



## PY 2012 - 2016 Alaska Integrated Workforce Development Plan



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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
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STATE OF ALASKA  
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# SECTION I: State Integrated Workforce Plan

## Governor's Vision

Governor Sean Parnell is committed to creating a climate for investment and economic growth in Alaska. Economic development is a foundation for a strong workforce development system, providing all Alaskans with opportunities to participate.

This administration's workforce investment priorities are evident in its introduction of legislation that focuses on developing Alaska's businesses and future workforce, and building critical infrastructure. Current priorities are resource development, energy, public safety, education, transportation and infrastructure, and military and veteran support. These demonstrate a commitment to growth and opportunity for the state and Alaskans.

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) adopted a vision of "building connections that put Alaskans into good jobs" that reflects Governor Parnell's commitment to economic growth. This vision focuses on developing a workforce system that is useful, accessible, and understandable for all users and customers. Customers include businesses looking for qualified workers, unemployed Alaskans looking for jobs, and incumbent workers seeking to upgrade their skills in a changing work environment. They also include youth new to the workforce and eager to find opportunities in the labor market.

The framework for this vision is three fold. First is small business development that creates jobs for Alaskans. Second are major projects, such as infrastructure development and the construction of an Alaska gas pipeline, which provide the opportunity to develop skills, knowledge, and abilities to compete in a global market. Third is preparing Alaskans for legacy careers in the emerging industrial support sector that plan, operate, and maintain infrastructure supporting the major resource and energy ventures. Alaska has the flexibility to refocus resources to train and employ Alaskans as needs change.

Alignment of economic development, education, and workforce development is critical to the state's efforts to train and retain its emerging workforce and those transitioning to Alaska's natural resource based development and other growing industries.

Governor Parnell understands that economic development and workforce development are interrelated: "Jobs for Alaskans require positioning our economy for growth with a solid investment climate." The state is investing in its workforce to attract businesses that will contribute to Alaska's economic prosperity. From the Alaska Performance Scholarship to the State Training and Employment Program, the state's investments will replace an aging workforce and develop a globally competitive and skilled workforce that will support Alaska's growing, emerging, and resource development industries.

## Economic and Workforce Information Analysis

*An assessment of the workforce skills and knowledge individuals need to find current and future employment in the state, particularly the skills and knowledge employers deem necessary for economic growth in Alaska*

### Overview

Alaska is one of a handful of states that registered only minor job loss during the recent Great Recession. Alaska — like North Dakota, Texas, and Louisiana — has fully recovered from those losses and exceeded pre-recession job counts. The economic asset these states share is oil and gas, with a combination of currently producing fields and the prospect for significant additional production. The International Energy Agency recently forecasted that by 2020, the U.S. will surpass Saudi Arabia as the world's leading producer of oil and much of that new production will come from the states listed above.

Alaska's basic sector economy — industries that export goods and services and thus import money — has been described as a three-legged stool. Oil is one leg; the federal government, including the military, is one leg; and everything else makes up the third leg. The "everything else" consists primarily of fishing, tourism, and mining.

Other industries are important to the economy, but their role is primarily to provide goods and services to the local population. Health care, for example, has grown faster than any other industry over the last few decades, and is expected to continue to record stronger growth than the broad economy and the majority of openings at the occupational level. But health care, government, construction, and a number of other support-sector industries depend on the health of the state's economic drivers.

### Oil

Looking at the three legs of Alaska's economy in slightly more detail, there is both significant uncertainty and opportunity for oil. Total barrels produced have been gradually declining since peaking at more than 2 million barrels a day in the late 1980s, but high prices in recent years have generated large budget surpluses for Alaska and the state's large rainy-day funds cushion the state against short-term downturns.

The production decline is worrisome and even if prices remain at historically high levels, oil-related revenue is projected to decline in the coming decade. And with no state income or sales tax, Alaska is uniquely dependent on oil revenue as a source of state government funds.

Some of the nearest-term opportunities for new oil production are off the northern coast of Alaska in the Arctic Ocean's Chukchi and Beaufort seas. Known reserves onshore are also significant and include shale oil, which has driven an increase in U.S. oil production, led by North Dakota and Texas.

The world consumes nearly 90 million barrels of oil a day, according to the International Energy Agency, and that number is expected to grow. It is impossible to know how much of the necessary new supply will come from Alaska, but expected high prices and the need to aggressively explore for new oil, develop new fields, and get the maximum out of existing fields all bode well for the oil industry in Alaska over the next few decades.

## **Federal Government**

For most of the last decade, Alaska has been at or near the top among states in per-capita federal funds received. A strong military presence in the state — around 23,000 uniformed personnel — is part of the reason, as is the state's vast size, which includes a high percentage of federally owned land.

Federal spending on Alaska ballooned from \$3.3 billion in 1990 to more than \$9 billion by 2005 before leveling off over the next several years. The recession-prompted stimulus spending then lifted the total to more than \$12 billion in 2010, even though Alaska suffered much less economic hardship during the recession than the nation as a whole and certainly much less than the hardest-hit states such as Michigan, Nevada, and Florida.

As an economic driver, the most Alaska can likely expect from federal government spending in the state over the next decade is stability or perhaps a gentle decline. For growth, the state will almost certainly have to look elsewhere.

## **Other Basic Sector Industries**

Mining's job count and production levels have grown strongly since the early 2000s and with world demand for both precious and semi-precious metals expected to climb, more growth is expected. From 2002 to 2010 (the most current year for which detailed information is available from the Bureau of Economic Analysis), mining's contribution to Alaska's gross domestic product increased from \$244 million to \$1.1 billion in inflation-adjusted dollars and employment grew from 1,400 to 2,700. Those numbers are still relatively small compared to the oil and gas industry, but mining has grown from 6 percent as large as oil and gas in 2002 to 12 percent as large in 2010.

Alaska's fisheries combined generated \$1.7 billion in gross earnings for harvesters in 2011, an increase of nearly \$1 billion from 10 years earlier (not adjusted for inflation). The state's fisheries have stabilized somewhat in recent years after hitting historical high-value levels in the late 1980s and then struggling to cope with downward price pressures that resulted from competition from salmon farms and globalization of the industry. The current market for Alaska seafood is strong and growing and the state is seen as a model for sustainable fisheries management, so the state's abundant seafood resources are expected to continue as a major economic contributor into the foreseeable future.

Alaska's final major second-tier basic sector industry is tourism. It was affected more than others by the severe national and global recession and also suffered a setback when several cruise ship companies redeployed ships to other markets in 2010. Though still uncertain, the economic recovery has boosted the industry and new cruise companies have entered the Alaska market, partially replacing the 2010 losses. An estimated 1.6 million out-of-state visitors came to Alaska during the summer of 2011 (the majority come from May to September), with 57 percent coming by cruise ship, 39 percent by air, and the remaining 4 percent by highway or ferry.

## **Projected Trends of the Economy Overall**

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's most current long-term employment forecast covers the period from 2010 to 2020. Job growth over that period is forecasted to be 12 percent, slightly below the nationally forecasted growth rate of 14 percent.

## **Projected Trends in Major Industries**

The clear standout in the long-term industry forecast is health care and social assistance, which is forecasted to grow by 31 percent compared to 12 percent for all industries combined. This sector alone is expected to account for 33 percent of the state's total projected employment growth. As alluded to above, however, the state's economic fortunes are very much tied to the oil and gas industry, and growth in industries such as health care, government, trade, and many others depend on whether oil activity increases or at least remains stable at current high levels of employment.

Oil and gas jobs are projected to grow slightly slower than average, while mining is expected to grow faster than any other sector except health care and social services. The construction industry, which has lost a small number of jobs every year since 2006, is projected to grow slightly slower than average through 2020, while the professional and business services sector (engineers, lawyers, accountants, etc.) is projected to slightly exceed overall job growth for the decade.

The leisure and hospitality sector (largely restaurants and hotels, which represent an important piece of the state's tourism industry) is projected to grow 12.5 percent over the decade and retail trade 11.4 percent. Government employment is expected to grow at less than 4 percent over the period.

## **Projected Trends in Occupations**

Of the top 25 occupations for percentage growth, 21 fall under the broad umbrella of health care and three of the remaining four have some connection to health care (personal care aides, health care educators, and medical secretaries). The impetus for much of that growth will be the aging of the state's baby boomers — those born between 1946 and 1964. The number of Alaskans ages 65 to 79 is expected to almost double from 2010 to 2020 and the number of Alaskans in the 80+ category is expected to grow by 46 percent.

In terms of total openings over the 2010 to 2020 decade, 37 percent will require less than a high school diploma, 38 percent will require a high school diploma or the equivalent, and the remaining 25 percent will require some type of postsecondary degree or award. The state's "top jobs" — those that rank in one of the top two wage quartiles and for which growth is expected to be stronger than average — include very few jobs that do not require at least a high school diploma, however.

<http://labor.alaska.gov/trends/oct12.pdf>

## **Unique Aspects of Alaska's Economy**

Alaska's economy is more seasonal than any other state, with 15 percent more jobs during the peak summer months than during January, the low point of the year in terms of job counts. At the industry level, the seasonality can be noticeably more pronounced. Construction jobs during the summer, for example, are 50 percent higher than during winter, and seafood processing jobs peaked at 20,700 in 2011, nine times as many as February's 2,300.

Largely as a result of that strong seasonality, the state has long attracted out-of-state workers, many of whom work for just part of the year in Alaska and then return to their home states during the off seasons of their particular industries. In 2010, 20 percent of the nearly 410,000 people who worked in the state at some point during the year were residents of other states. At the industry level, the percentages are as high as 75 percent for seafood processing, 40 percent for accommodation, and 30 percent for oil and gas.



### **Young Males Especially Likely to Claim Unemployment Benefits**

In 2010, 63 percent of unemployment insurance claimants were male and 28 percent were from 25 to 34 years old. Construction workers made up 16 percent of all claimants, with the next largest group coming from retail and wholesale trade at 12 percent. The largest percentage of claimants had average yearly earnings of \$10,000 to \$19,999 (25 percent), and the next largest percentage by earnings was in the \$1,000 to \$9,999 category (22 percent).

By geography, the largest percentage of claimants were in the state's most populated areas, as one would expect, but many rural parts of the state were disproportionately represented in unemployment claims relative to their populations. Unemployment rates show the same relationship, with generally higher rates in rural Alaska, and lower-than-average rates in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau especially.

<http://labor.alaska.gov/trends/sep10.pdf>

### **Skills Gaps Identifiable Through Nonresident Employment Data**

Alaska has access to two unique data sets on skills and knowledge identified by employers as necessary for economic growth in the state. The first provides the occupation of every Alaska worker covered by unemployment insurance (other states must rely on surveys for this type of data). The second comes from applications for the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend, a long-standing program in Alaska through which a portion of the earnings from oil-tax investment funds is distributed to residents. These applications, combined with the detailed occupational information for each worker, allow analysts to determine the residency of the state's workers.

That information spotlights occupations for which employers have difficulty finding residents with the necessary skills, training, or education. (There are several other reasons employers hire nonresidents, but the lack of qualified local workers is one of the most frequently cited.) One of the most obvious paths to economic growth in Alaska is to train residents to meet employers' demands, because those workers would purchase goods and services in the state.

The department publishes an annual report on the residency status of Alaska workers that includes occupations with the highest numbers of nonresident workers and high-paid occupations with a large number of nonresident workers.

<http://labor.alaska.gov/research/reshire/NONRES.pdf>

To the extent occupations are well-paid and work is available year-round, the data provide an unusually clear indication of skill, education, experience, and knowledge gaps. (Typically skills gaps are identified through surveys or anecdotal evidence from employers and there is debate within the labor market information community about whether purported skills gaps can be meaningfully identified through those methods.)

Among the findings in the most recent report, 31 percent of oil industry workers in 2010 were not residents of Alaska. Given that those jobs tend to be year-round and high paying, they have been identified as a high-priority target for the state's workforce development efforts. Similarly, the portion of health care jobs filled by nonresidents — about 11 percent of registered nurses were nonresidents in 2010 — gives state training providers an opportunity to fill more of those slots with Alaska residents.

***A description of the characteristics and employment needs of the state's population and diverse subpopulations including racial, ethnic, and linguistic groups; older people; and those with disabilities***

The median age of Alaska's population is approximately 34, younger than every other state except Utah and Texas. The state's population is younger than the nation's for several reasons: a slightly higher birth rate, consistent net migration gains from people in their 20s and 30s, and a smaller-than-average group of retirees and seniors.

Alaska's rural areas tend to have high unemployment rates and limited access to employment opportunities. While rural coastal Alaska depends heavily on fishing both for subsistence and commercial opportunities, many of the rural interior parts of the state are struggling economically. The Wade Hampton Census Area, for example, had an average monthly unemployment rate of 20.4 percent in 2011, in contrast to just 7.6 percent for the state as a whole.

<http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/labforce/>

Alaska Natives, who make up large percentages of much of rural Alaska and 17 percent of the state's total population, have noticeably greater unemployment rates than average (over 25 percent for Alaska Natives). Other populations with greater-than-average unemployment rates include youth from 16 to 19 and to a lesser extent those from 20 to 34.

Alaska's senior population tends to have lower-than-average unemployment rates, but the numbers have risen during the recent economic recession.

Although data at the state level are limited, Alaska's disabled workers would likely reflect national patterns: 18 percent of those with a disability were employed nationally in 2011 in contrast to 64 percent of the population without a disability.

***Based on the assessments above, an analysis of the skill and education gaps for all Alaskans, particularly those targeted by the programs included in the Integrated Workforce Plan***

Alaska's highly seasonal, resource-based economy generates significantly more jobs during the summer in many parts of the state than there are available Alaskans to fill them. On the other hand, when the construction, fishing, and tourism seasons scale back during the winter; many residents struggle to find employment. In that sense, the state has certain advantages in training its residents because there are lulls in the annual cycles that can be profitably spent obtaining new skills and training.

Alaska's ongoing public investment in construction, infrastructure, and resource development projects will require skilled individuals who can fill a variety of positions in construction, maintenance, and operation of public infrastructure resources and networks. Programs such as registered apprenticeships and on-the-job training offer employers an incentive to hire rural residents rather than employ a workforce from urban Alaska or the Lower 48.

Just as rural residents find access to training difficult, nontraditional workers such as women and minorities also find barriers to construction opportunities. Registered apprenticeship programs and on-the-job training give employers incentives to consider the nontraditional worker.



For veterans, the difficulty is translating war time and peacekeeping skills to the everyday working world. Creating incentives for employers to hire veterans can overcome the perception that veterans' skills are not useful in the workforce. Programs such as the state-funded helmets-to-hardhats offer incentives and provide support to veterans as they transition from service.

### ***An analysis of the challenges to the state's population attaining the education, skills, and training needed for employment***

Alaska's size and geographically diverse population make access to education and training a unique challenge. The state's largest cities are connected by road, but a large part of the state is accessible only by air or water, and travel may be expensive and time-consuming. There is often the additional challenge of cultural differences for people coming from villages to urban areas.

Those challenges create a special need for distance delivery of training and services and also, in some cases, for funds to cover travel and housing when training can only be in person.

Along with the geographic barriers, the state is working to overcome institutional and organizational obstacles. The state's Career and Technical Education Plan is a blueprint to guide educators and training providers toward better opportunities for job seekers and students.

Alignment of training with employment demands at the secondary level will prepare students for postsecondary training in Alaska's high-wage occupations. Creating awareness within the educational institutions creates an opportunity for teachers to connect lessons to actual demands of the work place.

Aligning traditional postsecondary training with applied and on-the-job learning accelerates the time job seekers spend becoming proficient. Models such as registered apprenticeship are critical to overcoming these barriers.

Ultimately, business and industry must value local workforce development over a transient workforce. If Alaska is to effect change in the labor force, then the training provided must result in a potential worker who is equal to or better than an imported worker in terms of cost to the company and quality of workmanship. Alaska's greatest challenge in preparing its workforce is designing a world-class training and development system that is responsive to business and industry and produces the most prepared workforce.

## **State Strategies**

The governor's vision for workforce development is aligned with the state's commitment to economic development. Workforce development programs rely on the broad strategic policy decisions of the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) to clarify the relationship between programs and particular economic development efforts. The AWIB uses three primary strategies to help the programs meet the governor's vision. First, AWIB identifies priority industries and occupations for the investment of scarce workforce investment resources. Second, AWIB works with priority industries to develop targeted workforce development plans, such as the Construction Workforce Development Plan and the Alaska Health Workforce Coalition Plan. Third, AWIB monitors investment of programs that are required to report to the board including the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and the State Training Employment Program.

AWIB determines priorities for the workforce investment system that are in line with the governor's vision and works with industry to implement them. Strategies include the occasional use of discretionary funding awarded by U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration to states whose priorities align with their governor's vision, and Alaska has a strong history of meeting that goal.

The state recently concluded a federally funded program that prepared Alaskans to build, operate, and maintain oil and gas pipelines in Alaska, now supported by both state and formula-funded resources. AWIB developed Alaska's Oil and Gas Training Plan as a way to establish funding priority. This model led to the training of more than 2,000 Alaskans, ranging from incumbent workers to low-income participants.

Under this model, AWIB tracks the investment results to determine programs' effectiveness and alignment with the governor's workforce development vision. Currently, the state receives no discretionary funding but looks forward to future investment opportunities from the Employment and Training Administration.

Because Alaska is heavily dependent on the oil and gas industry, other economic development catalysts must be created before demand for Alaska workers expands. Alaska workers must align their skill sets with those demanded by the few emerging and growing industries such as health care, mining, and renewable energy to hire more Alaskans.

The state workforce system uses broad guidance from the AWIB to develop and implement industry-specific workforce plans. AWIB resolutions provide guidance on specific industries to address economic variables and methods for prioritizing labor market data.

The first plan for which the AWIB provided direction was the state's Construction Industry Workforce Development Plan. From this plan the board and system learned about the connectivity of workforce development strategies.

Alaska's Oil and Gas Training Plan is the first plan that incorporates four key strategies for meeting industry needs:

- Increase awareness of and access to career opportunities in natural resource development.
- Develop a comprehensive, integrated career and technical education system for Alaska that aligns training institutions and coordinates program delivery.
- Increase opportunities for registered apprenticeship in skilled occupations and expand other structured training opportunities.
- Increase opportunities for development of appropriate training programs for operations, technical and management workers.

The AWIB's most recent strategic approach is working with the health care industry. By applying similar principles from the state's oil and gas training plan, the health care industry is expanding its labor force in a time of economic decline. Potential strategies include greater access to employer-based training and an emphasis on applied health care occupations.

The state is also using its successes and priorities with the oil and gas industry to help develop the renewable energy and energy efficiency subsector. Connecting training standards to industry expectations means that process, technology, and methodology share equal importance. The strategies and priorities the workforce investment system uses are based on the successful experiences with the oil and gas industry.

### ***Cross-Program Strategies***

One of the department's objectives is to maintain a fully integrated system that ensures availability of workforce services to all customers, with renewed focus on veterans, military spouses, low income individuals, individuals and youth with disabilities, out-of-school youth, and older workers.

To make the Alaska one-stop job center system more efficient, the department identifies high-skill/high-wage/high-demand occupations, and develops job training strategies to meet the needs of Alaska's businesses.

The department supports integration of services through a single delivery system for both businesses and individuals. This efficient use of resources includes integrating all Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs, Wagner-Peyser, Unemployment Insurance, veterans' programs, the Senior Community Service and Employment Program, the Trade Adjustment Assistance program, and the Work Services program (employment elements in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program). The department's vision for the one-stop job centers is to field all job seeker needs, including case management, support services, referral to target programs, and educational resources.

The Division of Business Partnerships (DBP) program staff provides cross-agency presentations and training to education, human services, justice, and Office of Children's Services agencies. Interactions among DBP, the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, the Alaska Business Education Compact, and others better serves Alaska youth who are most in need and have significant barriers to employment.

DBP offers annual training sessions for grantees and sub-recipients from many entities, such as career and technical education providers and counselors, job center employment service specialists, and registered apprenticeship program operators. Training sessions strengthen links among service providers and maximize sharing of information, providing better service to WIA participants. The state further strengthens its workforce system through incentive and performance grants for regional cooperation, coordination of activities under the WIA and exemplary performance results by a WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth program grant recipients, or a local job center. A policy that defines the allocation formula and award process is Alaska's WIA Statewide Incentive Grants for Regional Cooperation, Local Coordination, and Exemplary Performance Results Policy #805.

<http://www.labor.state.ak.us/bp/forms/policy805.pdf>

The DBP uses tools developed by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, and offers monthly teleconference training sessions with grantees and job center counselors. The division also provides training and technical assistance to youth service providers to develop ways to maximize access to resources from a variety of other youth services-oriented agencies. The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development developed additional resources, such as [Hot Jobs in Alaska](#) publications for teens, which provide information on high-growth careers in Alaska.

### ***Partnerships***

The department works with other state agencies, the University of Alaska, Alaska Native corporations, private-sector employers, trade associations and Joint Apprenticeship Training Centers (JATCs) to develop high-wage, high-demand training plans that make the most of existing registered apprenticeship and other training models. Industry representatives are helping drive decisions and design of workforce solutions. An example of successful public-private partnerships is the training of apprentices and skilled workers for pipeline construction and

maintenance on Alaska's North Slope. The training partnership includes contractors, labor organizations, JATCs and the State Training Employment Program, providing an opportunity to approximately 100 workers from across the state to attend a two-week intensive pipeline construction upgrade course.

Another example of a successful partnership is the relationship between Alaska Native nonprofits, for-profits and the workforce investment system. Registered apprenticeship gives Alaska Native nonprofits a training strategy that aligns with their for-profit counterparts, supported through the state workforce investment system. The result is more Alaska Natives working on Native-owned projects and earning industry-recognized portable credentials.

The workforce and education systems work closely to expand the supply of skilled workers for Alaska's high-growth industries. Through partnership with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, University of Alaska and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, the AWIB developed the Alaska Career and Technical Education Plan to align education programs with Alaska's in-demand industries and occupations. Alaska continues to support the use of work-based and applied learning to cultivate student awareness of, and interest in high demand industries. The state will continue to reinforce registered apprenticeship and industry-led career and technical education.

### ***Leveraging Resources***

Alaska leverages resources as a strategy to increase and sustain economic growth. This practice fosters enhanced partnerships between federal, state, local, and private resources in innovative ways, relying on three different levels of leveraged resources.

First, cash contributions are state, local, and private resources that are allocated in direct support of a WIA project. A state general fund appropriation is an example of a cash contribution. Second, in-kind contributions are federal, state, local, and private resources that support the efforts of a project under the WIA, but are not easily cost allocated. Third, Alaska also applies WIA resources as potential leveraged funds that are consistent with the economic and workforce development goals of the state, preparing Alaska workers for employment in high-wage, high demand occupations.

The Alaska Legislature funded the Alaska Youth First Initiative with state general funds. This program provides capacity building resources to Alaska's youth. Alaska Youth First grants support competitive training and career awareness programs that are industry-focused, demand-driven components of Alaska's training system.

At the community-based participant level, job center partners conduct joint planning and case management to maximize resources, providing individuals with comprehensive services. As an example, partners at the Bethel Job Center are conducting comprehensive joint case management through a distance delivery approach. Services for participants in Bethel are shared among partner agencies including Native non-profit organizations and the Association of Village Council Presidents. By working together for the common benefit of participants each partner agency is able to reach more participants and ensure comprehensive services.

## ***Policy Alignment***

The state and the AWIB continually focus on aligning, simplifying, and streamlining the workforce investment system. In 2003, as part of the state's effort to rein in costs and reduce the bureaucracy in the workforce investment system, Alaska dissolved the oversight of local areas for a single regional planning board, which aligned several policy issues:

- A single one-stop operator oversees and administers the state's job centers, which provides consistent application of policy and the flexibility to meet unique local and regional workforce needs. The single operator system prevents duplication of effort and helps partner organizations deliver services more effectively.
- Several standardized Web-based applications provide statewide services. These include the Alaska Labor Exchange system (ALEXsys), the Electronic Grants Management system (EGrAMS), and the online Individualized Case Management System (ICM). Each system provides a consistent approach to data collection and publishing of reports.
- Universal access at all one-stop job centers is consistent.
- An industry-demand-driven approach and economic data for targeted populations ensure resources are allocated to support high-demand occupations.

## **Employment and Training Administration Policy Emphasis**

### ***Alignment with State and Regional Economic Development***

As a developing state with significant infrastructure demands, Alaska's workforce development system alignment priorities include:

- Developing the state's natural resources
- Increasing the use of renewable energy resources to 50 percent by 2020
- Constructing, operating, and maintaining a gas line
- Aligning the state's education and postsecondary education systems to prepare Alaskans for in-demand occupations
- Mitigating the state's dependence on federal funding

Multiple plans and partnerships are in place to support these priorities, including the Alaska Oil and Gas Training Plan, Alaska State Energy Sector Partnership, Alaska Career and Technical Education Plan, and Alaska Health Workforce Development Plan.

### ***Cross-Program Alignment***

In 2003, the state aligned service delivery and reduced administrative redundancy by consolidating the workforce investment system under a single regional planning area. This eliminated the expense of supporting two local boards and ensured that statewide service delivery models are consistent. An additional benefit is funding stream coordination. The Workforce Investment Act identifies more than 15 unique funding streams. In Alaska, the

department coordinates and administers seven of those funding streams, which ensures effective planning, alignment, and integration.

### ***Dual Customer Focus***

Alaska's primary focus in responding to employers and job seekers is to maximize the benefits of workforce development, offering services and training to job seekers that lead to employment. Programs such as registered apprenticeship and on-the-job training are exemplary examples of this dual focus. The most effective are programs that result in portable, industry-recognized credentials. Providers on the Eligible Training Providers list must be endorsed and recognized by national bodies or licensing agencies.

### ***Evidence-Based Practices***

The public workforce system tracks participant data to report training completion, entered employment, job retention, and earnings change. While these measures are critical, they do not adequately address system alignment, program efficiency, or effectiveness. Therefore, the state proposes several new metrics and outputs to track system changes in two ways: the cost per individual relative to the total expense, and the cost per individual relative to direct expenditures. To assess the impact on individuals, the state will establish a benchmark and target for investment in individuals using newly developed data collection tools.

The number of individuals on a case managers' caseload is also an important measure of system efficiency. The state plans to set caseload standards including a system of weighting that will help establish case load sizes. The caseload of a case manager working with individuals who have more than three significant barriers to employment will have a weighting factor. This will encourage case managers to recruit those with significant barriers yet remain focused on priority occupations.

The state will measure the total number trained in response to established targets. Based on selected priority occupations, the state will establish target numbers for individuals trained and manage costs by discontinuing further training once target enrollment is met. The goal is to measure the outcome of entered employment in an occupation related to training compared to system's recruitment and training efforts.

The state's recent investment in a comprehensive workforce investment data system will make data collection and analysis easier. The system is based on a Microsoft XRM platform, and is configured to streamline data collection, allowing for timely analysis and for gauging progress.

State strategies and policies are aligned with economic development opportunities, focused on in-demand occupations, and aligned with the national policies of the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. With an additional focus on efficiency and effectiveness, the state expects continued high performance in accordance with national standards.

## **Engaging Employers**

A relationship between the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development and industry employers is critical to Alaska's workforce investment system. The department continuously looks for ways to develop



cooperative working relationships based on Alaska employer needs, and this creates lasting partnerships with the business community.

## **Programs and Services**

Employer service representatives, particularly Business Connection staff, pay attention to local labor market trends to match employers with skilled job seekers. Staff work with employers to coordinate recruitments, plan job fairs, post job orders, provide applicant pre-screening and referrals, develop jobs, provide space for job recruitments, and offer employment and training service plans. Using a mass e-mail distribution list of employers and other interested parties, staff sends daily messages on new job postings, recruitments at the job centers, and upcoming job fairs. The department has identified that the health care, oil and gas, and mining industries are the highest-demand industries and continually engages industry leaders in these fields.

Employer services and programs available through job centers include:

- Veteran services provided by five full-time representatives located in areas with the highest percentage of Alaska veterans
- Youth services provided by six career guides in partnership with local schools and businesses to ensure young job seekers are prepared to enter the job market
- Apprenticeship specialists in job centers who increase employer involvement in registered apprenticeship
- On-the-job training (OJT) that offers employers the opportunity to hire and custom train employees and receive partial employee wage reimbursements
- Training based on current employer demands (including incumbent worker training) and the perceived needs of the future job market
- Rapid Response services including employee protection and layoff aversion strategies to companies facing layoffs and closures
- Seafood recruitments, orientations, and interviews
- Fidelity bonding services that encourage employers to hire workers who may pose a financial risk to the employer

### *Examples:*

The department sponsors an annual hiring event at the Anchorage Youth Job Center to mitigate the youth unemployment rate. More than 30 construction industry employers participate. Most of the youth are interviewed and many are offered jobs at the end of the event.

Alaska recognizes the gaps between job seekers' education, training, and skills and those that Alaska employers request or require. The Alaska Career Ready program (ACR) uses ACT WorkKeys® to help fill those gaps. WorkKeys assessments help job seekers obtain the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), a portable credential that certifies job seekers have essential, verifiable work place skills. The foundational skills certified by the NCRC are recognized and used by thousands of employers nationwide.

The department provides ACT WorkKeys® job profiling, which enables employers to reduce employee turnover and training costs. A critical part of the service is identifying the gaps between job seekers' skills

and what Alaska employers need. Job center staff subsequently work with job seekers to get training targeted toward rapid reemployment. Staff considers state or federal funds, including WIA, TAA, and STEP for job training.

A key goal for the success of the ACR program is to develop a statewide Work Ready Committee that includes leaders from the private sector, employers, state government, state workforce agencies, economic development councils, chambers of commerce, K-12, and high-growth industry leaders. Through the Assessment and Evaluation Committee of the AWIB, the department will increase communication and gain support from the governor's office on the ACT Certified Work Ready Community (CWRC). The CWRC empowers states with data, process, and tools that drive economic growth.

### **Building Lasting Relationships**

Business Connection staff members build trusting, long-term relationships with Alaska employers from small businesses to industry leaders. The opportunity to promote the department's employment and training programs is based on meeting employer needs. It emphasizes the benefits to employers and avoids the impression of a "hard-sell" or bombardment with unwanted information. These relationships also ensure employers view the department as a valuable resource.

#### *Example:*

The department fosters relationships with mining industry employers and works closely with the University of Alaska Southeast mining training program to fill positions with Alaskans. An example, is annual underground miner training and incumbent worker training, including haul truck simulator training in southeast Alaska. The goal is to provide Juneau-area mining employers, such as Hecla Greens Creek and Coeur Alaska Kensington, with qualified Alaska workers.

### **Outreach**

Exploration of new outreach methods that can reach many employers at once, and material with better content are intended to increase employer awareness of department employment and training resources.

#### *Examples:*

The apprenticeship and veteran programs are working to determine the best ways to spend GI Bill, WIA, and State Training and Employment Program (STEP) funds for apprenticeship and other training opportunities for Alaska's veterans.

The department's tax and employer services units established a cost-effective, mutually beneficial method of employer outreach. The exchange of material reaches an average of 20 employers per week. It includes employment and training information such as Alaska Career Ready, veterans' services, and OJTs as part of the new- or returning-employer packets mailed by the tax unit. In return, job center Business Connection staff help alleviate overflow calls to the tax unit by promoting Web-based tax self-registration to employers with whom they come into contact. An apprenticeship brochure, currently in the revision process, will be included in the new-employer packet, and will highlight significant wage for hiring a veteran into an apprenticeship program.

The department is substantially revising its Web pages that are specific to employer needs. The Business Connection page will focus on the most commonly requested employer services under easily identifiable general headings with associated topics underneath. The overarching theme of the modification is to answer the question, “What is the benefit to the employer?” For example, the heading “Protect Your Workers” will lead employers to topics including Trade Adjustment Assistance, Layoff Aversion Strategies, Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification requirements, and COBRA continuation of employee health care benefits. Other main headings include Post a Job, Employment and Labor Laws, Hire Leadership and Experience (Veterans), and Hire Incentives.

Plans to recognize employers who hire veterans will include public identification of the business by public service announcements, listings on the Business Connection and veterans’ web pages, and window decals. The goal is to produce a decal, easily identifiable to all Alaska employers, showing that a particular business honors America’s veterans by hiring them and that will inspire friendly competition among local and industry employers, generating greater momentum for veteran hire.

Business Connection and veteran staff plan to increase their presence at Society for Human Resources Management and local chambers of commerce meetings on a regular basis in Juneau, Anchorage, and Fairbanks.

In conclusion, the department strives to provide outstanding customer service to employers by focusing on long-term, respectful relationships; understanding and responding to their employment and training needs; and promoting and providing consequential services and resources that meet those needs. The department will continue to meet or exceed the expectations of employers to include excellent performance outcomes for mutual workforce goals.

## **Desired Outcomes**

To determine Alaska’s proposed Workforce investment Act (WIA) Title 1B and Wagner-Peyser Act programs performance goals for program year 2012, the department considered the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) and the more recent GPRA Modernization Act of 2010 performance goals, U.S. Department of Labor regression model targets, previous year’s results (PY 2007-2011), the impact of waivers, current and future economic conditions, priority of service, participants served, integrated service delivery, and workforce solutions that contribute to the economic competitiveness of Alaska. Targets were set based on the estimated effect of unemployment rates on program performance outcomes and the department’s assumptions about future unemployment rates and the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U). The department also used recent quarterly performance results to determine its path. For youth the state also considered the barriers experienced by Alaska’s “neediest” youth.

Performance targets were adjusted to accommodate a significant number of at-risk individuals who need higher levels of service. The department proposes increasing access to services for special populations who may face significant barriers (such as veterans, older workers, individuals with disabilities, Native Americans, or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families recipients) that will impact WIA Adult, WIA Dislocated Worker and/or Wagner-Peyser Act outcomes. These proposed performance goals will increase customer satisfaction and ensure optimal return on investment of federal funds.

Alaska's rural economy and workforce is based largely on seasonal jobs and is difficult to assess. This seasonality is a primary factor in Alaska's employment retention rate. Alaska's waiver on rural employment retention rates was intended to reflect rural seasonality as a separate measure. Unfortunately, the department and Mathematica, the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration's contractor, which prescribes using specific technical computing software, are unable to generate consistent performance data. Alaska has requested technical assistance and is working with Mathematica to identify and resolve differences in reports.

Three factors influence Alaska's ability to achieve the WIA Literacy/Numeracy goal. First, Alaska's goal is negotiated at 33 percent even though the GPRA goal is set at 40 percent; Alaska must meet at least 26.4 percent to achieve a minimal acceptable standard. Second, the state has historically failed this measure for a number of reasons including an outdated data collection system and failure of participants taking the post-test. Third, the state believes a goal of 33 percent is a substantial stretch given the past performance. The state does not expect ETA to negotiate a performance number less than the minimally acceptable standard of 80 percent of the GPRA.

The state has instituted a two-step approach to solving the data problem. This includes a new data collection system and greater accountability asked of the project operators.

The results of these new practices are nearly a 50 percent increase in the literacy/numeracy rate from PY2010 to PY2011. For these reasons it seems practical that Alaska maintain the literacy/numeracy performance standard at 80 percent of the GPRA and continue to focus its efforts on data collection, accountability, and post-test completion.

Alaska requested a waiver to report common performance measure outcomes only, and received approval to do so in accordance with the waiver authority granted to the Secretary of Labor at WIA section 189(i)(4). Alaska will focus on establishing nine agreed-on levels of performance for the WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs and the three Wagner-Peyser Act measures. The three adult common measures will be applied separately to the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, and the three youth common measures will be applied to the WIA Youth program.

The below proposed goals are in alignment with the vision and strategic goals described in this new WIA/Wagner-Peyser Act Integrated State Plan. Alaska is committed to meeting the proposed performance measures for PY 2012 and in improving the quality of our services. Planned proactive strategies to ensure our continued improvements include strengthening our partnerships with service providers and program operators, enhancing communications among workforce development professionals statewide, and aligning workforce development resources. These performance goals, once agreed upon, will be implemented retroactively to July 1, 2012.

U.S. Department of Labor



Employment and Training Administration

Region 6 San Francisco

90 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 17300  
San Francisco, CA 94103

JUN 24 2013

*This letter constitutes an amendment to this plan.*

Dianne Blumer, Commissioner  
Alaska Department of Labor  
and Workforce Development  
P.O. Box 111149  
Juneau, AK 99811-1149

Dear Commissioner Blumer:

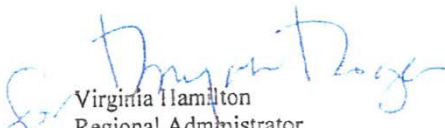
This letter finalizes the agreed-upon Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Wagner-Peyser performance targets for Program Year (PY) 2013. Following a review of the data and information supporting the proposed performance targets, and subsequent discussions with State staff, we are confirming the final performance targets as follows:

<u>Program</u>	<u>PY 2013 Negotiated Goal</u>
<u>WIA Adult</u>	
Entered Employment	80.0%
Retention	81.0%
Average Earnings	\$19,000
<u>WIA Dislocated Worker</u>	
Entered Employment	79.5%
Retention	87.0%
Average Earnings	\$22,250
<u>WIA Youth</u>	
Placement in Employment/Education	57.5%
Attainment of Degree/Certificate	62.0%
Literacy/Numeracy Gains	38.0%
<u>Wagner-Peyser</u>	
Entered Employment	55.0%
Retention	79.0%
Average Earnings	\$18,500

With respect to the data drop for PY 2012 Q3 for the WIA Adult Entered Employment Rate, our staffs will continue to work together to ensure that the data reporting for this measure is accurate.

This letter constitutes a modification to your Five Year, PY2012 - PY 2016, Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Wagner-Peyser (WP) State Plan. If you have any questions, please contact Rosemary Cowan at (415) 625-7935 or [cowan.rosemary@dol.gov](mailto:cowan.rosemary@dol.gov).

Sincerely,

  
Virginia Hamilton  
Regional Administrator

*PY 2007 – PY 2011 Historical Data*

<b>Adult</b>	<b>PY 2007</b>	<b>PY 2008</b>	<b>PY2009</b>	<b>PY 2010</b>	<b>PY 2011</b>	<b>Average</b>
Entered Employment Rate	70.4%	79.2%	73.6%	67.7%	82.6%	74.7%
Employment Retention Rate	79.9%	79.8%	73.0%	81.3%	77.4%	78.3%
Earnings	\$14,689.00	\$16,756.00	\$15,862.00	\$18,200.00	\$17,679.00	\$16,637
<b>Dislocated Worker</b>	<b>PY 2007</b>	<b>PY 2008</b>	<b>PY2009</b>	<b>PY 2010</b>	<b>PY 2011</b>	<b>Average</b>
Entered Employment Rate	75.8%	80.3%	75.1%	73.0%	78.2%	76.5%
Employment Retention Rate	84.4%	80.3%	84.9%	83.7%	82.0%	83.1%
Earnings	\$19,972.00	\$20,585.00	\$24,785.00	\$24,160.00	\$21,636.00	\$22,227.60
<b>Youth</b>	<b>PY 2007</b>	<b>PY 2008</b>	<b>PY2009</b>	<b>PY 2010</b>	<b>PY 2011</b>	<b>Average</b>
Placement in Employment of Education	69.0%	60.3%	53.8%	53.0%	56.0%	58%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	60.0%	51.2%	64.7%	61.0%	50.0%	57%
Literacy and Numeracy Gains	21.7%	35.4%	36.9%	15.0%	22.0%	26.2%

To address the decline in funding of WIA programs, the workforce system must align services with those most in need and those who can be served through efficient and effective strategies. Efficient strategies support the timely delivery of services through a process that is aligned with the priorities of the workforce investment board. Effective strategies ensure job seekers and employers receive services based on their circumstances. As a result of this shift, the number of total individuals served is likely to decline over the next five years. However, the outcomes for those receiving assistance will be of the highest quality and support the outcomes identified above.

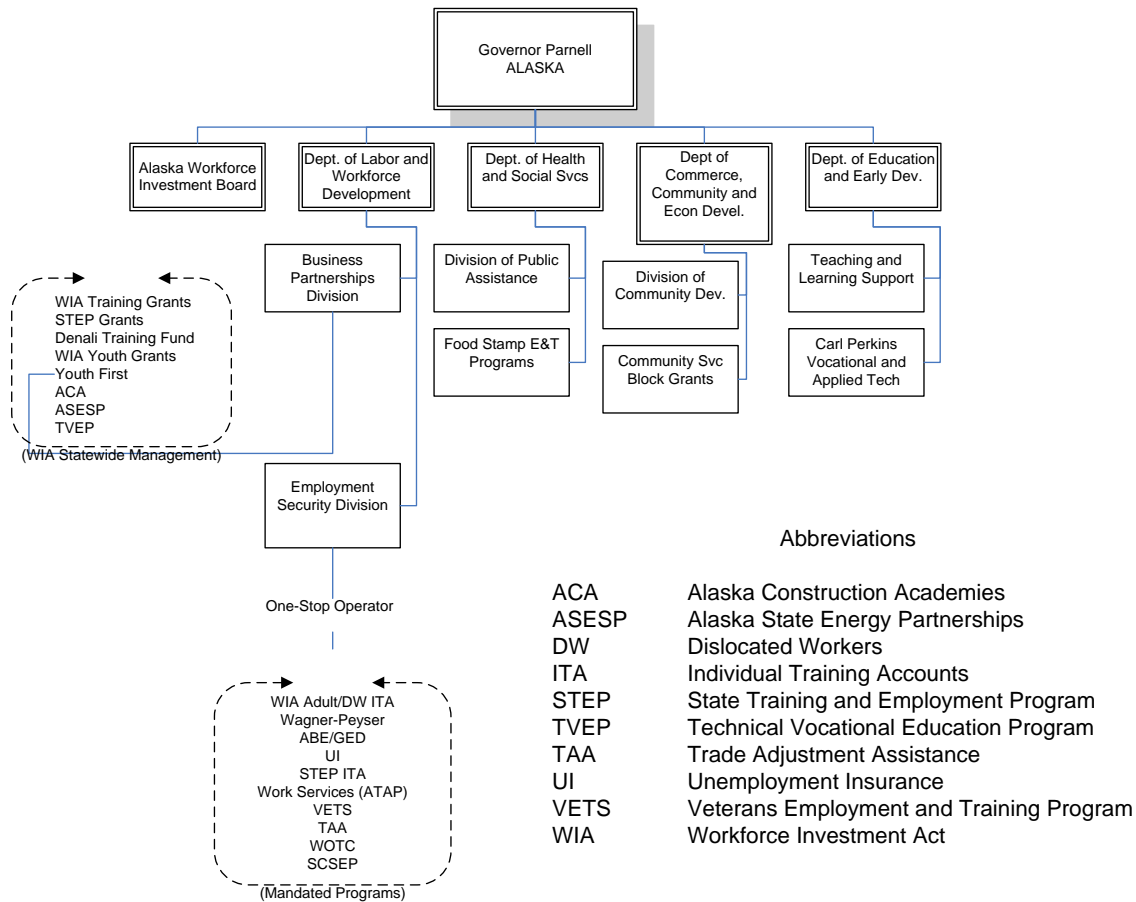
The economic downturn and higher-than-usual unemployment rate have impacted Alaska's Wagner-Peyser Entered Employment Rate. Over approximately the last two years, there has been an increase of participants exiting Alaska Labor Exchange system (ALEXsys), with substantially fewer jobs posted.

Alaska's dynamic labor market variables compel the state to take an innovative approach to sustainable workforce development. The above recommended performance measures for Alaska in PY2012 demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement of the workforce investment system while recognizing the realities of the state.



## SECTION II: State Operational Plan

### Alaska’s Public Workforce Investment System Structure and Programs



Through its evaluation authority, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board helps programs align policies and resources to workforce investment system goals. Alaska statutes describe the role of the AWIB, including subcommittees and programs accountable to the board. An important function of the board is evaluation of workforce investment programs consistent with the strategic direction of the state workforce investment plan and industry specific training plans. Historically the Training Program Performance Report assesses the effectiveness of programs in the achievement of enrollments, completion, and placement of qualified participants. The AWIB sets standards on the alignment of state and federal training programs.

Other responsibilities of the board established in state statutes and federal law include the development of plans and policies directly affecting the workforce investment system. As a subcommittee designated in statute, the Policy and Planning Committee oversees the process that results in the development of the Integrated Workforce Investment Plan. The committee works closely with staff and state leadership to articulate the governor’s vision and ensure that vision is interpreted in a way that supports business and industry as well as those seeking employment or training

assistance. The committee conducted numerous working group meetings and submitted the final version of the plan to the executive committee of the board for approval prior to submission to the Employment and Training Administration.

The Employment Security Division (ESD) is the state's service delivery agency for WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs statewide, WIA Youth in the Fairbanks area and other state job training programs, ensuring program services are delivered in accordance with federal and state directives and guidance. The ESD administers the state's Wagner-Peyser Employment Service and is designated the statewide one-stop operator, managing the job centers throughout the state.

The Division of Business Partnerships (DBP), the state workforce agency, ensures that Workforce Investment Act funding and other federal and state job training programs are aligned, administered, and delivered in accordance with federal and state directives and guidance.

### *How Agencies Interrelate*

The workforce system includes the private sector, other state agencies, and vendors contracted for training programs. The Division of Business Partnerships (DBP) manages partnership agreements by investing federal funds with training providers, employers, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), the one-stop operator, Employment Security Division (ESD), and the department's Research and Analysis Section. The DBP maintains a management information system for participant case management and training program performance reporting. These data are provided to the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) to evaluate and report program performance and provide recommendations to the governor.

The AWIB, by statute, provides oversight for planning and coordinating employment-related and education training programs operated by the state or under contract with the state. The board, through its committee structure, is responsible for oversight and evaluation of an efficient, effective and integrated workforce development system.

A Memorandum of Understanding is in effect between the board and one-stop partner agencies. The Alaska one-stop system has a policy that allows customers to access all services related to employment. The DVR and the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) Division of Public Assistance (DPA) are collocated with ESD in several of the state's one-stop job centers. Alaska has progressed from mere collocation toward true integration of one-stop services. This includes alignment of functional resources, job center redesign, improved cross training, and the inclusion of additional community partners and employers who use vital employment and training-related services through the Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN).

Alaska Lieutenant Governor Mead Treadwell and cabinet-level leadership of each state department associated with the public workforce system are voting members on the AWIB. The current roster, by-laws, and archived meeting minutes for the AWIB and all its committees are on the board's Web site.

<http://www.labor.state.ak.us/awib/home.htm>

### *Organization and Structure*

The AWIB was organized based on the Alternative Entity designation available in WIA. The workforce investment board was established prior to December 31, 1997, and as such is eligible for this designation. The governor appoints members from a broad spectrum of community and business leaders. The board receives administrative

support from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The board elects a chair and vice chair from among its representatives of business and industry. The AWIB has established an executive committee and the following chairs of permanent standing committees: Assessment and Evaluation, Policy and Planning, Employment and Placement, Workforce Readiness, the Youth Council and Legislative Committee.

The chairs of the permanent standing committees must be from the private sector and are appointed by the board's chair. The executive committee consists of the board chair, vice-chair, and immediate past chair, along with the chairs of the permanent standing committees. The executive committee assumes the duties of and exercises the powers of the board between regular business meetings.

In accordance with its bylaws, the AWIB has a legislative committee and a statewide Youth Council, and it may form additional standing committees, special committees, or ad hoc committees to advise and assist the board in carrying out its functions.

### ***Entities Represented***

The AWIB is the state's Workforce Investment Board. The AWIB consists of the following voting members, not to exceed 26:

- The lieutenant governor
- The commissioners of the Alaska Departments of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development; Education and Early Development; Health and Social Services; and Labor and Workforce Development
- One representative from the University of Alaska
- Four additional education representatives: one each from local public education, secondary vocational education, a postsecondary vocational education institution, and adult basic education
- Four representatives from business and industry
- Four representatives from organized labor
- At least one representative from an organization representing employment and training needs of Alaska Natives
- At least one representative from a community-based service organization
- At least one representative who has personal or professional experience with developmental disabilities
- At least one and up to five additional members from the private sector to ensure a private-sector majority with regional and local representation

The governor may appoint one person to fill two or more of the positions listed above. Additional nonvoting members may be appointed to the board from government or nongovernment entities. Voting members may appoint a designee who must be approved by the governor to serve in their place.

The AWIB has a private-sector majority, and the chair and vice-chair are elected from the representatives from business and industry. The state department commissioners represent the majority of mandatory and nonmandatory partners identified in the WIA. All of these individuals create an open path for partners to communicate with the board. In addition, the AWIB provides regular opportunities for communication with all mandatory partners not represented on the board.

### ***Board Member Selection Process***

AWIB members other than the state officials are appointed by the governor and serve at the governor's pleasure. They serve staggered four-year terms and may serve until a successor is appointed. The governor ensures that individuals appointed to the board have sufficient expertise to effectively carry out their duties. Such expertise includes knowledge of the long-term needs of individuals preparing to enter the workforce; the needs of local, state, and regional labor markets; and the methods for evaluating the effectiveness of vocational training programs in serving diverse populations. Additionally, the governor selects the organized labor representatives from lists of nominees submitted by recognized state labor organizations.

The constituencies represented on the board are all stakeholders in the governor's vision for Alaska's workforce development system. The board's membership provides a crucial linkage among vocational education, apprenticeship programs, and business and industry to combine economic, educational, and workforce development interests. The board membership brings together cabinet-level leadership from the state agencies responsible for grants management, public education, and one-stop operations with diverse representation from the private sector. Government officials on the board are the embodiment of distinct components of the governor's vision for economic and workforce development that support safe communities. This structure enables the board's private sector leadership to work collaboratively with government decision makers.

### ***Board Functions***

In its role as the governor's workforce advisory board, the AWIB has the responsibility to evaluate and recommend policy to implement the Workforce Investment Act. The board's duties under the act are to assist the governor to:

- Develop and continuously improve a WIA service delivery and one-stop system
- Develop and improve linkages to ensure coordination and nonduplication of services
- Coordinate the measures taken pursuant to the Carl Perkins Act
- Develop allocation formulas for the distribution of WIA program funds
- Develop and continuously improve levels of performance for the WIA performance measures
- Prepare an annual report to the Secretary of the U. S. Department of Labor and the Alaska State Legislature
- Develop a statewide employment statistics system as required in the Wagner-Peyser Act
- Develop an application for an incentive grant as required in Section 503 of the WIA

Alaska Statute 23.15.580(b) establishes the following responsibilities of the AWIB:

- Deliver to the governor and the Legislature a biennial plan to accomplish the goals developed to meet human resource investment needs
- Include quantifiable goals that will empower Alaskans to gain independence from public assistance and move up the socioeconomic ladder
- Designate the duties and responsibilities of state agencies to implement the federal act, and to capitalize on experience developed by workforce partners
- Participate in the development of a coordinated statewide system of activities and services that includes both mandatory and optional partners of the one-stop delivery system
- Provide for the development, accountability, and continuous improvement of comprehensive workforce performance measures to assess the effectiveness of the workforce investment activities in the state

- Report annually to the governor and legislature on the performance and evaluation of training programs in the state

In carrying out its duties, the AWIB adheres to the principles of local flexibility and maximum stakeholder participation. Industry consortia and regional councils serve the AWIB in an advisory capacity, both advocating for the industries and communities they represent and conveying the workforce investment needs of their groups as a whole. The AWIB role includes advancing the governor's vision as well as responsibilities under the WIA and those authorized by state law. The AWIB serves as an ambassador for the system to the public, provides outreach to employers for their involvement, and acts as a catalyst for continued improvement of the workforce investment system.

The AWIB helps the governor develop plans for workforce investment, advises the governor and legislature on ways to develop and continuously improve the statewide workforce system, provides guidance for the statewide labor market information system, monitors and evaluates the statewide service delivery system, and reports to the U.S. Secretary of Labor, governor, and state legislature.

### ***Access to Board Information***

All regular business meetings of the AWIB are open to the public. All stakeholders, as well as the public, are notified of additional significant matters (such as this plan) in addition to the regular business meetings. Public comment is welcome in person, by teleconference, or by Internet submission. The AWIB is conscious of accessibility and selects its venues accordingly. It is the state's practice that all official Web pages provide varied levels of accessibility per Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended, 1973. The current AWIB roster, bylaws, and archived meeting minutes for the board and all its committees are available on the board's Web site.

<http://www.labor.state.ak.us/awib/home.htm>

### ***Conflict of Interest***

The Alaska conflict of interest law (AS 39.50) applies to all members of state-appointed boards and commissions. AS 39.52.110.220 details the legislative intent that representatives maintain their right to personal and financial interests. Board members are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical manner. Examples of inappropriate actions include, but are not limited to:

- Using an official position for personal gain and intentionally granting unwarranted benefits to any person
- Seeking other employment or contracts through the use of official position
- Accepting compensation for the performance of official duties from a person other than the state
- Using state property or facilities to benefit personal interests
- Taking or withholding official action to affect a matter in which the board member has a personal interest
- Authorizing the use of state funds, facilities, equipment, services, or another government resources for partisan political purposes
- Accepting gifts, in any form, that are a benefit to personal or financial interests, under circumstances in which it could reasonably be inferred that the gift is intended to influence the performance of official actions

- Having a personal or financial interest in a state grant, contract, lease, or loan if the board member may take or withhold official action that affects the award, execution, or administration of the state grant, contract, lease, or loan

If a board member is involved in a matter that may result in a conflict of interest or violation of the Ethics Act, AS 39.52.220 will provide directions for declaration of the potential violation and remedy by the board.

### ***Resources to Function***

Alaska Statute 23.15.585 specifies that the governor appoints an executive director for the AWIB and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development that provides Alaska Modified Strategic State Plan professional, technical, and administrative staff to assist the board in carrying out its duties and responsibilities as described above. The AWIB budget is funded from programs for which the board is the lead state oversight entity for planning, evaluation, and coordinating under state statute (AS 23.15.575). The AWIB staff is responsible for its own budget and spending plan as a commissioner-level entity within the department.

### ***Structure/Process to Collaborate and Communicate***

The Alaska Job Center Network relies on a single point of contact model to ensure collaboration. As an example, the registered apprenticeship specialist creates awareness and provides the linkage between the job seeker/apprentice and the employer/sponsor, and fosters these relationships using the resources of the public workforce system. Additionally, improvements in the state's online labor exchange system, ALEXsys, better identify those with professional credentials and licenses. This allows employers the ability to more quickly assess where qualified workers live, and allows the department to further direct training and services to gaps in rural communities.

On July 1, 2004, Alaska consolidated its two previous local workforce areas into a single area state designation in accordance with a waiver granted by the USDOL Employment and Training Administration to restructure and streamline delivery of services under WIA. Consolidation eliminated an entire administrative layer allowing funds to go directly to the one-stop operator and aligning state policies to operate more effectively. The AWIB now performs the functions of local workforce investment boards in addition to its role as the state workforce investment board. Alaska's one-stop operator, the Employment Security Division, is incrementally improving coordination of services within the Alaska Job Center Network, in partnership with other agencies. The focus is improvement of partner collocation and public accessibility.

### ***Effective Sharing of Information***

Staff members from the divisions of Business Partnerships, Employment Security, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Public Assistance routinely attend and provide information at AWIB committee meetings. The AWIB staff is a liaison between board members and state agencies responsible for delivery of AWIB programs funded under the public workforce development system.

### ***Lines of Communication***

The AWIB performs the functions of local workforce investment boards in addition to its role as the state workforce investment board. The board members are governor-appointed and serve at the pleasure of the governor, as defined in AS 23.15.555(a).



## Operating Systems and Policies Supporting the State's Strategies

The state has developed and supported the development or acquisition of operating systems that are essential in supporting state workforce development strategies. These include technological applications, training for specific area skill building to service delivery staff members, marketing operating systems to business and potential participants, and reports that help one-stops prepare for layoffs.

These electronic workforce information delivery systems are well coordinated with and connected to national electronic workforce information tools. The [Alaska Job Center Network](#) and workforce information Web sites and the [Alaska Career Information System](#), Alaska's primary electronic workforce information delivery systems, link to [America's Career InfoNet](#), [America's Service Locator](#), [O\\*NET OnLine](#), [Alaska Labor Exchange System](#), and [America's Job Bank](#). All are available in the one-stop resource rooms and any location with an Internet connection.

The Wagner-Peyser system is integrated with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Unemployment Insurance database system, allowing ease in Employment Services registrations of UI claimants and the subsequent reporting of participation or nonparticipation in the Worker Profiling and Reemployment program. This provides the basis for job referrals based on participant activities.

Additionally, ALEXsys receives daily updates from the state's Individual Case Management System (ICM), tracking participant activities and services delivered through Workforce Investment Act programs. ALEXsys provides Web-based interfaces for participants and employers to enter records identifying their needs. This includes the ability for employers to post job orders online, allowing for more efficient, effective, and timely referrals in response to the job order.

The state performance accountability system is the department's new Workforce Investment Performance System (WIPS), which provides the ability to collect and report all data necessary to meet federal and state reporting requirements relative to state and federal workforce development funding streams, including the WIA Title I programs. The WIPS also includes basic case management (ICM) capabilities allowing one-stop staff to maintain comprehensive records documenting interaction with clients, planned and actual services for participants, training and supportive service-related costs, Individual Employment Plans, Individual Service Strategies, Individual Education Plans, referrals to agencies, and funding amounts from each of the partner services involved in the participant's service strategy.

The DBP coordinates with the department's Research and Analysis section to automate the compiling of wage data and adheres to strict data sharing agreements when handling wage data and participant information to ensure compliance with confidentiality agreements. The DBP is responsible for the upload of wage files into the ICM and safeguards the wage data by assigning user roles with controlled access to the system. Strict guidelines are followed when determining user access levels to ensure compliance with confidentiality requirements. Wage data are used for reporting on the quarterly and annual WIASRDs, WIA Quarterly 9090, WIA Annual 9091, and WIA Annual Narrative. In addition, it is used in reporting pre and post training earnings change and various state level reports, including ad hoc reporting, and its use as a management tool.

The primary vehicle for disseminating workforce information to internal and external customers is the Internet. The AJCN's home page includes "[Labor Market Information](#)" as a main link with many other related links, including

“[Business/Employer Connection](#)” and “[Job Seeker Resources](#).” The site is used in all [AJCN job center](#) resource rooms. Information is available to businesses and job seekers as well as staff and is a separate category that is more visible on the main page. The site is available to anyone with an Internet connection, including libraries, schools, work sites, and homes. The state also produces a monthly magazine, [Alaska Economic Trends](#), which is prepared by the department’s Research and Analysis Section and distributed to businesses, and individual subscribers as well as published on the Web.

Alaska continues to leverage and support understanding of labor market information, particularly as it relates to high-wage, high-demand industries, to the one-stop operator responsible for determining and negotiating individual training accounts, and delivering the majority of WIA Title I-B Adult and Dislocated Worker services. Labor Market Information staff works with local office staff on request to explain how the state and local economies operate, how to assess occupational employment opportunities at the state and local level, and how to use the tools and information available on the Research and Analysis Section’s Web site to obtain training and navigate career transitions. In this era of consumer choice, labor market information creates informed consumers who are able to make better decisions about personal career development.

The DBP maintains an online electronic grant application system ([EGrAMS](#)). [EGrAMS](#) is an enterprise-wide web-based scalable, configurable, business rule driven and workflow based end-to-end electronic grants system. The system provides consistent and standard user interfaces to handle the process from grant application entry to closeout. It offers a streamlined solution to configure, find, apply and manage the grant application process quickly, efficiently and accurately. The system uses a comprehensive security framework for user authentication and authorization. The system also provides user-friendly and intuitive web-based interfaces providing various ease-of-use features such as lookups, dropdowns and context sensitive help.

### ***Policies Supporting the State’s Strategies***

The state legislature funded the Alaska Youth First Initiative with state general funds aimed at enabling the state’s youth to enter high-demand occupations. This additional avenue for training is the result of an industry-focused, demand-driven training system. The workforce investment system’s strategies and priorities are based on past successes.

The governor’s vision and workforce development operating system policies lead the coordinated implementation of the state’s WIA integrated strategic plan as communicated through the AWIB. The governor directs the AWIB to coordinate development and maintain the state’s integrated Workforce Investment Act/Wagner-Peyser Plan in a way that is aligned and consistent with the state’s identified and anticipated future workforce development needs. Accordingly, the AWIB will take a more proactive role in ensuring that AJCN partner Memoranda of Agreement specifically detail alignment of policies, operations, administrative systems, other procedures, and costs to ensure coordination and avoid duplication of workforce programs operated by the mandated partners. The state’s Carl Perkins and Adult Basic Education programs are also consistent with this integrated plan. This process is meant to better align and leverage federal and state employment and training programs.

The department’s role is to coordinate delivery of high quality services to job seekers and businesses and meet system goals. The department’s Research and Analysis Section analyzes labor market information to identify possible shifts in employment and industry trends, and works with the AWIB to help them identify priority industries and related occupations most in demand in the state. The Division of Business Partnerships (DBP), Employment Security Division (ESD), industry leaders, and consortia collaborate on workforce development strategies and

policies that will mitigate workforce gaps in skilled, high-wage, high-demand occupations within the priority industries.

The department's integrated state plan provides a vision and standards for an effective, efficient, and consistent approach to delivering seamless services statewide, and establishes expectations for partner roles and responsibilities. This plan leads partnerships, including the agencies responsible for: WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Rapid Response, and Youth programs; Wagner-Peyser; TAA/NAFTA; Worker Opportunity Tax Credit; Adult Basic Education; Veterans Employment and Training Services; Vocational Rehabilitation; Senior Community Services Employment Program; Employment and Training Programs under the Food Stamp Act; Tribal and Native Employment and Training programs; and the Alaska Job Corps. Additional partners include the State Training and Employment Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, University of Alaska, Alaska Vocational Technical Education Center (AVTEC)—Alaska's Institute of Technology, Commission on Aging, DHSS, and a variety of community and private, nonprofit service and training providers.

The current one-stop operator Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and the agreed-upon cost allocation methods, guide the service delivery and administration of the Alaska Job Center Network. Integrated services are provided with the intent of aligning and coordinating services between agency partners and based on the WIA's one-stop operating principles, which include streamlining services, promoting universal access, empowering individuals, promoting state and local flexibility, engaging the private sector, and continuously improving WIA and Wagner-Peyser programs.

The AJCN provides vital information on employment and training opportunities for individuals and employers throughout the state. AWIB resolutions and initiatives, and the administration's strategic workforce development goals, form the basis of the Alaska Job Center service delivery. Service delivery throughout the AJCN is guided by the commitment to these principles:

- Job center staff will respond to the needs of their customers — both job seekers and employers — and pursue continuous improvement based on customer feedback.  
All Alaskans will have access to a full array of job seeking and employment development services.
- Customers will have a wide range of service options as well as sufficient information and assistance in making informed choices.
- Services, programs, and fiscal commitments currently administered by separate federal, state, and local governments will be integrated for maximum efficiency and customer responsiveness.
- Auxiliary aids and services will be provided to those with disabilities to ensure equally effective communication, access, and participation.
- Success will be evaluated on clearly measurable outcomes in meeting the needs and expectations of their customers, employers, and job seekers.
- People with limited English proficiency will have access to programs and services consistent with Alaska's Methods of Administration.

The principles, values, and design elements conveyed in this integrated workforce development plan are reflected in the delivery of services to AJCN customers. This plan acknowledges that the strengths each partner possesses ensure maximum effectiveness.

Alaska has a series of [service delivery policies](#) and standards to ensure coordination of programs and activities within the AJCN and youth program providers while avoiding duplication. These policies cover front-end services,

registration, self-sufficiency, assessment services, supportive services, the appeal/grievance process, coordinated employer services, monitoring, data collection, one-stop operator Memorandum of Understanding, the agreed-upon cost allocation methods and other skills and employment services.

The AWIB's certification process is one tool the state uses to review and assess the integration of services in the one-stops. Other tools include the comprehensive Memoranda of Understanding each one-stop negotiates and follows. Through these means, management is able to closely monitor service delivery and react quickly to instances that might inhibit integration.

Alaska's WIA/Wagner-Peyser system policies were created to provide a framework in which AJCN one-stops and affiliate sites could better support job seekers and employers, with the following goals:

- Focus on helping working-age youth and low-income, low-skilled populations obtain jobs and develop their skills to become economically self-sufficient.
- Align in-demand training with the expectation that Alaskans will develop the skills in-state to meet industry needs and replace its aging workforce with fewer nonresidents.
- Provide a more effective, consistent, and efficient approach to delivering employer and job-seeker services
- Serve customers jointly through the integration of services delivered by ALEXsys, AJCN, and other one-stop partners.

Under these policies the state is required to develop AJCN procedures and technical assistance guides to drive local implementation of state strategies and policies. Guidance emphasizes the maximum integration of business services and universal customers. The AJCN's business connection teams are in full-service job centers that offer services, such as employer job listings, job development, and business outreach, encompassing multiple program offerings. Guidance for these teams is in place to provide on-the-job training opportunities in partnership with employers.

The WIA dual enrollment policy and technical assistance guide ensures individual customers receive program services and benefits from federal and state programs. The employer handbook posted online provides information on all programs available through the one-stops. Additionally, Rapid Response team members that represent each region of the state ensure that employers are aware of services, including layoff aversion strategies such as employee stock ownership plans and feasibility studies.

In the future, these policies will help the department serve the entire AJCN and customers, not just those enrolled in a particular program. As part of continuous policy improvement, Alaska is working on a structural framework for system oversight and basic service delivery across the AJCN. This structure will be the result of a series of policy projects with priority on removing unnecessary limitations and requirements. To the extent possible, policies will be consolidated and issued by topic to establish clear relationships between subjects.

Alaska's workforce development system policies will enable integrated service delivery, which allows AJCN staff members funded by different funding streams to serve customers in the most efficient and effective manner possible. The focus is on providing all customers with the services necessary to meet their assessed needs rather than dictating service delivery based on funding streams. Within this vision, state policies will guide the AJCN providing appropriate flexibility within federal and state regulations to encourage innovation and operational control and to better integrate service delivery to all customers.

Wagner-Peyser Act resources have been used as the foundation for providing services and linking WIA-eligible adults and dislocated workers to available programs. The AJCN begins with the services provided by the one-stop

operator, and extends to the comprehensive network of employment, social, and training services. At the community level, many of these relationships existed prior to the enactment of WIA. Listed below is how the state ensures the three-tiered service delivery strategy for adults and dislocated workers:

- **Self-Service:** Clients who do not require direct staff assistance to use core services, job center services, and resource room facilities. A minimum of a partial registration is required if the client is using the job center. A full registration is optional to allow job matching. The client may be selected for a customer satisfaction survey and the customer's employment outcomes will be tracked on federal reports. Examples include clients who use the resource room equipment independently, and repeat clients in the resource rooms.
- **Facilitated Self-Service:** Brief assistance to allow a customer to use the resource room facilities without further staff assistance. A minimum of a partial registration is required. A full registration is optional to allow job matching. The client may be selected for a customer satisfaction survey and the client's employment outcomes will be tracked on federal reports. Examples of facilitated self-service include, but are not limited to: a short overview of the services available in the resource room; instructions on how to use the fax machine or other equipment; and providing handouts on a specific company or job search Web pages.
- **Staff-Assisted:** Employment services provided in a group or one-on-one setting, which takes a significant expenditure of staff time. These services are counted on federal reports. A minimum of a partial registration is required and the staff-assisted service provided must be recorded. A full registration is optional to allow job matching. The client may be selected for a customer satisfaction survey and the client's employment outcomes will be tracked on federal reports. Staff-assisted services that must be recorded include: referrals to partner agencies such as DVR and DPA; referrals to jobs; placements in training; reemployment services; assessment services including an assessment interview, testing, counseling, or employability planning; case management; career guidance; job search activities; fidelity bonding; job development contacts; tax credit eligibility determinations; referrals to other services, including skills training, educational services, and supportive services; and any other service requiring significant expenditure of staff time.

Business customers have access to facilitated self-help services through business assistance seminars sponsored by a variety of partners. Topics range from business startup to unemployment insurance cost management. Staff assisted services are available to all customers and may be accessed based on customer request or referral. AJCN staff determines the needs of the individual or business and either provide the service directly, refer the individual to the appropriate resource, or schedule additional assistance on-site. To ensure that employers can advertise and job seekers can apply for special job categories such as summer youth, internships, and seasonal openings, ALEXsys allows job openings to be attached and searched by specific categories.

To facilitate Alaska's workforce development during changing economic conditions, Alaska invests in registered apprenticeship, On the Job Training (OJT), and internships as a way to help employers manage the costs of skill development. As new apprentices, trainees, and interns learn on the job, they earn progressively more. A modest investment in a partnership between employers and the department will help develop a trained workforce.

The DBP competitive grants provide direction and guidance on integrating registered apprenticeship programs within the AJCN specific to the type of services and activities provided under the grant. Training trusts and registered apprenticeship programs may apply for and compete for WIA Title I-B funds through the procurement process. The AWIB has established a target of 60 percent of all training will be in the priority industries.

Because of the recent emphasis in Alaska on new and legacy high-growth jobs such as in energy, oil and gas production, transportation infrastructure, construction, and resource development, individual training accounts through job centers will also direct a certain percentage of available resources to these state priorities. ESD entered into an MOU with Alaska Works Partnership, Inc., (AWP) to solidify relationships with registered apprenticeship programs and to ensure that individuals can access these programs. Alaska also links veterans with these opportunities through AWP's Helmets to Hardhats program.

Alaska's Rapid Response (RR) allocation is adjusted annually to account for anticipated demand on the Dislocated Worker program funds to meet the needs of economic disasters and mass dislocations. Based on anticipated workforce needs and layoff aversion strategies, up to 25 percent of the allocated local Dislocated Worker program funds will be set aside for RR activities.

The state's approach to the integration and alignment of services to dislocated workers provided through the WIA RR, Dislocated Worker, and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs is driven by policy, technical assistance, sharing of best practice information, and performance management. As a part of integration efforts, designated department staff representing TAA, Trade Readjustment Allowances, RR, ESD's operations, and DBP meets to share information, discuss program issues, and plan service delivery.

The RR coordinator positioned in the ESD administers and oversees the RR program. The coordinator tracks all layoffs and industry declines regardless of the size. A team of RR specialists covers specific areas of the state. The RR coordinator provides specialized training and technical assistance to members on a regular basis to ensure that the specialists are proficient at working with businesses in transition regardless of where they are in the business cycle.

DBP [Policy #495.00](#), "Concurrent enrollment and a dual enrollment technical assistance guide for field staff use," addresses co-enrollment and the importance of establishing common processes for the delivery of services to all dislocated workers, including those eligible for TAA. Alaska recognizes that co-enrollment provides flexibility in designing successful service strategies for trade-affected dislocated workers. Co-enrollment is determined by dislocated worker needs.

## Services to Special Populations

The department maintains a "no wrong door" approach to the employment, reemployment, and training needs of all Alaska job seekers. To accommodate the unique needs of Alaska job seekers, the department uses individualized employment and training programs designed to eliminate the employment barriers among specific populations.

The AJCN is required to ensure that customers receive access to services through various portals, such as a comprehensive one-stop center and satellite or affiliate facilities. Toll-free lines provide access to the UI program and job centers. The AJCN's 22 job centers have standard business hours, are strategically located in rural and urban areas, and make direct services and/or referral for entire network services available to all.

Although the programs target designated populations, job seekers are evaluated for eligibility and co-enrollment into all available Employment Service (ES) programs to provide them with the best set of comprehensive services. Referral and co-enrollment are based on individual needs and eligibility combined with employment program functions. For example, an Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimant may also be a veteran and a dislocated worker

who is long-term unemployed. The claimant would be considered for referral by veteran representatives to Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) and co-enrollment under programs such as Work Services (for public assistance clients), WIA Dislocated Worker or Adult, on-the-job training, and emergency community resources.

The AWIB initiatives and goals form the basis of the AJCN service delivery. Service delivery is guided by the following principles:

- Job center staff will respond to the needs of their customers, both job seekers and employers, and pursue continuous improvement based on customer feedback.
- All Alaskans will have access to a full array of job-seeking and employment development services.
- Customers will have a wide range of service options as well as sufficient information and assistance to aid them in making informed choices from the array of services.
- Services, programs, and fiscal commitments currently administered by separate federal, state, and local governments will be integrated for maximum efficiency and customer responsiveness.
- Auxiliary aids and services will be provided to individuals with disabilities to ensure equally effective communication, access, and participation.
- Success will be evaluated on clearly measurable outcomes in meeting the needs and expectations of their customers, employers, and job seekers.
- Persons with limited English proficiency will have meaningful access to programs and services consistent with Alaska's Methods of Administration.
- Qualified interpreter services will be available to the job seeker at no cost.
- Job seekers will not to be required to rely on minor children, relatives, or friends as interpreters.
- Customers will have a right to file a grievance about the language access services provided them.

Ongoing training of job center staff promotes an awareness and sensitivity to the diverse needs of employers and job seekers. Services are provided consistent with nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the WIA, Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Age Discrimination Act, Title IX of the Education Act, and the Nontraditional Employment for Women Act. Annually, all WIA- and Wagner-Peyser funded staff members complete the online Civil Rights Center training modules regarding an Introduction to WIA Section 188 and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act. EO training of all job center staff is provided in various forms and forums, with monitoring and technical assistance.

Alaska's primary policy on serving targeted populations has been to incorporate them into the mainstream of one-stop job center services. If funds allocated for adult employment and training are limited, priority for intensive and training services funded with WIA Title I Adult funds must be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals.

Alaska's Wagner-Peyser and WIA programs will continue to offer universal access to its services, while extending a priority to veterans, UI claimants, long-term unemployed, under-employed, dislocated workers, low-income individuals, public assistance recipients, those with disabilities, individuals with limited English proficiency, the homeless, older workers, and ex-offenders.



## Veterans

Priority of service for veterans is defined by:

- TEGL 5-03 *Implementing the Veterans' Priority Provision*
- TEGL 22-04 *Serving Military Service Members and Military Spouses under the Workforce Investment Act Dislocated Worker Formula Grant*
- TEGL No. 16-03, Change 1, *NEG Policy Guidance – Assistance for Returning Members of the National Guard and Military Reserves*
- PL 107-288 “Jobs for Veterans Act”
- AK DOLWD WIA Adult Program Participant Eligibility and Priority of Service Policy #310.0
- AK DOLWD WIA Dislocated Worker Eligibility Policy #340.0, Chapter 41
- Federal Register 29, CFR Part 37 Subpart C – Governor’s Responsibilities to Implement the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity (EO) Requirements under WIA

Section 2(a) Act 38 U.S.C. 4215(a) creates priority of service for veterans (and some spouses) who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for participation in USDOL training programs. Priority of service extends to veterans and other covered persons meeting WIA program (Adult and Dislocated Worker) eligibility criteria. Specific categories of veterans afforded priority of service include:

- Special Disabled Veterans
- Campaign and Expeditionary Badge Recipients
- Disabled veterans other than special disabled veterans
- All other veterans and covered persons

After the Jobs for Veterans Act became Public Law 107-288, the state revised, published, and issued WIA Adult Program Participant Eligibility and Priority of Service [Policy #310.00](#), and WIA Dislocated Worker Eligibility [Policy #340.00](#). These policies require that veterans and other covered persons under Public Law 107-288 be given priority of service under all WIA Title-I funded programs, including Adult and Dislocated Worker, and the National Emergency Grant.

These policies provide criteria for determining general and service eligibility under the WIA programs. They also address guidelines for coordination, self-sufficiency determination, documentation needs, and nondiscrimination requirements. These policies ensure that AJCN workforce development professionals and grantees:

- Coordinate with WIA partners to ensure efficient and comprehensive access to a full range of participant services and resources
- Adhere to nondiscrimination laws and regulations
- Verify eligibility for adult program registrants
- Implement the priority of service for veterans, eligible spouses, individuals with disabilities who are low-income, public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are not self-sufficient

In the event WIA Adult program funding becomes 65 percent obligated, and other one-stop partner agency funding is unavailable, ESD’s Chief of Field Operations will implement the following priority of service when providing WIA Adult program participants with intensive and/or training services:



- Veterans or eligible spouses who are low-income
- Individuals with disabilities who are low-income
- Public assistance recipients
- Other low-income individuals
- Individuals who are not self-sufficient

Alaska state policies ensure priority of service to veterans and covered persons. To ensure priority of service is observed, eligible veterans and covered persons are identified at the *point of entry* and must be notified of programs and/or services available as stated in Public Law 107-288, 20 CFR, part 1010.230(a). Point of entry includes physical locations, such as one-stop career centers, as well as Web sites and other virtual service delivery resources.

All job center staff members receive training on the Jobs for Veterans Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and other legislation that affects veteran priority, preference, and employability. ESD's Employment and Training Technical Unit sends out weekly technical alerts to all staff; the alerts may contain modifications to program policies and guidance.

The one-stop and veterans' staff will use a needs-based approach to identify veterans with special needs — such as disabled veterans and recently separated veterans — and refer them to appropriate services. All veterans and covered persons pursuing employment will be registered in the state's labor exchange system, ALEXsys. Veterans with barriers to employment will be provided with the necessary initial assessment and the required documented intensive case management services by Disabled Veterans Outreach Programs (DVOP) staff unless there is not a DVOP available. ALEXsys provides a complete menu of customer-focused online workforce services; reference Title 38, USC, Chapters 41 and 42, Section 4215.

The state has Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) and Disabled Veterans Outreach Programs (DVOP) staff located in job center local areas with the highest veteran populations. Four veteran representatives are located in Anchorage and its surrounding areas, and one is located in Fairbanks. In PY2012, there were 3.5 full-time DVOPs and 1.5 full-time LVERs, including the Veteran Program Coordinator located in Juneau. Due to increasing staff costs and the desire to keep the 4.5 full-time equivalent positions working directly with veterans, the one-stop operator modified the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) plan beginning in PY2012 to shift funding for the previous half-time veteran program coordinator from the JVSG to other funding sources. This modification will enable service delivery within allocated funding.

The LVER and DVOP specialists are available to serve the more intensive needs of veterans. Veterans' Program Letter No. 07-10 refocused the roles and responsibilities of jobs for veterans' state grant-funded staff. DVOP Specialists primary core role is to provide intensive services to targeted veterans. Consistent with WIA Section 134(d)(3)(C), the intensive services category is clarified to include:

- Comprehensive assessment of education, skills, and abilities
- In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals
- Group and individual career coaching
- Short-term, pre-vocational services that may include development of learning and communication skills, interviewing skills, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for career goals

- Development of an individual employment plan that identifies employment goals, interim objectives, and appropriate services that will enable the veteran to meet his or her employment goals
- Conduct outreach to locate veterans for intensive services in places such as:
  - VA medical centers and vet centers
  - Homeless shelters
  - Civic and service organizations
  - Community stand downs
  - Military installations
  - WIA partners
  - State vocational rehabilitation services

The DVOP may facilitate Transition Assistance Program (TAP) employment workshops, and is responsible for providing veteran program activities to the field office manager for the quarterly manager's report if there is not a LVER in the office.

The primary duties of LVER staff include conducting outreach to employers in the area, and in conjunction with employers, providing veterans with full range of employment, training, and placement services. This includes promoting veterans who have highly marketable skills and experience.

Other LVER services to veterans include:

- Conducting job search assistance workshops
- Providing job development and referral
- Providing career and technical education guidance
- Providing Labor Market Information
- Providing referrals to training and supportive services

Veterans' representatives facilitate the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) to help military personnel transition into civilian life, help veterans gain employment in federal civil service, and perform intensive case management for all veterans with identified barriers to employment. Veterans' representatives also provide statewide coordination of employment outreach services to units of the Reserve Components and National Guard, and to veterans who are transitioning from service.

The Business Connection team provides employer outreach service strategy to connect qualified veterans with employers. The midtown Anchorage veterans' representative is physically stationed in the Business Connection and works with Federal Contractor Job Listing (FCJL) employers to create employment opportunities for veterans. VA Domiciliary and Hospital Outreach has been initiated at Fort Richardson with the Medical Release Unit established for returning Reserve and Guard Unit and the Rear Detachment Unit of Active Military, along with Centralized Applicant Referral Services (CARS) for federal job matching and Stand Down participation.

The LVER/DVOP staff provides outreach at Reintegration/Family Activity Days, supporting local Family Assistance Centers and Family Readiness Groups. Alaska continues to work with all Wagner-Peyser staff, supervisors, and managers to ensure a priority of service where there are no veterans' representatives (DVOP/LVER) in the job center.

Veterans have access to information and services via the enhanced AJCN [Veterans' Web page](#). This Web site is especially useful in remote areas not serviced by a job center, and in expeditiously connecting veterans directly to a veterans' representative or supportive service.

### **Dislocated Workers**

Dislocated worker assistance is a high priority of the department. It is provided in consultation with the affected workers, either through worker adjustment committees, surveys, or interviews. Core services may be provided to dislocated workers at more than one location by Alaska job centers and transition centers.

Affected employers, labor organizations, and partner staff are involved in the creation and operation of career transition centers using a peer support model when appropriate. Dislocated workers and displaced homemakers with multiple barriers to employment and those needing intensive and training services are registered, provided case management, assessed, referred, and served at any appropriate location. Staff may also identify unemployed workers with potential Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program eligibility and provide services or be referred to services as appropriate.

### **Low Income**

Low-income individuals are targeted through the Alaska Temporary Assistance Program (ATAP) and peer outreach. Individuals with multiple barriers to employment are targeted through the Division of Public Assistance by coordination and funding with the Senior Community Services Employment Program, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The state has adopted a liberal policy on identifying older people with serious barriers to employment, and will continue encouraging service for older workers who are working and those still in poverty.

Through an agreement with the Division of Public Assistance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients and other low-income individuals receive intensive services through ESD's Work Services Unit, including home visits, required participation in job club activities, and job search education through a series of workshops designed with the TANF client in mind.

### **The Unemployed**

All UI claimants are provided with the AJCN locations and lists of services and can ask that staff contact them with more information on job centers and employment and training services. UI claimants are registered in the ES public labor exchange system by the UI staff at the time they file their claim for UI benefits. All UI claimants are profiled through the Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) program. Those who have the highest likelihood of exhausting their benefits are prioritized for reemployment services.

### **People with Disabilities**

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has been a partner in the AJCN since the inception of WIA, but many other state and local entities also provide resources that help maximize employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Alternate and equally effective communications are provided to individuals with disabilities through telephonic devices for the hearing-impaired (TDDs), such as TTYs and Alaska Relay Service. All online and job center services use accessible technologies.

The AWIB was awarded a Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. With DEI funding, the AWIB partners with the ESD, one-stop job centers, the Divisions of Vocational Rehabilitation and Public Assistance, and the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education. The DEI grant funds efforts to improve education, training and employment opportunities and outcomes of adults who are unemployed and/or receiving Social Security disability benefits.

The DEI grant is a catalyst in expanding opportunities to increase staff awareness of the variety of assistive technologies and services available; provide technical assistance and training on working with persons with varying disabilities; and assure the one-stop resource rooms and training rooms are readily accessible. To assist with achieving the grant's goal, numerous staff members at various one-stop job centers around the state serve as lead disability resource coordinators (DRCs) on a rotational basis and are trained in best practices of serving individuals with disabilities. These DRCs work with other one-stop partners such as the state's Divisions of Vocational Rehabilitation and Public Assistance, independent living centers, Alaska Native grantees, school districts, the University of Alaska and various nonprofit agencies, to ensure that individuals with disabilities are able to access assistive services and are provided referrals as necessary.

Disability resource coordinators cultivate ongoing relationships with partner agencies to better serve all individuals who receive services. The DRC staff also creates public awareness of disability services through outreach to various groups throughout the state. Recognition and communication with partners reinforces that programs have the same goals: to provide services to achieve positive outcomes in employability, employment, and career advancement of all job seekers, including adults and youth with disabilities.

The lead DRCs are responsible for continuously training and educating other one-stop job center staff on the resources available to serve people with disabilities. This training approach provides all one-stop job center staff with awareness of best practices used when serving clients with disabilities and ensures sustainability of staff knowledge at job centers throughout the state.

Individuals with disabilities are also served by other programs regularly available in the job center such as those funded by Wagner-Peyser, WIA funds, Senior Community Services Employment Program, State Training and Employment Program funds, and Alaska Health and Social Services' Family Centered Services Program. Job center resource rooms are equipped with up-to-date assistive technology, and job center personnel receive ongoing training on the use of assistive technology in resource rooms.

With respect to equal opportunity measures described in Section VII B, Alaska will continue to provide full access to all AJCN services to people with disabilities. Additionally, Alaska will ensure full access to one-stop services through observance of state Administrative Order 129, which identifies responsibilities of the department and coordinators for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Alaska will further increase disability-related training and awareness to job center staff through the Disability Employment Initiative. Activities include:

- Review of departmental policies and practices to ensure compliance
- Receipt/approval of requests for reasonable accommodation
- Review of transition plans for changes to facilities
- Departmental staff notification and awareness of ADA and implementing regulations
- Training plan for managers, supervisors, and employees with an annual update
- ADA complaint processing

- ADA posters and materials for use at the one-stop level
- Review and ongoing upgrading of assistive technology available in the job centers

Alaska will maximize use of resources by individuals with disabilities and continue to work closely with the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, which uses planning, capacity building, systems change, and advocacy to create change for people with disabilities. Partner programs will continue to coordinate for increased efficiency of services provided with the ultimate goal of employment. A significant variable in determining accessibility for persons with disabilities is ongoing staff training and development. The department is dedicated to continue this with a permanent lead disability resource coordinator position.

Several efforts have improved access and inclusion for people with disabilities. Annual reviews and on-site assessments facilitate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Ongoing training through EO contacts, partner organizations, and community organizations ensure that persons with disabilities have complete access to the full array of job center services. The Assistive Technology (AT) grant evaluated AT in job centers, which helped partners recognize the value of reasonable accommodation through AT and provided an estimate for cost allocation agreements.

### **Limited English Proficiency**

Per Alaska's EO Methods of Administration, the state provides universal access to all programs and activities to all WIA recipients with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Individuals receive equally effective communication in their native language through a variety of media, depending on the nature and importance of the service provided. The state may determine, through planning and tracking of LEP persons, that the frequency of contact demands the translation of documents. Brochures, recruitments, announcements, and notices are occasionally transmitted in Alaska Native languages, Spanish, Russian, Korean, and Tagalog. At a minimum, recipients are required to offer translation and document the type of interpretive service required. The state will continue to assess its connections to LEP communities, and provide communications commensurate with need.

Adult job seekers with Limited English Proficiency are referred to Adult Basic Education (ABE) for citizen testing and special tutoring for basic skills such as reading, writing, and mathematics in order to help them earn a General Educational Development credential and secure sustainable employment. ABE also provides specialized math testing for those wishing to enter into apprenticeship.

Pursuant to Title II of WIA, and Title V, Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), the state also offers English as a Second Language, English Literacy/Civics, and citizenship resource classes for the LEP populations through Regional Adult Education Program grantees. These programs provide language assessment, individual tutoring, and small group classes to those for whom English is not their primary language. Individual job centers and UI call centers have access and use two language services to assist claimants and job seekers in accessing WIA and Wagner-Peyser services. These two services are provided by Language Line Services and Tele-Interpreters. At this time these services, along with the department's list of employees with linguistic abilities, satisfy most interpretive needs. Other forms include the use of online interpretation tools, community organizations, friends and family members, and professional interpreters.

## **Older Workers**

The department's Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training (MASST) program, federally known as SCSEP, may be cited as the "Community Service Senior Opportunities Act." In Alaska, the department's ESD administers the MASST program and partners when appropriate with the WIA Adult or Dislocated Worker programs. The purpose of SCSEP is to foster individual economic self-sufficiency and promote useful opportunities in community service activities that must include community service employment for unemployed low-income persons who are age 55 or older, particularly those who have poor employment prospects, and to increase the number of persons who may enjoy the benefits of unsubsidized employment in public and private sectors.

The intent of this program is to place older individuals in community service positions and provide job training to help them become self-sufficient; provide much needed support to organizations that benefit from increased civic engagement; and strengthen the communities that are served by such organizations. This program helps Alaska retain the valuable resources of older workers while enabling this population to maintain an independent lifestyle and make meaningful contributions to their communities.

## **Agricultural Workers**

Alaska has a limited agricultural industry primarily confined to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, with few agricultural employers availing themselves of the H2-A agricultural visa program. Alaska will continue to monitor commercial agricultural activity. The ALEXsys labor exchange system improves the one-stop operator's ability to identify potential workers. The AJCN and partner agencies will continue to provide services to agricultural employers and seasonal and migrant farm workers that are demand driven and are consistent with the department's mission to help Alaska's workers and employers succeed in the global economy by delivering quality services.

As required by 20 CFR Subpart B, 653.101, AJCN job centers will ensure that Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW) are offered the same range of employment services, benefits and protections, including counseling, testing, and job training referral services, as is provided to non-MSFWs. To ensure statewide compliance, the ESD will make every effort to achieve the federal requirements for "qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate services" to MSFWs.

## **Former Offenders**

Soon-to-be-released felons in all Alaska corrections facilities will soon have access to WorkKeys® assessments based on a partnership between the AK DOLWD and the Department of Corrections.

The AK DOLWD has one statewide Equal Opportunity Officer responsible for ensuring compliance with WIA nondiscrimination requirements. Locally, EO coordinators provide information and assistance to customers and staff involving equal opportunity and nondiscrimination matters. Where necessary, EO coordinators will assist beneficiaries and staff in filing EO complaints with the state EO officer and other civil rights agencies. The state EO officer ensures adequate training of local EO designees to fulfill the obligations of their role, in alignment with applicable laws and regulations. New EO contacts receive adequate training within the first six months of their assignment.

## **Ensuring Compliance**

The state's Methods of Administration (MOA) provides reasonable assurance of compliance with WIA Section 188 and 29 CFR Part 37. The MOA is updated to reflect organizational and other changes as appropriate. The department distributes its EO policy to WIA recipients within the AJCN annually, which also reinforces initial and ongoing notice and communication. Handbooks, a newsletter, and posters placed in prominent areas of recipient facilities provide the initial and ongoing EO notice. Taglines on relevant communications state that the state is an "equal opportunity employer/program," and "auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities," with a telecommunications device for the deaf where appropriate.

Alaska law and department policies and practices ensure that a variety of targeted populations are served in the AJCN. The department is responsible for monitoring compliance on an annual basis. Monitoring is completed through periodic compliance reviews and through the investigation of discrimination complaints. Equal Opportunity and discrimination complaint policies are posted in each local office. Complaints of discrimination are handled as outlined by current program policy.

Grievance procedures are established for local offices and grantees to refer potential complaints to the state EO officer as appropriate. Training on what constitutes an EO complaint, how to refer complaints, and how to maintain a complaint log are provided to EO contacts at the time of their designation. The state EO officer's desk regularly monitors recipients. At least one-third of job centers are annually monitored on-site for compliance.

## **WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs**

### ***Program Descriptions***

The WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs are designed to provide quality employment and training services to assist eligible individuals in finding and qualifying for meaningful employment and to help employers find the skilled workers they need to compete and succeed in business.

### ***Employment Goals***

Implement a workforce system that provides adults with workforce preparation and talent development services to:

- Increase employment, as measured by entry into unsubsidized employment
- Increase job retention in unsubsidized employment six months after entry into employment
- Increase earnings received in unsubsidized employment for dislocated workers
- Help employers find skilled workers
- Work collaboratively with partners, stakeholders in business, industry, education, and state and local governments to manage resources and ensure program performance, accountability, and customer satisfaction

### ***Services***

Both Wagner-Peyser and WIA funds are managed to ensure operational efficiencies, nonduplication of core services, and leveraging of resources to meet Alaska's workforce needs. The following core services, which are the foundation of the one-stop delivery system, are available in all AJCN job centers:

- Outreach to both job seekers and businesses to provide information on the services available
- Initial assessment of aptitudes, abilities, interests, and skills, and supportive services needs
- Placement services in mediated, facilitated, or self-service modes
- Rapid Response and Worker Profiling services for dislocated or soon-to-be dislocated workers
- Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) that offer reemployment assistance through a group orientation and individualized one-one-one assistance to Alaska's unemployment compensation claimants
- Access to current labor market information (LMI), including demand occupations, and future forecasts for labor market needs. Current job listings and employment opportunities are available in both printed and electronic formats.
- Access to performance information and costs associated with various training providers
- Information on the available supportive services including, but not limited to, housing, food stamps, child care, medical assistance, education, protective shelters, employment, and training
- Information on filing unemployment claims, including both telephone and Internet claim filing
- Other core services as determined by legislation and regulation governing the specific partner programs

Additionally, job seekers' access to intensive and training services is provided on-site or through referral to appropriate service providers:

- Intensive services: Includes more comprehensive assessments, development of individual employment plans, and counseling and career planning
- Training services: Links customers to job opportunities in their communities, including both occupational training and training in basic skills. Participants use an individual training account to select an appropriate program from a qualified training provider.
- Supportive services: Supportive services customer needs range from social and economic barriers to transportation or child care. WIA authorizes supportive services to enable an individual to participate in the program and to obtain or maintain their employment.

### ***Target Population***

- Adults, 18 years and older
- Dislocated workers
- Veterans and other eligible spouses or covered persons
- Low-income adults with disabilities
- Recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals who receive priority for intensive and training services where funds are limited
- Employed adults in order to obtain or retain employment that allows for self-sufficiency

### ***Definition of Dislocated Workers***

A Dislocated Worker is an individual at least 18 years old, who is a citizen of the United States, a United States national, permanent resident alien, lawfully admitted refugee or parolee, or other individual authorized by the Attorney General to work in the United States and in compliance with Selective Service registration (applies to males only) and who meets one of the following criteria:

- Has been terminated or laid off, or has received a notice of termination or layoff from employment



- Is eligible for or has exhausted unemployment insurance
- Has demonstrated an appropriate attachment to the workforce, but not eligible for unemployment insurance and unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation
- Has been terminated or laid off or received notification of termination or layoff from employment as a result of a permanent closure or substantial layoff
- Is employed at a facility where the employer has announced that the facility will close within 180 days
- Was self-employed (including employment as a farmer, a rancher, or a fisherman) but is unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in the community or because of a natural disaster
- Is a displaced homemaker who is no longer supported by another family member

## **WIA Youth Program**

The WIA Youth Program is federally funded to provide a comprehensive system of training and support services for young adults ages 14 to 21 in preparation for the workforce. The program is dedicated to academic excellence, career preparation for youth in the workplace and community, development and support in a safe environment by caring adults, and visible and active leadership roles for participants.

Under WIA Section 129(c) and 20 CFR 664.410, comprehensive youth services consist of 10 program elements that must be made available to youth participants:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to high school completion including dropout prevention strategies
2. Alternative high school services
3. The Summer Youth Employment and Training Program with direct links between academic and occupational learning
4. Paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing
5. Occupational skills training
6. Leadership development opportunities
7. Supportive services
8. Adult mentoring
9. Follow-up services for 12 months after program completion
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse, counseling, and referrals

Support services for participants while enrolled in the program may include linkages to community services, transportation assistance, child and dependent care, housing, referrals to medical services, and work attire and tools.

Program performance goals are negotiated annually with the U.S. Department of Labor, and success is measured by:

- Placement in employment or education: Employment includes placement into paid or un-paid occupation skills training for work experience (includes internships and job shadowing)
- Attainment of degree or certificate
- Literacy and numeracy gains

Youth services are provided primarily through grants allocated to both private and public entities throughout the state. They serve in-school and out-of-school youth, including those who have dropped out of school. When

available, a Request for Grant Applications can be found on the department's online Electronic Grant Management System, EGrAMS, or on the state's online public notice Web site. Every two to three years, the Division of Business Partnerships facilitates the Request for Grant Application (RGA) process, and the Alaska Workforce Investment Board's [Youth Council](#) reviews the competitive applications and offers recommendations to the labor commissioner, who is the final arbiter for approving or denying applications.

### *Youth Council*

The Youth Council is an advisory and policy committee that works on youth workforce issues on behalf of the AWIB. The Youth Council is responsible for developing strategy recommendations and oversight for youth workforce systems while addressing the needs and interests of the state. Some members of the Youth Council represent partner agencies and project operators; for example, one youth council member is the business community liaison for the Alaska Job Corps. The duties of the Youth Council include:

- Developing the portions of the local plan relating to eligible youth, as determined by the AWIB chair
- Recommending to the AWIB eligible providers of youth activities to be considered for competitive grants or contracts
- Overseeing eligible providers of youth activities
- Coordinating youth activities that are authorized by the WIA
- Advocating to service providers of eligible youth seeking assistance in achieving academic and employment success
- Identifying goals and strategies that include a variety of options for improving educational and skill competencies, and provide effective connections to employers for eligible youth
- Other duties the AWIB chair deems appropriate

The membership of the Youth Council must include:

- AWIB members with a special interest or expertise in youth policy
- Representatives of youth service agencies, including juvenile justice and local law enforcement agencies
- Representatives of local public housing authorities
- Parents of eligible youth seeking assistance under the act
- Individuals or former participants, including representatives of youth-serving organizations that have related experience
- Representatives of the Job Corps, as appropriate

The Youth Council offers recommendations to manage statewide and local disbursement of funds, with respect to the grant announcement and application process. It considers in-school and out-of-school funding requests in the Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna area and the rest of Alaska, also known as the balance of state. Additionally, serving targeted and priority populations, promoting leveraged resources, and strategy/policy alignment recommendations are forwarded to the department for consideration. These recommendations usually occur during the Request for Grant Application competitive process, while recommending new project operators for the program.

## *Partnerships and Leveraged Resources*

Goals and strategies include:

- Engage multiple partners to build a sustainable youth workforce development system
- Cultivate and leverage partnerships between business, industry, education, organized labor, Alaska Native and other minority organizations, and economic and workforce development entities to foster cooperation, communication, and coordination with all stakeholders
- Identify emerging workforce needs and work with business and industry to prepare youth for future opportunities
- Use federal, state, and local resources to meet individual youth needs, in addition to statewide workforce priorities
- Leverage resources to enhance youth services and develop sustainable, effective strategies that prepare youth to enter Alaska's high-wage, high-demand occupations
- Increase enrollments and services to youth with disabilities by partnering with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR); the University of Alaska's [TAPESTRY](#) program (a post-secondary transition program at the University of Alaska Anchorage for students with intellectual disabilities), and other project operators

Those over age 18 may enroll in youth and adult programs concurrently. Project operators (grantees) are encouraged to co-enroll eligible participants; however, programs must ensure nonduplication of service. Youth participants in Alaska may be targeted for co-enrollment opportunities with other WIA Youth and Alaska Youth First grantees, DVR, the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, the State Training and Employment Program, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, summer youth employment programs, Alaska's one-stop operator, the Alaska Job Corps, registered apprenticeship programs, and other providers of youth services to maximize efficiency and support.

It is common for grantees and service providers to work together to benefit the participant and the family. For example, a youth receiving services at DVR might coordinate labor exchange services and work experience placement through a one-stop job center.

## *Vision and Strategy Alignment*

The AWIB Youth Council recommends WIA programs help young adults remove obstacles and barriers that prevent them from obtaining training and educational opportunities. This also aligns with the Alaska Career and Technical Education plan. The ultimate goal is to enable young adults to qualify for a variety of career pathways that eventually lead them to employment in the state's priority occupations. These opportunities may include, but are not limited to, the Alaska Performance Scholarship, apprenticeships, and paid or unpaid work experiences. Strengthening information distribution, promoting services to intended audiences, and growing employer connections are vital to success, as well as identifying redundancies in the system and eliminating duplication of services to increase system efficiency. Identifying and working with the youngest, at-risk youth to mitigate situations that can grow beyond reach; and placing neediest youth in employment, work experience, and/or paths that lead to priority occupations.

## *Targeted Populations*

The AWIB Youth Council recommends emphasizing disadvantaged youth and capturing them at an earlier age, which allows more time for intervention and use of state resources. Services to WIA eligible youth will be targeted to participants:

- Who do not have additional resources for employment and training opportunities
- That are deemed low-income according to the Lower Living Standard Income Level
- That meet at least one of the following specified barriers to employment:
  - Has a disability
  - Runaway/homeless
  - In foster care
  - Out of school
  - Alaska Native or American Indian
  - In the juvenile justice system
  - Requires additional help to complete an educational program or to get and hold a job

## *WIA Title I Youth Activities*

Title I-B Youth programs contribute to the workforce investment system by providing comprehensive services to eligible in-school, out-of-school, and at-risk youth within a planned statewide workforce investment system. Those ages 14 to 21 are targeted for services that help them become productive members of the workforce, including academic, occupational, career and technical education, and employability and life skills training. The program partners leverage resources with a number of agencies throughout the state — for example, the Alaska Job Corps and the WIA Youth program currently have eleven project operators (described below). These grantees develop a scope of work, which includes a description of how youth activities will be coordinated between DVR, Job Corps, and other partners.

## *Grantees*

**Access Alaska, Inc.:** Collaborates with the DVR and the local job center to provide occupational and academic development training to Fairbanks-area youth with disabilities.

**AVTEC–Alaska's Institute of Technology:** Provides youth statewide with occupational training in high-wage jobs and academic development. This program has strong credential attainment rates for youth in Alaska's high-wage industries.

**Division of Juvenile Justice:** Provides services to adjudicated youth at their Bethel, Fairbanks, and Juneau locations. Projects include culinary arts training, small engine repair, construction training, and academic development.

**University of Alaska Anchorage, Kachemak Bay campus:** Provides educational and job training services to youth in the Homer area. Youth are exposed to various occupations and credentialing opportunities in Alaska's high-wage industries.

**Mat-Su Borough School District:** Provides academic support and work readiness training while promoting youth enrollment in the CTE program and apprenticeships.

**McLaughlin Youth Center – Anchorage School District:** Provides Step Up, a school for students who have been expelled or placed on long term suspensions for dangerous behavior. This school provides a way for these students to continue earning high school credits and helps with their transition back into the district.

**Nine Star Enterprises, Inc.:** Provides vocational and academic training and support for youth in the Anchorage area. Activities include on-site GED support, work experience, and occupational certification attainment.

**Covenant House:** Provides academic, occupational, and emotional support to homeless and runaway youth in the Anchorage area. Activities include work experience, one-on-one counseling, GED/diploma support, and work readiness skill development.

**Southeast Regional Resource Center:** Provides occupational training, academic development, and work experience opportunities for youth in the Juneau area.

**Employment Security Division:** Provides employment and academic support to youth in the Fairbanks area through a network of local businesses and training providers.

**Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association:** Provides work experience and academic development services to youth in the Lower Yukon area of Emmonak. Youth are involved in various stages of operation of Kwik'Pak Fisheries, from harvesting to processing and distribution. This fishery is one of the few work experience opportunities available to these rural youth and is vital to their skill development.

## Trade Adjustment Assistance Program

Alaska's Rapid Response (RR), Dislocated Worker, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Wagner-Peyser programs are all operated through the statewide network of 22 local job center offices. Central Office staff coordinates all of the RR activities, helps the employers or workers file TAA petitions and brings a variety of local and state service providers together for interagency RR meetings individually tailored to each employer's needs.

Co-enrollment of TAA participants in the WIA Dislocated Worker program as well as other programs for which they are deemed eligible is the standard practice. Alaska requires comprehensive assessment to develop an appropriate Individual Employment Plan and TAA services. All TAA customers are required to be referred to WIA for co-enrollment. WIA case managers emphasize the benefits of co-enrollment to allow the maximum benefit from all available resources. The TAA coordinators and WIA case managers develop and share Individual Employment Plans for all customers, which identify barriers to employment and how they will be addressed. Individuals requiring additional assistance due to low income, a disability, or homelessness will be given priority of service. All veterans and eligible spouses also receive priority of service.

Both WIA and Wagner-Peyser/Employment Service staff conduct reemployment services. The TAA program utilizes Wagner-Peyser in finding workers jobs, and often partners with Vocational Rehabilitation, veterans' services (both internal and the Veteran's Administration), and fidelity bonding, if appropriate. Some of the services provided are workshops in resume writing and interviewing skills. All TAA customers have access to any resources

provided by Wagner-Peyser and all customers co-enrolled with WIA are able to partake in any workshops provided by WIA staff. Case management is on an ongoing basis until the worker has found suitable employment. Effective communication between TAA and WIA staff is a constant priority. These shared components align to make up the third element of the governor's vision by developing and preparing Alaskans for good jobs in the legacy careers.

Administrative, fiscal, and data integrity are facilitated by the Trade Act System (TAS). The TAA coordinator enters worker information into TAS, the system from which the Trade Act Participant Report (TAPR) is obtained. All required data are collected and recorded in TAS throughout the life of the program for each individual. The coordinator oversees every aspect of each plan. The collected data are verified against USDOL/ETA/TAA's quarterly Data Integrity Result, and cross-checked in the new WIA MIS system against ALEXsys, the state's Alaska Labor Exchange System.

## **Wagner-Peyser Agricultural Outreach Plan**

Alaska has a limited agricultural industry that is primarily confined to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. One farm in the area works with the Foreign Labor Certifications program each year.

Because of the limited activity, Alaska receives no federal allotment for the National Farmworker Jobs Program and the U.S. Department Labor's Employment and Training Administration does not require Alaska to report on migrant seasonal farm workers.

Alaska will continue to monitor commercial agricultural activity throughout the state primarily through the Foreign Labor Certifications program and the local job centers.

## **American Job Center Network**

The Employment Security Division, which administers and operates the Alaska Job Centers and the Alaska Labor Exchange system, will co-brand with the American Job Center network. Current Alaska Job Center Network Web sites will be co-branded initially, paper forms and documents will be updated with the co-branding as stocks need to be replenished, and signage will be updated to include the "A proud partner of the American Job Center network" logo as costs permit.

## **Waiver Requests**

### **Alaska's Program Year 2012 Workforce Investment Act Waiver Requests**

## **Performance Accountability Common Performance Measures**

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (AK DOLWD), as the administrative entity of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in Alaska, submit this request for a waiver of the Performance Measures for WIA Act Title 1 with exclusive use of the Common Measures for all programs. This waiver will apply retroactively to Program Year 2012.

## **A. Statutory or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived**

This waiver request is being written in the format identified in WIA Section 189(i)(4)(B) and 20 CFR 661.420(c) and meets the standard for waiver approval at 20 CFR 61.420(e).

**Statutory Regulations to be Waived:** Alaska seeks to waive Section 136(b), which defines the current WIA Title 1 performance measures. Alaska is requesting that the state be allowed to replace the existing 17 measures (15 statutory and two customer satisfaction) with the Common Measures delineated in TEGL 17-05. For Program Year 2012, the State of Alaska will be operating under six measures: Entered Employment; Retention; Average Earnings for Adult and Dislocated Worker; Placement in Employment or Education; Attainment of a Degree or Certificate; and Youth Literacy and Numeracy Gains for Youth. Although customer satisfaction measures will no longer apply under common measures, Alaska understands that customer satisfaction activities and reporting is still required and will be included in the WIA annual report.

## **B. Goals of the Waiver and Expected Programmatic Outcomes if Waiver is Granted**

The AK DOLWD, the state administrative entity for the Workforce Investment Act, is requesting a waiver of the legal requirement to utilize the 17 WIA performance measures. The waiver would allow the exclusive use of the Common Performance Measures for performance accountability and reporting for the WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. Should the waiver be granted, this would allow workforce regions to focus additional resources on increased training opportunities and regional workforce strategies.

These new measures focus on attainment of education and credentials, placement and retention in employment, and wage gains. Alaska's intent mirrors that of the WIA: to simplify and streamline the performance accountability system that is an integral part of a reformed workforce development system. This request is in keeping with Alaska's vision of a more knowledgeable, skilled, engaged, and flexible workforce. It is Alaska's experience, and is the consensus opinion of most workforce development professionals, that the current performance measurement system is too cumbersome to be a viable program management tool across departments. A set of clear and understandable outcome measures will ensure accountability across all workforce development programs, while improving management and performance.

Common performance measures across programs and data collected will provide necessary information to help effectively oversee the workforce investment system. They will enhance the state's ability to assess the effectiveness and impact of workforce development efforts. Common measures will provide a more effective way of determining performance of the various programs via a system-wide perspective. Such a cross-program strategy is consistent with the move toward integration of programs as embodied in the WIA's one-stop system. It will also help Alaska build a connected workforce system to prepare a labor force to fill future high-growth industry labor demands.

The WIA provides flexibility to states and local areas in implementing reforms to the workforce development system in exchange for state and local accountability for results, including improved programmatic outcomes. Approval of this waiver will balance Alaska's WIA strategic planning objectives with the need to demonstrate statutory and regulatory compliance requirements for each of the individual programs in the state's unified plan. The AK DOLWD and AWIB recognize the accomplishments since WIA implementation, but also understand the need for continuous improvement while facing many workforce development and system integration challenges to ensuring all possible employment opportunities for Alaskans.

## **Outcomes/Benefits**

This waiver will:

- Provide for a simplified and streamlined performance measurement system
- Provide for integrated system-wide performance accountability
- Provide commonality across workforce development programs
- Reduce paperwork and labor costs associated with performance data collection and reporting
- Provide clear and understandable information to congressional and legislative leaders and the general public concerning the use of public funds and return on investment
- Provide for customer-driven instead of program-driven outcomes
- Provide for better service coordination and information sharing among programs

### **C. State or Local Statutory or Regulatory Barriers**

There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver.

### **D. Description of Individuals Impacted by the Waiver**

The waiver will positively affect the state's WIA customers, employers, and job seekers by simplifying performance requirements with a priority focus on services. Alaskans find themselves in a unique set of circumstances in their employment and environment. High-demand, year-round work is either in public or service industry jobs. Rural communities depend on the seasonal industries of construction, fishing, and tourism; mining and logging. The unemployment rates in rural Alaska reflect the seasonal nature of the state's economy. In some areas, the summer unemployment rate drops to 8 percent, then soars to 25 percent or more in the winter, representing one of the highest unemployment rates in the nation. These challenges demand more labor-intensive support.

All stakeholders and customers involved in WIA services will be positively impacted by the approval of this waiver. Customers eligible for an Individual Training Account (ITA), training providers, businesses, organized labor, and the AWIB will all benefit from the streamlined services that result from the use of the Common Measures.

### **E. Opportunity for Public Comment and the Process for Monitoring Implementation of the Waiver**

This request was developed as a result of concerns expressed by AWIB and AK DOLWD, and demand from business and industry partners. As with all major policy and procedural decisions, Alaska relied heavily upon input from partners and the public. The problems associated with requiring both the performance requirements mandated by WIA, in addition to anticipated benefits of the Common Measures, were discussed with all stakeholders, gaining input and insight.

The initial elements of the waiver plan were presented to the AWIB at its Executive Committee meeting on August 14, 2012, and subsequently approved. The waiver document was posted for three days from September 11-14, 2012 on Alaska's public Web site, allowing for public comment on its content and potential impact. No public comments were received. The commissioner was briefed and the waiver plan was finalized before AK DOLWD submitted it



through Region VI, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, to the U.S. Department of Labor for approval.

Technical assistance during the implementation phase of the waiver will include the continued transition to the Common Measures, and additional training as necessary. The AWIB and AK DOLWD, as the administrative entity of the WIA, will monitor the implementation and results of this waiver. The department's management information system has been enhanced to report Common Measures.

## **Implementation of Subsequent Eligibility of Training Providers**

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (AK DOLWD), as the administrative entity of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in Alaska, request a waiver to extend the period of eligibility for training providers to an indefinite period consistent with that stipulated in the state plan. The waiver will allow Alaska additional time to identify the broadest range of eligible providers, enabling individuals to make informed choices relating to their training goals. This extension will also ensure training providers have adequate time to fulfill their responsibility to submit performance and cost information on each program of training services to determine subsequent eligibility, and will allow Alaska to address funding shortages that affect the administrative costs of maintaining the eligible training provider list. This waiver request is being written in the format identified in WIA Section 189(i)(4)(B) and 20 CFR 661.420(c) and meets the standard for waiver approval at 20 CFR 661.420(e).

### **A. Statutory or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived**

WIA Section 122(c) (5) and WIA Regulations at Section 663.530 require an indefinite time limit for initial eligibility for training providers followed by the implementation of the subsequent eligibility process.

### **B. Goals of the Waiver and Expected Programmatic Outcomes if Waiver is Granted**

The state's approved training provider system identifies training providers and their respective training programs authorized. Alaska community colleges, universities, and private for-profit and nonprofit training agencies are listed on the WIA Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) located at: <http://laborstats.alaska.gov/training/etplistbp.pdf>.

This waiver will allow more time for Alaska workforce development staff to enhance and maintain a comprehensive system that supports customer choice and satisfaction. It will also enable AK DOLWD to provide technical assistance so that training providers will better understand the nuances of the ETPL and the associated processes and repercussions of not satisfying requirements. Further, there will be more time available for training and technical assistance to administrative staff and the Workforce Investment Board to increase their knowledge about the Eligible Training Provider system. The ultimate goals of this waiver are to:

- Increase WIA Performance information available on training providers initially eligible and on those existing providers on the state ETPL
- Identify the broadest range of eligible providers to enable individuals to make informed choices relating to their training goals, while also limiting the amount of travel required to receive training

- Maintain a comprehensive system administering the eligible provider process to ensure there are significant numbers of competent providers, offering a variety of training programs and occupational choices to maximize customer selection and satisfaction
- Allow time to offer technical assistance to training providers on issues and requirements relative to maintaining subsequent eligibility status
- Work with Regional Advisory Councils to assist in identifying training providers and getting them authorized as quickly as possible

### **C. State or Local Statutory or Regulatory Barriers**

There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver.

### **D. Description of Individuals Impacted by the Waiver**

All customers — including training providers, Alaska Workforce Development staff, and the AWIB — will be positively affected by this waiver.

- Eligible providers will have adequate time to submit performance and cost information on each of their training programs for determining subsequent eligibility.
- Users will have the broadest range of eligible providers to choose from in selecting the training provider offering programs relating to their training goals.
- All customers will have access to ETPL policies and procedures that specifically set forth requirements and processes affecting them.

### **E. Opportunity for Public Comment and the Process for Monitoring Implementation of the Waiver**

This request was developed as a result of concerns expressed by AWIB and AK DOLWD, and demand from business and industry partners. As with all major policy and procedural decisions, Alaska relied heavily on input from partners and the public.

The initial elements of the waiver plan were presented to AWIB at its Executive Committee meeting on August 14, 2012 and subsequently approved. The waiver was posted for three days from September 11-14, 2012 on Alaska's public Web site, allowing for public comment on its content and potential impact. No public comments were received. The commissioner was briefed and the waiver plan was finalized before AK DOLWD submitted it through Region VI, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, to the U.S. Department of Labor for approval.

The AWIB and AK DOLWD, as the administrative entity of the WIA, will monitor the implementation and results of this waiver.

**PY 2011 Impact:** Application of this waiver significantly increased the number of providers who remained on the ETPL. This allowed Alaskans more choices for improving their skills. The increased number of training providers had further benefit as in-state training tends to be less costly and more successful. The waiver also reduced administrative costs.

## Employer Contributions for Customized Training and On-the-Job Training (OJT)

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (AK DOLWD), as the administrative entity of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in Alaska, submit this request for a waiver of the required 50 percent employer contribution for customized training or On-the-Job Training at WIA 101(8)(C)&(31)(C) to a contribution based on a sliding scale, ranging from 10 to 50 percent for the employer contribution based on the employer's size. Specifically, AK DOLWD will establish the required portion of the costs, which shall not be less than 10 percent of the costs for employers with 50 or fewer employees, 25 percent of the costs for employers with greater than 50 through 250 employees, and 50 percent of the costs for employers with greater than 250 employees. This waiver will apply retroactively to Program Year 2012.

### A. Statutory or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived

This waiver request is being written in the format identified in WIA Section 189(i)(4)(B) and 20 CFR 661.420(c) and meets the standard for waiver approval at 20 CFR 61.420(e).

**Statutory Regulations to be Waived:** The State of Alaska is requesting a waiver of the requirement of the 50 percent employer contribution for customized or OJT training, as identified at WIA Section 101(8)(C)&101 (31)(B).

### B. Goals of the Waiver and Expected Programmatic Outcomes if Waiver is Granted

Approval of this waiver will balance Alaska's desire to achieve its WIA strategic planning objectives with the need to demonstrate compliance with the statutory and regulatory requirements for each of the individual programs in our unified plan. AK DOLWD is committed to ensuring all possible employment opportunities for Alaskans.

Customized and OJT training optimizes the resources available under workforce development initiatives to meet the needs of employers as well as job seekers. Customized and OJT training focuses on employers' and job seekers' needs while minimizing programmatic and bureaucratic barriers. However, the current 50 percent employer contribution requirement limits the ability to market customized and OJT training programs to employers, especially those from small business. Employers too often conclude that the 50 percent contribution requirement creates costs that outweigh the benefits of participating in a WIA-customized or OJT training program.

The proposed employer contribution sliding scale allows flexibility for employers to contribute at a rate that more appropriately represents a particular business' or industry's share of training costs. By removing the requirement of a 50 percent employer contribution toward the cost of training to businesses with 250 or fewer employees, AK DOLWD will be able to more effectively market WIA-funded customized or OJT training to the private sector in support of building relations with employers in high-demand, high-growth industries.

Allowing businesses to apply the sliding scale to determine the contribution amount will increase participation in the WIA customized and OJT training programs at the local level. Employers will benefit by having a labor pool with the marketable skills they require. The specific goals to be achieved by the waiver are to:

- Improve the ability of AK DOLWD to respond to changes in employer and industry needs
- Increase control for program delivery

- Increase employer/board collaboration to address industry needs and worker training
- Increase accountability of service providers
- Provide greater flexibility in designing and implementing WIA programs

### **C. State or Local Statutory or Regulatory Barriers**

There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver.

### **D. Description of Individuals Impacted by the Waiver**

The waiver will positively affect the state's WIA customers, employers, and job seekers. The state's smaller employers will benefit from the waiver due to the reduced contribution requirement. The training provided to individuals will make them more valuable to current and future employers. As more employers are able to access customized and OJT training it will impact the provision of training services to more adults and dislocated workers eligible for services under WIA. In particular, WIA eligible individuals with multiple barriers to employment, low basic skills, and low English language proficiency often benefit the most from customized and OJT training opportunities that can be designed to meet unique business and worker needs.

OJT training requires that an employer or group of employers commit to employ individuals upon successful completion, so employment rate performance for the state will benefit. This waiver plan increases the role of AK DOLWD, local job centers and business in the workforce development system and increases our flexibility to respond to the business community, in keeping with the goals of the WIA.

### **E. Opportunity for Public Comment and the Process for Monitoring Implementation of the Waiver**

This request was developed as a result of concerns expressed by AWIB and AK DOLWD, and demand from business and industry partners. As with all major policy and procedural decisions, Alaska relied heavily on input from partners and the public.

The initial elements of the waiver plan were presented to AWIB at its Executive Committee meeting on August 14, 2012 and subsequently approved. The waiver document was posted for three days from September 11-14, 2012 on Alaska's public Web site, allowing for public comment on its content and potential impact. No public comments were received. The commissioner was briefed and the waiver plan was finalized before AK DOLWD submitted it through Region VI, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, to the U.S. Department of Labor for approval.

Technical assistance during the implementation phase of the waiver may cover areas such as required forms/contracts and program design. The AWIB and AK DOLWD, as the administrative entity of the WIA, will monitor the implementation and results of this waiver.

**PY 2011 Impact:** This waiver facilitated the training of 113 WIA participants in OJTs during PY 2011, building the AJCN's capacity for utilizing this critical training model while supporting Alaska's economic recovery. Due to limited WIA formula funding for PY 2011, customized training was not used during PY 2010-PY 2011.

## Single Area State Designation

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (AK DOLWD), as the administrative entity of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in Alaska, submit this request for a waiver relating to single area state designation in 20 CFR 661.300(f). This waiver will apply retroactively to Program Year 2012.

### A. Statutory or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived

This waiver request is being written in the format identified in WIA section 136(b)(2)(A)(i)(II) and 20 CFR 666.140 and meets the standard for waiver approval at 20 CFR 661.420(e).

**Statutory Regulations to be Waived:** The State of Alaska is requesting a waiver to 20 CFR 661.300(f), which permits the governor to designate the state board to carry out the roles and responsibilities of the local boards encompassing the state, in the same manner as permitted in single service delivery area states.

### B. Goals of the Waiver and Expected Programmatic Outcomes if Waiver is Granted

Waiver of 20 CFR 661.300(f) allows the governor to establish a governance structure that is responsive to the unique economic requirements of Alaska. The waiver allows the state to streamline administration of services, increase efficiency, and avoid duplication of efforts across the workforce system.

If Alaska were to revert back to two local areas, Anchorage/Matanuska-Susitna Boroughs and Balance of State, there would be undue hardship. Alaska's workforce delivery system has transformed into a productive and consistent service delivery system. Reestablishment of multiple local workforce investment boards would require the development and funding of two or more administrative entities, and as a result, would create inconsistency in service delivery and confusion for employers and job seekers who rely on the state's workforce investment system. Consequently, the Balance of State would not be able to compete with the other local area in overall performance and outcomes because the majority of the participants in Alaska reside in the Anchorage/Matanuska-Susitna region.

### C. State or Local Statutory or Regulatory Barriers

There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver.

### D. Description of Individuals Impacted by the Waiver

All WIA adults, dislocated workers, and youth that meet the eligibility criteria are impacted by this waiver. WIA participants have seen increased benefit in the streamlining of services and the consistent application of the workforce system throughout the state. Eligible participants need not look to other local areas that might possess more resources because the state functions and reports as a single statewide designation.

### E. Opportunity for Public Comment and the Process for Monitoring Implementation of the Waiver

This request was developed as a result of concerns expressed by AWIB and AK DOLWD, and demand from business and industry partners. As with all major policy and procedural decisions, Alaska relied heavily on input from partners and the public.

The initial elements of the waiver plan were presented to the AWIB at its Executive Committee meeting on August 14, 2012 and subsequently approved. The waiver document was posted for three days from September 11-14, 2012 on Alaska's public Web site, allowing for public comment on its content and potential impact. No public comments were received. The commissioner was briefed and the waiver plan was finalized before AK DOLWD submitted it through Region VI, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, to the U.S. Department of Labor for approval.

The AWIB and AK DOLWD, as the administrative entity of the WIA, will monitor the implementation and results of this waiver.

The AWIB received a waiver to authorize the board to carry out the roles of a local board. Alaska's need to establish a single regional planning area was in response to excessive administrative costs, inconsistent service, and a desire to improve overall performance. To include local participation and points of view, the board invites other elected officials from Alaska's boroughs and cities to participate in Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) and includes them in planning. The AWIB has raised its quality of communication with more focus on statewide strategies and their connection to regional economic and workforce development needs.

**PY 2011 Impact:** Functioning as a single area streamlined the processing and timeliness of awarding grants by eliminating multiple layers of administrative entities, establishing consistent eligibility standards across the state, and improving visibility and accountability of workforce investment programs.

## **Transfer of WIA Funds between Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs**

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (AK DOLWD), as the administrative entity of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in Alaska, submit this request for a waiver of the WIA requirement limiting transfer of funds between the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs to no more than 30 percent of a program year's allocation. This waiver would provide the ability to transfer up to 50 percent of a program year's allocation between these two programs. Should this waiver be granted, it will provide AK DOLWD the needed flexibility to ensure critical workforce needs are met while ensuring consistency with congressional intent regarding the level of funding appropriated for the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. This waiver will apply retroactively to Program Year 2012.

### **A. Statutory Regulations to be Waived**

This waiver request is being written in the format identified in WIA Section 189(i)(4)(B) and 20 CFR 661.420(c) and meets the standard for waiver approval at 20 CFR 61.420(e).

**Statutory Regulations to be Waived:** The State of Alaska is requesting a waiver of the requirement limiting transfer of funds between the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs to no more than 30 percent of a program year's allocation, as identified at WIA Section 133(b)(4), 29 USC Section 2963(b)(4)

### **B. Goals of the Waiver and Expected Programmatic Outcomes if Waiver is Granted**

The State of Alaska is committed to ensuring Alaskans have all possible employment opportunities. Approval of this waiver will balance Alaska's ability to achieve WIA strategic planning objectives with the need to demonstrate compliance with the statutory and regulatory requirements for each of the individual programs in the state plan.

The AK DOLWD is working with its WIA partners to create a broad alliance with room for a variety of rural and urban configurations of the AJCN service delivery principles. Through these strategic partnerships, Alaska significantly stretched federal WIA resources. Using discretionary funding sources, the state has continued to accommodate the needs of Adult and Dislocated Worker program participants. However, the federal resources for Adult and Dislocated Worker services have decreased overall and AK DOLWD faces tough decisions about staffing and service levels in its WIA programs. Maximum flexibility in allocation of funds will help ensure that Dislocated Worker and Adult program services are maintained at a level sufficient to meet the needs of Alaska's workforce.

The ability to transfer funds between Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams empowers the state to effectively and efficiently apply funds where they are most in need to achieve its goals, allowing the state flexibility to respond to the particular needs of customers and labor markets by transferring up to 50 percent of a program's funding to the other program.

Approval of this waiver will allow workforce investment funds to be spent quickly and well, predominantly for the direct delivery of services to priority populations most heavily affected by the recession, including unemployed, underemployed, formerly incarcerated, and older workers who often have particular challenges in regaining employment. It will also permit direct services for those impacted by national energy and environmental policy and those in need of updated training related to the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries for careers in high-growth and emerging "green"-related industries. Job training and employment services will be relevant to local and regional employers, enabling workers and employers to rebuild their economies and thus increase jobs.

The specific goals to be achieved by the waiver are to:

- Improve the ability of AK DOLWD to respond to changes in program needs
- Increase control for program delivery
- Increase employer/board collaboration to address industry needs and worker training
- Increase accountability of service providers
- Provide greater flexibility in designing and implementing WIA programs
- Improve use of state and federal resources, leading to greater effectiveness and efficiency

### **C. State or Local Statutory or Regulatory Barriers**

There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver.

### **D. Description of Individuals Impacted by the Waiver**

Because of Alaska's diverse population and differences in urban and rural workforce demographics, WIA customer needs vary greatly from one location to another. Increased flexibility and control to transfer funds between the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs would allow maximum use of limited funds. All stakeholders and customers involved in WIA services, including employers and job seekers, will benefit from the approval of this waiver.

## **E. Opportunity for Public Comment and the Process for Monitoring Implementation of the Waiver**

This request was developed as a result of concerns expressed by AWIB and AK DOLWD, and demand from business and industry partners. As with all major policy and procedural decisions, Alaska relied heavily on input from partners and the public.

The initial elements of the waiver plan were presented to the AWIB at its Executive Committee meeting on August 14, 2012 and subsequently approved. The waiver document was posted for three days from September 11-14, 2012 on Alaska's public Web site, allowing for public comment on its content and potential impact. No public comments were received. The commissioner was briefed and the waiver plan was finalized before AK DOLWD submitted it through Region VI, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, to the U.S. Department of Labor for approval.

The AWIB and AK DOLWD, as the administrative entity of the WIA, will monitor the implementation and results of this waiver.

**PY 2011 Impact:** During PY 2011, Alaska transferred \$500,000 in Dislocated Worker program funds to the Adult program, funding employment and training for an additional 70 participants.

## **Individual Training Accounts for Youth**

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (AK DOLWD), as the administrative entity of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in Alaska, submit this request for an extension of its approved general waiver relating to WIA sec. 129 and 20 CFR 664.510 to allow the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for out-of-school youth. This waiver will apply retroactively to Program Year 2012.

### **A. Statutory or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived**

This waiver request is being written in the format identified in WIA section 136(b)(2)(A)(i)(II) and 20 CFR 666.140 and meets the standard for waiver approval at 20 CFR 661.420(e).

**Statutory Regulations to be Waived:** The State of Alaska requests a waiver to WIA sec 129 and 20 CFR 664.510, which permits the state to issue ITAs to out-of-school youth. The waiver is generally applied to older youth who require an additional service option to increase the likelihood of the youth entering employment and retaining their positions.

### **B. Goals of the Waiver and Expected Programmatic Outcomes if Waiver is Granted**

The goal of this waiver is to enable the state to provide industry-recognized training and certification in high-wage, high-demand occupations, leading to an increased number of eligible youth entering employment, receiving a credential, and being retained in employment.

The desired outcome is programs that will be equipped to provide youth with necessary training to be competitive in today's job market, providing the state with a capable and skilled youth workforce that will be able to fill the high



skill level positions vacated by an aging pool of workers. This waiver provides the state with a powerful and strategic resource to effectively reach the hard-to-serve youth demographics through occupational training pathways that lead to independence and self-sufficiency.

### **C. State or Local Statutory or Regulatory Barriers**

There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board and AK DOLWD policies do not pose any barriers to implementation of this waiver request.

### **D. Description of Individuals Impacted by the Waiver**

- (1) WIA-eligible out-of-school youth who:
  - o Dropped out of school
  - o Obtained a GED or high school diploma but lack resources to enter postsecondary occupational training and or education
  - o Lack competencies necessary to be competitive in the job market
- (2) The state workforce system
- (3) Public and private employers seeking young highly skilled workers

### **E. Opportunity for Public Comment and the Process for Monitoring Implementation of the Waiver**

This request was developed as a result of concerns expressed by AWIB and AK DOLWD and demand from partners. As with all other major policy and procedural decisions, Alaska relied on input from partners and the public.

The initial elements of the waiver plan were presented to the AWIB at its Executive Committee meeting on August 14, 2012 and subsequently approved. The waiver document was posted for three days from September 11-14, 2012 on Alaska's public Web site, allowing for public comment on its content and potential impact. No public comments were received. The commissioner was briefed and the waiver plan was finalized before AK DOLWD submitted it through Region VI, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, to the U.S. Department of Labor for approval.

The AK DOLWD, as the administrative entity of the WIA in Alaska, will monitor the implementation and results of this waiver.

**PY 2011 Impact:** Due to limited WIA youth funding for PY 2011, this waiver was not implemented. During PY 2010, ITA funds provided training valued at \$98,568 to 27 WIA youth, and 63 percent were trained in AWIB priority industries.

## **Performance Accountability System Seasonal Employment**

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (AK DOLWD), as the administrative entity of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in Alaska, submit this request for a waiver to exclude Alaskans living in boroughs/census areas where seasonal unemployment averages greater than 8 percent from November through March from the core performance measure retention in

unsubsidized employment six months after entry into the employment. This waiver will apply retroactively to Program Year 2012.

### **A. Statutory or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived**

This waiver request is being written in the format identified in WIA Section 189(i)(4)(B) and 20 CFR 661.420(c) and meets the standard for waiver approval at 20 CFR 61.420(e).

**Statutory Regulations to be Waived:** The State of Alaska is requesting a waiver to WIA Section 136, to permit the state to exclude exiters from boroughs/census areas where seasonal unemployment averages greater than 8 percent from November through March from retention in unsubsidized employment six months after entry into employment, and substitute three months due to the seasonal nature of the workforce in remote areas of Alaska identified in Enclosure One, located at the end of this document.

### **B. Goals of the Waiver and Expected Programmatic Outcomes if Waiver is Granted**

Approval of this waiver will allow WIA funds to be spent quickly and well, predominantly for the direct delivery of services to priority populations most heavily impacted by the recession, including rural seasonal jobs.

The goals to be achieved by the waiver are to:

- Serve more eligible individuals, expend more WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker funds, and mitigate the negative retention performance impacts of seasonal performance outcomes
- Increase the number of seasonal Alaskans participating in WIA intensive and training services each program year and increase the supply of trained credentialed workers for seasonal jobs
- Better serve rural employers who offer seasonal jobs
- Promote a healthy economy and strong communities by increasing employment opportunities and private sector activities that develop, strengthen, stimulate, and diversify Alaska's economic base
- Reduce seasonal unemployment and welfare dependence by economic region in Alaska
- Gain income for Alaskans as compared to nonresident workers
- Improve customer service and reach new client groups relative to seasonal work
- Improve use of state and federal resources, leading to greater effectiveness and efficiency

### **C. State or Local Statutory or Regulatory Barriers**

There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver.

### **D. Description of Individuals Impacted by the Waiver**

Rural Alaska has periods of very high unemployment due to the seasonal nature of work. During November through March of PY 2011, unemployment rates in 22 of Alaska's 29 boroughs/census areas averaged over 9 percent. The average unemployment rate for the 23 boroughs/census areas qualifying for this waiver during PY 2012 was 14 percent (see Enclosure One). Alaska wishes to train rural Alaskans for jobs including seasonal jobs, but because of the six-month retention performance measurement, staff may be reluctant to provide services to clients

seeking seasonal employment. Approval of this waiver will balance Alaska's desire to achieve WIA strategic planning objectives with the need to demonstrate compliance with the statutory and regulatory requirements for each of the individual programs in the state plan. The state will be able to serve more seasonal workers, addressing the occupational needs of the fishing, tourism, construction, and resource development industries without significant negative impact on performance.

The alternative Retention Performance Measure (as explained below) would apply to Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Older Youth exited into seasonal employment in borough/census areas where seasonal unemployment averages exceed 8 percent from November through March, and would equal the same six-month retention rate percentages already negotiated for each of the above three programs.

The alternative performance measure equals: the number employed in a seasonal job who are employed in the second quarter after exit, divided by the number employed in a seasonal job who exit during the quarter.

### **E. Opportunity for Public Comment and the Process for Monitoring Implementation of the Waiver**

This request was developed as a result of concerns expressed by AWIB and AK DOLWD, and demand from business and industry partners. As with all major policy and procedural decisions, Alaska relied heavily on input from partners and the public.

The initial elements of the waiver plan were presented to the AWIB at its Executive Committee meeting on August 14, 2012 and subsequently approved. The waiver document was posted for three days from September 11-14, 2012 on Alaska's public Web site, allowing for public comment on its content and potential impact. No public comments were received. The commissioner was briefed and the waiver plan was finalized before AK DOLWD submitted it through Region VI, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, to the U.S. Department of Labor for approval.

The AWIB and AK DOLWD, as the administrative entity of the WIA, will monitor the implementation and results of this waiver. The Management Information System has been enhanced to also identify and report WIA participants covered by this waiver.

**PY 2011 Impact:** Application of this waiver is expected to favorably increase the Adult Employment Retention and the Dislocated Worker Employment Retention rates. During PY 2010, this waiver increased the adult rate by 4.5 percentage points to 85.8 percent, which exceeded the negotiated adult performance measure. The waiver increased the Dislocated Worker rate by 4.5 percentage points to 88.2 percent, which narrowly missed exceeding this measure by three-tenths of a percentage point.

## Enclosure One:

	November-11	December-11	January-12	February-12	March-12	Average
<b>Anchorage/Mat-Su Region</b>	6.1%	6.4%	6.7%	6.8%	6.7%	<b>6.5%</b>
Municipality of Anchorage	5.4%	5.6%	5.9%	5.9%	5.9%	<b>5.7%</b>
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	8.5%	9.0%	9.7%	9.9%	9.8%	<b>9.4%</b>
<b>Gulf Coast Region</b>	<b>9.0%</b>	<b>10.3%</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>9.6%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>
Kenai Peninsula Borough	8.9%	9.6%	10.2%	10.2%	9.8%	<b>9.7%</b>
Kodiak Island Borough	8.8%	12.3%	6.7%	5.7%	5.7%	<b>7.8%</b>
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	10.0%	11.4%	11.2%	11.5%	10.5%	<b>10.9%</b>
<b>Interior Region</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>8.1%</b>
Denali Borough	20.4%	21.4%	21.6%	21.3%	20.2%	<b>21.0%</b>
Fairbanks North Star Borough	6.3%	6.7%	7.4%	7.2%	7.1%	<b>6.9%</b>
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	10.5%	11.5%	12.5%	12.5%	11.9%	<b>11.8%</b>
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	15.1%	16.6%	17.9%	17.7%	17.2%	<b>16.9%</b>
<b>Northern Region</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>9.6%</b>	<b>9.6%</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>9.3%</b>
Nome Census Area	10.6%	11.2%	11.5%	11.6%	11.6%	<b>11.3%</b>
North Slope Borough	4.6%	4.4%	5.2%	5.3%	5.5%	<b>5.0%</b>
Northwest Arctic Borough	13.0%	13.6%	14.8%	15.4%	16.0%	<b>14.6%</b>
<b>Southeast Region</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>8.7%</b>	<b>8.7%</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>8.2%</b>
Haines Borough	9.6%	11.9%	12.5%	12.6%	12.0%	<b>11.7%</b>
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	18.1%	21.5%	26.3%	26.0%	25.6%	<b>23.5%</b>
Juneau Borough	4.9%	5.0%	5.4%	5.4%	5.3%	<b>5.2%</b>
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7.3%	8.1%	8.9%	9.1%	8.4%	<b>8.4%</b>
Petersburg Census Area	10.0%	14.4%	14.3%	13.0%	12.0%	<b>12.7%</b>
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	13.6%	15.3%	19.3%	19.4%	18.1%	<b>17.1%</b>
Sitka City and Borough of	6.2%	6.8%	7.0%	6.8%	6.3%	<b>6.6%</b>
Skagway, Municipality of	27.4%	26.5%	28.3%	27.6%	23.6%	<b>26.7%</b>
Wrangell City and Borough of	10.4%	12.2%	13.0%	11.6%	11.7%	<b>11.8%</b>
Yakutat City and Borough of	11.8%	13.0%	14.1%	15.2%	13.9%	<b>13.6%</b>
<b>Southwest Region</b>	<b>13.1%</b>	<b>15.5%</b>	<b>13.6%</b>	<b>12.7%</b>	<b>12.7%</b>	<b>13.5%</b>
Aleutians East Borough	17.8%	26.5%	11.8%	9.4%	8.4%	<b>14.8%</b>
Aleutians West Census Area	12.4%	19.8%	7.6%	4.9%	4.9%	<b>9.9%</b>
Bethel Census Area	12.8%	13.8%	15.3%	15.4%	15.6%	<b>14.6%</b>
Bristol Bay Borough	6.9%	7.8%	11.4%	11.4%	11.6%	<b>9.8%</b>
Dillingham Census Area	10.5%	11.4%	10.7%	10.6%	10.4%	<b>10.7%</b>
Lake and Peninsula Borough	6.5%	7.5%	11.6%	12.0%	11.5%	<b>9.8%</b>
Wade Hampton Census Area	18.3%	21.5%	21.2%	21.2%	21.8%	<b>20.8%</b>

## SECTION III: Assurances and Attachments

### Required Policies and Procedures

#### ASSURANCES AND ATTACHMENTS – PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC COMMENT

	STATEMENT	REFERENCE	DOCUMENTATION and COMMENTS
1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established processes and timelines, consistent with WIA Section 111(g) – and, where appropriate, 20 CFR 641.325 (g) – to obtain input into the development of the Integrated Workforce Plan and to give opportunity for comment by representatives of local elected officials, local workforce investment boards, businesses, labor organizations, other primary stakeholders, and the general public.	WIA Sections 112(b)(9), 111(g) 20 CFR 661.207 20 CFR 661.220(d) 20 CFR 641.325(f), (g), (h), 20 CFR 641.335	<a href="#">State of Alaska Online Public Notice</a>
2. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state afforded opportunities to those responsible for planning or administering programs and activities covered in the Integrated Workforce Plan to review and comment on the draft plan.	WIA Sections 112(b)(9), 111(g) 20 CFR 661.207 20 CFR 661.220(d)	<a href="#">State of Alaska Online Public Notice</a>
3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The final Integrated Workforce Plan and State Operational Plan are available and accessible to the general public.		Alaska Workforce Investment Board <a href="#">website</a>
4. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state afforded the State Monitor Advocate an opportunity to approve and comment on the Agricultural Outreach Plan. The state solicited information and suggestions from WIA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. At least 45 days before submitting its final outreach, the State provided a proposed plan to the organizations listed above and allowed at least 30 days for review and comment. The State considered any comments received in formulating its final proposed plan, informed all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore, and included the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the plan.	WIA Sections 112(b)(9), 111(g) 20 CFR 661.207 20 CFR 661.220(d) 20 CFR 653.107 (d) 20 CFR 653.108(f)	<a href="http://www.jobs.state.ak.us/eo/Elements/ELEMENT%20SEVEN%205-15-05.pdf">http://www.jobs.state.ak.us/eo/Elements/ELEMENT%20SEVEN%205-15-05.pdf</a>
5. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	In the development of the plan, the state considered the recommendations submitted by the State Monitor Advocate in the annual summary of services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers.	20 CFR 653.108(t)	<a href="http://www.jobs.state.ak.us/eo/Elements/ELEMENT%20SEVEN%205-15-05.pdf">http://www.jobs.state.ak.us/eo/Elements/ELEMENT%20SEVEN%205-15-05.pdf</a>



6. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established a written policy and procedure to ensure public access (including people with disabilities) to board meetings and information regarding board activities, such as board membership and minutes.	WIA Sections 111(g), 112(b)(9), 117(e) 20 CFR 661.207	<a href="http://labor.alaska.gov/accessibility.htm">http://labor.alaska.gov/accessibility.htm</a>
7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Where SCSEP is included in the Integrated Workforce Plan, the state established a written policy and procedure to obtain advice and recommendations on the State Plan from representatives of the State and area agencies on aging; State and local boards under the WIA; public and private nonprofit agencies and organizations providing employment services, including each grantee operating a SCSEP project within the state, except as provided under section 506 (a)(3) of OAA and 20 CFR 641.320(b); Social service organizations providing services to older individuals; Grantees under Title III of OAA, Affected Communities, Unemployed older individuals, Community-based organizations serving older individuals; business organizations and labor organizations.	20 CFR 641.315(a)(1-10), 641.325 (f), (g), (h)	<i>Not applicable</i>

**ASSURANCES AND ATTACHMENTS - REQUIRED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

	STATEMENT	REFERENCE	DOCUMENTATION and COMMENTS
8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state made available to the public state-imposed requirements, such as state-wide policies or guidance, for the statewide public workforce system, including policy for the use of WIA title I statewide funds.	WIA Sections 112(b)(2), 129, 134 20 CFR 665.100	<a href="http://labor.alaska.gov/bp/policies.htm">http://labor.alaska.gov/bp/policies.htm</a>
9. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established a written policy and procedure that identifies circumstances that might present a conflict of interest for any state or local workforce investment board member or the entity that s/he represents, and provides for the resolution of conflicts. The policy meets the requirements of WIA Sections 111(f) and 117(g).	WIA Sections 112(b)(9), 111(g) 20 CFR 661.207 20 CFR 661.220(d)	<a href="http://labor.alaska.gov/awib/">http://labor.alaska.gov/awib/</a>
10. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state has established a written policy and procedure that describes the state's appeals process available to units of local government or grant recipients that request, but are not granted, designation of an area as a local area under WIA Section 116.	WIA Sections 112(b)(15), 116(a)(5) 20 CFR 661.280 20 CFR 667.700	<a href="http://labor.alaska.gov/bp/forms/policy260.pdf">http://labor.alaska.gov/bp/forms/policy260.pdf</a>
11. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written policy and procedures that describe the state's appeal process for requests not granted for automatic or temporary and subsequent designation as a local workforce investment area.	20 CFR 667.640 20 CFR 662.280	<i>Not applicable under Alaska's waiver</i>

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12. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members.	WIA Sections 112(b)(6), 117(b) 20 CFR 661.300(a), 20 CFR 661.325	<i>Not applicable under Alaska's waiver</i>
13. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years.	WIA Sec 117(c) 20 CFR 661.325	<i>Not applicable under Alaska's waiver</i>
14. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Where an alternative entity takes the place of an SWIB, the state has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under section 111(e) and the legal requirements for membership.	WIA Sections 111(e), (b) 20 CFR 661.210	<i>Not applicable under Alaska's waiver</i>
15. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Where the alternative entity does not provide representative membership of the categories of required SWIB membership, the state has a written policy or procedure to ensure an ongoing role for any unrepresented membership group in the workforce investment system. (Only applicable in cases where a state uses an alternative entity as its SWIB, and that entity does not provide for representative membership by individuals in the categories required by WIA sec. 111(b).)	WIA Sections 111(b), (e) 20 CFR 661.210(c)	<i>Not applicable under Alaska's waiver</i>
16. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	When applicable, the state takes any action necessary to assist local areas in developing and implementing the One-Stop system.	WIA Sections 112(b)(14), 134(c) W-P Section 8(c)	<i>Not applicable under Alaska's waiver</i>
17. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established procedures for determining initial and subsequent eligibility of training providers.	WIA Sections 112(b)(17)(A)(iii), 122, 134(d)(4) 20 CFR 663.515, 663.535	<a href="http://labor.alaska.gov/bp/etpl.htm">http://labor.alaska.gov/bp/etpl.htm</a>
18. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All partners in the workforce and education system described in this plan will ensure the physical, programmatic, and communications accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities in One-Stop Career Centers.	WIA Section 188 W-P Section 8(b) 29 CFR part 37 20 CFR 652.8(j)	<a href="http://labor.alaska.gov/accessibility.htm">http://labor.alaska.gov/accessibility.htm</a>
19. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state ensures that outreach is provided to populations and sub-populations who can benefit from One-Stop Career Center services.	WIA Section 188 29 CFR 37	<a href="http://labor.alaska.gov/esd/AWI-B-AJCN-one-stop-operator.pdf">http://labor.alaska.gov/esd/AWI-B-AJCN-one-stop-operator.pdf</a>
20. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state implements universal access to programs and activities to all individuals through reasonable recruitment targeting, outreach efforts, assessments, services delivery, partnership development, and numeric goals.	WIA Section 188 29 CFR 37.42	<a href="http://labor.alaska.gov/esd/">http://labor.alaska.gov/esd/</a>
21. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state complies with the nondiscrimination provisions of section 188, including that Methods of Administration were developed and implemented.	WIA Section 188 29 CFR 37.20	<a href="http://labor.alaska.gov/oeo.htm">http://labor.alaska.gov/oeo.htm</a>

22.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state collects and maintains data necessary to show compliance with nondiscrimination provisions of section 188.	WIA Section 185	<a href="http://labor.alaska.gov/oeo.htm">http://labor.alaska.gov/oeo.htm</a>
23.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For WIA Single-Area States only, the state has memorandums of understanding between the local workforce investment board and each of the One-Stop partners concerning the operation of the One-Stop delivery system in the local area.	WIA Sections 112(b)(5), 116(b), 118(b)(2)(B), 20 CFR 661.350(a)(3)(ii)	<a href="http://labor.alaska.gov/esd/partner-agreements.htm">http://labor.alaska.gov/esd/partner-agreements.htm</a>

**ASSURANCES AND ATTACHMENTS - ADMINISTRATION OF FUNDS**

		<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>REFERENCE</b>	<b>DOCUMENTATION and COMMENTS</b>
24.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written policy and procedures that outline the methods and factors used in distributing funds, including WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth formula and rapid response funds. The policy establishes a process for funds distribution to local areas for youth activities under WIA Section 128(b)(3)(B), and for adult and training activities under WIA Section 133(b), to the level of detail required by Section 112(b)(12)(a). In addition, the policy establishes a formula, prescribed by the governor under Section 133(b)(2)(B), for the allocation of funds to local areas for dislocated worker employment and training activities.	WIA Sections 111(d)(5), 112(b)(12)(A), (C), 128(b)(3)(B), 133(b)(2)(B), 133(b)(3)(B) 20 CFR 661.205(e)	<i>Not applicable under Alaska's waiver</i>
24a.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For Dislocated Worker funding formulas, the state's policy and procedure includes the data used and weights assigned. If the state uses other information or chooses to omit any of the information sources set forth in WIA when determining the Dislocated Worker formula, the state assures that written rationale exists to explain the decision.	WIA Section 133(b)(2)(B) 20 CFR 667.130(e)(2)(i)-(ii)	<i>Not applicable under Alaska's waiver</i>
25.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the SWIB help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the state consults with chief elected officials in local workforce investment areas throughout the state in determining the distributions.	WIA Sections 111(d)(5), 112(b)(12)(A), 128(b)(3)(B), 133(b)(3)(B), 20 CFR 661.205(e)	<i>Not applicable under Alaska's waiver</i>
26.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written policy and procedures for any distribution of funds to local workforce investment areas reserved for rapid response activities, including the timing and process for determining whether a distribution will take place.	WIA Sections 133(a)(2), 134(a)(2)(A) 20 CFR 667.130(b)(2), (e)(4), 665.340	<i>Not applicable under Alaska's waiver</i>



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27. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written policy and procedures to competitively award grants and contracts for WIA Title I activities.	WIA Section 112(b)(16)	<a href="#">Alaska Statutes Chapter 5</a>
28. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written criteria to be used by local workforce investment boards in awarding grants for youth activities, including criteria that the governor and local workforce investment boards will use to identify effective and ineffective youth activities and providers of such activities.	WIA Sections 112(b)(18)(B), 123, 129	<a href="#">Youth services</a> are provided primarily through grants allocated to both private and public entities throughout the state. In-school and out-of-school youth are served, including those who have dropped out of school. When available, the <a href="#">Request for Grant Applications</a> can be found on the division's electronic on-line grant management system, <a href="#">EGrAMS</a> , or on the state's <a href="#">online public notice</a> Web site.
29. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written criteria for a process to award a grant or contract on a competitive basis for Summer Youth Employment Opportunities element of the local youth program, where a provider is other than the grant recipient/fiscal agent.	WIA Sections 123, 129(c)(2)(C) 20 CFR 664.610.	<a href="#">Youth services</a> are provided primarily through grants allocated to both private and public entities throughout the state. In-school and out-of-school youth are served, including those who have dropped out of school. When available, the <a href="#">Request of Grant Applications</a> can be found on the division's electronic on-line grant management system, <a href="#">EGrAMS</a> , or on the state's <a href="#">online public notice</a> Web site.
30. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state distributes adult and youth funds received under WIA equitably throughout the state, and no local areas suffer significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan.	WIA Section 112(b)(12)(B)	<i>Not applicable under Alaska's waiver</i>
31. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written fiscal-controls and fund-accounting procedures and ensures such procedures are followed to ensure the proper disbursement and accounting of funds paid to the state through funding allotments made for WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, and the Wagner-Peyser Act.	WIA Sections 112(b)(11), 127, 132, 184 W-P Sections 9(a), (c) 20 CFR 652.8(b), (c)	<a href="#">Alaska Statutes Chapter 5</a>
32. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state ensures compliance with the uniform administrative requirements in WIA through annual, onsite monitoring of each local area.	WIA Sections 184(a)(3), (4) 20 CFR 667.200, .400(c)(2), 667.410	<a href="#">Division of Business Partnerships Grant Monitoring Policy</a>

33. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state follows confidentiality requirements for wage and education records as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, WIA, and applicable Departmental regulations.	WIA Sections 136(f)(2), (f)(3), 122, 185(a)(4)(B) 20 USC 1232g 20 CFR 666.150 20 CFR part 603	Alaska Statutes covering confidential information <a href="#">AS 39.25.080</a> and <a href="#">Policy on Disclosures</a>
34. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state will not use funds received under WIA to assist, promote, or deter union organizing.	WIA Section 181(b)(7) 20 CFR 663.730	<a href="#">Alaska Statutes Chapter 5</a>

**ASSURANCES AND ATTACHMENTS – ELIGIBILITY**

	<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>REFERENCE</b>	<b>DOCUMENTATION and COMMENTS</b>
35. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Where the SWIB chooses to establish them, the state established definitions and eligibility documentation requirements regarding the “deficient in basic literacy skills” criterion.	WIA Sections 101(13)(C)(i) CFR 664.205(b)	<i>Alaska did not establish a state definition for “deficient in basic literacy skills.”</i>
36. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Where the SWIB chooses to establish them, the state established definitions and eligibility documentation requirements regarding “requires additional assistance to complete and educational program, or to secure and hold employment” criterion.	WIA Sections 101(13)(C)(iv) 20 CFR 664.200(c)(6), 664.210	<i>Alaska did not establish a state definition for “requires additional assistance to complete and educational program, or to secure and hold employment.”</i>
37. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established policies, procedures, and criteria for prioritizing adult title I employment and training funds for use by recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals in the local area when funds are limited.	WIA Section 134(d)(4)(E) 20 CFR 663.600	<i>Division of Business Partnerships <a href="#">WIA Adult</a> and <a href="#">WIA Dislocated Worker Policies</a></i>
38. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established policies for the delivery of priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses by the state workforce agency or agencies, local workforce investment boards, and One-Stop Career Centers for all qualified job training programs delivered through the state's workforce system. The state policies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that covered persons are identified at the point of entry and given an opportunity to take full advantage of priority of service; and</li> <li>2. Ensure that covered persons are aware of:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Their entitlement to priority of service;</li> <li>b. The full array of employment, training, and placement services available under priority of service; and</li> <li>c. Any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/ or services.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Require local workforce investment boards to develop and include policies in their local plan to implement priority of service for the local</li> </ol>	WIA Sections 112(b)(17)(B), 322 38 USC Chapter 41 20 CFR 1001.120-.125 Jobs for Veterans Act, P.L. 107-288 38 USC 4215 20 CFR 1010.230, 1010.300-.310	<i>Division of Business Partnerships <a href="#">WIA Adult</a>, <a href="#">WIA Dislocated Worker</a> and <a href="#">WIA Youth Policies</a></i>

<p>One-Stop Career Centers and for service delivery by local workforce preparation and training providers.</p>		
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**ASSURANCES AND ATTACHMENTS - PERSONNEL AND REPRESENTATION**

	<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>REFERENCE</b>	<b>DOCUMENTATION and COMMENTS</b>
<p>39. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>The state assures that Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) significant office requirements are met.</p> <p>Note: The five states with the highest estimated year-round MSFW activities must assign full-time, year-round staff to outreach activities. The Employment and Training Administration designates these states each year. The remainder of the top 20 significant MSFW states must make maximum efforts to hire outreach staff with MSFW experience for year-round positions and shall assign outreach staff to work full-time during the period of highest activity.</p> <p>If a state proposes that its State Monitor Advocate work less than full-time, the state must submit, for approval by the Department, a plan for less than full-time work, demonstrating that the state MSFW Monitor Advocate function can be effectively performed with part-time staffing.</p>	<p>WIA Section 112(b)(8)(A)(iii), 112(b)(17)(A)(iv) W-P Sections 3(a), (c)(1)-(2) 20 CFR 653.107(a), 107(i), 653.112(a), 653.108(d)(1)</p>	<p><i>Not applicable</i></p>
<p>40. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Merit-based public employees provide Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities in accordance with Departmental regulations.</p>	<p>W-P Sections 3(a), 5(b) 20 CFR 652.215 Intergovernmental Personnel Act, 42 USC 4728(b)</p>	<p><a href="http://labor.alaska.gov/esd/AWTB-AJCN-one-stop-operator.pdf">http://labor.alaska.gov/esd/AWTB-AJCN-one-stop-operator.pdf</a></p>
<p>41. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>The state has designated at least one person in each state or Federal employment office to promote and develop employment opportunities, job counseling, and placement for individuals with disabilities.</p>	<p>W-P Section 8(b) 20 CFR 652.211</p>	<p><a href="http://labor.alaska.gov/esd/AWTB-AJCN-one-stop-operator.pdf">http://labor.alaska.gov/esd/AWTB-AJCN-one-stop-operator.pdf</a></p>
<p>42. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>If a SWIB, 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.</p>	<p>W-P Section 8(b) 20 CFR 652.211</p>	<p><a href="http://labor.alaska.gov/esd/AWTB-AJCN-one-stop-operator.pdf">http://labor.alaska.gov/esd/AWTB-AJCN-one-stop-operator.pdf</a></p>

## **Public Comment**

To ensure that Alaska's workforce investment system is responsive to the public, the AWIB and the department sought input from local chief elected officials, representatives of businesses and labor organizations, and other appropriate partners while developing the Alaska Integrated Workforce Development Plan for Program Years 2012-2016. Recommendations and feedback as it related to the plan came from varying perspectives. These included the private sector, through the board membership; the public sector (through the board, One-Stop Operator, and the Alaska Job Center Network); and through the public comment process.

Prior to finalization and submission of this plan, the AWIB sought public comment on a draft in accordance with Section 111(g) and Section 112 (b)(9) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 USC 2821 and 29 USC 2822). The comment period ended on September 14, 2012, and no comments were received.

**STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES CERTIFICATION**

The State of Alaska certifies on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of September in 2012 that it complied with all of required components of the Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act. The State of Alaska certifies that funds will be spent in accordance with the Workforce Investment Act and the Wagner-Peyser Act and their regulations, written U.S. Department of Labor guidance implementing these laws, and all other applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

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Governor

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Date

**Program Administration Designees and Plan Signature**

**WIA Title I Grant Recipient Agency: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Business Partnerships**

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State WIA Title I Administrative Agency: **Same as Above**

**WIA Title I Signatory Official: Dianne Blumer, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development**

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**Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Employment Security Division**

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As the governor, I certify that for the State of Alaska, the agencies and officials designated above have been duly designated to represent the State of Alaska in the capacities indicated for the Workforce Investment Act, Title I, and Wagner-Peyser Act grant programs. The state will provide subsequent changes in the designation of officials will be provided to the U.S. Department of Labor as such changes occur.

I further certify the State of Alaska will operate our Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act programs in accordance with this plan and the assurances herein.

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Sean Parnell, Governor

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Date