opportunities to:

- Gain relevant work experience
- Develop transferable and occupation-specific skills
- Build connections to potential employers

These experiences serve as a bridge between training and employment, supporting participants' transition from subsidized community service to unsubsidized employment.

#### **Outcome**

By aligning training strategies, service delivery, and work-based learning with long-term job projections and high-demand industries, SCSEP prepares participants for successful entry into unsubsidized employment.

This approach supports increased labor force participation among older workers while helping meet Alaska's current and projected workforce needs.

[\(3\) 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 CFR641.325\(c\)\)](#)

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), known statewide as Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training (MASST), prepares eligible older Alaskans (age 55 and older) for unsubsidized employment through paid, part-time community service assignments and individualized training plans delivered in coordination with the Alaska Job Center Network.

Consistent with 20 CFR 641.325(c), program targeting and skill development are guided by labor market information (LMI) developed under Section 15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 491-2).

#### **Current and Projected Employment Opportunities**

Alaska's labor market reflects favorable conditions for employment placement, particularly for entry-level and re-entry workers. In March 2025, the state's job opening rate was 5.6 percent, with approximately 0.8 unemployed individuals per job opening.

The 2025 statewide employment forecast projects an increase of approximately 5,300 jobs (+1.6 percent), led by:

- Construction
- Healthcare
- Transportation
- Resource industries

Long-term projections estimate approximately 37,000 annual job openings through 2032, driven largely by replacement needs. These conditions create sustained employment opportunities for SCSEP participants across multiple regions of the state.

#### **High-Demand Occupations**

These employment opportunities are concentrated in occupations that align well with SCSEP participants' skill profiles, including:

- Office and administrative support
- Healthcare support
- Food service
- Building and grounds maintenance
- Retail
- Transportation and material moving

These occupations provide accessible entry points for older workers and support transitions to unsubsidized employment.

#### **Participant Skills and Experience**

SCSEP participants possess a range of transferable skills that support successful transitions to employment, including:

- Administrative and clerical functions, including reception, scheduling, recordkeeping, and data entry
- Customer service and communication skills
- Reliability, punctuality, and teamwork

These skills are developed through prior work experience, volunteer activities, and community engagement and are highly valued by employers across multiple industries.

#### **Skills Developed Through SCSEP**

Through participation in SCSEP, individuals further develop skills aligned with current labor market demand, including:

- Digital literacy, including use of office software, online job search tools, and virtual communication platforms
- Sector-specific skills aligned with healthcare, retail, food service, facilities support, and transportation industries
- Workplace readiness competencies necessary for successful transition to unsubsidized employment

Community service assignments are structured work-based learning opportunities that enable participants to apply and strengthen these skills in real-world settings.

#### **Healthcare Sector Focus**

Healthcare remains a critical employment sector and a key pathway for SCSEP participants. Statewide demand includes approximately 9,400 healthcare workers annually, including support and administrative roles aligned with SCSEP training pathways.

SCSEP coordinates with WIOA core and partner programs to support access to short-term, stackable credentials that facilitate entry into healthcare and other high-demand occupations.

#### **Use of Labor Market Information**

SCSEP leverages Alaska's labor market information systems, maintained by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Research and Analysis Section, to inform training strategies, job matching, and individualized service plans.

Coordination with WIOA core and partner programs, including Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, and the use of AlaskaJobs ensures alignment between participant skills and high-demand occupations. This approach supports efficient transitions to unsubsidized employment and strengthens alignment with statewide workforce strategies.

LMI-driven service planning ensures that participant training and placement activities remain responsive to changing economic conditions and employer demand across Alaska.

#### **(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 the document, it 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))

SCSEP is fully integrated within the Alaska Job Center Network and aligned with WIOA Titles I–IV through co-location, co-enrollment, and coordinated service delivery, consistent with the State’s integrated service delivery approach described in Section II(c) of this plan.

Consistent with 20 CFR 641.302(g) and 641.325(e), Alaska implements and continues to strengthen coordinated service strategies to ensure individuals aged 55 and older have access to the full range of workforce system services.

#### **Integration Within the One-Stop Delivery System**

SCSEP staff maintain an on-site presence in Alaska Job Centers to support coordinated service delivery and access to partner programs. This includes:

- Referrals across partner programs
- Shared case management and documentation
- Joint service planning with WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and other required partners

AlaskaJobs supports integrated case management through shared documentation and case notes, reducing duplication and improving coordination across programs.

#### **Services Available to SCSEP Participants Through the One-Stop System**

Through the Alaska Job Center Network, SCSEP participants have access to a comprehensive range of services, including:

- Job search tools and labor market information
- Workshops, orientations, and hiring events
- Training opportunities aligned with regional demand
- Career pathway information and supportive services

These services support participant progression from initial engagement through training and placement into unsubsidized employment.

#### **Referral and Co-Enrollment Strategies**

SCSEP utilizes bidirectional referral processes to ensure individuals are connected to appropriate services across the workforce system:

- Individuals not eligible for SCSEP are referred to WIOA Title I and other partner programs
- SCSEP participants are referred to additional services, including vocational rehabilitation, occupational skills training, and supportive services

Co-enrollment strategies are used to expand access to resources, reduce service gaps, and support participants in achieving employment outcomes.

#### **Planned Actions to Strengthen Coordination**

Alaska will continue to implement the following actions to strengthen coordination between SCSEP, WIOA Title I programs, and One-Stop partners:

- Expand co-enrollment strategies across WIOA core programs
- Strengthen referral tracking, documentation, and follow-up processes
- Enhance cross-training among partner staff to support integrated service delivery
- Align service delivery approaches and performance strategies across programs
- Increase coordination with business services teams to support employer engagement and job placement

These efforts reinforce a seamless, customer-centered service delivery model that improves access, reduces duplication, and accelerates transitions to unsubsidized employment.

#### **Ongoing Coordination And Oversight**

Ongoing coordination is supported through structured communication and shared accountability across partners, including:

- Joint staff training and professional development
- Regular partner meetings and coordination activities
- Data-sharing practices that support integrated case management
- Alignment of performance strategies and continuous improvement efforts

Oversight and technical assistance are provided by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development to ensure consistent implementation of coordination strategies statewide.

#### **Outcome**

Through these coordinated actions, SCSEP functions as an active partner within the One-Stop delivery system. This approach ensures individuals aged 55 and older have access to integrated services that support successful transitions to unsubsidized employment and align with Alaska's broader workforce development strategies.

[\(B\) 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\(h\)\)](#)

Alaska coordinates SCSEP with activities carried out under the Older Americans Act (OAA) through alignment with the Alaska Commission on Aging, the Department of Health, as the State Unit on Aging, and the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services (FFY 2024–FFY 2027).

Consistent with 20 CFR 641.302(h), Alaska implements coordinated strategies to align SCSEP services with OAA programs to support individuals with the greatest economic and social need.

#### **Alignment with OAA Programs**

SCSEP prioritizes individuals with the greatest economic and social need and integrates employment services with the broader senior services network. Coordination includes alignment with:

- OAA Title III supportive services, nutrition, and caregiver programs
- OAA Title VI programs serving Alaska Native communities
- OAA Title VII elder rights programs

This alignment ensures that participants receive both employment and supportive services necessary to achieve and maintain unsubsidized employment.

### **Service Coordination and Delivery**

Coordination is operationalized through integrated and community-based service delivery strategies, including:

- Co-location and community-based service delivery
- Warm handoffs and streamlined referral pathways
- Shared case management practices

Partnerships with senior centers, Aging and Disability Resource Centers, and community-based organizations ensure access to wraparound supports, including:

- Transportation
- Nutrition services
- Housing assistance
- Health services
- Legal assistance

These coordinated services address barriers to employment and support participant stability and long-term success.

### **Planned Actions to Strengthen Coordination**

Alaska will continue to implement the following actions to strengthen coordination between SCSEP and OAA programs:

- Strengthen referral pathways between SCSEP and OAA service providers
- Expand collaboration with Title VI programs serving tribal communities
- Increase cross-training between SCSEP staff and OAA program staff
- Align service planning with the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services
- Enhance coordination with Aging and Disability Resource Centers to improve access to supportive services

These efforts reinforce a seamless, customer-centered service delivery model that improves access to services, reduces duplication across programs, and strengthens participant outcomes.

### **Ongoing Coordination and Alignment**

Ongoing coordination is supported through structured collaboration across programs, including:

- Joint planning and policy alignment
- Cross-program training and technical assistance
- Regular meetings to coordinate service delivery and clarify roles

These activities ensure consistent implementation of coordinated strategies and support continuous improvement across SCSEP and OAA programs.

### **Outcome**

Through these coordinated and continuously improving efforts, Alaska ensures that SCSEP participants benefit from integrated employment and supportive services aligned with the Older Americans Act.

This approach supports successful transitions to unsubsidized employment, improves participant well-being, and ensures services remain responsive to participant needs and community conditions across Alaska.

(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 coordinates with a broad network of public and private entities to support older Alaskans, including community- and faith-based organizations, transportation providers, housing programs, and organizations serving individuals with disabilities and others facing barriers to employment.

Consistent with 20 CFR 641.302(i), Alaska implements coordinated strategies to align SCSEP services with community-based and partner programs, ensuring comprehensive, integrated service delivery for older individuals.

#### **Outreach and Recruitment Strategies**

Outreach and recruitment are conducted through coordinated partnerships and community engagement strategies, including:

- Engagement through community-based organizations and nonprofit networks
- Distribution of outreach materials at community locations
- Partner referrals and coordinated outreach activities

These strategies ensure that eligible individuals, including those in underserved and rural communities, are aware of and able to access SCSEP services.

#### **Service Coordination and Partnerships**

Coordination is supported through cross-referral processes and partnerships with public and private entities, including:

- Housing navigators and housing assistance programs
- Alaska Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Alaska Native organizations
- Reentry programs
- Regional training providers

These partnerships expand access to supportive services and workforce resources and support coordinated service delivery across programs.

#### **Host Agency and Work-Based Learning Integration**

Host agency placements across nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and community-based settings provide structured work-based training opportunities that build job skills and support transitions to unsubsidized employment.

These placements are aligned with participants' employment goals and regional labor market demand, ensuring that training activities remain relevant, job-driven, and responsive to employer needs.

#### **Planned Actions to Strengthen Coordination**

Alaska will continue to implement the following actions to strengthen coordination with public and private partners:

- Expand partnerships with community- and faith-based organizations in underserved and rural areas
- Strengthen coordination with transportation and housing providers to address access barriers
- Increase collaboration with disability service providers and programs serving individuals with special needs
- Enhance referral tracking, documentation, and follow-up across partner programs

- Support the development of additional host agencies in community-based settings

These efforts reinforce a seamless, customer-centered service delivery model that improves access to services, reduces duplication across programs, and accelerates transitions to unsubsidized employment.

#### **Integrated, Person-Centered Service Delivery**

Through warm handoffs, shared case management, and coordinated service planning, SCSEP aligns supportive services with participant employment objectives. Services may include:

- Transportation
- Housing stability supports
- Nutrition services
- Benefits navigation
- Disability-related services

These coordinated approaches support person-centered and culturally responsive service delivery and improve employment outcomes for participants.

#### **Outcome**

Through these coordinated and expanding partnerships, SCSEP ensures that older Alaskans have access to comprehensive, integrated services that address barriers to employment and support successful transitions to unsubsidized employment.

This approach strengthens alignment across programs, improves the effectiveness of service delivery, and ensures services remain responsive to participants' needs and community conditions throughout Alaska.

[\(D\) Planned actions to coordinate SCSEP with other labor market and job training initiatives. \(20 CFR 641.302\(j\)\)](#)

Alaska coordinates SCSEP with labor market and job training initiatives by aligning service delivery with statewide sector strategies, employer engagement efforts, and broader workforce system initiatives, consistent with 20 CFR 641.302(j).

#### **Workforce System and Employer Engagement**

SCSEP staff collaborate with Alaska Job Centers, the Business Employment Services Team (BEST), and employer partners to connect participants to:

- Job fairs and hiring events
- Employer-driven recruitment activities
- Industry-specific training opportunities

These coordinated efforts strengthen connections between SCSEP participants and employers and support placement into in-demand occupations.

#### **Training Provider Partnerships**

SCSEP partners with Alaska Adult Education, Nine Star Enterprises, Southeast Regional Resource Center, the University of Alaska system, and other training providers to support foundational and occupational skill development, including:

- Reading, writing, and math skills
- Communication and workplace readiness
- Digital literacy and technology skills

AlaskaJobs supports job search, résumé development, interview preparation, and job matching, ensuring alignment between participants' skills and available job opportunities.

#### **Co-Enrollment and Resource Alignment**

To expand access to training and employment opportunities, SCSEP leverages co-enrollment and braided funding strategies with:

- WIOA programs
- Older Americans Act programs
- Reentry Employment Opportunities
- State Training and Employment Program (STEP)

These strategies reduce duplication, maximize available resources, and expand access to training, supportive services, and career pathways.

#### **Sector-Based Training Alignment**

Training priorities are aligned with high-demand industries identified in the State Plan, including:

- Healthcare
- Transportation and logistics
- Hospitality and tourism
- Administrative services

SCSEP also coordinates with registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs to support career pathways in construction, healthcare, and information technology.

Host agency placements reflect regional labor market demand in both rural and urban areas, strengthening alignment between training activities and employment opportunities.

#### **Planned Actions to Strengthen Coordination**

Alaska will continue to implement the following actions to strengthen coordination with the labor market and job training initiatives:

- Expand partnerships with training providers aligned with high-demand industries
- Increase participant access to sector-based and work-based learning opportunities
- Strengthen coordination with registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs
- Enhance co-enrollment strategies and braided funding approaches
- Improve alignment between training investments and labor market demand

These efforts reinforce a seamless, customer-centered service delivery model that improves access to training, reduces duplication across programs, and accelerates transitions to unsubsidized employment.

#### **Outcome**

Through these coordinated and expanding efforts, SCSEP strengthens alignment with Alaska's workforce system and labor market initiatives.

This approach ensures participants receive training and support that lead to unsubsidized employment in high-demand occupations while improving system efficiency and responsiveness to employer demand across Alaska.

[\(E\) Actions to ensure that SCSEP is an active 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. \(20 CFR 641.335\)](#)

Alaska ensures that SCSEP remains an active partner in the One-Stop delivery system through full integration within the Alaska Job Center Network and alignment with WIOA core and required partners, consistent with 20 CFR 641.335.

### **Program Integration and Presence**

SCSEP is administered by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and co-located with the Division of Employment and Training Services. SCSEP staff maintain a consistent presence in Alaska Job Centers to conduct:

- Outreach and recruitment
- Intake and eligibility determination
- Participant orientation
- Case management
- Coordination with partner programs

SCSEP is included in the Alaska Workforce Investment Board Memoranda of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreements, ensuring formal integration into the One-Stop delivery system.

AlaskaJobs serves as the primary system for service delivery, case management, data tracking, and participant engagement across partner programs.

### **Coordination and Service Alignment**

Coordination across the One-Stop delivery system is strengthened through integrated service delivery practices, including:

- Standardized referral pathways
- Shared case management practices
- Cross-training among partner staff
- Joint service delivery activities

These practices support co-enrollment, reduce duplication of services, and ensure consistent, coordinated service delivery statewide.

### **Continuous Improvement and System Alignment**

To further strengthen SCSEP's role within the One-Stop delivery system, Alaska will continue to implement the following actions:

- Expand co-enrollment strategies with WIOA core programs
- Enhance cross-program staff training and knowledge sharing
- Strengthen referral tracking, documentation, and follow-up processes
- Increase coordination with business services teams to support employer engagement
- Leverage AlaskaJobs to improve data sharing, performance tracking, and alignment across programs

These efforts reinforce a seamless, customer-centered service delivery model that improves access to services, reduces duplication, and accelerates transitions to unsubsidized employment while strengthening alignment across the workforce system.

### **Outcome**

Through this integrated and continuously improving approach, Alaska ensures that SCSEP functions as an active and aligned partner within the One-Stop delivery system.

This approach improves access to services, strengthens coordination across programs, and enhances participant outcomes while ensuring services remain responsive to employer demand and workforce system priorities across Alaska.

(F) Efforts to work with local economic development offices in rural locations.

Alaska strengthens SCSEP engagement in rural and remote communities through coordination with local economic development offices and regional partners to align workforce services with community and economic priorities.

**Regional Partnerships and Community Alignment**

SCSEP collaborates with Alaska Native regional and village organizations, tribal health consortia, nonprofit organizations, and community partners that serve as host sites and referral sources across remote regions. These partnerships ensure that services are culturally responsive and aligned with local workforce needs and community priorities.

**Alignment with Regional Economic Priorities**

Coordination efforts focus on aligning training and community service assignments with regional economic development priorities, including:

- Tourism
- Fisheries
- Transportation and logistics
- Natural resource management
- Rural healthcare
- Office administration

These efforts support both participant employment outcomes and local economic development strategies.

**Engagement with Economic Development Entities**

SCSEP collaborates with local economic development offices, workforce and economic development entities, chambers of commerce, and community organizations to:

- Identify employment opportunities in high-demand sectors
- Recruit host agencies and employer partners
- Align training opportunities with regional economic initiatives

These coordinated efforts strengthen connections between SCSEP participants and locally relevant employment opportunities.

**Addressing Rural Access Barriers**

To address geographic and infrastructure barriers, SCSEP incorporates flexible and community-based service delivery approaches, including:

- Remote and technology-supported participation where feasible
- Community-based host site development
- Locally coordinated outreach and service delivery

These strategies expand access to training and work-based learning opportunities and ensure services remain accessible in rural and remote areas.

**Planned Actions to Strengthen Coordination**

Alaska will continue to implement the following actions to strengthen coordination with rural economic development efforts:

- Expand engagement with local and regional economic development offices
- Strengthen alignment between SCSEP training activities and regional economic plans
- Increase the development of host sites in rural and tribal communities

- Enhance outreach and recruitment in underserved rural areas
- Support partnerships that connect participants to locally relevant employment opportunities

These efforts reinforce a seamless, customer-centered service delivery model that improves access to services, reduces geographic barriers, and accelerates transitions to unsubsidized employment in rural communities.

#### **Outcome**

Through these coordinated and expanding efforts, SCSEP enhances economic opportunity for older Alaskans, supports community development, and strengthens pathways to unsubsidized employment in rural and remote communities.

This approach ensures services remain responsive to regional economic conditions, supports local workforce needs, and strengthens alignment between workforce development and economic development strategies across Alaska.

[\(2\) 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\(e\)\) \(May alternatively be discussed in the State strategies section of the strategic plan.\)](#)

Alaska's long-term strategy for engaging employers to support the placement of SCSEP participants in unsubsidized employment is integrated within the State's broader workforce development system and aligned with the State Strategies section of this Combined State Plan.

This strategy emphasizes sustained employer partnerships, alignment with labor market demand, and the development of employment pipelines that connect SCSEP participants to in-demand occupations.

#### **Employer Partnerships and Demand Alignment**

SCSEP collaborates with employers, industry consortia, chambers of commerce, and workforce partners to identify current and projected hiring needs and align training with industry demand.

Participants are prepared for employment through targeted skill development, including:

- Digital literacy
- Workplace communication
- Résumé development and interview preparation
- Industry-recognized credentials aligned with high-demand occupations

These efforts ensure that participants are equipped with the skills necessary to meet employer expectations and successfully transition to unsubsidized employment.

#### **Public Sector and Strategic Initiatives**

The State has expanded partnerships with public-sector employers and military installations and supports initiatives such as Provisional Hire to address workforce shortages and create entry points for SCSEP participants.

SCSEP, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Alaska Job Center staff promote the value of hiring older workers by emphasizing:

- Reliability and work ethic
- Transferable skills and experience
- Strong retention outcomes

These efforts strengthen employer awareness and expand opportunities for SCSEP participants across public- and private-sector employment pathways.

#### **Employer Engagement and Service Integration**

Employer engagement is supported through coordinated, system-wide activities integrated within the Alaska Job Center Network, including:

- Job fairs and hiring events
- Business engagement and business connection services
- Targeted outreach to employers in high-demand sectors
- Coordination with the Business Employment Services Team (BEST)

These activities ensure that employers are connected to a pipeline of qualified SCSEP participants and that services remain aligned with employer demand.

Co-enrollment and braided funding strategies support participant success by addressing employment barriers, including transportation, tools, and work-related expenses.

#### **Development of Employment Pathways**

SCSEP strengthens pathways to unsubsidized employment by:

- Aligning community service assignments with employer needs and career pathways
- Facilitating direct connections between participants and employers
- Supporting transitions from host agency placements to unsubsidized employment where appropriate
- Coordinating with training providers to support skill advancement in high-demand industries

These strategies position SCSEP as a talent pipeline that connects trained participants to employers with workforce needs.

#### **Planned Actions to Strengthen Employer Engagement**

Alaska will continue to implement the following actions to strengthen employer engagement and improve employment outcomes:

- Increase outreach to employers in high-growth and high-demand industries
- Strengthen partnerships with business services teams and sector partnerships
- Expand work-based learning and on-the-job training opportunities
- Enhance alignment between SCSEP training activities and employer needs
- Improve tracking of employer engagement and placement outcomes

These efforts reinforce a seamless, customer-centered service delivery model that improves employer engagement, strengthens job matching, and accelerates transitions to unsubsidized employment.

#### **Outcome**

Through these coordinated and forward-looking strategies, Alaska strengthens employer partnerships, improves job matching, and expands opportunities for SCSEP participants to achieve unsubsidized employment.

This approach ensures employer engagement efforts remain responsive to labor market demand, supports sector-based workforce strategies, and strengthens alignment between workforce development and employer needs across Alaska.

Alaska's long-term strategy for serving minority older individuals under SCSEP is grounded in equitable access, culturally responsive service delivery, and targeted outreach to populations facing disproportionate barriers to employment.

Minority older individuals in Alaska include Alaska Native and American Indian populations, individuals with limited English proficiency, and other underserved communities in both rural and urban areas.

#### **Outreach and Culturally Responsive Service Delivery**

SCSEP conducts inclusive, targeted outreach and develops host-agency placements within minority-serving organizations, including Alaska Native organizations, tribal health providers, community health clinics, senior centers, and nonprofit organizations.

These placements ensure that training environments reflect participants' cultural, linguistic, and community contexts and support engagement in familiar and trusted settings.

#### **Priority Populations and Equitable Access**

SCSEP prioritizes individuals with the greatest economic and social need, consistent with program requirements, and ensures equitable access to services across all service areas.

When individuals are not eligible for SCSEP due to income or other criteria, staff provide referrals to partner programs to ensure continued access to workforce and supportive services.

#### **Partnerships and Service Coordination**

The State strengthens coordination with Alaska Native corporations, tribal entities, community-based organizations, and workforce system partners, including WIOA Titles I–IV programs, Older Americans Act (OAA) Title VI programs, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Public Assistance, Public Housing, and Corrections.

Through coordinated referrals, co-enrollment, and shared case management supported by AlaskaJobs, participants access industry-aligned training, foundational skills development, and supportive services.

#### **Training and Support Strategies**

Training strategies focus on developing:

- Digital literacy
- Workplace communication
- English language skills, as appropriate

SCSEP also provides access to supportive services that address barriers to employment and support successful transitions to unsubsidized employment.

#### **Data-Driven Equity and Continuous Improvement**

The State employs data-driven strategies to monitor equity and program effectiveness. Participation, employment, retention, and wage outcomes are analyzed to identify disparities among minority populations.

These data are used to:

- Inform continuous improvement efforts
- Refine outreach and service delivery strategies
- Establish measurable goals to improve equity in access and outcomes

This approach ensures that service delivery remains responsive to participant needs and labor market conditions and supports continuous improvement in equitable outcomes.

### **Demographic Context**

Alaska's senior population continues to grow and diversify. As of July 2024, approximately 201,428 Alaskans are age 55 and older, representing 27.3 percent of the state's population.

Additional detail on age distribution is provided in Appendix I – Alaska Senior Population Demographics (Age 55+), which supports planning for service delivery, workforce participation strategies, and targeted outreach to older workers.

### **Planned Actions to Strengthen Equity**

Alaska will continue to implement the following actions to strengthen equitable service delivery:

- Expand outreach to underserved minority populations in rural and urban areas
- Strengthen partnerships with tribal and minority-serving organizations
- Enhance culturally responsive service delivery practices
- Improve access to language assistance and supportive services
- Continue refining data-driven strategies to address disparities in outcomes

These efforts reinforce a seamless, customer-centered service delivery model that improves access, reduces disparities, and strengthens employment outcomes for minority older individuals.

### **Outcome**

Through these coordinated and forward-looking strategies, SCSEP ensures that older minority individuals have equitable access to training, supportive services, and employment opportunities.

This approach strengthens economic inclusion, improves employment outcomes, and positions SCSEP as a responsive, equity-driven workforce program aligned with the needs of diverse communities across Alaska.

[\(4\) 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 locations of the 75 individuals most in need of community services, as well as the groups working to meet those needs. \(20 CFR 641.330\)](#)

Alaska directs SCSEP community service assignments to nonprofit organizations and public agencies that provide essential services while supporting participant skill development and pathways to unsubsidized employment. Host sites include senior centers, schools, healthcare facilities, libraries, and other community-based organizations where participants engage in supervised, work-based training that builds transferable skills such as customer service, clerical support, and digital literacy.

### **Geographic Areas of Need**

Community service needs are most pronounced in rural and remote areas of Alaska, as well as in population centers including Anchorage, the Matanuska–Susitna Borough, Fairbanks, the Kenai Peninsula, and Juneau. Rural and remote regions, including Southwest Alaska, the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, the Northwest Arctic, Bristol Bay, and rural Southeast Alaska, experience particularly high demand due to geographic isolation, limited infrastructure, and reduced access to essential services.

SCSEP prioritizes service delivery in these areas to ensure equitable access to both community services and workforce opportunities.

### **Individuals Most in Need of Services**

Consistent with 20 CFR 641.330, SCSEP prioritizes individuals with the greatest economic and social need and those with the greatest barriers to employment. The 75 individuals most in need of community services are identified through program intake, assessment, and prioritization processes and are primarily located in high-need rural and urban service areas.

These individuals include those who:

- Have low incomes
- Have limited employment histories
- Are members of minority populations
- Are veterans or eligible spouses
- Have limited English proficiency or low literacy
- Are formerly incarcerated or under supervision
- Reside in rural or remote communities with limited access to services

These populations are concentrated in both urban centers with high service demand and rural regions with limited service availability.

### **High-Demand Community Services**

The 75 individuals most in need are connected to host agencies that provide services addressing critical community needs, including:

- Digital access and digital literacy support
- Employment and job search assistance
- Information and referral services
- Transportation assistance
- Congregate meals and nutrition services
- Housing navigation and housing stability support
- Healthcare and long-term care navigation
- Utility and food assistance
- Mental health support services
- Financial literacy services
- Vision and related health services

These services reflect the most pressing needs identified across Alaska's communities and align with both community priorities and participants' employment pathways.

### **Organizations Providing Services**

SCSEP partners with a broad network of organizations to meet these needs, including:

- Tribal entities and Alaska Native organizations
- Nonprofit and community-based organizations
- Senior centers and Aging and Disability Resource Centers
- Healthcare providers and community health clinics
- Schools and libraries
- Transportation providers and housing authorities
- Faith-based organizations and food banks
- Vocational training providers and the University of Alaska system

These organizations serve as host agencies and are strategically located in areas where the 75 most in-need individuals reside, ensuring that services are accessible and aligned with community demand.

### **Participant Skill Development**

SCSEP participants gain hands-on experience delivering these services while developing skills aligned with in-demand occupations.

Training emphasizes:

- Customer service
- Clerical and administrative functions
- Basic office technology
- Workplace readiness competencies

These skills support successful transitions to unsubsidized employment and align with regional labor market needs.

### **Data-Driven Targeting and Continuous Improvement**

Alaska utilizes data from AlaskaJobs, labor market information, and partner program insights to identify high-need communities and ensure that the 75 individuals most in need are effectively targeted and served.

This data-driven approach supports:

- Continuous refinement of service locations and host site development
- Alignment of community service assignments with identified needs
- Monitoring of participant outcomes to improve program effectiveness

These efforts ensure that service delivery remains responsive to changing community conditions and workforce demands.

### **Outcome**

Through this coordinated and data-informed approach, Alaska ensures that the 75 individuals most in need of community services are connected to appropriate services where they need them most.

This approach strengthens community service delivery, supports vulnerable populations, and prepares participants for successful transition into unsubsidized employment while aligning SCSEP activities with broader workforce and community development priorities.

[\(5\) 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 achieve the goals of the program better. This may include recommendations to the Department as appropriate. \(20 CFR 641.302\(k\)\)](#)

Alaska's long-term strategy to improve SCSEP services focuses on continuous improvement, equitable access, and program adaptability to the State's unique geographic and demographic conditions.

The State is implementing targeted enhancements to program design, service delivery, and program operations to expand access, modernize training, and strengthen alignment with labor market demand.

### **Program Design and Service Delivery Enhancements**

Key program design improvements include:

- Integrating digital literacy and remote work competencies
- Expanding sector-based training pathways in high-demand industries such as healthcare, tourism, transportation, logistics, and administrative services
- Increasing the use of flexible and remote service delivery models

These strategies improve access for participants in rural and underserved communities and ensure that training aligns with evolving workplace expectations.

#### **Data-Driven Strategy and Regional Responsiveness**

SCSEP employs regionally tailored strategies that respond to local labor market conditions and community needs. The program leverages AlaskaJobs and SCSEP performance data to identify service gaps across regions and priority populations, including by race and ethnicity, disability status, and other characteristics.

These data-driven approaches support:

- Continuous improvement
- Targeted resource allocation
- Improved participation and employment outcomes

This approach ensures that program design remains responsive, scalable, and aligned with both community needs and workforce demand.

#### **Employer Engagement and Sector Alignment**

To strengthen employer engagement and training relevance, Alaska has expanded partnerships with host agencies and employers through sector-based training pipelines and structured employer input.

These partnerships:

- Inform training design
- Validate required competencies
- Support direct connections to unsubsidized employment opportunities

This approach strengthens SCSEP's role as a workforce pipeline aligned with employer needs.

#### **Alignment With WIOA and System Integration**

The State continues to align SCSEP with Alaska's WIOA Combined Plan by advancing sector partnerships, developing career pathways, sharing cross-program data, and implementing job-driven investment strategies. Co-enrollment and braided funding with workforce and education partners are expanded to:

- Maximize resources
- Reduce duplication
- Improve service integration across the Alaska Job Center Network

These strategies reinforce a fully integrated, system-wide approach to service delivery.

#### **Supportive Services and Benefits Coordination**

Long-term improvements include enhancements to supportive services and benefits counseling. Participants receive guidance on work incentives and, as appropriate, are connected to programs such as Social Security work incentives, Medicaid, While Working, Ticket to Work, and related services.

Coordination with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Aging and Disability Resource Centers ensures comprehensive, person-centered support that addresses barriers to employment and supports retention.

#### **Grantee and Program Operator Strategy**

To improve program effectiveness, Alaska will continue to refine the roles and utilization of SCSEP grantees and program operators by:

- Strengthening performance expectations and accountability measures
- Enhancing coordination between grantees and One-Stop partners

- Expanding operator capacity to serve rural and underserved communities
- Increasing use of community-based and remote service delivery models
- Supporting ongoing staff development and cross-training

These strategies ensure that program operators are aligned with statewide priorities and positioned to deliver high-quality services across all regions.

#### **Operational and Performance Improvements**

Alaska is optimizing the use of SCSEP staff, grantees, and One-Stop partners through clearly defined roles, strengthened co-location within the Alaska Job Center Network, expanded use of remote and community-based host sites, and ongoing staff training.

Performance management strategies emphasize key indicators, including:

- Enrollment
- Employment outcomes
- Retention
- Earnings
- Equity measures

These efforts support accountability, continuous improvement, and sustained program effectiveness.

#### **Recommendations and Continuous Improvement**

Alaska will continue to assess program effectiveness and may provide recommendations to the U.S. Department of Labor to support program flexibility in rural and remote areas, including considerations related to:

- Flexible service delivery models
- Host site development in remote communities
- Participant support strategies tailored to geographic challenges

These recommendations support the program's ongoing evolution and its alignment with Alaska's unique service delivery environment.

#### **Outcome**

Through these long-term strategies, Alaska will continue to improve SCSEP service delivery, expand access for underserved populations, and strengthen pathways to unsubsidized employment.

This approach ensures that SCSEP remains responsive, innovative, and aligned with statewide workforce priorities, employer needs, and the evolving economic landscape across Alaska.

[\(6\) 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\(f\)\)](#)

Alaska's strategy for continuous improvement in SCSEP performance is designed to increase participants' entry into unsubsidized employment and to meet or exceed the performance levels established under Section 513(a)(2)(E)(ii) of the Older Americans Act.

The State utilizes a data-driven, integrated approach that aligns service delivery, training, and employer engagement to improve outcomes across all required performance indicators.

#### **Performance Accountability and Monitoring**

SCSEP is governed by core performance measures, including:

- Unsubsidized employment in the second and fourth quarters after exit

- Median earnings
- Effectiveness in serving employers and host agencies

Alaska uses AlaskaJobs and the SCSEP Grantee Performance Management System (GPMS) to conduct ongoing performance monitoring. This includes:

- Regular data reviews
- Trend analysis and root cause analysis
- Implementation of corrective actions to address performance gaps

These practices ensure the timely identification of performance issues and support continuous improvement across the program.

#### **Participant Assessment and Individualized Planning**

Continuous improvement efforts begin at intake, where standardized assessments are used to evaluate participant skills, interests, aptitudes, and barriers to employment.

Individualized Employment Plans (IEPs) are developed to align participant goals with local labor market demand. Co-enrollment with WIOA programs expands access to training, supportive services, and job placement resources, strengthening pathways to unsubsidized employment.

#### **Training and Skill Development Strategies**

To enhance job readiness and accelerate employment outcomes, SCSEP expands competency-based training in:

- Digital literacy
- Workplace communication
- Sector-specific skills aligned with high-demand industries

Priority sectors include healthcare, hospitality and tourism, transportation and logistics, and administrative services.

Training strategies are supported by wraparound services, including transportation assistance, tools, and work-related supplies, as well as flexible and distance service delivery options where appropriate.

#### **Employer Engagement and Work-Based Learning**

Employer engagement strategies include:

- Partnerships with employers and industry groups
- Work-based learning opportunities and on-the-job training
- Sector-based employment pipelines

Host agencies are evaluated on their effectiveness in supporting participants' transitions to unsubsidized employment. Host site development is prioritized for placements with strong potential to lead to unsubsidized employment outcomes.

#### **Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Cycle**

Alaska applies a structured continuous improvement framework that includes:

- Ongoing performance monitoring and data analysis
- Identification of performance gaps and disparities across regions and populations
- Implementation of targeted corrective actions and service adjustments
- Evaluation of outcomes and refinement of strategies

Quality assurance is strengthened through cross-training of SCSEP, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), and Alaska Job Center staff; shared case management; and coordinated service delivery.

The State monitors key performance indicators, including employment entry, retention, earnings, and equity outcomes, to ensure alignment with federal performance requirements and continuous improvement across the program.

#### **Data-Driven Performance Optimization**

Alaska enhances performance outcomes by strategically using data systems and predictive analytics to identify trends, inform adjustments to service delivery, and improve participant outcomes.

This approach supports:

- Early identification of participants at risk of not achieving employment outcomes
- Targeted interventions and service adjustments
- Alignment of training and placement strategies with labor market demand

These efforts strengthen the State's ability to proactively manage performance and improve results across all indicators.

#### **Planned Actions to Improve Performance**

Alaska will continue to implement the following actions to strengthen performance outcomes:

- Enhance data-driven decision-making and performance tracking
- Expand co-enrollment and integrated service delivery strategies
- Strengthen employer engagement and placement pipelines
- Increase access to training aligned with high-demand occupations
- Improve service delivery in rural and underserved communities
- Continue refining strategies to address disparities in outcomes

These actions reinforce a seamless, customer-centered service delivery model that improves employment outcomes and ensures alignment with federal performance expectations.

#### **Outcome**

Through this structured, data-driven, continuous-improvement framework, Alaska strengthens SCSEP performance, enhances service quality, and ensures participants achieve sustained, measurable gains in unsubsidized employment.

This approach supports achievement of, and continuous improvement beyond, the performance levels established under the Older Americans Act and ensures that SCSEP remains a high-performing, accountable, and results-driven program aligned with workforce system goals.

#### **(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))

Alaska prioritizes SCSEP projects in localities where services authorized under Title V are most needed, based on concentrations of older individuals with the greatest economic and social need and barriers to employment, consistent with 20 CFR 641.325(d).

These localities include Anchorage, Fairbanks, the Matanuska–Susitna Borough, the Kenai Peninsula, Bethel, and Juneau, as well as rural, tribal, and frontier communities with limited access to workforce services, employment opportunities, and transportation.

Ongoing impacts from the loss of host sites and employment opportunities following the COVID-19 pandemic have further increased the need for targeted project development and sustained partner engagement in these areas.

#### **Priority Populations**

SCSEP serves populations with the greatest economic and social need, consistent with statutory requirements and Alaska's demographic and economic conditions. These populations include:

- Alaska Native elders
- Older adults with disabilities
- Individuals living in poverty or on fixed incomes
- Individuals experiencing homelessness
- Justice-involved older adults
- Widowed or divorced individuals
- Veterans
- Individuals with limited work histories or who are not eligible for Social Security benefits

These populations are present in both urban centers and rural communities, with particularly high concentrations in rural and tribal regions.

#### **Data-Driven Identification of Need**

To identify where SCSEP services are most needed, Alaska utilizes multiple data sources, including:

- Poverty rates
- Unemployment trends
- U.S. Census demographic data
- Analysis from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development Research and Analysis Section

This analysis is supplemented by input from local partners, including tribal organizations, community-based providers, and Alaska Job Center staff, to ensure that service delivery reflects real-time community needs and conditions.

#### **Project Placement and Service Areas**

SCSEP projects are developed and implemented in locations where community service needs and participant demand are highest. Projects are primarily carried out through host agency placements in public and nonprofit organizations.

Key service areas include:

- Government services
- Senior services
- Transportation
- Education
- Healthcare
- Retail trade
- Leisure and hospitality

Training and community service opportunities are made available statewide, contingent upon the availability of host agencies and qualified supervision.

#### **Access and Rural Service Delivery**

Host site assignments are made with consideration of geographic access, including travel distance, transportation availability, and local infrastructure, to ensure participants can reasonably access services.

In rural and remote areas, SCSEP utilizes flexible, community-based placements, including locally based host agencies and, where feasible, remote service delivery strategies, to expand access and reduce barriers to participation.

#### **Equitable Distribution**

The State ensures that SCSEP services are distributed across both urban and rural regions to achieve equitable access for eligible individuals statewide.

Allocation and project placement decisions are guided by:

- Data-driven analysis of need and service gaps
- Community input from local and regional partners
- Ongoing evaluation of participation, service levels, and outcomes across regions and populations

This approach ensures that resources are strategically allocated to underserved areas and priority populations while maintaining statewide coverage.

#### **Outcome**

By aligning project placement, outreach, and training strategies with local labor market conditions and community needs, Alaska ensures that SCSEP services are delivered to the areas and populations most in need.

This approach strengthens local workforce capacity, improves equitable access to services, and supports older Alaskans in achieving unsubsidized employment and long-term economic self-sufficiency.

[\(2\) 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.](#)

Alaska prioritizes SCSEP projects in localities where services authorized under Title V are most needed, based on concentrations of older individuals with the greatest economic and social need and barriers to employment, consistent with 20 CFR 641.325(d).

These localities include Anchorage, Fairbanks, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, the Kenai Peninsula, Bethel, and Juneau, as well as rural, tribal, and frontier communities with limited access to workforce services, employment opportunities, and transportation.

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SCSEP serves populations with the greatest economic and social need, consistent with statutory requirements and Alaska's demographic and economic conditions. These populations include:

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- U.S. Census demographic data
- Analysis from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development Research and Analysis Section

This analysis is supplemented by input from local partners, including tribal organizations, community-based providers, and Alaska Job Center staff, to ensure that service delivery reflects real-time community needs and conditions.

**Project Locations and Authorized Positions**

SCSEP projects are conducted statewide across boroughs and census areas in alignment with the federally established equitable distribution methodology. This methodology determines the number of authorized positions based on the relative share of eligible populations in each geographic area.

The table below summarizes authorized positions by major regions for Program Year (PY) 2025 and PY 2024, including changes between program years. The full list of boroughs and census areas, including detailed position allocations, is provided in Appendix J – SCSEP Authorized Positions by Borough and Census Area.

**Table 1. SCSEP Authorized Positions Summary by Region**

Region	PY 2025	PY 2024	Change
<b>Anchorage Municipality</b>	32	35	(3)
<b>Matanuska-Susitna Borough</b>	16	16	0
<b>Fairbanks North Star Borough</b>	11	12	(1)
<b>Kenai Peninsula Borough</b>	12	13	(1)
<b>Southeast Alaska (Combined)*</b>	9	11	(2)
<b>Rural and Remote Areas (Combined)**</b>	17	22	(5)
<b>Total Slots</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>(10)</b>

\* Southeast Alaska includes Juneau, Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Sitka City and Borough, Petersburg Borough, Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area, Haines Borough, and Hoonah-Angoon Census Area.

\*\* Rural and Remote Areas include all remaining boroughs and census areas not listed above.

Adjustments to authorized positions reflect updated population data and application of the federal equitable distribution methodology. These changes ensure that SCSEP positions remain aligned with demographic shifts and the distribution of eligible individuals across the State.

**Project Placement and Service Areas**

SCSEP projects are developed and implemented in locations where community service needs and participant demand are highest. Projects are primarily carried out through host agency placements in public and nonprofit organizations.

Key service areas include:

- Government services
- Senior services
- Transportation
- Education

- Healthcare
- Retail trade
- Leisure and hospitality

Training and community service opportunities are made available statewide, contingent upon the availability of host agencies and qualified supervision.

#### **Access and Rural Service Delivery**

Host site assignments are made with consideration of geographic access, including travel distance, transportation availability, and local infrastructure, to ensure participants can reasonably access services.

In rural and remote areas, SCSEP utilizes flexible, community-based placements, including locally based host agencies and, where feasible, remote service delivery strategies, to expand access and reduce barriers to participation.

#### **Equitable Distribution**

The State ensures that SCSEP services are distributed across both urban and rural regions to achieve equitable access for eligible individuals statewide.

Allocation and project placement decisions are guided by:

- Data-driven analysis of need and service gaps
- Community input from local and regional partners
- Ongoing evaluation of participation, service levels, and outcomes across regions and populations

This approach ensures that resources are strategically allocated to underserved areas and priority populations while maintaining statewide coverage.

#### **Participant Protections and Service Continuity**

Alaska maintains a participant-centered approach to implementing equitable distribution and ensures that changes in slot allocations do not adversely impact current SCSEP participants.

- No participant will be displaced from their position due to equitable distribution adjustments
- Participants will continue to receive services regardless of geographic changes
- No enrollee will be terminated solely due to changes in authorized positions

The State maintains flexibility in service delivery to support participants in areas where authorized positions may decrease. This approach ensures continuity of services, minimizes disruption, and supports successful transitions to unsubsidized employment.

#### **Outcome**

By aligning project placement, outreach, and training strategies with local labor market conditions and community needs, Alaska ensures that SCSEP services are delivered to the areas and populations most in need.

This approach strengthens local workforce capacity, improves equitable access to services, and supports older Alaskans in achieving unsubsidized employment and long-term economic self-sufficiency.

(3) Describe current slot imbalances and proposed steps to correct inequities to achieve equitable distribution.

Alaska's SCSEP operates without a waitlist; however, slot imbalances persist due to the State's vast geography, rural isolation, and uneven distribution of host-site capacity.

**Current Slot Imbalances**

Slot imbalances in Alaska are characterized by relatively higher enrollment and utilization in urban hub communities and under-enrollment in rural and remote regions.

Urban hub communities, including Anchorage, Fairbanks, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, the Kenai Peninsula, and Juneau, have greater infrastructure, transportation access, and a higher concentration of host agencies, resulting in comparatively higher slot utilization.

In contrast, rural, remote, and tribal communities where concentrations of older individuals with the greatest economic and social needs are often highest experience under-enrollment due to:

- Limited host-site availability
- Transportation barriers
- Reduced access to workforce services

**Contributing Factors**

Additional factors contributing to slot imbalances include:

- Pandemic-related host-site closures
- Seasonal employment fluctuations
- Income-eligibility dynamics, including rapid employment placement or ineligibility due to income thresholds

These conditions can result in temporary underutilization or uneven distribution of authorized positions across service areas.

**Data-Driven Redistribution Strategy**

To correct these imbalances, Alaska implements a data-driven and adaptive approach to slot allocation and service delivery.

The State regularly analyzes:

- Poverty levels
- Unemployment rates
- Senior population density
- Current slot utilization

These data inform redistribution strategies, and authorized positions are adjusted, as appropriate, to better align with areas of greatest need.

This approach ensures that slot allocation remains responsive to demographic changes, economic conditions, and service demand across regions.

**Flexible Slot Management**

Alaska maintains flexibility through a strategic reserve approach to slot management, allowing the State to rapidly deploy positions to areas experiencing increased demand or emerging opportunities.

Quarterly equity reviews and seasonal adjustments ensure that slot distribution remains responsive to changing economic conditions and local labor market demand.

#### **Targeted Outreach and Capacity Building**

Targeted outreach is conducted to increase enrollment and rebuild host-site capacity in underserved regions.

These efforts leverage partnerships with:

- Alaska Job Centers
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
- Tribal organizations
- Faith-based entities
- Chambers of commerce
- Community-based organizations

Outreach strategies include community engagement, on-site recruitment, and distribution of informational materials to connect eligible individuals to SCSEP services.

#### **Integrated Service Delivery**

Shared case management and co-enrollment with WIOA partner programs maximize available resources, reduce duplication of services, and improve participant access to training and employment opportunities.

Cross-training of staff strengthens referral systems, improves service coordination, and enhances placement outcomes.

#### **Continuous Monitoring and Equity Assurance**

Alaska applies an ongoing equity-focused monitoring approach to ensure that slot distribution aligns with federal equitable distribution requirements and statewide priorities.

This includes:

- Regular review of participation and service levels across regions
- Monitoring of disparities among priority populations
- Adjustment of strategies to address identified gaps

These efforts ensure accountability and support continuous improvement in equitable service delivery.

#### **Outcome**

Through these coordinated and data-driven actions, Alaska systematically addresses slot imbalances, improves utilization of authorized positions, and ensures that SCSEP services are equitably distributed across urban, rural, and tribal communities.

This approach strengthens access to employment and training opportunities, supports efficient use of program resources, and advances economic inclusion for older Alaskans statewide.

(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.

Alaska's long-term strategy for achieving equitable distribution of SCSEP positions is grounded in a structured, data-driven process that actively moves positions from overserved to underserved locations in compliance with 20 CFR 641.365.

The State conducts regular analyses of slot distribution relative to need to identify areas where positions exceed or fall below equitable levels.

#### **Current Distribution Context**

Urban areas such as Anchorage and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough maintain a higher concentration of authorized positions due to larger senior populations and greater host-site capacity.

In contrast, underserved regions, including Bethel and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Bristol Bay, the Northwest Arctic, Nome, Kodiak, rural Southeast Alaska, and other frontier communities, have fewer positions relative to need due to:

- Geographic barriers
- Limited infrastructure
- Reduced availability of host agencies

#### **Phased Reallocation Strategy**

To address these imbalances, Alaska implements a phased reallocation strategy that gradually shifts positions from overserved to underserved areas while minimizing disruption to current participants.

Because the State is not over-enrolled, position adjustments are implemented through:

- Natural attrition
- Vacancy management
- Strategic placement of new enrollments

This approach ensures that no active participants are displaced while advancing equitable distribution.

#### **Data-Driven Allocation Framework**

The State conducts quarterly equity reviews and develops an annual equitable distribution plan to guide adjustments. Allocation decisions are informed by:

- Poverty rates
- Unemployment levels
- Senior population density
- Rural isolation and transportation barriers
- Availability of qualified host agencies and on-site supervision

This framework ensures that position distribution remains responsive to changing demographic and economic conditions.

#### **Flexible Deployment Strategy**

Alaska maintains flexibility through a limited reserve of positions that can be deployed to underserved areas as new host sites are developed or demand increases.

This approach allows the State to respond quickly to emerging needs while maintaining overall program stability and alignment with equitable distribution requirements.

#### **Consultation and Implementation**

In accordance with 20 CFR 641.365, Alaska consults with:

- SCSEP subrecipients
- Program staff
- Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB)
- Alaska Job Centers
- Host agencies

The State provides advance notice, technical assistance, and targeted outreach to support capacity building in receiving areas and ensure the successful implementation of position redistribution.

#### **Monitoring and Performance Alignment**

Performance and distribution outcomes are monitored through AlaskaJobs and the SCSEP Grantee Performance Management System (GPMS) to ensure positions remain aligned with areas of greatest need and that slot utilization is maximized.

#### **Ongoing Gaps and Targeted Response**

Despite these efforts, service gaps persist in regions such as Southwest Alaska, the Northwest Arctic, the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, and parts of Southeast Alaska.

To address these disparities, SCSEP staff conduct sustained outreach and partner with local and tribal organizations to:

- Develop host sites
- Recruit participants
- Expand access to training and employment opportunities

#### **Outcome**

Through this long-term, adaptive strategy, Alaska ensures that SCSEP positions are progressively redistributed in alignment with equitable distribution requirements, while maintaining participant stability and expanding access to services for older adults in underserved and rural communities.

#### **(B) Equitably serves rural and urban areas.**

Alaska's SCSEP program is designed to equitably serve both urban and rural communities, recognizing the State's vast geography, transportation barriers, and diverse population distribution.

#### **Urban Service Delivery Context**

Urban hubs such as Anchorage, Fairbanks, and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough provide greater access to host agencies, public transportation, and workforce infrastructure. These conditions support:

- In-person training
- Co-enrollment with partner programs
- Direct service delivery through Alaska Job Centers

#### **Rural and Remote Service Challenges**

Rural and remote regions often face:

- Limited infrastructure
- Fewer employment opportunities

- Reduced access to workforce services

To ensure equitable access, Alaska implements tailored service delivery strategies that address these geographic and logistical challenges while maintaining consistent program quality and participant outcomes.

#### **Targeted Service Strategies**

SCSEP coordinates with Alaska Job Centers, WIOA partner programs, tribal organizations, and community-based nonprofits to expand access statewide.

Key strategies include:

In Rural Areas:

- Development of community-based host sites
- Distance and flexible service delivery models
- Targeted outreach to identify and enroll eligible participants

In Urban Areas:

- Co-location within Alaska Job Centers
- Integrated case management
- Employer engagement to maximize placement opportunities

#### **Equitable Distribution and Access**

Annual equitable distribution review guide:

- Reallocation of participant positions
- Development of host agencies in underserved rural areas
- Expansion of digital access and remote training opportunities

These efforts ensure that service availability is not limited by geography and that participants in both rural and urban communities have access to comparable training, supportive services, and employment pathways.

#### **Sustained Statewide Coverage**

The State's long-term strategy for sustaining equitable service delivery includes:

- Awarding subrecipient grants to operators with demonstrated regional capacity
- Embedding SCSEP staff within Alaska Job Centers
- Strengthening partnerships with tribal and community organizations to extend reach into remote areas

#### **Outcome**

Through these coordinated strategies, Alaska ensures that SCSEP services are equitably distributed and accessible across both rural and urban communities, supporting comparable outcomes, promoting economic inclusion, and enabling older Alaskans to achieve unsubsidized employment regardless of location.

[\(C\) Serves individuals afforded priority for service under 20 CFR 641.520. \(20 CFR 641.302\(a\), 641.365, 641.520\)](#)

Alaska's SCSEP ensures priority of service for individuals with the greatest economic and social need and those with the greatest barriers to employment, in full alignment with 20 CFR 641.520 and the Older Americans Act.

#### **Priority of Service Implementation**

The State applies standardized priority-of-service procedures during intake, assessment, and enrollment to ensure that eligible individuals who meet priority criteria are served first.

Program staff utilize consistent screening and documentation processes to identify priority populations at the point of entry. When enrollment opportunities are limited, individuals meeting priority criteria are given precedence for participation and placement into community service assignments and related authorized activities.

SCSEP staff coordinate with the Alaska Job Center Network and WIOA Title I partner programs to ensure that priority populations receive equitable access to services across both urban and rural areas.

#### **Priority Populations**

Priority is afforded to eligible individuals who meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Age 65 or older
- Individuals with disabilities
- Individuals with limited English proficiency or low literacy
- Residents of rural areas
- Veterans and eligible spouses (as defined under 38 U.S.C. 4215(a))
- Individuals with low employment prospects
- Individuals who have not obtained employment after utilizing WIOA Title I one-stop services
- Individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Individuals who are formerly incarcerated or under supervision following release within the last five years

#### **Consistency and Monitoring**

Alaska ensures that priority of service is applied consistently across all service areas through:

- Staff training
- Cross-program coordination
- Ongoing monitoring and oversight

These procedures ensure that individuals with the greatest need receive timely and equitable access to SCSEP services while maintaining compliance with federal requirements and consistent service delivery statewide.

[\(5\) The ratio of eligible individuals in each service area to the total eligible population in the State. \(20 CFR 641.325\(a\)\)](#)

Alaska determines the distribution of SCSEP positions across service areas based on the ratio of eligible individuals in each area to the statewide total eligible population, consistent with 20 CFR 641.325(a).

#### **Methodology for Calculating Ratios**

This ratio is calculated using:

- U.S. Census data
- Poverty thresholds
- Demographic estimates of individuals age 55 and older who meet SCSEP eligibility criteria

These data sources are used to estimate the proportion of eligible individuals within each service area relative to the statewide total.

#### **Application of the Equitable Distribution Formula**

Alaska applies the federal equitable distribution methodology to align authorized SCSEP positions with the proportional share of eligible individuals in each geographic area.

This ensures that:

- Service capacity reflects relative need across all regions
- Both urban and rural areas are proportionally represented

- Resource allocation is grounded in objective demographic and economic data

The resulting ratios directly inform the State's equitable distribution plan and annual slot allocation decisions.

#### **Ongoing Review and Alignment**

Alaska conducts annual reviews of equitable distribution reports and demographic data to assess alignment between current slot allocations and the statewide ratio of eligible individuals.

These reviews include:

- Comparison of authorized positions to proportional eligibility shares
- Identification of over-served and underserved areas
- Validation of alignment with the State's equitable distribution plan

#### **Adjustment Strategies**

Where discrepancies are identified, the State implements gradual adjustments through:

- Attrition-based reallocation
- Strategic placement of new enrollments

These strategies allow Alaska to realign positions with the eligible population ratio while avoiding disruption to current participants.

#### **Continuous Improvement and Equity Assurance**

To strengthen alignment over time, Alaska integrates ratio analysis into its broader framework for equitable distribution and monitoring.

This includes:

- Incorporation of ratio data into quarterly equity reviews
- Coordination with subrecipients to adjust service strategies
- Alignment with long-term redistribution and rural access strategies

#### **Outcome**

Through this structured and data-driven approach, Alaska ensures that SCSEP positions are distributed in proportion to the eligible population across the State, supporting equitable access to services and compliance with federal equitable distribution requirements.

(6) The relative distribution of eligible individuals who:

- (A) reside in urban and rural areas within the State
- (B) Have the greatest economic need
- (C) Are minorities
- (D) Are limited English proficient.
- (E) Have the greatest social need. (20 CFR 641.325(b))

Alaska's SCSEP serves individuals with the greatest economic and social need, consistent with federal requirements. The following data reflect the relative distribution of enrolled participants across priority populations identified in 20 CFR 641.325(b).

These data inform outreach, equitable distribution, service design, and continuous improvement strategies to ensure alignment with federal priorities and statewide workforce needs.

#### **A. Individuals Residing in Urban and Rural Areas**

- 56% of participants reside in urban areas
- 44% of participants reside in rural areas

This distribution reflects Alaska's geographic realities and demonstrates ongoing efforts to maintain access to services across both population centers and remote communities.

#### **B. Individuals with the Greatest Economic Need**

- 87% are at or below the poverty level
- 81% are receiving public assistance
- 47% are homeless or at risk of homelessness
- 8% are veterans or eligible spouses of veterans

These data indicate that SCSEP is effectively prioritizing individuals with significant economic barriers to employment.

#### **C. Minority Individuals**

- 48% of participants are minorities

This reflects strong engagement with diverse populations, including Alaska Native communities and other historically underserved groups.

#### **D. Individuals with Limited English Proficiency**

- 4% have limited English proficiency
- 7% have low literacy skills

These data inform targeted outreach and service strategies, including language access and literacy support.

#### **E. Individuals with the Greatest Social Need**

- 76% have low employment prospects
- 37% have severely limited employment prospects in areas of persistent unemployment
- 26% have disabilities
- 25% have severe disabilities
- 16% are frail
- 13% are age 75 or older

These indicators demonstrate that SCSEP is serving individuals facing multiple and significant barriers to employment.

#### **Supplemental Priority Population Data**

- 17% of participants are formerly incarcerated individuals, consistent with TEGL 17-20

This additional data reflects Alaska's commitment to serving individuals with significant reentry barriers and supporting pathways to employment.

#### **Use of Data for Program Improvement**

Alaska integrates these data into its broader planning and performance framework to:

- Inform equitable distribution and slot allocation decisions
- Guide targeted outreach to underserved populations
- Strengthen partnerships with community and tribal organizations

- Align service strategies with participant needs and barriers

Regular review of these data ensures that SCSEP services remain responsive, equitable, and aligned with federal priorities.

### **Outcome**

These data demonstrate that Alaska's SCSEP is effectively targeting individuals with the greatest economic and social need and those facing significant barriers to employment.

Through ongoing analysis and strategic application of these data, the State ensures equitable access to services, strengthens program effectiveness, and advances economic inclusion for older Alaskans.

(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))

Alaska's SCSEP implements a structured, participant-centered approach to avoid disruptions when positions are redistributed, when new Census or other reliable data become available, or when over-enrollment occurs, in accordance with 20 CFR 641.325(i) and 641.302(b).

### **Participant-Centered Continuity Strategy**

The State prioritizes continuity of service for all participants and host agencies. When adjustments to position distribution are necessary, Alaska implements gradual, planned transitions rather than abrupt changes.

Redistribution of positions is primarily achieved through:

- Natural attrition
- Strategic vacancy management (not refilling positions in overserved areas)
- Targeted placement of new enrollments in underserved areas

This approach ensures that current participants are not displaced from their assignments.

### **Phased Adjustment Approach**

Alaska applies a phased adjustment model to ensure that redistribution occurs over time and aligns with participant exit patterns, enrollment cycles, and local capacity.

Adjustments are timed to:

- Align with participant exits and completions
- Avoid interruption of active community service assignments
- Maintain stability for host agencies and service providers

This structured approach minimizes disruption while maintaining compliance with equitable distribution requirements.

### **Transition Planning and Communication**

When redistribution or other adjustments are required, SCSEP staff initiate coordinated transition planning. This includes timely communication with affected participants, host agencies, and partner programs to outline anticipated changes, timelines, and available options.

Staff works directly with participants to maintain continuity of services through:

- Reassignment to alternate host sites, where appropriate
- Continuation of existing assignments when feasible
- Connection to other workforce services and employment opportunities

#### **Service Continuity and System Integration**

To further minimize disruption, Alaska leverages the Alaska Job Center Network to ensure uninterrupted access to employment and training services, including:

- Assessments and case management
- Training and skill development
- Job placement assistance

Where in-person opportunities are limited, SCSEP utilizes flexible service delivery models, including remote and hybrid training options, to maintain participant engagement and progress toward employment goals.

#### **Monitoring and Early Identification**

The State continuously monitors enrollment levels and position distribution through AlaskaJobs and the SCSEP Grantee Performance Management System (GPMS) to identify potential over-enrollment or imbalances early.

This monitoring framework enables:

- Early identification of redistribution needs
- Proactive planning for adjustments
- Coordination with subrecipients and host agencies

#### **Coordination with Partners and Subrecipients**

Regular communication with subrecipients, host agencies, and partner programs ensures alignment and supports timely, coordinated implementation of any necessary adjustments.

Technical assistance is provided to support:

- Host site transitions
- Participant reassignment
- Capacity building in underserved areas

#### **Continuous Improvement and Risk Mitigation**

Alaska integrates disruption avoidance strategies into its broader equitable distribution and monitoring framework.

This includes:

- Ongoing evaluation of redistribution outcomes
- Adjustment of strategies based on lessons learned
- Alignment with federal guidance and best practices

These efforts ensure that redistribution processes remain effective, equitable, and minimally disruptive.

#### **Outcome**

Through attrition-based redistribution, phased adjustments, proactive monitoring, coordinated communication, and flexible service delivery, Alaska ensures that required changes are implemented with minimal disruption. This approach maintains participant stability, supports continuity of host agency, and advances successful transitions to unsubsidized employment.

## APPENDICES

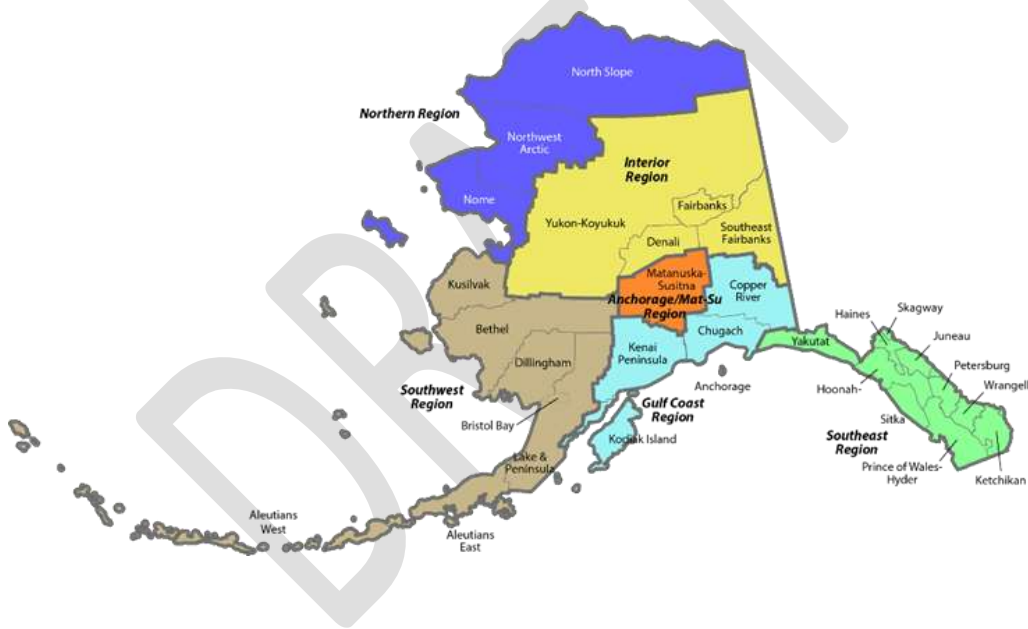
The following appendices provide supporting data, figures, and program descriptions referenced throughout the State Plan. These materials supplement Sections II and III and provide additional detail on economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and partner programs.

### Appendix A – Economic and Labor Market Data

This appendix provides detailed labor market information supporting the economic analysis presented in Section II(a)(1)(A). Data are derived from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) Research and Analysis Section and reflect the most recent available statewide and regional labor market information.

#### Statewide and Regional Economic Structure

- **Figure A-1. Alaska Economic Regions Map**  
Displays Alaska's six economic regions used for labor market analysis and workforce planning.



## Industry Employment Outlook

- **Figure A-2. Alaska Job Outlook by Industry, 2026**

Provides projected statewide employment trends across major industry sectors.

	Monthly avg, 2024 <sup>1</sup>	Monthly avg, 2025 <sup>1</sup>	Change, 2024-25	Percent change	JOBS FORECAST		
					Monthly avg, 2026	Change, 2025-26	Percent change
<b>Total Nonfarm Employment<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>333,900</b>	<b>337,800</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>340,800</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>0.9%</b>
Total Private	254,300	258,300	4,000	1.6%	261,700	3,400	1.3%
Mining and Logging	12,500	13,400	900	7.2%	14,400	1,000	7.5%
Oil and Gas	8,300	9,000	700	8.4%	10,000	1,000	11.1%
Construction	18,500	19,500	1,000	5.4%	20,200	700	3.6%
Manufacturing	11,900	11,900	0	0%	11,800	-100	-0.8%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	66,400	67,000	600	0.9%	67,500	500	0.7%
Wholesale Trade	6,500	6,500	0	0%	6,500	0	0%
Retail Trade	34,900	34,700	-200	-0.6%	34,600	-100	-0.3%
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	25,000	25,800	800	3.2%	26,400	600	2.3%
Information	4,400	4,300	-100	-2.3%	4,300	0	0%
Financial Activities	10,800	10,800	0	0%	10,800	0	0%
Professional and Business Services	28,800	29,000	200	0.7%	29,200	200	0.7%
Educational (private) and Health Services	53,000	54,600	1,600	3.0%	55,700	1,100	2.0%
Health Care	41,700	43,200	1,500	3.6%	44,300	1,100	2.5%
Leisure and Hospitality	35,900	35,800	-100	-0.3%	35,700	-100	-0.3%
Other Services	12,100	12,000	-100	-0.8%	12,100	100	0.8%
Total Government	79,700	79,500	-200	-0.3%	79,100	-400	-0.5%
Federal, except military	15,500	15,200	-300	-1.9%	14,800	-400	-2.6%
State, incl. University of Alaska	23,900	24,200	300	1.3%	24,300	100	0.4%
Local and tribal, incl. public schools	40,300	40,100	-200	-0.5%	40,000	-100	-0.2%

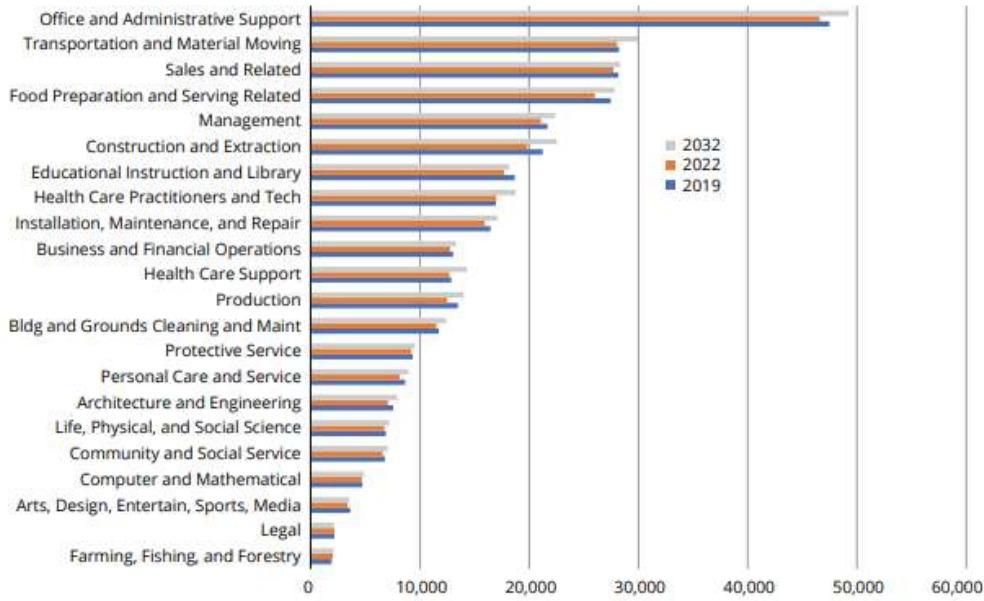
<sup>1</sup>Preliminary and adjusted estimates. <sup>2</sup>Excludes the self-employed, uniformed military, most commercial fishermen, domestic workers, and unpaid family workers.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

**Occupational Demand and Projections**

- **Figure A-3. Alaska Occupational Projections by Group, 2022–2032**  
 Illustrates projected occupational demand and growth across major occupational groups.

**Projected total job counts by occupational group through 2032**



**Note:** Occupational categories are based on the federal Standard Occupational Classification Manual.

**Source:** Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

## Appendix B – Workforce Analysis Supporting Figures

This appendix provides supporting figures and data visualizations related to Alaska's workforce analysis, including labor force participation, employment and unemployment trends, and workforce characteristics. The information is based on data from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development and other relevant sources and supports the analysis presented in Section II(a)(1)(B).

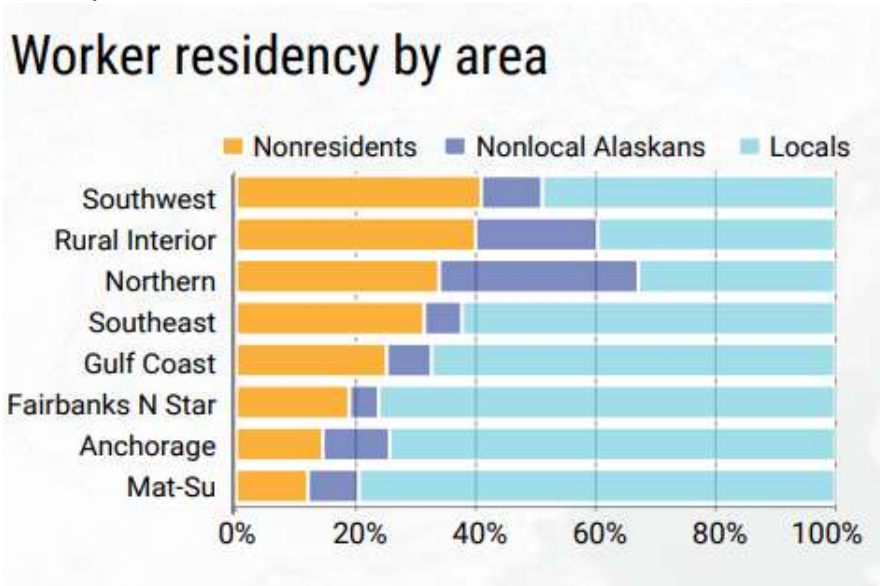
**Figure B-1: U.S. and Alaska Job Growth (Percent Change, 2015–2025)**

This figure compares job growth trends between the United States and Alaska over time, illustrating differences in economic recovery patterns, growth rates, and long-term employment trends.



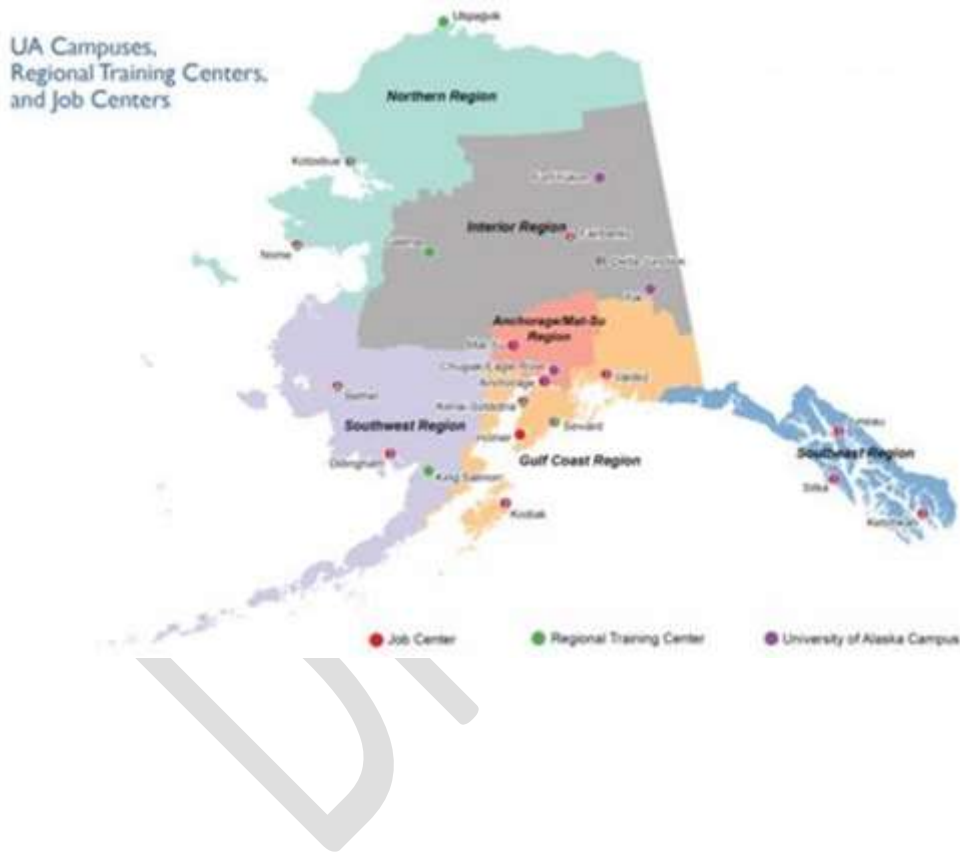
**Figure B-2: Worker Residency by Area**

This figure illustrates the distribution of resident and nonresident workers across Alaska's economic regions, highlighting regional workforce dynamics, reliance on nonresident labor, and implications for workforce availability.



**Figure B-3: Job Centers, Regional Training Centers, and University of Alaska Campuses**

The map illustrates the geographic distribution of Alaska Job Centers, Regional Training Centers, and University of Alaska campuses. This figure provides context for the statewide distribution of workforce education and training infrastructure described in this section. The map illustrates key physical locations and does not represent the full range of service delivery methods, including virtual services, itinerant staffing, or partner-based service models.



### Appendix C – Performance Goals for the Core Programs

This appendix presents Alaska’s expected performance levels for the primary performance indicators of WIOA core programs, consistent with Section 116(b)(2)(A) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These levels reflect the State’s proposed performance targets for Program Years 2026 and 2027 . They are subject to negotiation and agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Education.

	Title I – Adult Program			
	Program Year: 2026		Program Year: 2027	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	80.5%		81.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	81.0%		81.5%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$11,750		\$12,000	
Credential Attainment Rate	69.5%		70.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	68.5%		69.0%	

	Title I – Dislocated Worker Program			
	Program Year: 2026		Program Year: 2027	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	88.5%		89.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	83.5%		84.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$13,750		\$14,000	
Credential Attainment Rate	62.0%		62.5%	
Measurable Skill Gains	75.0%		75.5%	

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	Title I – Youth Program			
	Program Year: 2026		Program Year: 2027	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit) <sup>15</sup>	61.0%		62.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit) <sup>16</sup>	60.5%		61.5%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$4,500		\$4,600	
Credential Attainment Rate	56.5%		57.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	69.0%		70.0%	

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<sup>15</sup> For Title I Youth programs, employment, education or training.

<sup>16</sup> For Title I Youth programs, employment, education or training.

	<b>Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program</b>			
	<b>Program Year: 2026</b>		<b>Program Year: 2027</b>	
	<b>Expected Level</b>	<b>Negotiated Level</b>	<b>Expected Level</b>	<b>Negotiated Level</b>
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	<b>32.0%</b>	<b>32.0%</b>	<b>33.0%</b>	<b>33.0%</b>
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	<b>36.0%</b>	<b>36.0%</b>	<b>37.0%</b>	<b>37.0%</b>
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	<b>\$6,450</b>	<b>\$6,450</b>	<b>\$6,500</b>	<b>\$6,500</b>
Credential Attainment Rate	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>20.5%</b>	<b>20.5%</b>
Measurable Skill Gains	<b>25.5%</b>	<b>25.5%</b>	<b>26.0%</b>	<b>26.0%</b>

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	Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service Program			
	Program Year: 2026		Program Year: 2027	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	66.0%		66.5%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	65.0%		65.5%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$7,200		\$7,350	
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

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	Vocational Rehabilitation Program			
	Program Year: 2026		Program Year: 2027	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	54.5%		54.6%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	52.2%		52.3%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$5,800		\$6,000	
Credential Attainment Rate	40.0%		40.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains	63.5%		63.6%	

**\*\*THIS METRIC WILL NOT BE PART OF PY2026 – 2027 NEGOTIATIONS.**

	All WIOA Core Programs			
	Program Year: 2026		Program Year: 2027	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

## Appendix D – State Workforce Policy Inventory

This appendix provides an inventory of Alaska’s workforce policies governing the administration and implementation of WIOA core and partner programs. It includes key policies related to program operations, service delivery, performance accountability, and system coordination, and supports the framework described throughout this State Plan.

### WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser, AEFLA, and AWIB Policies

WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser, AEFLA, and AWIB Policies	Policy Number
Alaska Adult Education	Assessment and Technical Assistance Manual
Allocating Wagner-Peyser Staff to Job Centers	07-519
Allowable Cost Guidelines	07-520.2
Cash Management	07-504.1
Co-enrollment	07-505.1
Data Integrity	07-541
Dislocated Worker Eligibility	07-524.2
Eligible Training Provider List	07-501.2
Equal Opportunity Discrimination Complaints Policy	07-506.4
GED Manager Policy	07-544
Grant Monitor Corrective Action Plan Timelines	200-2016
High Concentration of Eligible Youth	07-503.3
Incident Report of Fraud, Waste, or Abuse	07-536.1
Job Center Universal Access for Customers with Disabilities	07-516
Military Veteran Priority of Service	07-509.1
Monitoring and Single Audit	07-523.2
Once-Stop Operator Certification	100-2017
Participant Common Exit	07-539
Participant Performance Data Collection	07-508.2
Pre-Award Risk Assessment and Due Diligence	07-527.3
Priority Populations - Adult Program	07-517.2
Process for AWIB Endorsement of Industry Workforce Development Plans	100-2016
Program Complaint and Appeal	07-510.2
Property Management	07-511.1
Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Definition	07-525.1
Rapid Response Activities Policy	07-545.1
Registrant Family Income	07-512.1
Sanctions for Non-Compliance	07-513.1
Self-Sufficiency	07-514.3
Subaward Amendments	07-526.1
Subaward Appeal	07-507.1
Subaward Close-out	07-528.1
Subrecipient Accrual-Based Reporting	07-538.1

<b>Supportive Service Limitations for Information Technology Supplies</b>	100-2020
<b>Supportive Services</b>	07-521.2
<b>Time Charging</b>	07-531.1
<b>Tuition and Training Funds</b>	07-530.2
<b>Wagner-Peyser (WP) Enrollment Policy</b>	07-565
<b>Wagner-Peyser Program Monitoring Plan and Policy</b>	07-543
<b>WIOA Incumbent Worker Training</b>	07-529.3
<b>WIOA Title I-B Within State Funding Allocations</b>	07-518.1
<b>WIOA Title I-B Youth Program Eligibility</b>	07-502.2
<b>Work Experience</b>	07-515.3
<b>Youth Incentives</b>	07-522.2
<b>Youth Program Eligibility Policy</b>	07-502.2

**Vocational Rehabilitation Policies (<https://labor.alaska.gov/dvr/policies/index.html>)**

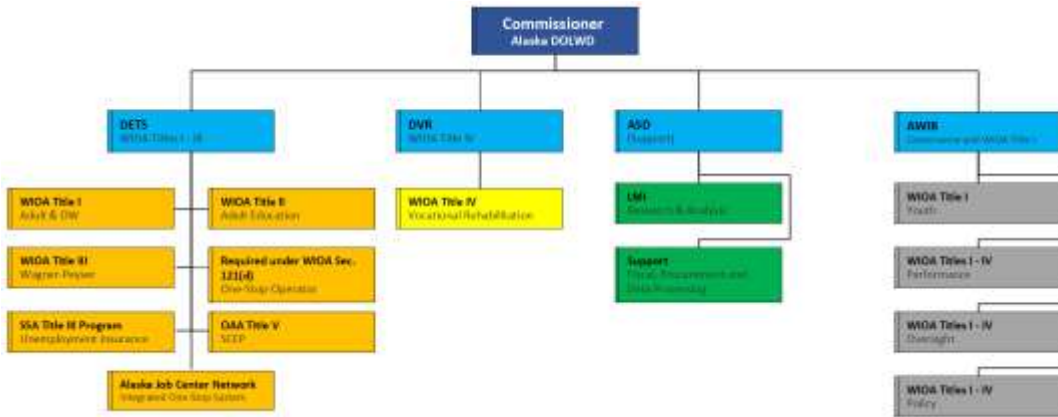
<b>Vocational Rehabilitation Policy</b>	<b>Policy Number</b>
<b>Co-enrollment</b>	07-505
<b>Ethics</b>	CS 1.0
<b>Confidentiality</b>	CS 2.0
<b>Informed Choice</b>	CS 3.0
<b>Appeals</b>	CS 4.0
<b>Pre-Employment Transition Services</b>	CS 5.0
<b>Application</b>	CS 6.0
<b>Eligibility</b>	CS 7.0
<b>Trial Work</b>	CS 8.0
<b>Significance of Disability Determination</b>	CS 9.0
<b>Financial Participation</b>	CS 10.0
<b>Individualized Plan for Employment</b>	CS 11.0
<b>Vocational Rehabilitation Services</b>	CS 12.0
<b>Employment</b>	CS 13.0
<b>Supported Employment</b>	CS 14.0
<b>Self-Employment</b>	CS 15.0

**Senior Community Service Employment Program Policies**

<b>Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) Policy</b>	<b>Policy Number</b>
<b>SCSEP: Senior Community Service Employment Program Eligibility</b>	07-S01
<b>SCSEP: MASST Individual Durational Limits</b>	07-S02
<b>SCSEP: MASST Participant Termination</b>	07-S03
<b>SCSEP: MASST Wages and Unemployment Insurance</b>	07-S04

## Appendix E – Organizational Chart Reference

This appendix presents the organizational structure of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, including the divisions and units responsible for WIOA program administration and service delivery.



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## Appendix F – Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) Membership

This appendix provides the current membership roster for the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), consistent with the composition requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Section 101(b), and 20 CFR Part 679. The roster identifies each member’s organization and representation category and demonstrates compliance with federal requirements, including the business majority representation requirement

### AWIB Membership Roster

Name	Organization	Representation Category	WIOA Category
<b>Dahlstrom, Nancy</b>	State of Alaska Lt. Governor	Government / Required Partner	Government
<b>Howell, Kelly</b>	State of Alaska Lt. Governor Designee	Government / Required Partner	Government
<b>Muñoz, Catherine</b>	State of Alaska DOLWD Commissioner	Government / Required Partner	Government
<b>Vacant</b>	State of Alaska DOLWD Commissioner Designee	Government / Required Partner	Government
<b>Bishop, Deena</b>	State of Alaska DEED Commissioner	Government / Required Partner	Government
<b>Billings, Brad</b>	State of Alaska DEED Commissioner Designee	Government / Required Partner	Government
<b>Hedberg, Heidi</b>	State of Alaska DOH Commissioner	Government / Required Partner	Government
<b>Marasigan, Christine</b>	State of Alaska DOH Commissioner Designee	Government / Required Partner	Government
<b>Sande, Julie</b>	State of Alaska DCCED Commissioner	Government / Required Partner	Government
<b>Robb, Sylvan</b>	State of Alaska DCCED Commissioner Designee	Government / Required Partner	Government
<b>Rizk, Michelle</b>	University of Alaska	Higher Education	Education
<b>Toussaint, Beki</b>	Alaska Resource Education	Postsecondary Voc. Education	Education
<b>Vacant</b>	-	Secondary Vocational Education	Education

<b>Zugg, Patricia (Trish)</b>	Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District	Public Education	Education
<b>Vacant</b>	-	Adult Basic Education	Education
<b>Betts, Katrena</b>	Arc of Anchorage	Professional Development Disabilities	Workforce
<b>Delia, Tony</b>	Tony Delia Enterprise LLC	Native Employment and Training Organization	Workforce
<b>Pacarro, Brenda</b>	Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI)	Business/Industry	Business
<b>Bell, Larry</b>	Nat. Electrical Contractors Assn. NECA	Business/Industry	Business
<b>Murray, George</b>	Arctic Slope Regional Corporation Energy Services	Business/Industry	Business
<b>Maltby, Alicia</b>	Associated Builders and Contractors	Business/Industry	Business
<b>Owens, Nicholas</b>	Bristol Bay Industrial, LLC (BBI)	Private Industry	Business
<b>Rose, Patrick</b>	Northern Industrial Training LLC.	Private Industry	Business
<b>Vacant</b>	-	Veteran	Workforce
<b>Manternach, Keith</b>	Specialty Truck and Auto	Private Industry	Business
<b>Freeman, Jarret</b>	Ice Services Inc	Private Industry	Business
<b>Johnson, Kenn</b>	Alaska Trowel Trades Apprenticeship	Labor Organization / Workforce Representative	Workforce
<b>Baxter, Ronald (Corey)</b>	International Union of Operating Engineers 302	Labor Organization / Workforce Representative	Workforce
<b>Dungey, Antwon</b>	Alaska Teamsters Union	Labor Organization / Workforce Representative	Workforce
<b>Woodard, Jon</b>	Pacific Northwest Ironworkers District Council	Labor Organization / Workforce Representative	Workforce
<b>Vacant</b>	-	Non-Voting Local Elected Official	Government
<b>Vacant</b>	-	Non-Voting Local Elected Official	Government

## Appendix G – ETPL Performance Criteria and Scoring Methodology

This appendix outlines the performance criteria, scoring methodology, and minimum thresholds used by the State of Alaska to determine initial and continued eligibility for training providers under WIOA Section 122.

### Initial Eligibility – Existing Training Programs

Rate And Earnings	Point Value
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit must meet 60 percent	15.0
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit must meet 60 percent	15.0
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit must meet \$5,025	15.0
Credential Attainment Rate must meet 65 percent	7.5
The program completion rate must meet 35 percent	7.5
Industry-Recognized Credential	20.0
Partnership With Business	5.0
Accessible Throughout The State By Web-Based Learning	5.0
In-Demand Industry/Occupation	10.0
<b>Total Points Available</b>	<b>100.0</b>

- Minimum score required: 75 points

### Initial Eligibility – New Training Programs

Rate And Earnings	Point Value
New Program – No Completer Data Available	N/A
Industry-Recognized Credential	20.0
Partnership With Business	5.0
Accessible Throughout The State By Web-Based Learning	5.0
In-Demand Industry/Occupation	10.0
<b>Total Points Available</b>	<b>40.0</b>

- Minimum score required: 30 points

### Continued Eligibility

Rate And Earnings	Point Value
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit must meet 60 percent	20.0
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit must meet 60 percent	20.0
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit must meet \$5,025	20.0
Credential Attainment Rate must meet 65 percent	10.0
The program completion rate must meet 35 percent	10.0
In-Demand Industry/Occupation	20.0
<b>Total Points Available</b>	<b>100.0</b>

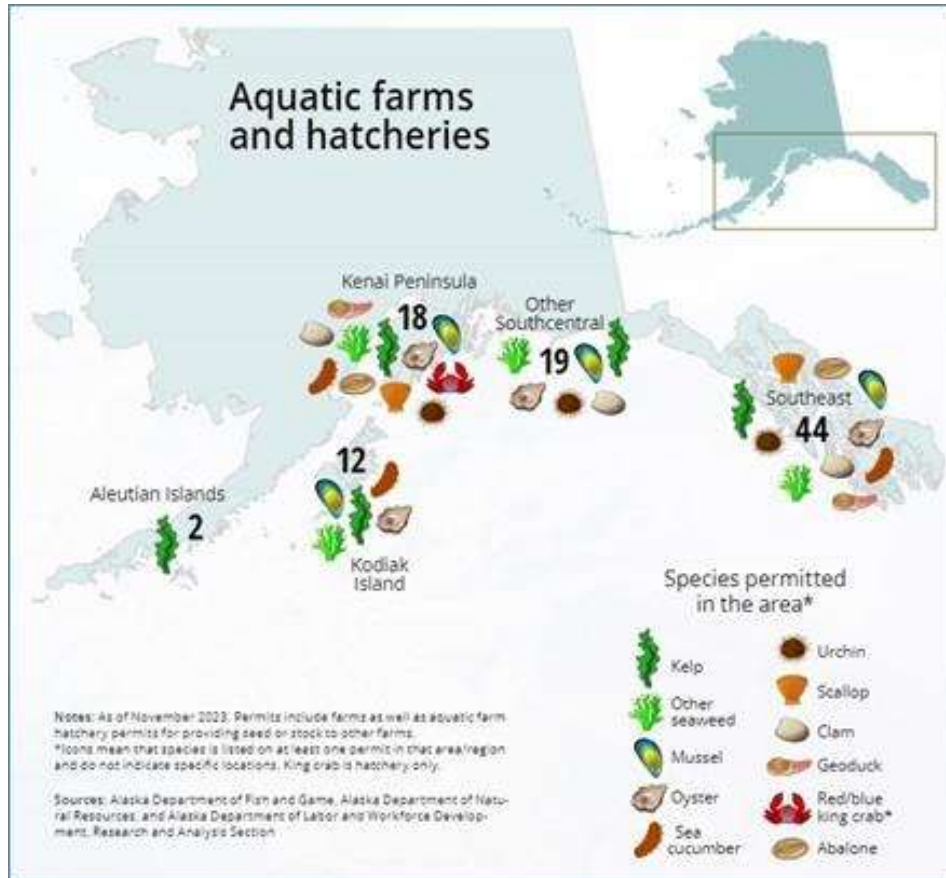
- Minimum score required: 80 points

### Notes

- These thresholds represent minimum performance standards for eligibility
- Criteria may be updated through State policy to reflect economic conditions and federal guidance
- Performance data is validated using Unemployment Insurance wage records and provider-reported outcomes

## Appendix H – Locations of Aquatic Farms and Hatcheries in Alaska

This appendix provides geographic information on the locations of aquatic farms and hatcheries across Alaska, supporting analysis of the state’s mariculture and aquaculture industries and related workforce development considerations.



## Appendix I – Alaska Senior Population Demographics (Age 55+)

This appendix provides an overview of Alaska’s population age 55 and older, based on July 2024 estimates from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section. The data illustrate the size, distribution, and growth of the senior population across the state and support analysis of workforce trends related to aging populations, labor force participation, and service needs for older individuals.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section (July 2024 Estimates)

Age Group	Total	Male	Female
<b>Total (55+)</b>	201,428	101,442	99,986
<b>55–59</b>	40,522	20,878	19,644
<b>60–64</b>	45,614	23,489	22,125
<b>65–69</b>	42,325	21,323	21,002
<b>70–74</b>	33,048	16,680	16,368
<b>75–79</b>	20,854	10,427	10,427
<b>80–84</b>	11,217	5,386	5,831
<b>85–89</b>	5,177	2,303	2,874
<b>90+</b>	2,671	956	1,715

## Appendix J – SCSEP Authorized Positions by Borough and Census Area

This appendix provides the distribution of authorized Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) positions across Alaska by borough and census area, consistent with federal equitable distribution requirements and supporting statewide program planning and service delivery.

FIPS	Alaska Borough/Census Area	PY 2025	PY 2024	Change
2013	Aleutians East Borough	1	1	0
2016	Aleutians West Census Area	1	1	0
2020	Anchorage Municipality	32	35	(3)
2050	Bethel Census Area	2	4	(2)
2063	Chugach Census Area	1	1	0
2066	Copper River Census Area	1	1	0
2070	Dillingham Census Area	1	1	0
2090	Fairbanks North Star Borough	11	12	(1)
2100	Haines Borough	1	1	0
2105	Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	1	1	0
2110	Juneau City and Borough	2	4	(2)
2122	Kenai Peninsula Borough	12	13	(1)
2130	Ketchikan Gateway Borough	2	2	0
2150	Kodiak Island Borough	2	2	0
2158	Kusilvak Census Area	1	2	(1)
2170	Matanuska-Susitna Borough	16	16	0
2180	Nome Census Area	2	2	0
2185	North Slope Borough	1	1	0
2188	Northwest Arctic Borough	1	1	0
2195	Petersburg Borough	1	1	0
2198	Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	2	2	0
2220	Sitka City and Borough	1	1	0
2240	Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	2	2	0
2290	Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2	2	0
	<b>Total Slots</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>(10)</b>

## Appendix K – Acronyms and Abbreviations

This appendix provides a comprehensive list of acronyms and abbreviations used throughout the State Plan to support clarity and ease of reference for reviewers and stakeholders.

Acronym	Definition
ABE	Adult Basic Education
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AEFLA	Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (WIOA Title II)
AJC	American Job Center
AJCN	Alaska Job Center Network
ARS	Agricultural Recruitment System
ASD	Administrative Services Division (DOLWD)
AT	Assistive Technology
AWF	Alaska Workforce Futures
AWIB	Alaska Workforce Investment Board
BRU	Business Relations Unit (DVR)
CCRS	College and Career Readiness Standards
CIE	Competitive Integrated Employment
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CSBG	Community Services Block Grant
DOLWD	Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
DVR	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (Alaska)
DVOP	Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program
ELL	English Language Learner
ES	Employment Service (Wagner-Peyser)
ETA	Employment and Training Administration (USDOL)
ETPL	Eligible Training Provider List
FFY	Federal Fiscal Year
GEPA	General Education Provisions Act
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act
HCBS	Home- and Community-Based Services
I&E	Innovation and Expansion (VR funds)
IEP (Education)	Individualized Education Program (IDEA)
IET	Integrated Education and Training
IELCE	Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education
IFA	Infrastructure Funding Agreement
IPE	Individualized Plan for Employment (VR)
I&R	Information and Referral
ITA	Individual Training Account
JVSG	Jobs for Veterans State Grant
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
LMI	Labor Market Information
MSG	Measurable Skill Gains
MSFW	Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker
NFJP	National Farmworker Jobs Program
OAA	Older Americans Act
OA	U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship
OEC	Office of Employment & Training
OJT	On-the-Job Training

<b>OOS</b>	Order of Selection (VR)
<b>OSO</b>	One-Stop Operator
<b>PD</b>	Professional Development
<b>Pre-ETS</b>	Pre-Employment Transition Services
<b>QA</b>	Quality Assurance
<b>RA</b>	Registered Apprenticeship
<b>RESEA</b>	Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment
<b>SCSEP</b>	Senior Community Service Employment Program
<b>SEA</b>	State Educational Agency
<b>SE</b>	Supported Employment
<b>SILC</b>	Statewide Independent Living Council
<b>SNAP E&amp;T</b>	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment & Training
<b>SRC</b>	State Rehabilitation Council
<b>SSA</b>	Social Security Administration
<b>TANF</b>	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
<b>TA</b>	Technical Assistance
<b>TAA</b>	Trade Adjustment Assistance
<b>USDOL</b>	U.S. Department of Labor
<b>UI</b>	Unemployment Insurance
<b>VR</b>	Vocational Rehabilitation
<b>WBLE</b>	Work-Based Learning Experience
<b>WEX</b>	Work Experience
<b>WIOA</b>	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
<b>WP</b>	Wagner-Peyser Act
<b>WSB</b>	Workforce System Business Services

## Appendix L – One-Stop Partner Programs and Workforce System Resources

This appendix provides an overview of required and optional one-stop partner programs and additional workforce system resources that support coordinated service delivery under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These programs contribute to integrated service strategies, referrals, supportive services, and co-enrollment across Alaska's workforce system.

These partner programs support the alignment strategies described in Section II(c) and the service delivery framework outlined in Section III by contributing to coordinated referrals, shared service delivery, and improved access to workforce, education, and supportive services.

### Required and Optional One-Stop Partner Programs

#### Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Program description

- Provides time-limited cash assistance and supportive services to eligible low-income families with children
- Promotes employment, self-sufficiency, and family stability

Workforce system role

- Coordinates referrals to the Alaska Job Center Network
- Supports co-enrollment with WIOA core programs
- Provides supportive services that enable participation in workforce activities

#### Perkins Postsecondary Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Program description

- Supports career and technical education programs aligned with industry demand
- Provides technical training and credential pathways through postsecondary institutions

Workforce system role

- Aligns training programs with in-demand occupations and career pathways
- Supports credential attainment and skill development
- Coordinates with workforce programs to align education and training investments

#### Job Corps

Program description

- Provides residential education and career training for eligible youth ages 16–24
- Offers academic instruction, career technical training, and support services

Workforce system role

- Serves as a training and education pathway for eligible youth
- Coordinates referrals with WIOA Youth programs and Alaska Job Centers
- Supports transitions to employment, apprenticeship, or postsecondary education

#### Housing and Supportive Service Programs

##### Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) – Jumpstart Program

Program description

- Provides housing assistance through the Moving to Work (MTW) Demonstration Program
- Implements the Jumpstart Program to support economic self-sufficiency
- Offers case management and financial incentives tied to employment and education outcomes

Key outcomes include:

- First-time employment
- Increased wages
- Reduced reliance on public assistance
- Credential attainment
- Progress toward economic independence

Workforce system role

- Provides housing stability that supports participation in employment and training
- Coordinates with workforce programs to align housing and employment goals

- Supports individuals with barriers to employment through integrated service strategies

### **Tribal and Community Workforce Programs**

#### **Alaska Native Coalition on Employment and Training (ANCET)**

##### Program description

- Represents a coalition of tribal workforce development organizations serving Alaska Native populations
- Provides employment, training, and supportive services across rural and urban communities

##### Services provided include:

- Job readiness and career services
- Occupational skills training and credential attainment
- Work-based learning and employment placement
- Supportive services to address barriers to employment

##### Participating organizations include:

- Aleutian-Pribilof Islands Association (APIA)
- Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP)
- Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA)
- Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC)
- Kawerak, Inc.
- Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC)
- Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC)
- Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA)

##### Workforce system role

- Provides culturally responsive workforce services across Alaska
- Supports service delivery in rural and remote communities
- Coordinates with Alaska Job Centers for referrals and co-enrollment
- Expands access to workforce services for populations facing barriers to employment

### **Additional Workforce System Resources**

These programs, while not always formal one-stop partners, contribute to the broader workforce system by supporting employment, training, education, and supportive service needs.

#### **Workforce system role across resources includes:**

- Supporting coordinated referrals and service access
- Enhancing training and employment opportunities
- Providing supportive services that enable workforce participation
- Strengthening alignment between workforce, education, and community programs

### **System Integration and Coordination**

Across all partner programs and resources, Alaska's workforce system emphasizes:

- Coordinated intake, assessment, and referral processes
- Co-enrollment across WIOA core and partner programs
- Shared service delivery through the Alaska Job Center Network
- Alignment of workforce, education, and supportive service strategies
- Data-informed decision-making and performance accountability

These integrated approaches ensure that individuals can access a comprehensive range of services in a seamless, coordinated manner while supporting improved employment outcomes and system efficiency.