



State of Alaska

**Alaska Strategic State Plan
for Title 1 of the Workforce
Investment Act of 1998
and the Wagner-Peyser Act**

Modification July 1, 2011, to June 30, 2012



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**Modifications
of Alaska’s Extended Strategic Plan for
Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998
and the Wagner-Peyser Act**

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**Summary of Modifications
of Alaska’s Extended Strategic Plan for
Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998
and the Wagner-Peyser Act
July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012**

I. Modification of the State’s Vision

This section was modified to reflect Governor Sean Parnell's vision for the State Workforce system, based on the relationship between economic and workforce development and education. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board maintains the focus on developing a workforce system that is useful, accessible, and understandable to all system users and customers.

II. Modification of the State Workforce Investment Priorities

Modifications made to this section include the governor's two priorities: (1) Performance Scholarships to enhance the capacity to develop competitive in-state training for Alaska's youth, and (2) making communities safe and prosperous with pathways for Alaskans to prepare for and find good careers.

III. Modifications to the State Governance Structure

The organization chart was modified to include the University of Alaska and to clarify the AWIB's and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's relationship, as well as the board's and workforce system partners' relationship to the governor.

IV. Modification of Economic and Labor Market Analysis

Section IV was modified to reflect the fact that Alaska, like the rest of the nation, experienced the effects of one of the largest economic contractions in the nation's history, resulting in increased unemployment rates and a downturn in employment. Although Alaska's economy began to rebound in 2010, only modest growth is expected in the near future.

V. Modification of Overarching State Strategies

Alaska is aligning the workforce system around economic development and making efforts to leverage resources and sustain activities that support regional economic development. The Alaska Legislature funded the Alaska Youth First Initiative with state general funds aimed at building capacity in the state's youth population to enter Alaska's high demand occupations. This additional avenue for training is the result of leveraging an industry focused, demand driven training system.

The strategies and priorities the state workforce investment system uses are based on the successful experiences developing a plan and then working the plan. Modifications were made to this section to include the Health Care, Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency industries,' and the Career and Technical Education Plans.

Additional modification of this section incorporates the state's newest waiver to implement Common Measures as identified in TEGL 17-05.

VI. Modifications to Major State Policies and Requirements

Alaska is developing a comprehensive data collection and reporting system that ensures Alaska is using data to strategically plan for performance and program outcomes.

VII. Modifications to Integration of the One-Stop Service Delivery System

The State of Alaska is not substantially modifying the One-Stop Service Delivery integration system.

VIII. Modifications in Administration and Oversight

The state has not made any substantial modifications to the Administration and Oversight of the WIA.

IX. Modifications in One-Stop Service Delivery Strategies

This section of the plan was modified to address the following issues and changes in strategies:

- The Employment Security Division is proactively raising the Veterans Program Performance to the negotiated performance rates by restoring fulltime DVOP and LVER staff that focus only on veterans.
- Alaska increased use of innovative service delivery strategies by making enhancements to the Alaska Labor Exchange System, ALEXsys, which allows customers to sign up for job center workshops independently, and a Virtual Recruiter, which allows clients to sign up for automated notifications when a job becomes available in their field of interest.
- In order to increase service levels to people with disabilities, best practices from numerous projects are combined to create an innovative service delivery strategy through the Disability Employment Initiative, including the establishment of a permanent disability resource coordinator, and rotating disability coordinators in the job centers.

X. Modifications to State Administration

The state plan for statewide activities funds has been modified due to the reduction in the amount appropriated by Congress.

The state is working on improving the reporting processes through the development of a data warehouse and an associated analysis and reporting system. This state funded project is in the requirements phase, scheduled to be complete in SFY 2013.

The Performance Indicators chart was updated to reflect the use of the Common Measures as allowed by the state's waiver and shows the negotiated performance levels for the WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. The Employment Security Division renegotiated Alaska's Wagner-Peyser Entered Employment Rate for Program Years 2010 and 2011 from 64 percent to a more realistic and achievable level of 55 percent.

I. State Vision

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

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board adopted “building connections that put Alaskans into good jobs” as a vision that reflects Governor Parnell’s commitment to economic growth. The board’s vision keeps the focus on developing a workforce system that is useful, accessible and understandable to all of the system’s users and customers. Today’s workforce system customers include businesses looking for qualified workers, unemployed Alaskans looking for jobs, incumbent workers seeking to upgrade their skills in a changing work environment, and youth new to the workforce eager to find opportunity in a tight labor market. In short, the board believes that Alaska’s workforce investment system is an economic development resource with social benefits to Alaskans. The focus of the vision is to create opportunities for Alaskans to work in emerging and growing high wage, high demand occupations.

The vision includes a two-fold perspective. First is the small business development that creates jobs for Alaskans. Second are mega-projects such as infrastructure development and the construction of an Alaska gas pipeline that provide Alaskans the opportunity to develop the skills, knowledge, and abilities to compete in a global market.

Alignment of the state’s economic, education and workforce development strategies is critical to the state’s efforts to train and retain its youth workforce and those transitioning to Alaska’s natural resource based extraction, and emerging and growing industries. Through the alignment of these three development strategies, the state will meet its workforce needs and create better opportunities for Alaskans.

Alaska’s workforce development leaders understand the symbiotic relationship between economic development and workforce development. “Jobs for Alaskans requires positioning our economy for growth with a solid investment climate,” Governor Parnell said. This means the state is investing in its workforce to attract business that is growing and will contribute to Alaska’s economic prosperity. From the new Alaska Performance Scholarship to the State Training and Employment Program, the investments made by the state are aimed at replacing an aging workforce and developing the globally competitive skills needed by Alaska’s growing, emerging, and resource extraction industries.

I. A Economic Development Goals

What are the state’s economic development goals for attracting, retaining and growing business and industry within the state? (§112(a) and (b)(4)(A-C).)

- Economic development is underpinned by workforce development.
 - Key to Alaska’s future is the development of an infrastructure that reinforces economic growth. From the creation of modern transportation systems, including roads and ports, to the continued development of a sophisticated information and communication system, the state’s infrastructure development is critical to creating new economic opportunity.

- The state’s workforce development system depends on the economic and skill development that stems from an improved infrastructure. The skills that are developed on heavy highway projects are the same skills needed to build new hospitals, clinics, and other health care infrastructure, as well as new pipeline and mining industry infrastructure.
- With infrastructure development, increased opportunities for small business are created, in particular for the transportation, construction, resource extraction, healthcare, tourism, and education industries.
- All Alaskans should have opportunities to participate in the Alaskan workforce.
 - Consistent with the vision of this plan and the position of the AWIB, the workforce development system is aligned to reduce the rate of nonresident workers in Alaska. Historically, business and industry recruited nonresidents to fill specialized, technical, and in some instances, undesirable occupations in remote areas of the state. As the state’s training and development infrastructure advances, and the state increases capacity to provide business and industry with a skilled workforce, it is important that employers are aware of the in-state talent and make the Alaskan workforce their first choice for recruitment.
 - As a strategy to meet industry demand for a skilled workforce, it is important that Alaska’s youth be encouraged to obtain their training and remain in Alaska. Programs like the new Alaska Performance Scholarship and the Alaska Career and Technical Education Plan are based on the recognition that a disproportionate number of Alaska’s youth do not return to Alaska if they attend training elsewhere. Programs that incentivize in-state training make it easier for Alaska to grow its own workforce.
- Alaska’s Workforce Development Policies will help Alaska attract, grow, and retain business and industry.
 - Alaska’s businesses are provided with the support and resources needed to compete in the global market. AWIB policies support growth of new economies and sustenance of core industries. The workforce development system includes many approaches to work with Alaska’s small businesses to develop a skilled workforce, whether it is through on-the-job training, registered apprenticeship, or partnering with existing training facilities to develop targeted training.
 - Along with natural resource extraction, the state will support in-state training and capacity for emerging renewable energy and energy efficiency industries.
 - Workforce development policies must continue to meet the natural resource extraction industry demand for a skilled workforce. Global markets continue to be dependent on Alaska’s natural resources. The next opportunity is for Alaska to add value to those resources before sending them out of state.
 - “Roads to Resources” is a message that still resonates in Alaska. Developing the infrastructure for resource extraction will have a secondary benefit on many industries, such as tourism and health care, which follow the typical transportation corridors.
 - The workforce development system must continue to create stronger partnerships with business organizations, such as local chambers of commerce, and other institutions working to improve the climate for small business investment.

I. B Maximize and Leverage Resources

Given that a skilled workforce is a key to the economic success of every business, what is the governor's vision for maximizing and leveraging the broad array of federal and state resources available for workforce investment flowing through the state cabinet agencies and/or education agencies in order to ensure a skilled workforce for the state's business and industry? (§112(a) and (b)(4)(A-C).)

The state's practice is to enhance partnerships between federal, state, local, and private resources in new and innovative ways to ensure a skilled workforce for business and industry. To this end, Alaska received a High Growth Job Training Initiative for Energy award used to leverage resources and achieve sustainable change in the workforce system. Federal funds from economic development agencies, such as the Denali Commission Training Fund, were leveraged by the state to invest in workforce development, particularly for public infrastructure projects primarily in rural Alaska. The practice of partnering supports Governor Parnell's renewed vision of economic and workforce development, and focus on creating career pathways for youth in Alaska's emerging industries.

In order to maximize and leverage resources, the Alaska legislature funded the Alaska Youth First Initiative with the state general funds. This fund provides capacity building resources to Alaska's youth. Youth First funding will be invested in training programs responsive to Alaska's youth workforce development needs. This state funded avenue for training is the result of an industry focused, demand driven training system. With Alaska Youth First and other WIA leveraged funds, Alaska is aligning the workforce system around economic development to ensure a skilled workforce for business and industry.

School-to-business partnerships are a vital component of the governor's vision of maximizing workforce investment resources. The focus is to provide graduating students with the required skills needed in the job market, especially a strong foundation in analytical and critical thinking, reading, writing, math, and employability or "soft" skills. These partnerships link employers with local schools and training programs to provide students with a solid understanding of the standards, legal requirements, and expectations employers have for new hires, easing the transition from learning to the workplace.

I. C Ensuring Continuum of Education and Training

What is the governor's vision for ensuring a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce? (§112(a) and (b)(4)(A-C).)

The governor recognizes the importance of ensuring a continuum of education and training to strengthen Alaska's economy with high wage, demand jobs. The governor supports students' introductions to careers so they are exposed to employment opportunities available in Alaska. Introduction of career clusters will link academic basics with specific skills needed to ensure success in the workplace. The state continues to fund the Alaska Youth First program, which provides career guides and career exploration in Alaska's middle and high schools. The goal is that students will graduate prepared to make career decisions that will allow them to live and work in Alaska.

The state faces significant challenges in preparing Alaskans for high-paying, high skills jobs due to nonresident hiring practices and limited in-state training options for employers and job seekers. To address this, as well as the skills gaps, Alaska must continue its investment in professional development at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Beyond traditional postsecondary education and training, the state is also expanding available training options through registered apprenticeships, targeting occupations related to construction of an Alaska gas line. As many as 70 occupations identified in the Alaska gas line training

strategic plan have registered apprenticeships established, which are also eligible to earn up to 38 credits toward a college degree.

There is also progression toward developing a full continuum of health careers to ensure that Alaskan communities have the needed health care and support. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board has targeted health care as an industry critical to Alaska's workforce and economic needs. A Health Care Workforce Coalition was formed to design a plan and strategies for developing the health care workforce.

An example of the state's commitment to developing a continuum of training is the partnership between the commissioners of the Alaska Departments of Labor and Workforce Development, and Education and Early Development. They are working together introducing innovative programs, such as Alaska Career Ready so that students' and adult job-seekers' readiness for work, college, and occupational training can be gauged, and basic skills of both target populations can be enhanced.

I. D Identify Challenges

What is the governor's vision for bringing together the key players in workforce development including business and industry, economic development, education, and the public workforce system to continuously identify the workforce challenges facing the state and to develop innovative strategies and solutions that effectively leverage resources to address those challenges? (§112(b)(10).)

Governor Parnell's vision is to work with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board, other state and federal agencies, Alaska Native corporations, tribes, nonprofits, and private organizations to address the workforce challenges of the decade ahead. The strategies that support this vision will increase outreach opportunities for high school students, and raise awareness and appreciation of pathways to high growth jobs, career and technical education, and job training resources.

The quickening pace of resource development brings attention to the growing gap between the supply and demand of skilled workers. In order to expand apprenticeships, literacy and math skills of applicants must be improved. Industry based pre-vocational and job training services will increase the success of entry level and semi-skilled candidates in securing their first and next job as they advance on a career path. The workforce system will increase access to jobs and training, streamline to reduce duplication of effort, and connect employers with skilled workers.

I. E Ensure Youth Opportunities

What is the governor's vision for ensuring that every youth has the opportunity for developing and achieving career goals through education and workforce training, including the youth most in need, such as out of school youth, homeless youth, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, migrant and seasonal farm worker youth, and other youth at risk? (§112 (b)(18)(A).)

It is Governor Parnell's desire to ensure enhancement and reinforcement of local resources that will help Alaska's disconnected youth prepare for careers or further education and training. The ultimate goal is to create and maintain a seamless continuum of educational and career development opportunities and incentives that will assist these youth in selecting, pursuing, and obtaining careers resulting in good jobs and self-sufficiency. Services will include academic, occupational, vocational, work readiness, and life skills training to prepare youth for summer employment opportunities, after school jobs, and careers.

Alaska is aligned with the new ETA strategic vision for youth focused on serving populations with the greatest need especially out-of-school youth, youth in and aged-out of foster care, youth offenders, youth

with incarcerated parents, migrant and homeless youth, and youth with disabilities. Alaska's youth programs have developed strategies that use creative methods for recruiting and serving these populations.

One-Stop service delivery provides choices for youth, available through the job centers, that include English as a Second Language, General Equivalency Diploma testing and preparation, a Family Literacy program, a staffed community resource room, work search, pre- and post-employment programs and vocational rehabilitation counselors who offer transition services for youth with disabilities. In rural areas, virtual One-Stop technology will be used in conjunction with one-on-one contact as the state recognizes that there is no substitute for rural access to service provision. The goal is to expand affiliate sites to include tribal, faith-based, and community organizations.

The successes of the High Growth Job Training Initiative led to support by the governor and legislature of outreach to, and training of, youth through Alaska's Youth First Initiative. More than two million general fund dollars sustain the efforts first begun under the High Growth grant. Applying the principles of innovation, partnerships, outcomes, leveraged resources and sustainability, the Youth First Initiative continues to provide businesses with the next generation of skilled workers and leaders.

Other recent efforts to provide youth with opportunities include the Alaska Construction Academy model deployed in nine communities to expose youth to occupations in the construction industry, and the Alaska Performance Scholarship aimed at providing youth an incentive to perform in secondary school and receive training in state. Both of these programs offer significant incentives to Alaska's youth who are seeking in-state training in Alaska's in-demand or emerging industries.

II. State Workforce Investment Priorities

Key Workforce Investment Priorities

Identify the governor's key workforce investment priorities for the state public workforce system and how each will lead to actualizing the governor's vision for workforce and economic development. (§111(d)(2) and 112 (a).)

- Alaska's youth will be career ready when they complete high school. Ready to work, ready to learn is a message the education system has taken to heart. Recent joint development of the state's Career and Technical Education Plan for K-16 between the University of Alaska and the Departments of Education and Early Development and Labor and Workforce Development is one of Alaska's commitment to having a prepared workforce complete high school or postsecondary education.
- The Governor's Performance Scholarship for postsecondary training and technical education will support the capacity to develop competitive in-state training for Alaska's youth.
- Alaska will have a world-class workforce ready to meet the needs of Alaska's high skill, high demand jobs.
- The skills gap between industry demand and a skilled resident workforce must be met with clear direction and guidance. Central to this is an understanding of the industries and occupations that are in-demand and create the gap. Once the characteristics of the skills gap are determined, the system must monitor change for the long term and adjust investments accordingly.
- Aligning the 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 workers.
- Alaska's postsecondary career and technical training facilities and professional education system will provide world-class training using state-of-the-art equipment, technology and processes. Further, the enhanced systems of training providers will include public and private training institutions. The focus on Alaska's world-class training system will be on providing the best training available in a given occupation. This means the university system, organized labor, private training institutions, regional training centers, and statewide vocational technical education programs must find common ground and align training based on industry demand.
- Alaska's businesses will have the support and resources to compete in the global market.
- The state is investing in making communities safe and prosperous with pathways for Alaskans to prepare for and find good careers.

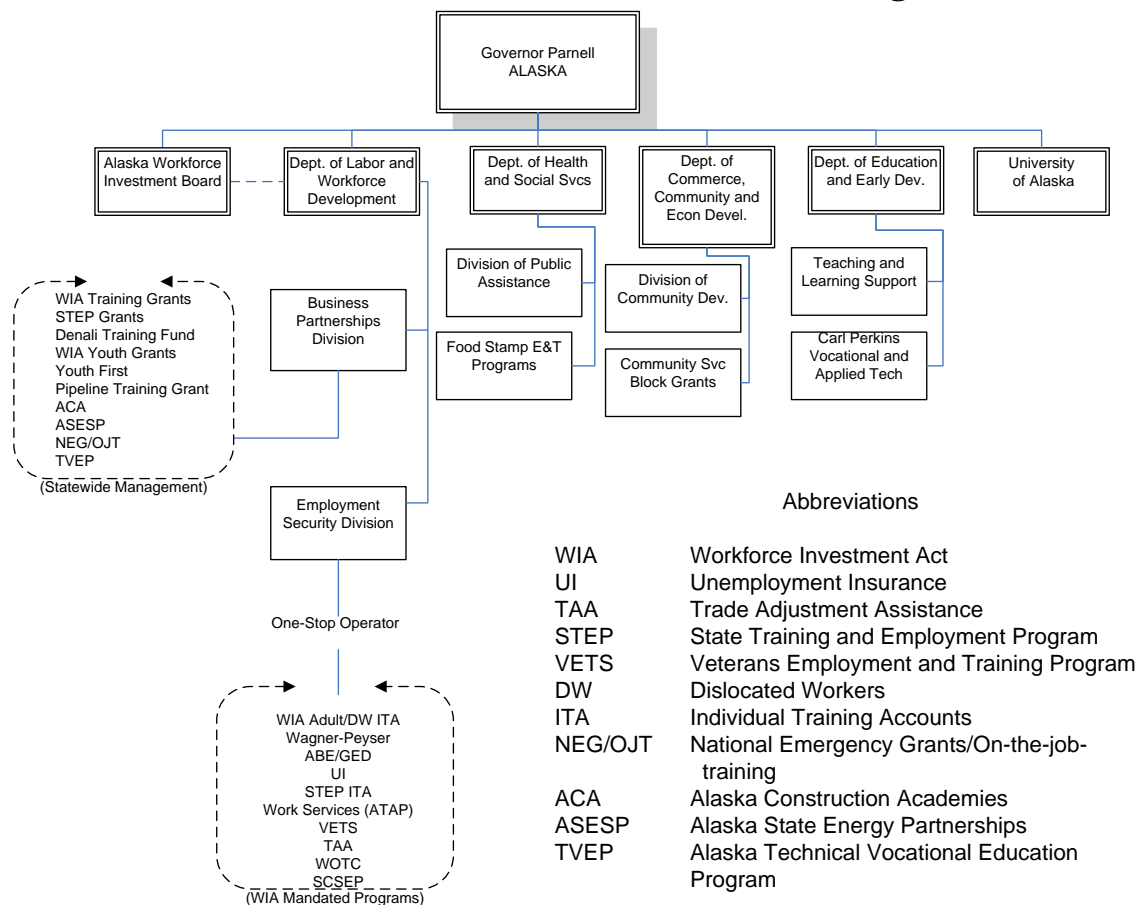
Investment in these priorities will ensure the workforce development system is preparing Alaskans to work in emerging and high demand occupations, and the quality of life, safety, and prosperity of residents in their local communities.

III. State Governance Structure

III. A. 1 Organization of State Agencies

Provide an organizational chart that delineates the relationship to the governor of the agencies involved in the public workforce investment system, including education and economic development and the required and optional One-Stop partner programs managed by each agency.

Alaska's Public Workforce Investment Structure and Programs



The Alaska Workforce Investment Board is funded through, provided administrative support by, and collaborates with, the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and is responsible for advising the governor on statewide workforce investment matters. The Department's Employment Security Division (ESD), the state's One-Stop Operator, manages the job centers throughout the state. The Division of Business Partnerships (DBP), the State Workforce Agency, is within the Alaska Department of Labor and ensures that Workforce Investment Act funding and other federal and state job training programs are aligned, administered, and delivers services in accordance with federal and state directives and guidance.

III. A. 2 How Agencies Interrelate

Describe how the agencies involved in the workforce investment system interrelate on workforce, economic development, and education issues and the respective lines of authority. (§112(b)(8)(A).)

The workforce system includes the private sector, other state agencies and vendors contracted for training programs. The DBP manages partnership agreements by investing federal funds with training providers, employers, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), the One-Stop Operator, ESD, and the Department's Research and Analysis section. The DBP also maintains the management information system for participant case management and training program performance reporting. These data are provided to the AWIB to evaluate and report program performance and provide recommendations to the governor.

The AWIB, by statute, provides oversight for the planning and coordination of employment-related education training programs operated by the state or operated 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. The AWIB provides oversight and guidance to the One-Stop Operator and articulates the coordination among state agencies. A Memorandum of Understanding is in effect between the board and One-Stop partner agencies.

The Alaska One-Stop system has a policy of "No Wrong Door." The DVR and the Division of Public Assistance are collocated with ESD in several of the state's seven comprehensive One-Stop job centers. Alaska is progressing from mere collocation toward true integration of One-Stop services. This includes alignment of functional resources, job center redesign efforts, 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).

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 board and all its committees is available to the public on the board's web site (<http://www.labor.state.ak.us/awib/home.htm>).

III. B. 1 Organization and Structure

Describe the organization and structure of the state board. (§111).

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 four permanent standing committees, which are:

- Assessment and Evaluation
- Policy and Planning
- Employment and Placement
- Workforce Readiness

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 and exercises the powers of the board between regular business meetings.

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

III. B. 2 Entities Represented

Identify the organizations or entities represented on the state board. If you are using an alternative entity which does not contain all the members required under section 111(b)(1), describe how each of the entities required under this section will be involved in planning and implementing the state workforce investment system as envisioned in WIA. How is the alternative entity achieving the state's WIA goals? (§111(a-c), 111(e), and 112(b)(1).)

The AWIB is designated as 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; and,
- 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 non-voting members may be appointed to the board from government or non-government entities. Furthermore, 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 non-mandatory 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.

III. B. 3 Board Member Selection Process

Describe the process your state used to identify your state board members. How did you select board members, including business representatives, who have optimum policy-making authority and who represent diverse regions of the state as required under WIA? (20CFR 661. 200.)

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.

III. B. 4 How Membership Achieves Vision

Describe how the board's membership enables you to achieve your vision described above. (§§111(a-c) and 112(b)(1).)

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 between vocational education, apprenticeship programs, and the industries affected by the governor's human resource investment strategy and attempt to combine economic, educational, and workforce development interests. It 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. The government officials on the board are the embodiment of distinct components of the governor's vision. This structure enables the board's private sector leadership to work hand-in-hand with government decision-makers.

III. B. 5 Board Functions

Describe how the board carries out its functions as required in sec. 111 (d) and 20 CFR 661. 205. Include functions the board has assumed that are in addition to those required. Identify any functions required in sec. 111 (d) the board does not perform and explain why.

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 assure coordination and non-duplication 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 Alaska’s state legislature;
- Develop a statewide employment statistics system as required in the Wagner-Peyser Act; and,
- 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 strategic 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; and,
- Report annually to the governor and legislature on the performance and evaluation of training programs in the state.

In carrying out its duties, the board adheres to the principles of local flexibility and of 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 board 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 for the workforce investment system. The AWIB assists the governor in developing strategic 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.

III. B. 6 Access to Board Information

How will the state board ensure that the public (including people with disabilities) has access to board meetings and information regarding state board activities, including membership and meeting minutes? (20 CFR 661. 205)

All regular business meetings of the AWIB are open to the public. All stakeholders as well as the general public will be notified of additional significant matters (such as this plan) in addition to the regular business meetings. Public comment is invited and welcomed either in-person, by teleconference, or via the Internet

submission. The AWIB is conscious of accessibility issues with respect to all community members and selects its venues accordingly. It is the practice of the state of Alaska that all official web pages provide varied levels of accessibility per Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended, 1973. The current AWIB roster, by-laws, and archived meeting minutes for the board and all its committees is available to the public on the board's web site (<http://www.labor.state.ak.us/awib/home.htm>).

III. B. 7 Conflict of Interest

Identify the circumstances, which constitute a conflict of interest for any state or local workforce investment board members or the entity that s/he represents, and any matter that would provide a financial benefit to that member or his or her immediate family. (§§111(f), 112(b)(13), and 117(g).)

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 shall maintain their right to personal and financial interests. It is expected that board members shall conduct themselves in an ethical manner. Examples of inappropriate actions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 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 in order 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 resource 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; or
- 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.

In the event 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.

III. B. 8 Resources to Function

What resources does the state provide the board to carry out its functions, i.e., staff, funding, etc.?

Alaska Statute 23.15.585 specifies that the governor appoints an executive director for the Alaska Workforce Investment Board and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development who provides

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]. State departments that either operate or contract for employment-related training programs for which the board provides oversight [AS 23.15.580(f)-(g)] pay a management assessment fee, not to exceed 0.75 percent of the program's annual operating budget, to the board. The AWIB staff is responsible for its own budget and spending plan as a commissioner-level entity within the DOLWD.

III. C. 1 Structure/Process to Collaborate and Communicate

Describe the steps the state will take to improve operational collaboration of the workforce investment activities and other related activities and programs outlined in section 112(b)(8)(A) of WLA, at both the state and local level (e. g. , How will the State Board and agencies eliminate any existing state-level barriers to coordination? (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(8)(A).)

The Alaska Job Center Network relies on a single point of contact model to ensure collaboration. As an example, the registered apprenticeship specialists create awareness of registered apprenticeships and provides the linkage between the job seeker/apprentice and the employer/sponsor. Using the resources of the public workforce system, registered apprenticeship relationships are fostered and encouraged. Additionally, improvements are being made in the state's online, labor exchange system, ALEXsys, to better identify persons possessing professional credentials and licenses. This will allow employers the ability to more quickly assess where qualified workers live, for recruitment purposes, and allows the department to further direct training and services where gaps exist in rural communities.

On July 1, 2004, Alaska consolidated its two previous local workforce areas into a single state planning area in accordance with a waiver granted by the 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, in partnership with other agencies, is incrementally improving coordination of services within the Alaska Job Center Network. The focus of this effort is improvement of partner collocation and public accessibility.

III. C. 2 Effective Sharing of Information

Describe the lines of communication established by the governor to ensure open and effective sharing of information among the state agencies responsible for implementing the vision for the public workforce system and between the state agencies and the state workforce investment board.

The lieutenant governor and commissioners of the Alaska Departments of Labor and Workforce Development; Commerce, Community and Economic Development; Education and Early Development; Health and Social Services, are members of the state workforce investment board. Staff members from the divisions of Business Partnerships, Employment Security, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Public Assistance routinely attend and provide information at AWIB committee meetings. AWIB staff serves as a liaison

between board members and the state agencies responsible for delivery of AWIB programs funded under the public workforce development system umbrella.

III. C. 3 Lines of Communication

Describe the lines of communication and mechanisms established by the governor to ensure timely and effective sharing of information between the state agencies/ state board and local workforce investment areas and local boards. Include types of regularly issued guidance and how federal guidance is disseminated to local boards and One-Stop Career Centers. (§112(b)(1).)

Alaska is a single state regional planning area that acts in the capacity of local boards, using the same lines of communication described in sub-section 2 above, and the board members are governor-appointed and serve at the pleasure of the governor, as defined in AS 23.15.555(a).

III. C. 4 Integrated Vision for Youth

Describe any cross-cutting organizations or bodies at the state level designed to guide and inform an integrated vision for serving youth in the state within the context of workforce investment, social services, juvenile justice, and education. Describe the membership of such bodies and the functions and responsibilities in establishing priorities and services for youth? How is the state promoting a collaborative cross-agency approach for both policy development and service delivery at the local level for youth? (§112(b)(18)(A).)

The [Alaska Youth Council](#), an advisory council of the Alaska Workforce Investment Board, provides broad oversight and policy recommendations concerning youth issues to the Alaska Workforce Investment Board. The Alaska Youth Council is composed of members from education, health and social services, housing, juvenile justice, private sector employers, parents of persons receiving services, a representative of youth with disabilities, and youth. The council reviews performance and statewide strategies and makes recommendations based on current statewide needs and future workforce projections.

The Youth Council serves as a regional policy council and is responsible for developing strategy recommendations and oversight for youth workforce systems while addressing the needs and interests of the state.

In addition, the Youth Council forges partnerships and encourages coordination among partners with the goal of developing and structuring a youth service system that is responsive to the needs of youth, as well as regional economic development and overall health of the community. This system provides a variety of proactive options to improve educational achievements, impacting the dropout rate, and prepares youth for successful careers in Alaska. The Youth Council functions as a committee and is subject to periodic oversight accountable to the AWIB.

IV. Economic and Labor Market Analysis

Provide a detailed analysis of the state's economy, the labor pool, and the labor market context. (§112(b)(4).)

Alaska's economy has shifted since the submittal of the Workforce Investment Act two-year plan for PY 07 and PY 08. Although the state economy has performed relatively well, Alaska did not escape the upheaval of the recent U.S. recession. The state's 21 years of uninterrupted growth ended in 2009, with a loss of 900 jobs over the year. Although the downturn was brief, its effects continue to ripple through the state's labor market.

The many years of labor shortages and easy-to-find jobs that typified Alaska's labor market just two years ago have ended, turning the job seeker's market into an employer's market. Alaska's unemployment rate rose to 8.2 percent in 2009, the highest in 18 years. The rate dropped slightly in 2010 to 7.8 percent, but it was still the second-highest jobless rate in 18 years.

It will likely remain a challenge to find jobs in Alaska in 2011. A modest increase in employment is forecasted for 2011 – 1,800 jobs, or 0.6 percent, bringing total employment to 325,400. The continued strength of the health care sector is projected to drive this growth, but employment in the remaining industries is expected to stay relatively flat. (See Exhibit 1, below.)

1 Alaska Wage and Salary Employment Forecast							
Forecast for 2011							
	2009 Monthly Average	2010 Monthly Average	Change 2009 to 2010	Percentage Change 2009 to 2010	2011 Monthly Average	Change 2010 to 2011	Percentage Change 2010 to 2011
Total Nonfarm Wage and Salary	321,700	323,600	1,900	0.6%	325,400	1,800	0.6%
Natural Resources and Mining	15,200	14,400	-800	-5.3%	14,400	0	0.0%
Oil and Gas	12,800	11,800	-1,000	-7.8%	11,700	-100	-0.8%
Construction	16,200	16,100	-100	-0.6%	16,100	0	0.0%
Manufacturing	12,800	12,800	0	0.0%	12,800	0	0.0%
Seafood Processing	9,100	9,100	0	0.0%	9,100	0	0.0%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	63,200	62,900	-300	-0.5%	63,000	100	0.2%
Retail Trade	35,600	35,500	-100	-0.3%	35,500	0	0.0%
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	21,300	21,100	-200	-0.9%	21,200	100	0.5%
Information	6,600	6,400	-200	-3.0%	6,300	-100	-1.6%
Financial Activities	14,700	14,800	100	0.7%	14,900	100	0.7%
Professional and Business Services	26,200	26,000	-200	-0.8%	25,900	-100	-0.4%
Educational and Health Services	39,800	41,900	2,100	5.3%	43,600	1,700	4.1%
Health Care	28,700	30,100	1,400	4.9%	31,200	1,100	3.7%
Leisure and Hospitality	31,200	31,200	0	0.0%	31,300	100	0.3%
Other Services	11,500	11,900	400	3.5%	12,000	100	0.8%
Government	84,300	85,200	900	1.1%	85,100	-100	-0.1%
Federal Government	17,100	17,400	300	1.8%	17,200	-200	-1.1%
State Government	25,400	26,100	700	2.8%	26,300	200	0.8%
Local Government	41,800	41,700	-100	-0.2%	41,600	-100	-0.2%

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

The oil sector and the federal government helped buoy the state economy during the national recession, and these two sectors combined represent over two-thirds of the state's economic activity. However, both face declines in the future.

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While oil production has been dwindling the past decade, production has now slowed to one-third of its original flow, raising the near-term economic risk. Oil prices and budget reserves have helped mitigate these declines, however the growing risk to the broader economy of low oil production and talk of an oil pipeline shutdown are increasing uncertainty and inhibiting economic gains.

The federal sector is the state's largest economic driver, and there are signs that the flow of federal money is declining. As the nation addresses the deficit, these losses could be large enough to derail Alaska's economy.

Construction of a natural gas pipeline was expected to help soften the effects of declining federal money and oil production. The project would create thousands of temporary construction jobs, and the gas flow would help offset the losses from lagging oil production. However, huge discoveries of shale gas and other gas fields around the nation have depressed gas prices.

Unemployment insurance payment data provide additional insight into Alaska's changing economy. Exhibit 2 below shows that the number of unemployment insurance claimants has increased dramatically: nearly 60 percent from 46,745 to 72,922 over the period from 2007 to 2010. This rise affected all major industry sectors.

2 UI Claimants by Industry

Alaska, CY 2007 to CY 2010

Industry	2007	2008	2009	2010
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	453	369	398	430
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1,455	1,758	3,555	3,710
Utilities	239	219	245	302
Construction	8,902	7,981	10,780	11,331
Manufacturing	6,211	5,809	7,268	8,557
(42) Wholesale Trade and (44-45) Retail Trade	4,973	4,668	7,062	8,370
Transportation and Warehousing	2,981	2,861	4,066	4,481
Information	529	474	785	895
Finance and Insurance	848	734	990	1,210
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,076	897	1,186	1,391
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,119	1,143	1,984	2,194
Management of Companies and Enterprises	106	28	54	85
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	2,079	2,140	3,345	3,877
Educational Services	1,147	1,111	1,418	1,713
Health Care and Social Assistance	3,860	3,827	4,787	5,816
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	527	571	819	954
Accommodation and Food Service	4,118	4,021	5,866	6,780
Other Services except Public Administration	1,434	1,344	1,859	2,270
Public Administration	4,688	4,460	5,455	6,278
All Industries	46,745	44,415	61,922	72,922

Notes: UI claimants are defined as a count of individuals who formerly worked for employers classified in the noted industry sector, and collected at least one week of benefits under any available program (UI, EB, EUC) during the given year. This includes both in-state and out-of-state claimants, and no individual is counted twice within one year.
Industries that include subsectors are subsets of the total for the two-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).
Example: Both NAICS 213111 and NAICS 213112 are included in the total for NAICS 21: "Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction."

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Demand for Skilled Workers

Alaska's need for skilled labor hasn't changed appreciably since the development of the two-year plan. Employers continue to seek workers with both basic skills and specialized technical knowledge for occupations at all levels of education and training. Skilled workers will continue to be in demand throughout Alaska's economy, across all industries and in all occupations.

Demographics of Labor Pool

Alaska's labor pool has also remained dynamic since the two-year plan was submitted. Alaska has a higher rate of migration than any other state, and its in- and out-migration averages about 45,000 annually.

The percentage of Alaskans who are foreign-born is about half the national rate, but only 39.5 percent of Alaskans were born in the state. The military, with its regular rotation of troops and their families, is a major factor in migration to and from Alaska. Finally, the census shows that Alaska Natives are moving from rural to urban areas. This high migration rate means that the skill composition of Alaska's labor force is constantly in flux.

Skills Gap

Alaska's skills gap is evident in the combination of labor surpluses and employers' inability to find enough Alaskans to fill high-skill positions. Employers in Alaska have routinely imported labor to fill jobs at all skill levels. In 2009, more than 19 percent of Alaska's wage and salary workers were nonresidents. In Alaska's rural communities, where job opportunities are scarce, high skilled and high wage positions such as teachers, mechanics, and nurses often go to outsiders.

If this gap widens, both sides of the labor market will suffer. Alaska's employers will be unable to hire the workers they need to compete and remain economically viable, and significant numbers of Alaskans will remain unemployed or discouraged.

V. Overarching State Strategies

V. A *Use of Title I Funds*

Identify how the state will use WIA Title I funds to leverage other federal, state, local, and private resources in order to maximize the effectiveness of such resources and to expand the participation of business, employees, and individuals in the statewide workforce investment system? (§112(b)(10).)

Alaska leverages resources as a strategy to magnify and sustain economic growth. The state's practice of leveraging fosters enhanced partnerships between federal, state, local and private resources in new and innovative ways. Within the policy, the state relies on three different levels of leveraged resources. Cash contributions are actual state, local, and private resources that are allocated in direct support of a WIA project. General fund appropriation is an example of a cash contribution that supports workforce development. 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. Leveraged resources align with WIA, but are not necessarily in direct support of the project. Alaska also looks at WIA resources as potential leveraged funds that are consistent with the economic and workforce development goals of the state. In this way WIA funds are used to support the priorities of the state and prepare Alaskans for employment in high wage, high demand occupations.

As a result of Alaska's efforts to leverage resources and sustain activities that support regional economic development, the Alaska Legislature funded the Alaska Youth First Initiative with state general funds. This fund provides capacity building resources to Alaska's youth. Alaska Youth First grants to competitive training programs that are responding to Alaska's youth workforce development needs. This additional avenue for training is the result of an industry focused, demand-driven training system. With Alaska Youth First and other WIA leveraged funds, Alaska is aligning the workforce system around economic development.

Partnership in Alaska occurs at several levels. First at the statewide, industry level, Alaska is working with representatives from the construction, transportation, and natural gas industries to develop employer contributions to train new workers in high growth demand industries. With registered apprenticeships, Alaska is able to leverage union and non-union training with a job at the end of training. Second is at the community-based participant level, with job center partners conducting joint planning and case management to maximize resources to provide individuals with the most comprehensive services. As an example, partners at the Bethel Job Center are conducting comprehensive joint case management through a distance delivery approach.

V. B *National Strategic Direction*

What strategies are in place to address the national strategic direction discussed in [Section 4] of this guidance, the Governor's priorities, and the workforce development issues identified through the analysis of the State's economy and labor market? (§112(b)(4)(D) and 112(a))

The state is closely aligned with national strategic direction through the focus on Alaska's high growth, demand driven job training initiative, which mirrors Employment and Training Administration's attention to industries that produce good paying, sustainable jobs. The energy industry, including oil, gas, mining, construction and transportation, as well as health and behavioral health, are industry sectors that promise high job growth and demand for skilled, trained labor and continue to be a major focus in Alaska. Thousands

of jobs are projected in these industries' economic development horizon with a natural gas pipeline construction, road building to resources, and improved port facilities to deliver products to world markets.

Along with potential construction of a natural gas line, Alaska's secondary and support industries will experience related growth as emerging businesses' and industry demand for goods and services increases. This development of infrastructure will advance responsible development of Alaska's abundant natural resources for the benefit of all Alaskans, and ultimately the nation. By investing in the state's infrastructure, Alaska is addressing the limitations of the current economy and positioning to be globally competitive in the energy industry.

To facilitate Alaska's Workforce development during parallel evolving economic conditions, Alaska invests in registered apprenticeship and internships as a way to help employers manage costs and skill development. As new apprentices learn on the job, they will earn progressively more. As the economy turns around employers will be in a position to offer more competitive wages. This balance of employer and job-seeker/apprentice provides both customers of the workforce system access to skilled training and a quality workforce. Through a modest investment in a partnership between employers, apprentices and DOLWD, the shared partnership will mitigate adverse impacts of economic decline.

Under the High Growth Job Training Initiative for Energy, the system improved because of partnerships with joint labor-management training programs and industry brokers. These partnerships provided the state with a methodology for aligning workforce partners around common objectives that included preparing Alaska's youth for Alaska's jobs, helping Alaskans to make earlier and better career decisions, and designing short and long-term workforce development strategies for an industry.

V. C Strategies for Target Industries

Based on the state's economic and labor market analysis, what strategies has the state implemented or plans to implement to identify and target industries and occupations within the state that are high growth, high demand, and vital to the state's economy? (§112(a), 112(b)(4)(A).) The state may want to consider industries:

- 1. Projected to add a substantial number of new jobs to the economy; or*
- 2. That have a significant impact on the overall economy; or*
- 3. That impact the growth of other industries; or*
- 4. That are being transformed by technology and innovation that require new skill sets for workers; or*
- 5. Those are new and emerging and are expected to grow.*

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board, which provides oversight for the workforce system, identifies priority industries for which it recommends investments of public training funds. The industries are health care, construction, information technology, education, natural resource development, transportation, hospitality and tourism, seafood harvesting and processing. Alaska expects to experience modest growth after the largest economic contraction in the state in 20 years. Since the oil and gas industry faces economic uncertainty, other catalysts for economic development must be created before demand for Alaskan workers expands. Alaska workers must align their skill sets with those demanded by the few emerging and growing industries, or confront the reality of more transient non-resident workers being hired by Alaskan employers.

Strategically, the state workforce system uses the broad guidance from the board to develop and implement industry specific workforce plans. Resolutions passed by the board often provide guidance on specific industries to address, economic variables to impact and methods for prioritizing labor market data.

The first and oldest plan for which the board provided direction was the state's construction worker plan. From this plan the board and system learned about the connectivity of workforce development strategies. Alaska's Oil and Gas Training Plan was the first strategic plan that incorporated four key strategies and objectives in meeting the industry needs.

- First is career awareness and marketing. Young people and Alaskans with limited knowledge of an industry opportunity are not as likely to take advantage of that opportunity without additional information from a trusted advisor.
- Second, the connection between secondary, post-secondary and employment must be described as a clear career pathway. If an individual cannot understand the linkages between one level of training and the next then they are not likely to continue to pursue the additional training required by industry.
- Third, Registered Apprenticeship and On-the-Job Training as training strategies must provide the trainee and employer with specific benefits. Central to the success of these training modalities is the training plan. By outlining the specific occupational skills to be developed and the time period both the employer and apprentice/trainee know what is expected. The value added by Registered Apprenticeship is the portability of an industry recognized credential. While on-the-job-training does not result in a recognized credential it is nonetheless a viable option when an occupation is not appropriate for a registered apprenticeship.
- Fourth, incumbent worker training and leadership development for managers, supervisors and skilled professionals creates an environment that values workforce training and development.

The latest strategic approach is in the health care industry. By applying similar principles from the oil and gas training plan, the health care industry is attempting to expand its labor force in a time of economic decline. Possible areas of innovation in health care include greater access to employer-based training and an emphasis on applied healthcare occupations as targets for the industry.

The next industry to benefit from the planning effort is the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency industry. Through an industry sector partnership in concert with investors in renewable and energy efficiency, the state is developing the workforce based on the demands created by those investing in the industry. Connecting training standards to investor expectations means that process, technology and methodology are equally important. The strategies and priorities the workforce investment system uses are based on the successful experiences with developing a plan and then working the plan. While planning sometimes seems to take an unusual amount of time, the benefit of training for what is needed by industry cannot be underestimated.

As a need for specific direction, the development of the Career and Technical Education Plan offered education and workforce development a blueprint for aligning workforce efforts. This plan had its roots in Alaska's Oil and Gas Training Plan, and was subsequently refined as its own sub-strategy. The CTE plan does not address specific industry needs, but provides guidance to the education system on the skills, knowledge, and abilities that employers are looking for in Alaska's emerging youth workforce.

V. D Strategies for Sustained Partnerships

What strategies are in place to promote and develop ongoing and sustained strategic partnerships that include business and industry, economic development, the public workforce system, and education partners (K-12, community colleges, and others) for the purpose of continuously identifying workforce challenges and developing solutions to targeted industries' workforce challenges? (§112(b)(8).)

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development works cooperatively with other state agencies, the University of Alaska, Alaska Native corporations, private sector oil and gas employers, and labor unions (e.g. Alaska Operating Engineers, Alaska Laborers, Alaska Teamsters, Alaska Plumbers and Pipe fitters, etc.) to develop a high wage, high demand training plans that utilize existing registered apprenticeship and other training to the maximum degree possible.

Industry representatives are driving decisions and design of workforce solutions. The system is empowered to train more workers, provide a training and service delivery system that prepares workers for high growth industries, and achieve sustainable results. Workers will be able to take advantage of new and future job opportunities in high growth sectors of Alaska's emerging economy such as renewable energy and energy efficiency occupations.

A successful example of public/private partnerships is the training of apprentices and skilled workers for building an oil pipeline on Alaska's North Slope. The training partnership includes contractors, labor organizations, and the State Training Employment Program with approximately 100 workers from across the state attending a two-week intensive pipeline construction upgrade course where crafts teamed and demonstrated pipeline-building skills.

Another example of this partnership is the relationship between Alaska Native nonprofits, for profits, and the workforce investment system. Registered Apprenticeship provides the Native non-profits a training strategy that can align with their for-profits counterpart, supported financially and technically through the state workforce investment system. The result is more Alaskan Native working on Native-owned projects and earning industry recognized portable credentials.

Additionally, the workforce system works closely with the education system to expand the pipeline of skilled workers into Alaska's high growth industries. Alaska continues to support the use of work-based learning and applied learning to cultivate student awareness and interest in high demand industries. The state will also reinforce education efforts in apprenticeship and industry led career and technical education.

V. E Strategies for System Resources

What state strategies are in place to ensure that sufficient system resources are being spent to support training of individuals in high growth/high demand industries? (§112(b)(17)(A)(i), and 112(b)(4)(A).)

Policy recommendations from the Alaska Workforce Investment Board ensure that resources are focused on high growth demand industries. For example the Alaska Workforce Investment Board's strategic operating

plan targets 60 percent of state training resources for occupations associated with its priority industries. This type of recommendation allows the AWIB to monitor program performance and make policy adjustments to ensure that federal funds are maximized in high growth areas such as natural resource development, transportation, health care, and construction.

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 develop and conduct workshops designed to equip local office staff, including case managers and employment counselors, with the body of knowledge required to understand how the state and local economies operate, assess occupational employment opportunities at the state and local level, and assist clients in using economic information to successfully navigate career transitions. In this era of consumer choice such Labor Market Information creates informed consumers who are able to make better decisions about personal career development.

V. F Strategies for Small Business

What workforce strategies does the state have to support the creation, sustainability, and growth of small businesses and support for the workforce needs of small businesses as part of the state economic strategy? (§§112(b)(4)(A) and 112(b)(17)(A)(i).)

The majority of private sector employers in Alaska are small businesses. Alaska supports these organizations by providing human resource services that would be difficult to maintain as a small business. The workforce system dedicates a portion of resources to the One-Stop Operator’s Business Connection. The Business Connection provides many of the small business workforce development needs. The Business Connection provides monthly day-long workshops designed exclusively for the small business owner and includes providing information on tax credits, Small Business Administration resources, registered apprenticeships, and a large menu of services at no charge to the business customer. Additionally, the state utilizes training resources not only to develop staff, but also to stimulate economic development. Through the use of registered apprenticeship and on-the-job training, the state helps develop small businesses. This ensures the training and work completed by these trainees is of more value to the employers, and the local workers are retained in the community.

V. G Statewide Activities to Promote National Direction

How are the funds reserved for statewide activities used to motivate the entities that make up the state workforce system at the state and local levels to achieve the governor’s vision and address the national strategic direction identified in Part I of this guidance? (§112(a).)

After funding mandatory statewide activities, the state focuses remaining resources on projects that build capacity for training. As an example, the state plans to support ongoing coordinated pipeline-training projects. Other efforts include creating awareness in youth about occupations in demand industries. Construction Career Fairs are supported with statewide set aside funds and cover the cost of transporting young people to sites where they can learn first-hand about the rigors of training in the construction industry.

V. H Promote Workforce Investment System Collaboration

Describe the state strategies to promote collaboration between the public workforce system, education, human services, juvenile justice, and others to better serve youth that are most in need and have significant barriers to employment, and to successfully connect them to education and training opportunities that lead to successful employment. (§112(b)(18)(A).)

Division of Business Partnerships' program staff provide cross-agency presentations and training through professional development to education, human services, justice, and Office of Children's Services agencies. Interactions, among DBP, the Governor's Committee on Employment and Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities, the Alaska Business Education Compact and others, foster collaboration to better serve Alaskan youth who are most in need of services and have significant barriers to employment.

The 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. Capacity building through this type of training establishes stronger links among service providers and better information sharing that maximizes the service to WIA participants. The state further strengthens its workforce system through the issuance of incentive and performance grants for regional cooperation, coordination of activities under the Act, and exemplary performance results by a WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth program grant recipient, or local job center. The policy that defines the allocation formula and award process is stipulated under Alaska's WIA Statewide Incentive Grants for Regional Cooperation, Local Coordination and Exemplary Performance Results Policy #805 located at:

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

The program utilizes tools developed by the U.S. Department of Labor and offers monthly teleconference training sessions with grantees and job center counselors. DBP also provides training and technical assistance to youth service providers to develop comprehensive strategies that maximize access to resources from a variety of other youth services-oriented agencies. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development also developed its own resources such as Hot Jobs in Alaska publications that provide information on high demand careers in Alaska in a way that is meaningful to youth.

sV. I Impediments to Success

Describe the state strategies to identify state laws, regulations, policies that impede successful achievement of workforce development goals and strategies to change or modify them. (§112(b)(2).)

As a member of national organizations such as the National Association of State Workforce Agencies, the National Governor's Association, and other federal policy organizations, Alaska has been effective at influencing development and deployment of laws and policies before they become significant impediments. Alaska has also dedicated staff to monitor in-state laws and policies and works to mitigate the negative impact. Alaska's congressional delegation is keenly aware of the workforce development system and has worked with federal agencies to overcome unnecessary bureaucracy. Alaska has been at the forefront in monitoring laws, regulations, and policies that have delayed service delivery.

V. J Waivers and Workflex

Describe how the state will take advantage of the flexibility provisions in WLA for waivers and the option to obtain approval as a workflex state. § 189(i) and §192.

The state plans to use the full flexibility available in the waiver provisions of WIA with the following waivers in place.

- Waiver of the required 50 percent employer contribution for customized training at WIA Section 101(8) (C). The state's waiver of the required 50 percent employer contribution for customized training permits the use of a sliding scale for the employer contribution based on the size of the business. Under this waiver, the following sliding scale is permitted: 1) no less than 10 percent match for employers with 50 or fewer employees, and 2) no less than 25 percent match for employers with 51-250 employees. For employers with more than 250 employees, the current requirement (50 percent contribution) continues to apply. When determining the funding source for customized training, the state must use the appropriate program funds for the appropriate WIA-eligible populations. The state provides customized training to low-income adults with WIA Adult funds and provides customized training to dislocated workers with WIA Dislocated Worker funds. Customized training provided with statewide funds serves WIA eligible individuals.
- Waiver of WIA Section 101(31) (B) to increase the employer reimbursement for on-the-job training. The state's waiver permits an increase in employer reimbursement for on-the-job training through a sliding scale based on the size of the business. Under this waiver, the following reimbursement amounts are permitted: 1) up to 90 percent for employers with 50 or fewer employees, and 2) up to 75 percent match for employers with 51-250 employees. For employers with more than 250 employees, the current requirement (50 percent contribution) continue to apply. When determining the funding source for customized training, the state uses the appropriate program funds for the appropriate WIA-eligible populations.
- Waiver of the prohibition at 20 CFR 664.510 on the use of Individual Training Accounts for older and out-of-school youth. Under this waiver, the state is permitted to use ITAs for older and out-of-school youth participants. The state ensures that funds used for ITAs are tracked and reflected in the individual service strategies for these youth.
- Waiver of WIA Section 133(b) (4) to increase the allowable transfer amount between Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams allocated to a local area. Under this waiver, the state is permitted an increase to 50 in the amount allowed to transfer between the Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams. The transfer authority is limited to 50 percent, which provides flexibility while ensuring consistency with Congressional intent regarding the level of funding appropriated for the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.
- Waiver to permit WIA participants who enter seasonal employment occupations to be counted in an alternative format for performance measure at WIA section 136(b)(2)(A0(i)(II) and 20 CFR 666.140. This waiver provides the state flexibility to address the seasonal nature of much of the workforce. The state is not required to apply the core retention performance

measure to WIA participants that enter seasonal employment occupations. The state applies the alternative retention performance measure to Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Older Youth exited into seasonal employment, but only in borough/census areas where seasonal unemployment averages greater than eight percent from November through March and would equal the same six-month retention rate percentages already negotiated for each of these three programs. This waiver allows the state to use the alternative retention performance measure, defined as: of those seasonal workers employed in first quarter after exit: Number employed in seasonal jobs who are employed in second quarter after exit; Number employed in seasonal jobs who exit during the quarter.

- Application of WIA regulations at 20 CFR 661.300(f) to allow the State Board to carry out the roles of a Local Board. This waiver permits the state to apply 20 CFR 661.300(f) to the statewide regional planning area described in its state plan. This provision allows the governor to designate the state board to carry out the roles and responsibilities of the local boards in the designated region encompassing the state, in the same manner as permitted in single service delivery area states.
- Waiver of the provision at 20 CFR 663.530 that prescribes a time limit on the period of initial eligibility for training providers. Under this waiver, the state is allowed to postpone the determination of subsequent eligibility of training providers. The waiver also allows the state to provide an opportunity for training providers to re-enroll and be considered enrolled as initially eligible providers.
- Waiver of Section 136(b), which defines the WIA Title I performance measures. This waiver permits implementation of (and reporting only) common measures as identified in TEGLE 17-05 in place of current measures and will provide a more effective way of determining performance of the various programs, accomplishing this through a system-wide perspective.

Collectively these waivers provide the state the flexibility to deliver workforce development services in a manner that reflects the state's unique needs and circumstances.

VI. Major State Policies and Requirements

Describe major state policies and requirements that have been established to direct and support the development of a statewide workforce investment system not described elsewhere in this plan as outlined below. (§112(b)(2).)

VI. A Policies on Common Data Collection

What state policies and systems are in place to support common data collection and reporting processes, information management, integrated service delivery, and performance management? (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(8)(B).)

The state of Alaska made substantial commitments to data collection and reporting. The legislature appropriated \$3.7 million to design a comprehensive data collection and reporting system that ensures Alaska is using data to strategically plan for performance and program outcomes. Alaska's policies, procedures, and system definitions bring relevant programs and applications into alignment with the defined common data elements and reporting requirements. State statutes and legislative performance-based budgeting initiatives support and expand upon common data and reporting.

The Wagner-Peyser program currently uses ALEXsys, the web-based labor exchange system for data collection, storage, and maintenance. This system is interfaced with the Unemployment Insurance database system, allowing ease in registrations of UI claimants and the subsequent reporting of participation or non-participation in the Worker Profiling and Reemployment program. UI wage data is available for matching with registered clients within the same computer system. The Employment Security Division produced the new labor exchange system in April 2006.

Wagner-Peyser staff conduct quarterly self-appraisal record reviews and develop corrective action plans as necessary to correct any deficiencies found during reviews. Quarterly federal management reports are also analyzed for anomalies or unusual patterns. Follow-up and oversight are provided statewide to ensure appropriate corrective actions and improved performance.

VI. B Use of Resources

What state policies are in place that promote efficient use of administrative resources such as requiring more co-location and fewer affiliate sites in local One-Stop systems to eliminate duplicative facility and operational costs or to require a single administrative structure at the local level to support local boards and to be the fiscal agent for WLA funds to avoid duplicative administrative costs that could otherwise be used for service delivery and training? The state may include administrative costs controls, plans, reductions and targets for reductions if it has established them (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(8)(A).)

The state streamlined processes and operations in the interest of efficiencies and effectiveness of the Alaska Job Center Network. As the state is a single regional planning area state, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board also serves in the capacity of a local workforce investment board. AWIB initiatives and resolutions strengthen and support elimination of duplication and reinforce the need for efficient and effective use of resources at all levels of the system. The Memoranda of Understanding in each of the One-Stops further compliment AWIB commitments and implement the respective controls and oversight of administrative resources at the local level.

VI. C Universal Access

What state policies are in place to promote universal access and consistency of service statewide? (§112(b)(2).)

The Alaska Job Center Network web site, <http://www.jobs.alaska.gov/>, provides vital information relating to 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 methodology and practices. Service delivery throughout the Alaska Job Center Network is guided by the commitment to these fundamental 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 are 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.

VI. D Demand Driven Approach

What policies support a demand-driven approach, as described in Part I. “Demand-driven Workforce Investment System”, to workforce development – such as training on the economy and labor market data for local Board and One-Stop Career Center staff? (§§ 112(b)(4) and 112(b)(17)(A)(iv).)

In concert with the governor’s office, the AWIB has set forth in policy statements the priority industries with defined goals related to the number of participants trained in the occupations related to this list.

Eight industries are on the current list:

- Health Care
- Construction
- Information Technology
- Transportation
- Education

- Natural Resource Development
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Seafood Harvesting and Processing

The DOLWD/R&A Section analyzes labor market information to identify possible shifts in employment and industry trends, and recommends to the Alaska Workforce Investment Board the priority industries and related occupations most in demand in the state for the upcoming year.

The Division of Business Partnerships, the Employment Security Division, industry leaders, and consortiums collaborate on workforce development strategies that will mitigate workforce deficiencies in skilled, high wage, high demand occupations within the priority industries.

VI. E Apprenticeship and Job Corps Integration

What policies are in place to ensure that the resources available through the federal and/or state apprenticeship programs and the Job Corps are fully integrated with the state One-Stop delivery system? (§112)(b)(17)(A)(iv).

The state One-Stop Operator includes the Alaska Job Corp in its Memorandum of Understanding, ensuring its inclusion in discussions and strategies for service delivery. DBP competitive grants provide direction and guidance related to integration of registered apprenticeships and Job Corp programs with the Alaska Job Center Network programs specific to the type of services and activities provided under the auspices of the grant. The AWIB has established a target of 60 percent of all training will be in the priority industries and that registered apprenticeship is the preferred service delivery method. Job center participants who are 16 to 24 of age are encouraged to enroll in the Job Corps program, as participants completing this training program are more likely to successfully complete registered apprenticeships to full employment. Youth grant recipients also enroll their participants in the Job Corp to prepare them to move into apprenticeships. Additionally, each job center has been assigned a "single point of contact" for registered apprenticeship information and can direct prospective applicants and students of the Job Corps to various apprentice training slots. Job Corps students are accepted into available seats and little intervention is necessary.

To promote a skilled workforce and advance registered apprenticeship training programs, a governor's administrative order was signed in July 2005 directing that 15 percent of the labor on heavy and highway projects should be dedicated to registered apprenticeship.

VII. Integration of One-Stop Service Delivery

Describe the actions the state has taken to ensure an integrated One-Stop service delivery system statewide. (§§112(b)(14) and 121.)

VII. A State Policies and Procedures

What state policies and procedures are in place to ensure the quality of service delivery through One-Stop Centers such as development of minimum guidelines for operating comprehensive One-Stop Centers, competencies for One-Stop Career Center staff or development of a certification process for One-Stop Centers? (§112(b)(14).)

The original five-year Statewide Unified Plan, the current One-Stop Operator MOU, and the agreed upon Cost Allocation Methodology, guide the service delivery and administration of the Alaska Job Center Network. Integrated services are provided with the intent and in the spirit of the WIA’s “One-Stop Operating Principles.” These principles include streamlining services through integration, promoting universal access, empowering individuals, promoting state and local flexibility, engaging the private sector, and improving WIA and Wagner-Peyser programs. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board will reaffirm these principles during the period of this plan.

The current, integrated partnership includes the agencies responsible for the following programs under WIA: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Rapid Response, and Youth Programs, Wagner-Peyser, TAA/NAFTA, Worker Opportunity Tax Credit, ABE/GED, 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, AVTEC- Alaska’s Institute of Technology, Commission on Aging, Department of Health and Social Services, and a wide variety of community and private, non-profit service and training providers.

Competencies for public employees are included in the state merit employment system and bargaining unit agreements, and in job class performance standards. Additionally, AJCN staff undergoes individualized training and probationary experience on the job. Cross training is expected and promoted at all levels. Cross-program hiring also occurs and has provided a higher level of customer service and integration.

One-Stop academies are held in all five employment service delivery regions in the state. These academies bring in all interested partners and programs that are an integral part of the Alaska Job Center Network. Through these academies, public, private, and non-profit service providers cross training and orientate one another to understand each other’s services.

The state has updated and implemented a complete job center certification process. Certification renewal is conducted in all state full-service job centers. Certification ensures that a full-service job center provides the entire menu of services that represent all programs mandated under the WIA umbrella and other programs that fit the needs of individual communities. One aspect of the certification process evaluates the job center self-assessment reviews as required by the Alaska Workforce Investment Board. These self-assessment reviews show management within the Alaska Job Center Network a comprehensive evaluation of each center’s operations. This review also provides prescriptive information for continuous improvement. Each of the comprehensive, full-service job centers is fully accessible.

To ensure consistent services, the state uses standardized procedures for completing intake, eligibility, follow-up, and placement. These procedures and forms are posted on an easily accessible staff resource web site.

VII. B Maximum Integration

What policies or guidance has the state issued to support maximum integration of service delivery through the One-Stop delivery system for both business customers and individual customers? (§112(b)(14).)

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board 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.

Guidance provided to Alaska Job Center Network teams emphasizes the maximum integration of business services and universal customers. Business Connection teams are in the 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 capitalize on on-the-job training opportunities in partnership with employers.

The WIA dual enrollment policy and technical assistance guide ensures individual customers are afforded opportunities to receive program services and benefits from federal and state programs. Information on all available programs is supplied in the employer handbook that is posted on the internet for the public and is available through the One-Stops. Additionally, Rapid Response team members that represent each region of the state ensure that employers are aware of Rapid Response services, including layoff aversion strategies, such as employee stock ownership plans and feasibility studies.

Customer access drives the redesign of Alaska's four largest job centers. Job center team members from multiple agencies serve all the customers who walk through the door to request services. The common cost allocation agreement reflects the philosophy that every agency that derives benefit, including performance measures, counts, and administrative funds, participates in the common and shared costs of the job center core services and resource room. Employees who serve universal customers are assisted by the Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training participants, public service aides, local university interns, and other mandated partners wherever authorized.

The Employment Security Division is the principal provider of core, intensive, and individualized training services, reemployment activities, resource room management, labor exchange activities, and Internet-based statewide labor exchange through the Job Center Network. The organization includes management hierarchy led by a director and two assistant directors, one charged with job center operations, and one with support. This ensures non-duplication of operations, improves communication and direction. The ESD, in collaboration with partner agencies, also provides appropriate intensive services statewide to targeted populations, such as low-income adults and youth, veterans, UI claimants, dislocated workers, job seekers with disabilities, and employment needs of all job seekers.

Ongoing training of job center staff promotes an awareness and sensitivity to the diverse needs of employers and job seekers. Services are provided in a manner consistent with nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the Workforce Investment Act (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 staff completes 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, forums, and with monitoring, technical assistance.

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development 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.

The state's Methods of Administration (MOA), recertified in August 2008, provides the governor's 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.

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 monitors recipients regularly. At least one third of job centers are monitored on-site annually for compliance.

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. The Disability Program Navigator Initiative, which began in Alaska in July 2006, institutes training and practices to integrate services for persons with disabilities and strengthen connections to employment. 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 grant evaluated AT in job centers that helped partners recognize the value of reasonable accommodation through AT and provided an estimate for cost allocation agreements.

VII. C One-Stop Infrastructure Costs

What action has the state taken to promote identifying One-Stop infrastructure costs and developing models or strategies for local use that support integration? (§112(b)(14).)

The One-Stop Operator works closely with all partner agencies in developing cost sharing models and principles. The models are addressed and incorporated in the "Operator Memorandum of Understanding" and the "Cost Allocation Methodology Agreement" with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board.

Additionally, One-Stop job centers meet routinely to discuss procedures that ensure integration and appropriate cost sharing.

The One-Stop primary service providers have a system to quickly analyze and allocate costs of joint ventures, such as a job center redesign, equipment replacement and signage. The administrative managers of each agency allocate costs utilizing the “Cost Allocation Methodology Agreement.” Real costs are broken down at the end of each state fiscal year and adjustments are made accordingly.

VII. D Statewide Activities Funds

How does the state use the funds reserved for statewide activities pursuant to §129(b)(2)(B) and 134(a)(2)(B)(v) to assist in the establishment and operation of One-Stop delivery systems? (§112(b)(14).)

The state will use WIA statewide activity funding to leverage other federal, state, local, and private resources to:

- Maximize the effectiveness of the combined resources;
- Expand the participation of businesses employees, and individuals in the statewide workforce investment system;
- Address the national workforce strategic direction, the governor’s priorities, and the workforce development challenges identified through analysis of the economy and labor market; and,
- Track progress toward meeting strategic goals and implementing the governor's vision for the workforce investment system.

The Division of Business Partnerships solicits statewide activities grant applications that align with the AWIB strategic plan and the governor’s workforce development initiatives. Responsive grant applications support and promote the Alaska Job Center Network. Grants resulting from solicitations require recipients to work closely with the One-Stop in their area to ensure the most comprehensive service delivery strategies while maximizing efficiencies of available resources. Projects or activities may include:

- Capacity building and technical assistance to the One-Stop Operator, One-Stop partners, and eligible providers, which may include staff development and training, the development of exemplary program activities and research and demonstration projects;
- Innovative incumbent worker training programs, which may include an employer loan program to assist in upgrading skills;
- Innovative programs for displaced homemakers and programs to increase the number of individuals trained for and placed in non-traditional employment;
- Provide adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities as necessary to assist in carrying out local employment and training activities;
- Conducting youth activities statewide;
- Conducting evaluations to assess the extent to which activities funded under subtitle B of Title I of WIA formula grants and carried out through the state's One-Stop delivery system are used to provide

high-quality, outcome-based workforce development services in a demand-driven and fully integrated service environment, consistent with the state's WIA plan;

- Assisting in the establishment and operation of One-Stop delivery systems;
- Disseminating the Eligible Training Provider List;
- Providing Labor Market Information;
- Alaska Workforce Investment Board oversight;
- Providing additional assistance to local areas that have high concentrations of eligible youth; and,
- Operating a fiscal and management accountability information system.

Should the need for a new job center emerge, statewide activity funds may be used to establish or modify the facility, stock it with equipment for the public resource area, and support collocation of partner agencies for seamless delivery of workforce services to employers and job seekers. While statewide activity funds are not used for ongoing maintenance or continued operations, they are used to proportionally allocate costs among new job center partners.

Statewide activity funds may be used at the local level to promote and support One-Stop academies for workforce agencies and service providers in the job centers and throughout local communities. The academies are highly successful and provide a vehicle for promoting awareness and coordination of a job center's service delivery area. Alaska is building on the success of the academies by expanding them to rural job centers. Other approaches under consideration include adding One-Stop academy curricula specific to employer services, and incorporating national training from organizations that offer recognized case manager credentialing training.

Statewide activity funds may also be used to bring administrators and managers from multiple agencies together, similar to the academies, to promote coordination, integration, and continuous improvement on a statewide level.

VII. E Support Human Capital Solutions

How does the state ensure the full spectrum of assets in the One-Stop delivery system support human capital solutions for businesses and individual customers broadly? (§112(b)(14).)

Alaska is working to provide more efficient services to businesses, while using fewer staff. This direction provides job seeker services in group settings as much as possible. Group workshops and orientations are scheduled instead of one-on-one job seeker interviews. To increase services to businesses, Alaska participated in the National Business Engagement Consortium, a seven state project incorporating business representatives, training, business lead management, public relations strategies, web site application improvement and direct mail-based mass marketing into an integrated campaign for better awareness and usage by business customers.

The Anchorage Midtown Job Center created the Business Connection, which is made up of experienced staff responsible for providing a full menu of services to employers. Other comprehensive job centers are following the Anchorage lead and designating staff to a Business Connection proportionate to the local population and employers. Alaska is also integrating service delivery with Alaska Job Center Network

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partners to reduce duplication of activities, explore dual enrollment opportunities, and reduce administrative costs so more funding and resources can be directed toward serving customers.

The state has expanded these partnerships by increasing the number of written agreements (MOUs and MOAs) with tribal/Native organizations, school districts, and faith-based and community organizations. The best example of a realized agreement is the Native MOU that has resulted in the ability to share aggregate wage information with a Native 477 grantee, so the organization can report its performance to the U.S. Department of Interior.

VIII. Administration and Oversight

VIII. A. 1 Local Area Designations

Identify the state's designated local workforce investment areas and the date of the most recent area designation, including whether the state is currently re-designating local areas pursuant to the end of the subsequent designation period for areas designated in the previous state plan. (§§112(b)(5).)

Alaska had two local areas, the Anchorage/Matanuska-Susitna local area and the Balance of State designated in 2000. In 2003, the AWIB and governor evaluated the local areas and administration of the workforce investment system and concluded that it would be more effective if the state consolidated administration of the two areas. Administrative Order 210 directed the consolidation of the administration of the two local areas. In 2003 and 2005, the Employment and Training Administration approved a waiver granting the state the authority to function as a single regional planning area with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board functioning as the local board for both areas. At this time the state does not plan to re-designate existing areas or designate any new areas and plans to continue as a single regional planning area.

VIII. A. 2 Description of Process

Include a description of the process used to designate such areas. Describe how the state considered the extent to which such local areas are consistent with labor market areas: geographic areas served by local and intermediate education agencies, post-secondary education institutions and area vocational schools; and all other criteria identified in section 116(a)(1) in establishing area boundaries, to assure coordinated planning. Describe the state board's role, including all recommendations made on local designation requests pursuant to section 116(a)(4). (§§112(b)(5) and 116(a)(1).)

Under Section 116(a)(2) of the Workforce Investment Act, Alaska's two local areas received automatic designation as sub-state areas under the Job Training Partnership Act. In August of 2003, the board submitted a waiver request and received approval to consolidate oversight and planning for the two local areas. The board concluded that a symbiotic relationship existed between Alaska's two local areas and it was not effective or efficient to administer them differently and still meet Alaska's workforce investment system goals.

VIII. A. 3 Appeals Process

Describe the appeals process used by the state to bear appeals of local area designations referred to in §112 (b)(5) and 116(a)(5).

Should a local area wish to appeal a decision regarding local area status, representatives of the local area may appeal to the Alaska Workforce Investment Board. If the appeal does not result in designation, then local area representatives request a review by the U.S. Secretary of Labor.

VIII. B WIB Appointment Criteria

Identify the criteria the state has established to be used by the chief elected official(s) in the local areas for the appointment of local board members based on the requirements of section 117. (§§112(b)(6), 117(b).)

The AWIB is assigned oversight and local workforce investment board responsibilities. As the state board was in existence prior to December 31, 1997, the board complies with section 111(e) and is designated as the

state workforce investment board under the alternate entity provision. Membership to the state workforce investment board complies with section 111(e)(1)(C).

VIII. C Capacity Building

How will your state build the capacity of local boards to develop and manage high performing local workforce investment system? (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(14).)

The AWIB uses board members, who are leaders in their respective areas, to ensure high performance. The board uses data collected from the workforce investment system to evaluate effectiveness and make recommendations to the governor if changes in the system are necessary.

VIII. D Local Planning Process

Describe the state mandated requirements for local workforce areas' strategic planning and the assistance the state provides to local areas to facilitate this process, (112(b)(2) and 20 CFR 661. 350(a)(13).)

The state develops a statewide strategic plan that meets the needs of the local areas. Under its waiver designating the state as a single regional planning area and oversight authority for the local areas, the AWIB engages in bi-annual strategic planning. Recently the board's planning efforts have focused on creating more opportunity for youth and developing a career path to meet the workforce needs of the Alaska gas line. Additionally, the AWIB strategic plan is aligned with Alaska's overall performance-based budget.

As a specific requirement of the AGIA statute, the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development was charged with developing a training program that is responsive to the workforce needs of the Alaska gas line. As a result of this planning effort, the workforce system designed Alaska's Oil and Gas Training Plan that has application in most large scale workforce development responses. The recent change in the economy creates an environment for the application of this plan.

The four-part plan focuses on Career Awareness, Alignment of Secondary and Postsecondary, Increased Opportunities for Registered Apprenticeship, and Incumbent and Advanced Professional Training. In the current economy the state will focus on these four areas and incorporate the strategies contained in the training program for the gas line.

The plan provides for rapid deployment of short-term training and marketing, and provides a framework for justifying longer term training and degree/certificate completion. The plan is built as an industry-led, statewide network of partnerships that focuses on one outcome: building a skilled workforce responsive to industry demand. This spurs economic growth and fosters productivity in business and industry, which in turn contributes to Alaska's continued, evolving leadership in the national and international marketplace.

VIII. D. 1 Local Planning Process Oversight

What oversight of the local planning process is provided, including receipt and review of plans and negotiation of performance agreements?

The AWIB reviews agency planning, assists in the negotiation of performance measures, and issues an annual performance report to the governor and legislature.

VIII. D. 2 Local Planning Process Goals and Direction

How does the local plan approval process ensure that local plans are consistent with state performance goals and state strategic direction?

The regional plans are coordinated by the AWIB to ensure alignment of the state's strategic direction. The plan is aligned with the overall strategic goals and is revisited bi-annually.

VIII. E. 1 Regional Planning

Describe any intra- or inter-state regions and their corresponding performance measures.

Alaska is a single regional planning area that encompasses the entire state. Performance is aligned with Alaska's negotiated performance measures and tracked accordingly. Representatives from the two previous local areas are members of the state board and ensure that local issues are considered.

VIII. E. 2 Regional Designation Discussion

Include a discussion of the purpose of these designations and the activities (such as regional planning, information sharing and/or coordination activities) that will occur to help improve performance. For example, regional planning efforts could result in the sharing of labor market information or in the coordination of transportation and support services across the boundaries of local areas.

Alaska's decision to establish a single regional planning area was in response to excessive administrative costs, inconsistencies in services, and a desire to improve overall performance. With limited administrative dollars, it did not make sense to support two local area administrative functions and local boards when the performance of the two areas was essentially the same. This cost saving measure allowed the state greater administrative flexibility by reducing the administrative support of two local boards and one state board to one board for all oversight. The board is limited to three meetings per year and uses a committee teleconference approach to conduct day-to-day business. With different local areas, but one state employment agency, it had been necessary for the state agency to support two sets of policies and procedures and to train staff differently depending upon location. This used staff and administrative resources that might otherwise be available to support participants. Finally, the performance measures were interpreted differently in the two local areas. These differences were not productive and did not support program performance.

VIII. E. 3 Regional Roles

For inter-state regions (if applicable), describe the roles of the respective governors, state, and local boards. (§§112(b)(2), 116(c).)

Alaska operates as a single regional planning area and the governor is the chief elected official. In an effort to include local participation and points of view, other local elected officials from Alaska's boroughs and cities are consulted in planning efforts and invited to participate in the advisory councils established on a regional basis to promote communication.

VIII. F. 1 Methods of Allocation

If applicable, describe the methods and factors (including weights assigned to each factor) your state will use to distribute funds to local areas for the 30 percent discretionary formula adult employment and training funds and youth funds pursuant to §§ 128(b)(3)(B) and 133(b)(3)(B).

This is not applicable as Alaska does not use the 30 percent discretionary allocation formula.

VIII. F. 2 Equitable Distribution

Describe how the allocation methods and factors help ensure that funds are distributed equitably throughout the state and that there will be no significant shifts in funding levels to a local area on a year-to-year basis.

Since the state is a single regional planning area there is no shifting of fund levels from one area to the next. However, the workforce investment board does accept input from local regions regarding priority economic development through Regional Advisory Councils. This input is renewed when considering projects related to statewide activities.

VIII. F. 3 Dislocated Worker Funds

Describe the state allocation formula for dislocated worker funds under §133(b)(2)(B).

The allocation for Rapid Response assistance and worker readjustment is not to exceed up to 25 percent of the available dislocated worker funds. Alaska’s allocation is adjusted annually to account for increased demand on the dislocated worker program funds or increased activity in meeting the needs of economic disasters and mass dislocations.

VIII. F. 4 Methods and Factors

Describe how the individuals and entities on the state board were involved in the development of the methods and factors, and how the state consulted with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the state in determining such distribution.

The state board provided guidance on the level of allocation. The state administrator advises the board annually of the need to adjust the formula and provides a recommendation on the intended adjustment. Since the governor is the chief elected official for Alaska’s single regional planning area, the governor retains final authority of the allocation formula. The state does depend upon the waiver allowing for up to 50 percent of funds to be transferred between adult and dislocated worker, depending upon the economic conditions of the state.

VIII. G. 1 Policies and Procedures

Identify the policies and procedures, to be applied by local areas, for determining eligibility of local level training providers, how performance information will be used to determine continuing eligibility and the agency responsible for carrying out these activities.

The state board considers an eligible training provider policy that details the application procedure for training providers. The process includes information on the calculation of performance and a statement that providers must meet the minimum standards established by the board to continue as an eligible provider. The standards specify that ETP programs should “in and of themselves” prepare a person for a job. If a provider’s performance falls below the minimum threshold, the provider has one year to improve performance. If performance does not meet the minimum standards after one year it is no longer a program approved for funding with an Individual Training Account voucher.

VIII. G. 2 Soliciting Recommendations

Describe how the state solicited recommendations from local boards and training providers and interested members of the public, including representatives of business and labor organizations, in the development of these policies and procedures.

The DBP is the designated state agency for compliance with the tenets of the eligible training provider list. Before a program is approved for inclusion on the list the provider must demonstrate compliance with the regulations pertaining to the operation of a postsecondary program in the state. The Division of Business Partnerships verifies compliance prior to approving a program. The state board notifies training providers and interested parties of draft policies in writing. Training providers are encouraged to comment and make recommendations for change.

VIII. G. 3 Maintaining Eligible Provider List

Describe how the state will update and expand the eligible training provider list to ensure it has the most current list of providers to meet the training needs of customers?

The state requires providers of programs on the eligible training provider list to submit participant information on all participants completing the program. This information is then compared to the wage record information to verify placement and earnings for the proceeding four quarters. The state funds this effort with statewide activity funds awarded to the DOLWD/R&A Section. The state will continue this effort to support the Eligible Training Provider list. The AWIB is improving the number and quality of training programs through the use of Industry Skill Standards. By recommending that training providers meet industry skill standards, the quality of the training is improved. In turn, training providers on the list produce better training which encourages other training providers to meet the same standards in order to remain competitive.

VIII. G. 4 Appeals Process

Describe the procedures the governor has established for providers of training services to appeal a denial of eligibility by the local board or the designated state agency, a termination of eligibility or other action by the board or agency, or a denial of eligibility by a One-Stop Operator. Such procedures must include the opportunity for a hearing and time limits to ensure prompt resolution.

Alaska's WIA Eligible Training Provider List policy describes the procedures for providers to appeal decisions regarding eligibility for the ETPL. The process affects any provider of adult, dislocated worker or youth services where an Individual Training Account may be used. Providers denied eligibility must be notified within 30 days of the decision, including the reason for the removal and their right to appeal. Providers are encouraged to use an informal resolution process. If this process is not appropriate, the provider may choose to submit a formal complaint in writing and request a scheduled hearing. The state administrator must render a decision within 10 days of receipt of an appeal. The provider has the option to appeal to the commissioner, who must render a decision within five days of receipt of an appeal. If this proves unsatisfactory, the provider may seek a hearing within five-day notice of the commissioner's decision. The hearing officer will then render a decision within five days of the date of the hearing. These hearing decisions are considered final.

VIII. G. 5 Awards Process

Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes that will be used at the state level to award grants and contracts for activities under title I of WIA, including how potential bidders are being made aware of the availability of grants and contracts. (§112(b)(16).)

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development procures youth services using a competitive grant process. The state follows the directions for contracting described in Alaska Administrative Code AAC 12. Under this process the department solicits written bids that describe how the grantee will provide youth services under the terms of the Workforce Investment Act. The department provides clear interpretation of the state's priorities and objectives and requests that respondents describe program and service delivery strategy.

Several guiding principles are used in soliciting proposals, including: that proposals align with the existing workforce system; applicants demonstrate how they will partner with other entities to leverage resources and maximize benefit to the state, employers and participants; and applicants demonstrate how they will achieve performance criteria described in the solicitation.

Occasionally, the department will conclude that a specific service provider is unique in its services, partnerships or resources, and as such, no competitive solicitation is necessary. In these instances, the department drafts a statement describing the unique circumstances and justifies the decision not to compete a grant based on Alaska Administrative Code and Alaska statute, which exempts grants from the contracting process.

In support of efficient and effective use of the state's institutions of higher education, it is likely the department will enter into an agreement with the University of Alaska using a classroom training agreement for specific occupations related to Alaska's high wage, high demand occupations. In instances where adults and dislocated workers are interested in training for these occupations, a direct referral relationship will be established. The number of individual training account transactions will be reduced while the number of participants served will be increased. Individuals who are eligible for services may be referred directly to the University of Alaska, not requiring additional paperwork.

VIII. G. 6 Awards Criteria, Youth

Identify the criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants for youth activities, including criteria that the governor and local boards will use to identify effective and ineffective youth activities and providers of such activities. (§112(b)(18)(B).)

The DBP annual Requests for Proposals prioritize the youth most in need to include out-of-school youth, youth with disabilities, foster youth and youth who have aged out of the foster care system, youth offenders and youth with incarcerated parents, homeless youth, and migrant youth. During the grant application review process, team members are provided grantee performance data addressing recruitment, retention, and service strategies. A specific section of the Request for Proposals is aimed at alignment and partnerships. Grant applications identifying specific partnering practices are viewed more favorably by the state.

VIII. H. 1 Coordination of Services

Describe how the services provided by each of the required and optional One-Stop partners will be coordinated and made available through the One-Stop system. Include how the state will consolidate Wagner-Peyser Act funds.

Providers delivering services through the One-Stop agree to the conditions of the Memorandum of Understanding and cost allocation agreement. Additionally, each job center has a manager who oversees the activities and identifies areas where additional coordination is necessary.

The recipient of Wagner-Peyser funds is also the recipient of WIA funds for services and individual training accounts through the One-Stops. This single entity coordinates and ensures that funds are used appropriately. Fundamental core services are funded by Wagner-Peyser. Intensive services may be funded by Wagner-Peyser when it is clear that no other partners or funding sources exist to provide intensive services. WIA is used to fund intensive and training services for those individuals determined eligible.

VIII. H. 2 Improvement and Technical Assistance

Describe how the state helps local areas identify areas needing improvement and how technical assistance will be provided.

The AWIB conducts evaluations of the workforce system and the service providers, and makes recommendations. Through a monitoring and internal review process, the state administrator identifies areas that may need corrective action or technical assistance. For service providers with inadequate performance, it is expected that recommendations will be followed. The One-Stop Operator is evaluated and provided technical assistance on a periodic basis. Technical assistance varies, including coaching by project coordinators, training from internal and external experts and through technology. Technical assistance is intended to improve program performance and ensure activities are consistent with the governor's vision for job training programs.

To ensure that Alaska's workforce investment system is responsive to need, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development seek regular input from the public. The board sets aside time for public comment on any issue of importance to a community. That information is used to describe and design technical assistance for the service providers in the area.

The board has also established a system of regional advisory councils. The councils function as a community based link to regional areas. Each council has at least one board member appointed and is represented by the business leaders and service providers of the region. Many of the councils' membership include job center regional managers, which serves to strengthen the relationship between governance and operations. This overall model ensures that the board has a coordinated method of gathering and communicating information in the regions.

During regular monitoring of WIA service providers, the Division of Business Partnerships program leads regularly contact and interview recipients of services to assess other needs not readily apparent. This approach provides local community members a chance to talk with someone without the fear of reprisal or retaliation. The individual client information gathered is held in confidence and aggregated to improve the overall service delivery system.

VIII. H. 3 Additional Partners

Identify any additional state mandated One-Stop partners (such as TANF or Food Stamp Employment and Training) and how their programs and services are integrated into the One-Stop Career Centers.

All of the mandatory One-Stop partners are signatory to the One-Stop Memoranda of Understanding and are represented at the full service One-Stops. These include the Food Stamp Employment and Training and the Alaska Temporary Assistance programs. Alaska has several full-service job centers in the larger urban areas.

These programs share data and make informed referrals to each other's programs on behalf of their common clients according to the conditions of the Memoranda of Understanding. These include the Wagner-Peyser program, under the direction of the One-Stop Operator, which provides the backbone of core and intensive services through universal access, Adult Basic Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Carl Perkins vocational education grantees, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and Veterans' Employment and Training Services.

VIII. I Oversight

Describe the monitoring and oversight criteria and procedures the state utilizes to move the system toward the state vision and achieve the goals identified above, such as the use of mystery shoppers, performance agreements. (§112(b)(14).)

The Division of Business Partnerships is the designated state workforce agency and conducts monitoring and oversight of programs and service providers in accordance with said federal and state guidelines and policies. According to an annually established schedule, the division conducts on-going monitoring and oversight of service providers in programmatic and financial management areas. DBP also conducts on-site reviews of service provider operations on an annual basis according to a set of risk-based criteria.

The DBP requires all sub-recipients to comply with the requirements of Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments and Non-profit Organizations. The Alaska Department of Administration, Division of Finance Office of Management and Budget is responsible for tracking when the A-133 audits are required of sub-recipients and ensuring those audits are obtained. The departmental internal auditor is responsible for overseeing the resolution of any findings of non-compliance or questioned costs identified in those audits that pertain to the WIA programs. The monitoring system is designed to provide information necessary to make decisions about resource allocation, adjust grant awards, and realign services and grant activities with the governor's vision.

A variety of evaluation tools including customer feedback and mystery shoppers are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the state workforce investment system .

The DBP also maintains a Management Information System, which tracks the required participant information. The MIS affords the division the opportunity to further monitor and manage the performance of the WIA service providers and sub-recipients.

VIII. J Grievance Procedures

Attach a copy of the state grievance procedures for participants and other affected parties (including service providers.) (§122(g) and 181(cc).)

The grievance [policy #260](#) is in the process of being amended to address periods of time that an aggrieved may make an appeal. The Employment Security Division is responsible for the operation and oversight of the One-Stops. ESD has formally adopted EEO grievance and complaint policy and procedures for services provided under the Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser programs, and the Alaska Methods of Administration for EEO and CRC compliance.

VIII. K. 1 Guidelines for Workforce Investment System

Describe the following state policies or procedures that have been developed to facilitate effective local workforce investment systems (§§112(b)(17)(A) and 112 (b)(2).) State guidelines for the selection of One-Stop providers by local boards.

As a single regional planning area, the state selected the ESD as the One-Stop Operator and is not expected to change this decision. The Employment Security Division administers the majority of programs under WIA and is responsible for consistency and efficiency in its role as the One-Stop Operator in the state.

VIII. K 2 Procedures

Procedures to resolve impasse situations at the local level in developing memoranda of understanding (MOUs) to ensure full participation of all required partners in the One-Stop delivery system.

As a single regional planning area, Alaska does not have multiple MOUs requiring impasse resolution. At this time all required partners are signatory to the MOU and comply with its requirements.

VIII. K 3 Criteria

Criteria by which the state will determine if local boards can run programs in-house.

Local areas are not approved to run programs in-house. Through the AWIB the state assumes all responsibilities for administration of local area boards.

VIII. K 4 Performance

Performance information that on-the-job training and customized training providers must provide.

Performance information is collected consistent with the type of funding used for these programs, such as Dislocated Worker, Adult, etc.

VIII. K 5 Reallocation

Reallocation policies.

As a single area state the only information that influences reallocation is related to the allocation of Rapid Response funds from the dislocated worker program.

VIII. K 6 Approving Local Requests

State policies for approving local requests for authority to transfer funds (not to exceed 20 percent) between the Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams at the local level.

As a single regional planning area, the state administrator makes the determination to transfer funds. The state has a waiver allowing the state to transfer up to 50 percent of adult or dislocated worker funds. Transfer of funds is dependent upon fund availability, performance and economic conditions.

VIII. K 7 Other Individuals

Policies related to displaced homemakers, nontraditional training for low-income individuals, older workers, low-income individuals, disabled individuals, and others with multiple barriers to employment and training.

Alaska's Adult and Dislocated Worker eligibility policies provide definitions for services to special populations. The target populations are given due consideration according to the priority afforded when funding is limited. As an example, low-income individuals are determined a priority when funding is limited.

VIII. K 8 Youth Eligibility Criterion

If you did not delegate this responsibility to local boards, provide your state's definition regarding the sixth youth eligibility criterion at section 101(13)(C)(iv) ("an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment"). (§§ 112(b)(18)(A) and 20 CFR 664. 210).)

Alaska defines the sixth youth eligibility criteria in the Youth Eligibility Policy as an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment means any youth who:

- 1) Lacks the employability skills to gain or retain employment; or
- 2) Lacks access to training opportunities due to geographic challenges; or
- 3) Has cultural dissonance; or
- 4) Is defined as a migrant youth; or
- 5) Is currently attending an educational program; and
 - a) Has previously dropped out of an education program or has poor attendance patterns in an educational program during the last 12 calendar months; and
 - b) Has below average grades; or,
- 6) Is not attending an educational program; and
 - a) Has no vocational/employment goal; and
 - b) Has a poor work history, no work history, or has been fired from a job in the last six calendar months; or,
- 7) Has completed full high school attendance; and
 - a) Failed comprehensive high school graduation tests; and
 - b) Was denied an Alaska high school diploma; and
 - c) Requests and requires intensive tutoring and/or remedial education to prepare for and retake the comprehensive examinations or the General Equivalency Diploma examination.

IX. Service Delivery

Describe the approaches the state will use to provide direction and support to local boards and the One-Stop Career Center delivery system on the strategic priorities to guide investments, structure business engagement, and inform service delivery approaches for all customers. One-Stop service delivery strategies are addressed below. (§§112(b)(17)(A) (§§112(b)(2) and 111(d)(2).)

A. One-Stop Service Delivery Strategies

IX. A. 1 One-Stop Services

How will the services provided by each of the required and optional One-Stop partners be coordinated and made available through the One-Stop system? (§112(b)(8)(A).)

The Alaska Job Center Network includes job centers, service providers, and affiliated agencies. It is represented by a well-recognized “jobs” logo, which has been incorporated into the department’s logo. In addition to 22 job centers, the network includes an electronic or virtual delivery system that is accessible from job centers, and through personal home or business computers.

AJCN One-Stops provide universal access to core and intensive services through self-service, staff-assisted self-service or staff-assisted services. Affiliate sites provide access to core services through the same design where appropriate. Required and optional partners located in AJCN job centers deliver services as designed and implemented by the Alaska Workforce Investment Board, and per Employment Security Division Strategic and Operational plans approved for PY 10 through PY 11 describing the roles and functions of the job center operator related to the provision of services by partners in each facility. Plans include how core services are provided and coordinated within each job center and how staff within a job center function as part of a multi-agency team.

Coordination occurs through a variety of informational and referral means that include cross training, phone, fax, and email communications, in-person referrals, and regularly scheduled operation meetings. Meetings include representation with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board, its Employment and Placement, Workforce Readiness, Assessment and Evaluation, Policy and Planning committees, Executive Committee, and project-based groups such as the multi-agency, Job Center Services Integration Committee (JCSIC).

Alaska has successfully collocated required and optional One-Stop partners in 22 statewide comprehensive, satellite and affiliate job centers. Recognizing the difference between collocation and integration, directors responsible for administering required partner programs collaborate to define next steps, give direction for coordinated service delivery, promote cross communications, and provide specific training for integration.

As a first step, the directors of the Alaska divisions of Public Assistance, Vocational Rehabilitation, Business Partnerships, and Employment Security, collectively accept accountability for integrating workforce service delivery using the vision, “The AJCN creates opportunities for Alaskans to obtain employment, training and social services in a convenient and timely way resulting in satisfied customers – both employers and job seekers – to promote self-reliant families and a healthy economy. ” The customer service theme of "no wrong door" is reinforced.

All frontline staff learns about partner services in order to reduce duplication of effort. This type of interaction can also lead to opportunities to jointly case-manage clients in the future. Teamwork is encouraged across programs and functions for streamlined service delivery. All-staff meetings are an additional step in continuously improving effective communications. The directors and operation chiefs also promote a customer service-centered environment in each job center, and collectively develop staff motivational strategies. Local partner management teams meet on a regular basis to ensure all partners are aware of job center activities.

Alaska encourages flexibility in the design, implementation, and delivery of services within each AJCN Job Center. Services provided by partners are coordinated through a variety of tools including Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) and Memoranda of Agreement (MOA), including cost sharing agreements, operational agreements, and local agreements. The statewide Management Information System is a case management system that supports the tracking and coordination of services provided to customers.

The two primary coordination tools in the system are:

The MOU/MOA – These agreements enable each job center to establish cooperative and beneficial relationships among partners to deliver core and intensive services, as appropriate, in an integrated system that meets local needs.

Job Center Certification Application process - Sites apply to ESD for designation. The application requires partners seeking certification to complete a self-evaluation. The application requires that sites describe program and service delivery integration and coordination efforts, quality standards for service delivery, data collection methods, quality improvement efforts, and leadership involvement as well as other standards that might be added by the job center.

IX. A. 2 Youth Formula Programs

How are youth formula programs funded under §128(b)(2)(A) integrated in the One-Stop system?

There has been an expansion of the youth system in the Alaska Job Center Network. In order to address the significant geographic challenges in serving youth in outlying regions, establishment of youth programs within this statewide system was enhanced to provide continuity and support with an emphasis on out-of-school youth. Employment counselors and community development specialists from the One-Stop system who are dedicated to the WIA youth program through a reimbursable services agreement with the Division of Business Partnerships, provide workshops, assessment, training of staff, presentations, while some direct youth client services in conjunction with the youth program providers in several major areas throughout the state.

Direct services are provided through a case management model previously piloted in one job center. This model integrates services from various agencies and organizations within the community. National best practices, including a model that engages community service providers developed with assistance from the Office with Disability and Employment Policy, are incorporated in the delivery system.

This service delivery model serves as the recruitment, enrollment, assessment, and case management agent through joint collaboration between the One-Stop and the youth program providers in several regions. The job center has a developed network of community agencies, such as faith-based and private and public sector agencies, and acts as the intermediary to allocate funds for the provision of

internships, leadership development, and work experience, job shadowing and other aspects of the ten basic elements to eligible youth.

IX. A. 3 Minimum Requirements

What minimum service delivery requirements does the state mandate in a comprehensive One-Stop Center or an affiliate site?

The AJCN includes full service and satellite job centers, as well as designated affiliate sites through which the various partner agencies deliver services to all Alaskans. Access to all core services is required within the [AJCN job centers](#). A job center must provide all “core services,” coordinate partner services for customers, provide referrals, and offer access to the Internet or other electronic linkages. The core services that must be available in a One-Stop job center are:

- Services Orientations
- Information and Referral
- Initial Assessment
- Job Search Assistance
- Job Readiness Workshops
- Job Referral and Placement Activities
- Labor Market Information
- Training and Retraining Information
- Internet Access through Resource Areas
- Unemployment Insurance Access
- Translation Services

An affiliate site is a location from which a single partner agency delivers services. Typically it is their own office that is used as a base of operations and in full cooperation with the AJCN (examples include: Adult Basic Education Programs not collocated and the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Evaluation Centers). Affiliate sites also possess information and referral mechanisms that connect customers to the rest of the network, real-time. AJCN affiliate sites offer all of the core services in the comprehensive list through staff or through the Internet or other electronic linkages, provide at least one of the required programs directly on-site, provide access to job center services offered elsewhere in the AJCN and provide direct referrals to services outside the site. This includes information about rapid response and early intervention services to dislocated workers as well as other services of required partner programs. Currently, Alaska has employed the use of a mobile job center vehicle that acts as a roaming "affiliate" site. The mobile job center travels via the Alaska Marine Highway System in the Southeast Region to connect the AJCN to rural and remote communities, especially school districts, with limited access to physical locations. Alaska has hundreds of outreach locations that are served itinerantly, but does not consider any one of these sites "affiliate."

Satellite job centers consists of two or more of the WIA partner programs delivering core services to a universal population, along with as many intensive and training services available. The satellite job centers

possess the electronic and in-person information and referral mechanisms that connect customers with the entire Alaska Job Center Network. Satellite job centers include: Anchorage Youth Hiring Center, Cook Inlet Tribal Corporation, Inc., Barrow, Bristol Bay, Eagle River, Glennallen, Homer, Kodiak, Kotzebue, Nome, Seward, Sitka, Tok, and Valdez.

Full-service job centers consist of the WIA required partner programs delivering on-site, electronic, or itinerant services, the full range of labor exchange services, other Wagner-Peyser related programs, WIA core, intensive and training services, and Rapid Response program to a universal population, along with intensive and training services based on eligibility for programs such as VETS, Alaska Temporary Assistance, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, Work Services, and Vocational Rehabilitation. Participation of some partners such as Adult Basic Education, the Senior Community Employment program, and tribal grantees may be based on information and referral mechanisms that link the entire system. The Unemployment Insurance program is accessed through toll-free telephones connecting to call centers. Efforts are continuing to co-locate more partners in the same physical locations. Full-service job centers are located in: Anchorage Midtown, Anchorage Muldoon, Fairbanks, Juneau, Ketchikan, Kenai Peninsula, Bethel, and Mat-Su.

The AJCN includes links to the Alaska Labor Exchange System (ALEXsys) "Hot Jobs," and the Unemployment Insurance Benefit Internet Filing (BIF) system. Alaska Job Centers have access to the web-based services and an adequate number of public-use computers in each resource room (including the mobile unit via satellite links). Web sites are updated regularly.

IX. A. 4 Tools/Products Developed

What tools and products has the state developed to support service delivery in all One-Stop Centers statewide?

The state has developed and/or supported the development or acquisition of products that have proven to be essential in assisting the One-Stops to serve a variety of client populations. Tools have been in the form of technological applications, training for specific area skill building to service delivery staff members, marketing tools to business and potential participants as well as reports that assist One-Stops to prepare for layoff events. Some examples of these tools and products are listed below by category:

Resource rooms in job centers possess computers, fax machines, printers, copiers, paper, supplies, and informative resources needed to access jobs and qualified workers to facilitate labor exchange. Alaska's Labor Exchange System (ALEXsys) is a computer system used for data collection, storage, and maintenance of ES registration and staff-assisted services. Electronic job listings on ALEXsys are updated continuously throughout each workday.

Benefit Internet Filing BIF is an Internet-based unemployment insurance claims application product that the Employment Security Division produced to provide wider access to Alaskans making their claims for UI. This tool includes the ability to maintain and update a person's claim via the Internet.

Alaska Labor Exchange System (ALEXsys) allows employers to directly list their jobs and to search the database for qualified applicants. Agencies and potential employers can search the skills bank to determine the skills set of the population in specific areas, allowing for identification of skills gaps and potential training opportunities to prepare the workers for upcoming public work projects and other jobs. Job seekers can input their resumes, search for jobs, which match their skills, and directly apply to the employer. This system was put into production on April 17, 2006. Maintenance, upgrades, and future plans for this successful IT system are ongoing. Enhancements have included a Workshop Auto-scheduler, which allows clients to sign up for

job center workshops independently, and a Virtual Recruiter, which allows clients to sign up for automated notifications when a job becomes available in their field of interest.

Management Information System MIS is a statewide management information system used for data collection, storage, and maintenance of WIA client records. This system provides job center and grantee staff with a tool for tracking case management and for scheduling services.

Policies to assist staff in providing consistent and integrated service delivery of the Wagner-Peyser Title III and WIA Title I programs, the Employment Security Division and the Division of Business Partnerships have worked to develop clear policies and procedures for the programs. The agency continues to review, create, and define policies, procedures, guidance, and forms on a regular basis to ensure job center staff have the necessary tools for delivering services.

Blueberry Intranet was developed by the One-Stop Operator in order to disseminate guidance and policy information to staff on an internal Web site called Blueberry. Posted on this web site are the policies, procedures, guidance, and forms for carrying out the service delivery of the Wagner-Peyser Title III and WIA Title I programs.

Alaska's Youth First Initiative was developed and implemented by the department as an employer outreach plan for Alaska's Youth First Initiative. DOLWD is knocking on businesses' doors looking for opportunities for Alaska's young people. This initiative enhances the state's Alaska Hire campaign by working closely with industry to provide jobs for Alaska's youth. The department is working with businesses throughout the state to establish student internships and summer jobs for Alaska's youth. Additionally, the department is helping to place teachers in Alaska businesses and job training programs to help them better understand the challenges of today's workplace. Creating and maintaining partnerships between educators, training providers, the state, business, industry, and economic development agencies are another priority.

Brochures and other printed and electronic materials are employed to increase veterans' awareness of One-Stop services and their locations, encourage use of the full-spectrum of services available to veterans, and highlight veterans' priority of service, as required under the Jobs for Veterans Act, upon arrival at their local One-Stop. Additionally, DOLWD identifies strategies with One-Stop business representatives to connect businesses who want to hire veterans who want jobs; conducts outreach with local Department of Defense Family Service Centers and veterans' organizations to enable cross training and referrals. They also engage these entities in useful service delivery strategies and serve spouses of veterans who also need to re-enter the workforce.

Technical Vocational Education Program TVEP is a result of the increased emphasis on employment and training in Alaska. The state established the TVEP as a new WIA partner funding source for training and development. TVEP is funded like the State Training and Employment Program through worker tax contributions. Today the TVEP fund provides capacity building resources to several vocational training institutions. This additional avenue for training is needed to create an industry focused, demand driven training system. With TVEP, STEP, and other WIA leveraged funds, Alaska is re-aligning its workforce system.

TaxWeb is a tool which allows employers to pay their unemployment insurance taxes online. By providing more services online, it makes it more convenient for businesses to work with the state, giving them more

time to focus on company growth. Employers receive ready access to their tax account information and may perform a variety of transactions, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. TaxWeb helps businesses compile, calculate, submit and pay, through Electronic Funds Transfer, quarterly contribution reports over the Internet. In addition, new employers can register with the Department. The Department also allows Alaska's unemployed workers to file unemployment insurance (UI) claims online. Alaska's unemployed workers still have the option of phoning an Unemployment Claim Center during regular business hours, and speaking directly to a customer service representative for assistance.

Posters are displayed throughout DOLWD facilities around the state to better communicate the department's mission, showing Alaskans at work in Alaska jobs. The campaign represents all of the major industries and occupations in Alaska. Posters first went up in the DOLWD buildings in Juneau followed by job centers, schools, and other facilities across the state. Additional marketing efforts included a statewide radio campaign with spots by the governor, the labor commissioner and the Alaska Vocational Technical Education Center director, helping to get the word out about the Alaska Hire campaign and DOLWD's efforts to put Alaskans to work. These types of campaigns will continue.

IX. A. 5 Recommended Models

What models/templates/approaches does the state recommend and/or mandate for service delivery in the One-Stop Career Centers? For example, do all One-Stop Career Centers have a uniform method of organizing their service delivery to business customers? Is there a common individual assessment process utilized in every One-Stop Career Center? Are all One-Stop Career Centers required to have a resource center that is open to anyone? (§§112(b)(2) and 111(d)(2).)

Alaska follows the case management, team-based approach that includes appropriate partners in its service delivery for both job seekers and employers. Staff members are encouraged to work as a team providing seamless services to job seekers, bringing together the most appropriate services based on identified client needs. As an example, Alaska utilizes best practices learned from the Customized Employment Grant which provided a model for a more effective system for serving persons with disabilities, and lessons learned from the Disability Program Navigator and the Family Centered Services projects. Integrated case management is one of the most important tools the state has relied upon for continued integration efforts. Alaska has taken this model one step further with the Disability Employment Initiative and included asset development, provider resources, and entrepreneurship as tools to serve customers. Disability Resource Coordinators are stationed in all job centers to ensure effective service delivery to all customers with an emphasis on customers with disabilities.

Alaska implemented a model of service delivery to employers that focuses on first developing a relationship then slowly increasing the menu of services and conducting outreach to increase market share. Job centers are encouraged to establish account representatives for the primary industries in their area. The account representatives network with each other to provide enhanced services to employers. The disability resource coordinators will further employer resources by providing information on assistive technology and work accommodations.

Another model for business services is the Integrated Employer Services team that was developed in the largest urban area, Anchorage. All partners who provide services to employers collaborate to ensure employers do not receive duplicative services from the different partners. Outreach to employers is unified

for job service partners, not just promoting one program or specific population group. Vocational Rehabilitation, Veterans' Services, Adult Basic Education, Senior Community Services Employment Program, Public Assistance-sponsored Work Services job development, and Wagner-Peyser Employment Services staffs work together on a regular basis to resolve issues and prevent duplication of similar services. The state's philosophy is to develop a relationship with employers and, over time, add to the menu of services that can be provided.

Alaska's approach to service delivery for job seekers is to provide universal access with priority service to identified specific populations. All job centers have well equipped resource rooms available for work search activities and include computers with Internet access, phones, faxes, and copiers. Assistive technology and trained disability resource coordinators to assist customers with disabilities is available in all job centers.

ESD has made Career Ready 101/KeyTrain, a web-based, individualized, self-paced curriculum, available to job seekers as quick initial self-assessment measuring real world skills employers believe are critical to job success in any occupation. Job seekers can use the Career Ready 101/KeyTrain curriculum as a tool to increase various skills and to prepare for WorkKeys® assessments and obtain a nationally portable Alaska Career Readiness Certificate.

Updates and enhancements to the Alaska Labor Exchange system (ALEXsys) further enable the system to assist job seekers in the self-assessment of their skills, occupational skill gaps, and provide best fit occupation and training program suggestions based upon transferrable skills.

Additionally, unemployment insurance claimants who file their claim on-line through the Benefits Internet Filing (BIF) system are invited to view a comprehensive reemployment services orientation. The orientation provides information on employment and training services offered by the Alaska Job Center Network.

Alaska also carries out a formal AJCN assessment/certification process for its job centers on a regular basis. This process includes an initial self-assessment followed by an on-site visit by a review team, which includes expert program staff, as well as AWIB board members to ensure compliance with service delivery under the WIA that focuses on AWIB priorities and recommended activities.

The ESD self-assessment system for the Wagner-Peyser program includes a review of service delivery of ES programs. Program service delivery is assessed on an annual basis while data collection records are reviewed on a quarterly basis. There is a comprehensive annual review of service delivery for Public Assistance-sponsored Work Services. This is conducted by Health and Social Services' Program Review and Integrity Analysis Section.

B. Workforce Information

IX. B. 1 Integrate Information into Planning

Describe how the state will integrate workforce information into its planning and decision making at the state and local level, including state and local boards, one-stop operations, and case manager guidance.

Alaska DOLWD is responsive to the need for quality labor market information by working with partners and customers to shape and improve the services required to create a high-skills, high wage workforce. A fundamental component of a demand driven workforce investment system is the integration and application

of the best available state and local workforce information including, but not limited to, economic data, labor market information, census data, private sources of workforce information produced by trade associations and others, educational data, job vacancy surveys, transactional data from job boards, and information obtained directly from businesses.

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board consistently uses Alaska workforce information provided by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section to provide guidance to partners of the workforce investment system. The information is used to determine the state's high demand industries and to encourage the development of training programs and capacity with existing and potential training providers.

Research and Analysis staff work closely with ESD on a variety of subjects, make presentations at their meetings, and work with AJCN members and staff on a wide range of topics in support of their efforts. These contacts form the foundation of an integrated service delivery strategy that is consistent with state strategies. The One-Stop Operator uses the information provided by R&A at the state level to plan service delivery strategies including target industries to promote for participant training, setting staffing levels in the local one-stop job centers, and providing guidance to local case managers giving career information to job seekers. The ESD also includes the labor market information on the menu of services provided to employers through the Business Connection units in the job centers.

Case managers use R&A workforce information directly with participants when developing their individual employment plan to ensure customers are aware of the industries and job opportunities that are in high demand or will be in high demand when the participant anticipates completing a training program.

IX. B. 2 Accessibility to Workforce Information

Describe the approach the state will use to disseminate accurate and timely workforce information to businesses, job seekers, and employment counselors, in easy to use formats that are readily accessible within One-Stop Career Centers and at remote locations such as libraries, schools, worksites, and at home.

The primary vehicle for disseminating workforce information to internal and external customers is the Internet. The Alaska Job Center Network home page includes "Labor Market Information" as a main link with a limited number of other links, including "Business/Employer Connection" and "Job Seeker Resources." The site is used in all One-Stop job center resource rooms. The information is available to businesses and job seekers, as well as staff and is a separate category, more visible on the main page. The site is available to any location with an Internet connection including libraries, schools, worksites and private citizen homes. The One-Stop Operator also funds a monthly magazine, *Alaska Economic Trends*, which is prepared by R&A, and distributed to businesses, and published on the R&A web site.

Additionally, job fairs have shown to increase accessibility to workforce information and have assisted in marketing job seeker and employer services. The majority of Alaska's job centers participate in at least one community job fair annually. Our comprehensive, full-service job centers usually host several each year and many targeted recruitments. Best example of a targeted recruitment is our Veterans' Job Fair conducted at the Anchorage Muldoon Job Center, which is located near Alaska's two largest military bases: Elmendorf AFB, and Ft. Richardson. Research and Analysis conducts regular visits and LMI workshops throughout each year. All job center staff, case managers, employment counselors, and partner agencies are invited to attend. Workforce information is updated regularly and is interpreted to service providers by expert economists. The

same team also makes regular updates to Alaska's Career Information System, relied upon heavily by case managers and counselors, to provide needed career-choice information, wages, industry trends, and probability for job openings in the future. This information assists both client and case manager in making informed decisions regarding training and employment goals.

IX. B. 3 Core Products Alignment

Describe how the state Workforce Information Core Products and Services Plan is aligned with the WIA state Plan to ensure that the investments in core products and services support the overall strategic direction for workforce investment.

The mission of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's R&A section is to promote sound decision making through the production and dissemination of timely and accurate workforce statistics and analysis. It is articulated in the Workforce Information Core Products and Services plan, and consistent with the vision of both the governor and the Alaska Workforce Investment Board.

The workforce vision involves an effective and measurable workforce system that focuses on the lifelong business of preparing and placing Alaskans into good jobs. Research and Analysis uses the state's strategic plan as the first stakeholder document it reviews before disseminating information. By doing this, R&A ensures that the appropriate materials and information are being prepared and made available to state and local stakeholders to support the state's overall strategic direction for workforce development.

Research and Analysis' industry and occupational analyses are central to Alaska's workforce development agenda. Consistent with the governor's vision and the AWIB, R&A analyzes the administration's high-priority industry sectors. The analysis includes industry employment trends, current and future occupational demand, anticipated occupational replacement needs, and indicators of current occupational supply inadequacies. By tracking the employment and earnings of workforce development training program completers, R&A provides essential insight into the effectiveness of the workforce development system.

IX. B. 4 Coordinating State and National Tools

Describe how state workforce information products and tools are coordinated with the national electronic workforce information tools including America's Career Information Network and Career Voyages.

Electronic workforce information delivery systems are well coordinated with and connected to the national electronic workforce information tools. The AJCN 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, Alaska's Job Bank (ALEXsys) and America's Job Bank. All are available in the One-Stop resource rooms and any location with an Internet connection.

C. Adult and Dislocated Workers

The WIA hierarchy of services, the three tiers of Wagner-Peyser service delivery, and the "triage" system of quickly identifying the needs of individuals all reflect how Alaska serves its customers, both job seekers and businesses. During the last ten years of WIA, Alaska slowly integrated varying philosophies of service delivery into one. Triage continues to help frontline staff identify appropriate services and delivery methods as determined by the specific customer needs. Wagner-Peyser Three Tiers of delivery methods contribute directly to core, intensive, and training services, provided under WIA. Alaska continues to train front line staff on the Wagner-Peyser and WIA philosophies with the goal of providing superior customer service.

IX. C. 1. a Universal Access to Core Services

Describe state strategies and policies to ensure adults and dislocated workers have universal access to the minimum required core services as described in §134(d)(2).

One of the guiding principles of the state’s One-Stop system is the concept of universal access. The AJCN One-Stop system is required to ensure that customers receive access to services through various portals, be it a comprehensive One-Stop center, satellite or affiliate facilities, which might provide a partner program's service. Toll-free lines are established and published for access to the UI program and Job Centers. The [Alaska Job Center Network](#) 22 job centers have convenient hours, are strategically located in both rural and urban areas, and make direct services and/or referral for entire-network services available to all.

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 state also provides equally effective communications for Limited English Proficient persons, with oral and written translation through various media. Online, telephonic, and in person interpreters are used, depending upon the nature and importance of the service provided and the frequency of contact with the LEP population.

The state’s model of service delivery for adult and dislocated worker programs through job centers ensures that WIA eligible adults and dislocated workers have access to the minimum required core and intensive services. Job centers provide core and/or intensive services to persons seeking work, and direct these services toward industries and occupations that are in demand, based on state, regional, and/or local labor market information. Focus is on coordination of services through numerous partnerships and integration of services via co-location and electronic connection. This strategy ensures that the state focuses on populations that are designated for priority of services.

Through the One-Stop system and entities electronically connected, core and intensive services will be made available to adults and dislocated workers. Core services will consist of eligibility determination, intake and orientation, assessment, job search, job placement, and provision of labor market, provider performance, unemployment assistance, resources, and program information, including Pell grants, Welfare to Work, supportive services, and grievance procedures. Intensive services will be provided either through the One-Stop system or through contracted service providers. Intensive services will consist of case management, counseling, in depth assessment, development of an individual employment plan, and short term prevocational skill development.

The state Criteria for Job Center Validation also addresses requirements for access to core services through staff or electronic resources. Universal access encompasses the awareness that customers coming to an AJCN job center include the general public and businesses. There are no “eligibility” requirements for a person who seeks employment services or access to information related to training, and career development related services. In Alaska, this includes major efforts to ensure services are accessible to populations with barriers to employment, particularly those with physical or mental disabilities, or those with limited English speaking abilities.

Labor exchange services funded by Wagner-Peyser are primary core services available to all customers at each job center. Additionally, satellite or other partner affiliate programs provide services specific to their programs. Dislocated workers are directed by Rapid Response staff to AJCN sites for assistance with finding

employment and exploring eligibility for services funded by WIA and Trade Act. A significant number of dislocated workers are informed of and provided access to core services through the Rapid Response process initiated through WARN or other notifications. Other potentially eligible adults and dislocated workers may be contacted through outreach, worker profiling and through system sponsored orientations. Orientations often take place at an employment site.

Alaska has seen a sharp rise in the in-person visits to the job center resource rooms. Statewide, the job center resource rooms served 292,752 individuals in PY 2009. This is due in large part to the implementation of ALEXsys, and a recent regulatory work test requirement to compel UI beneficiaries to enter an active electronic resume in the system that is visible to employers.

The state recently developed a virtual Reemployment Services orientation for those workers most likely to exhaust benefits before becoming reemployed. Since the online inception on March 10, 2010, of the Reemployment Services Model on ALEXsys, the Alaska Job Center Network has seen an upward participation trend of RES Orientation and Career Tracks viewers, and a noticeable job seeker pattern has emerged. To date, more than 13,500 individuals have viewed reemployment services information either online via ALEXsys or by attending staff-assisted workshops. The net result at the service delivery point is that job centers are truly seeing and helping those people who have more significant barriers to employment and require more intensive services.

Alaska's [policies](#) ensure services are provided without discrimination, and provide complaint and appeal procedures.

IX. C. 1. b Three Tiered Service Delivery Strategy

Describe how the State will ensure the three-tiered service delivery strategy for labor exchange services for job seekers and employers authorized by the Wagner-Peyser Act includes: (1) self-service, (2) facilitated self-help service, and (3) staff assisted service, and is accessible and available to all customers at the local level. (§112(b)(17)(a)(i).)

Wagner-Peyser Act resources have been used as the foundation for providing services and linking adults and dislocated workers to available programs. The AJCN begins with the services provided by the Employment Security Division and extends to the comprehensive network of employment, social, and training services. At the local, 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 or facilitation 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 the customer satisfaction survey and the client's employment outcomes will be tracked on federal reports. Examples include, but are not limited to, clients who use the resource room equipment independently and repeat clients in the resource rooms.

Facilitated Self-Service: Providing brief assistance to a client to allow the client 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 the 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: ES services provided in a group or one-on-one setting which takes a significant expenditure of staff time. This is the most time-intensive level of service. The 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 the 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 customer and either provide the service directly, refer the individual to the appropriate resource, or schedule for additional assistance on-site.

To ensure that employers can advertise and job seekers can apply for special job categories such as summer youth, internships, seasonal opening, and recovery act jobs, ALEXsys allows job openings to be attached to and searched by specific categories.

Consistent approaches to service delivery and data entry have been established statewide. As a result, local delivery of service is now focused on the most effective services that will potentially impact management indicator outcomes and ultimately to meeting federal performance goals on certain common measures. At the same time, service delivery activities are being adapted to take advantage of useful information being entered into MIS. It also gives the state the ability to consider implications for planning and transitioning to the anticipated WSPER system being proposed by the Department of Labor in federal regulations.

IX. C. 1. c Integrated Resources

Describe how the state will integrate resources provided under the Wagner-Peyser Act and WIA Title I for adults and dislocated workers, as well as resources provided by required One-Stop partner programs, to deliver core services. (§112(b)(17)(a)(i).)

Resources are integrated primarily at the local office level. However, efforts have been underway to expand integration in funding the common and shared portions of job center resource rooms. The majority of core and intensive services are provided within the resource rooms and the adjacent case management office space to ensure close proximity from one level of service to another. This improves the transfer of clients and ensures a smooth customer flow without the disruption of services. Participating partner agencies work with the One-Stop Operator to identify appropriate cost sharing based on the agreed upon cost allocation methodology. Illustrating this point, a resource room in which three partners derive customer benefit share in the costs of public-use computer replacement. Only one purchase request is generated yet all three partners

contribute to the purchase. This arrangement is invisible to the customer and partner agencies have been able to work out the equitable distribution of funding shared costs during the past several years.

In Alaska, WIA, Wagner-Peyser and other Employment Security Division administered DOL funded programs are the primary contributor of funding to the facilities and technologies that support core and other services. Resource rooms in particular, and department web sites that provide labor market information and career exploration, are integral to self-service core activities. AKCIS and ALEXsys, the Internet based employer opening and job seeker resume on-line public labor exchange system, are as well.

A high volume of customers are individuals seeking employment related services provided by ESD staff. A shared case management and data collection system (MIS), allows cross reference to collected Unemployment Insurance recipient data to be built upon by various partner program service providers that more closely focus on the provision of intensive and training related services. The department continues to add enhancements to the MIS system to capture services linked to any targeted program and its fund source and continues to develop reports to manage and measure services and performance.

ESD job center personnel administer the Work Services program that serves TANF and Food Stamp employment and training recipients. This program integrates participants into core job center activities and utilizes referral processes to intensive services provided through ESD and partner programs.

The director of ESD has taken proactive steps to address the challenges of maintaining an effective AJCN system infrastructure. Under the leadership of ESD's director, a range of actions were taken to reduce costs to the department to better align with reduced federal levels and new cost challenges based on aging buildings, technology needs, and a significant aging of the agency workforce. There have been staff and management reductions and building closures or re-locations within the state. Along with this has come organizational change with new management and restructuring of ESD.

IX. C. 2 Intensive Services

Describe state strategies and policies to ensure adults and dislocated workers who meet the criteria in §134(d)(3)(A) receive intensive services as defined. (§112(b)(17)(a)(i).)

Based on criteria listed in 134 (d)(3)(A), the Division of Business Partnerships describes in policies the types of intensive services and activities to be provided to adult and dislocated workers. Specifically, WIA Adult Program Participant Eligibility and Priority of Service [Policy #310.00](#), and Workforce Investment Act Dislocated Worker Eligibility [Policy #340.00](#). Based on these policies, the Employment Security Division develops procedure for AJCN job center staff to ensure consistent delivery of intensive services to eligible adults and dislocated workers.

Additionally, the state board has adopted policies to ensure WIA adult and dislocated worker program participants have access to intensive services at local One-Stops. These services include:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels
- Individual employment plans
- Individual and group counseling
- Case management

- Short-term pre-vocational services

Employment counselors and case managers conduct assessments of work skills. Employment counseling, assessment, and case management are provided to Alaska workers enhancing opportunities for personal growth and enabling them to achieve their maximum potential as wage earners. Individual/group counseling is provided on a range of issues including:

- Assessment of abilities, interests, skills, values, and literacy
- Assistance with work related choice, change, or adjustment
- Labor market and workforce information
- Awareness of employer expectations
- Problem solving in the workplace
- Handling stress due to job loss and other life changes

Tools used for assessment include the online TABE, GATB/AP, Career Scope, WPT, Cop System, Interest Profiler, CAI, SDS, CDM, MBTI, WIL, and Micro Skills Alaska Career Ready 101. Alaska Career Ready 101 is now the primary self-assessment tool recommended to Alaska's job seekers by statewide job center staff. Career Ready 101 is preparatory coursework for WorkKeys® and combines all WorkKeys® skills, comprehensive soft skills, and life-literacy skills in one self-contained system. This easily-accessible, self-assessment tool is vital as the resource room usage continues to increase. Assessment results are reviewed with and interpreted for the customer and an individual employment plan is completed based on counseling interviews and assessment results. Following plan steps, the customer is assisted in achieving their goals through career exploration, including a review of labor market and workforce information using AKCIS and other CIDS. This includes staff-assisted job search and placement assistance, career counseling, job referral, and job development, search skills training and referral for additional partner services and/or formal training. Intensive follow-up support is provided.

Pre-vocational services are provided including job search techniques such as interviewing skills (including mock interviewing), resume preparation training, networking skills (including telephone skills, informational interviewing, company research), labor market and workforce information using AKCIS and other CIDS and remediation of barriers including referral to supportive services such as ABE, SCSEP, DVR, and community services.

Employment counselors and case managers provide case management working closely with WPRS, DVR and ABE, sharing information to monitor the client's progress throughout the implementation of the IEP and providing follow-up after the plan is completed and the worker is employed or in training.

IX. C. 3. a Training Services

Describe the Governor's vision for increasing training access and opportunities for individuals including the investment of WLA Title I funds and the leveraging of other funds and resources. (§112(b)(17)(a)(i).)

The governor's vision for increasing training access and opportunities for Alaskans includes reducing overhead and placing every dollar available into tuition and actual training costs. His vision also includes taking advantage of already existing training facilities and making them available to more students during hours of non-use. The use of high school vocational facilities is a prime example of the realization of this vision. The King Career Center in Anchorage was only being used during normal school hours and the opportunity existed to use it in the evenings, weekends, and throughout the summer. This is a part of the Alaska Youth First Initiative that was started through Alaska's High Growth Job Training Initiative for Energy funds, and is being sustained through the use of state general funds. The goal is to increase youth enrollment into career and technical education classes and summer internships and use the existing facilities to train older, out-of-school youth, and adults.

An additional example of the governor's vision is the acquisition of general funds to support Adult Basic Education (ABE). These funds support ABE's efforts to provide additional training to students of registered apprenticeship programs. An ABE provider would provide construction math lessons, for example, to a student struggling in a construction program. This had the effect of ensuring that: a student was successful; the department maximized the original funding for the registered apprenticeship program (formula adult for example); ABE was the fund or service leveraged; and the student gained suitable employment.

Training services are provided through each of Alaska's seven comprehensive job centers, training providers, and grantees. These services include:

- Occupational Skills Training
- Private Sector Training
- Entrepreneurial Training
- Customized training
- On-the-job training
- Training for special populations

The Division of Business Partnerships administers training services by way of grants statewide and the Employment Security Division delivers core and intensive services through the Alaska Job Center Network. The ESD administers Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) in five service delivery regions. Individuals referred to training specialists receive an orientation to training services and undergo intake and eligibility determination. An integral part of the eligibility determination is the active job search component. Once local eligibility determinations are made, funding type, training provider, and supportive needs are negotiated. The state developed several policies and procedures that provide local training specialists specific guidance relating to funding limitations, dual enrollment, ITA administration, and federal, state, and AWIB directions. These policies continue to develop in order to provide consistency in implementation and administration. Customized training and training for special populations are negotiated with job center partner agencies such as Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Division of Public Assistance where appropriate. The state's current efforts in Customized Employment, which is a team-based, case management approach for individuals with disabilities and other complexities, and integrated employment services, which includes team-based job development, assist in securing on-the-job training and training for special populations. These efforts are ongoing and will continue to improve during the next several years.

Alaska has already begun to leverage other funds such as pilots and demonstration projects, as well as a request to the oil industry to commit their own resources for investing in future Alaska workforce needs. The State Training and Employment Program, which is funded by employee contributions to the UI trust fund, is also leveraged in concert with WIA and Wagner-Peyser formula funds to increase training access and opportunities for employment. State general fund match and maintenance of efforts for Adult Basic Education, Senior Community Services Employment Program (Title V, Older Workers Program), and Work Services (funded through Alaska Health and Social Services), all contribute to the overall workforce investment in Alaska.

IX. C. 3. b. i ITA Policies

What policy direction has the state provided for ITAs?

The Division of Business Partnership's [WIA Policy Number #930.00](#) Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs, stipulates policy for adults and dislocated workers receiving WIA Title IB training services to maximize customer choice in the selection of an eligible training provider. It contains guidance for the preparation, issuance, and management of ITAs and includes funding limits, specifications for adults and dislocated workers, conditions, and required documentation. This policy assists in consistent management of limited funds in the various formula funding streams. Alaska received a waiver to allow for youth ITAs. Funding ceilings fluctuate with funding availability and are further regulated by AWIB determination of annual funding limits for ITA participants.

IX. C.3.b.ii ITA Innovative Strategies

Describe innovative training strategies used by the state to fill skills gaps. Include in the discussion the state effort to broaden the scope and reach of ITAs through partnerships with business, education, economic development, and industry associations and how business and industry involvement is used to drive this strategy.

One approach used to fill skill gaps since WIA inception has been to utilize portions of the governor's WIA ten percent discretionary funds for the operation of incumbent worker training programs and to provide additional funds to our local WIA service provider. Additional efforts included securing an ARRA National Emergency Grant, and a Pilot and Demonstration grant for Pipeline Workers. In the One-Stop delivery system, partners assess clients' training needs and determine which of a wide range of available resources will be utilized. In some cases, the ITA offered through Title I of WIA is chosen.

Members representing business, labor, economic development agencies, industry associations, community and technical colleges, and workforce development agencies have worked together to identify industry skill gaps and have leveraged additional resources to maximize the use of WIA ITAs to increase training capacity supporting targeted industries. These partnerships broaden the use of ITAs, targeting the use of these funds in the same direction as the grant funds in industries such as energy; health care; construction; information technology; education; natural resources development (energy); transportation; hospitality and tourism.

IX. C. 3. b. iii Plan for Training with Title I Funds

Discuss the state plan for committing all or part of WIA Title I funds to training opportunities in high growth, high demand, and economically vital occupations. Describe the state policy for limiting ITAs.

The state has targeted WIA Title I-B funds for training in high growth, high demand industries such as construction, transportation, oil and gas production, healthcare, and resource extraction. The AWIB, along with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Research and Analysis Section, are currently expanding this to include targeted occupations and targeted and transferable skills across multiple industries, such as information technology occupations and skills.

IX. C. 3. b. iv Policy on Limiting ITAs

Describe the state policy for limiting ITAs (e. g. , dollar amount or duration).

Alaska established limits on duration and dollar amount although exceptions to both may be made and subject to funding availability. DBP [Policy Number #930.00](#) Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs, and the annually published [memorandum](#) co-signed by the directors of ESD and DBP, impose limits on the dollar and/or duration for the ITAs to WIA adult, dislocated worker, and youth participants.

IX. C. 3. b. v Apprenticeship Training

Describe the state's current or planned use of WIA Title I funds for the provision of training through apprenticeship.

First, training trusts and registered apprenticeship programs will apply for and compete for WIA Title IB funds through the procurement (RFP) process. Due to the recent emphasis on high growth initiatives such as energy, oil and gas production, transportation infrastructure, construction, and resource extraction, individual training accounts through the job centers will also direct a certain percentage of available resources to these state priorities. The Employment Security Division entered into an MOU with Alaska Works Partnership to solidify relationships with registered apprenticeship programs and to ensure individuals are afforded every opportunity to gain access to these programs. Alaska also links veterans with these opportunities through the *Helmets to Hardhats* program.

IX. C. 3. b. vi Apprenticeship Training

Identify state policies developed in response to changes to WIA regulations that permit the use of WIA Title I financial assistance to employ or train participants in religious activities when the assistance is provided indirectly (such as through an ITA). (20 CFR § 667. 266(b)(1)).

Alaska state policies (including the ITA policy) are not in conflict with changes to WIA regulations that permit the use of WIA Title I financial assistance to employ or train participants in religious activities when the assistance is provided indirectly. In order to clarify the enhanced role of faith-based organizations in workforce development and the removal of legal barriers to the delivery of WIA services by faith-based organizations, DBP published a WIA Sectarian/Religious Activity [Policy #498.00](#).

IX. C. 3. c Access to ETP List

Describe the state process for providing broad customer access to the statewide list of eligible training providers and their performance information including at every One-Stop Career Center. (§112(b)(17)(A)(iii).)

The [Eligible Training Provider List](#) is updated annually and published on-line at <http://www.labor.alaska.gov/bp/etpl.htm> and available at all AJCN job centers. Customers and providers may access the list from

any computer with an Internet connection. Assistive technology devices are available in the resource rooms for those needing accommodations. The list includes information on each program with five or more total participants in the last three years. To be included on the state ETP list, a training program must meet performance floors and targets for completion rate, employment rate, and earnings level. Procedures used to determine these rates are calculated in the same manner for all training programs. This assures consistency and equitability.

The web site is designed to help customers and AJCN staff search the list by regions, by training provider, and by training program. Also, training providers can apply, using the Web site, to have training programs placed on the list. This customer oriented site provides training program performance and school information including student characteristics, employment, and earnings of past students.

IX. C. 3. d. i OJT Direction

Based on the outline below, describe the state's major directions, policies and requirements related to OJT and customized training. Describe the governor's vision for increasing training opportunities to individuals through the specific delivery vehicles of OJT and customized training. (§§112(b)(17)(A)(i) and 134(b).)

See Section IX. C.3.d.ii

IX. C.3.d.ii OJT and Customized Training

Describe how the state:

- *Identifies OJT and customized training opportunities;*
- *Markets OJT and customized training as an incentive to untapped employer pools including new business to the state, employer groups;*
- *Partners with high growth, high demand industries and economically vital industries to develop potential OJT and customized training strategies;*
- *Taps business partners to help drive the demand-driven strategy through joint planning, competency and curriculum development; and determining appropriate lengths of training, and*
- *Leverages other resources through education, economic development and industry associations to support OJT and customized training ventures.*

Customized training for individuals is provided through grants by the DBP, and developed through competitive requests for proposal, based on targeted key industries and the unique needs of these employers. The ESD utilizes individual training accounts for OJT with private employers. Individuals are matched to appropriate occupations and interested employers who are willing to leverage their own funds and commit to hiring the individual upon completion of a specified hands-on training plan and time period. Specific skill and competency attainment, consistent with industry standards, is promoted and measured.

OJT is actively promoted through the use of media, job developers, business outreach and job seekers who have researched specific employers for this type of training. Alaska has also entered into agreements with certain employers to promote demand-driven occupational training and OJT opportunities in high growth industries such as energy, health care, construction, and transportation. SCSEP funds are also leveraged to support OJT and customized training ventures for older workers.

The department was recently awarded \$715,684 to fund a two-year, PY2010-PY2011, ARRA National Emergency Grant for the provision of On-the-Job-Training services to 50 eligible WIA Dislocated Worker program participants affected by layoffs. Additionally, the department is prepared to match up to 20 percent of this grant amount, or \$143,137, with State Training and Employment Program funds. This NEG-OJT grant will provide a method to jump start re-employment for dislocated workers experiencing prolonged unemployment by enabling employers to create training and job opportunities for these individuals. Participants will be given a chance to “earn and learn,” which means they will develop applicable occupational skills while earning a paycheck. This award is not only intended to deliver OJT services to 50 unemployed Alaskans, but also to build the capacity of the AJCN to engage this critical training model that will aid Alaska’s economic recovery.

IX. C.4.a Service to Specific Populations

Describe the state’s strategies to ensure that the full range of employment and training programs and services delivered through the state’s One-Stop delivery system are accessible to and will meet the needs of dislocated workers, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, migrant and seasonal farm workers, women, minorities, individuals training for nontraditional employment, veterans, public assistance recipients and individuals with multiple barriers to employment (including older individuals, limited English proficiency individuals, and people with disabilities). (§112(b)(17)(A)(iv).)

The Wagner-Peyser programs offer universal access while extending priority to veterans, UI claimants, dislocated workers, public assistance recipients, and persons with disabilities. Alaska’s plan provides services to adult, dislocated workers and youth, along with seven special populations:

- Veterans
- Dislocated workers, including displaced homemakers
- Low-income individuals, including recipients of public assistance and food stamps
- Individuals training for non-traditional employment
- Individuals with disabilities and/or multiple barriers to employment
- Fishermen and dislocated industry workers
- UI claimants identified under Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services

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, 20 CFR Part 663.115; 20 CFR Part 663. 115 Eligibility Criteria for core services for dislocated workers in the adult and dislocated worker programs, 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,” DOLWD WIA Adult Program Participant Eligibility and Priority of Service Policy #310.0, DOLWD WIA Dislocated Worker Eligibility Policy #340.0, Chapter 41, and Federal Register 29, CFR Part 37 Subpart C – Governor’s Responsibilities to Implement the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Requirements of WIA (EO provisions 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 DOL training programs. Priority of service extends to veterans and other eligible individuals meeting WIA program (Adult and Dislocated Worker) eligibility criteria. If the participant meets the eligibility criteria for the programs, and the participant is a veteran or other eligible individual, they are given priority over non-veterans participants who meet the specified eligibility requirements. Following determination of a priority, priority of service is disseminated accordingly to target groups that have met the eligibility criteria as defined by the Workforce Investment Act. 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

Further planning information is defined in paragraph g. below, and explains how Alaska provides priority of service for veterans in Alaska.

Dislocated Worker assistance is a high priority of this administration and the governor. 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. Alaska job centers and transition centers provide assistance to meet workers' needs. Affected employers, labor organizations, and partner staff are consulted and involved in the creation and operation of career transition centers. A peer support model is utilized when appropriate. Dislocated workers 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 TAA eligibility and provide services or be referred to services as appropriate.

Displaced homemakers are served through the AJCN with the identical core, intensive and training services similarly available to other dislocated workers. Incumbent workers, who are employed in year-round or seasonal work, need more skills and knowledge to maintain employment or progress in a career path within the industry.

Low-income individuals are being 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 with regard to identifying older individuals with serious barriers to employment, and will continue encouraging service to older workers who are working and those still in poverty.

Through an agreement with the Division of Public Assistance, TANF recipients and other low-income individuals are provided intensive services by ESD's Work Services Unit. This unit provides intensive employment-focused services exclusively to TANF clients. At times, these services include home visits, required participation in job club activities, and job search education through a series of workshops designed with the TANF client in mind.

All UI claimants are provided with the AJCN locations and lists of services and can request staff contact them with more information on job center services, 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.

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board was awarded a Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. With DEI funding, AWIB will partner with the Employment Security Division, One Stop job centers, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Public Assistance, and Governor's Council on Disabilities. The three-year DEI grant will fund efforts to improve education, training and employment opportunities and outcomes of adults who are unemployed and/or receiving Social Security disability benefits.

To assist with achieving the grant's goal, numerous staff at various One-Stop Job Centers around the state will serve as lead Disability Resource Coordinators on a rotational basis and will be trained in best practices of serving individuals with disabilities. These DRC's work with other one-stop partners such as the state's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Public Assistance, independent living centers, native grantees, school districts, University of Alaska and various non-profit agencies to ensure that individuals with disabilities are able to access assistive services and are provided referrals as necessary.

After receiving training, the Disability Resource Coordinators will cultivate ongoing relationships with partner agencies to better serve all individuals who receive services. DRC staff will also create public awareness of disability services by outreaching and presenting 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 DRC's will also be responsible for continuously training and educating other One Stop Job Center staff on the resources available to serve people with disabilities. This training approach should serve to provide all One-Stop Job Center staff with awareness of best practices used when serving clients with disabilities and ensure sustainability of staff knowledge and abilities at Job Centers throughout the state.

The Juneau One-Stop has applied to the Social Security Ticket to Work program and received approval to operate as an Employment Network (EN). This EN status further enhances job center staff ability to serve clients who receive Social Security disability benefits. As an Employment Network, the Juneau One-Stop is now able to provide in-depth coordinated services that address each Ticket to Work participant's individualized conditions of employment. This status also allows the One-Stop to receive milestone payments as beneficiaries work toward self-sufficiency; the payments are then reinvested back into the program to promote sustainability.

Individuals with disabilities are also served by other programs regularly available in the job center such as those funded by Wagner Peyser, Workforce Investment Act Funds, Senior Community Services Employment Program, State Training and Employment 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.

IX. C. 4. b. Reemployment Services and Wagner-Peyser Act Services

Describe the reemployment services the state provides to Unemployment Insurance claimants and the worker profiling services provided to claimants identified as most likely to exhaust their Unemployment Insurance benefits in accordance with section 3(c)(3) of the Wagner-Peyser Act. (§112(b)(17)(A)(iv).)

Reemployment Services are designed to lead job seekers, especially Unemployment Insurance claimants, to rapid reemployment. Employment and training resources are available through the Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN) both online and from Alaska's 22 statewide job centers. UI claimants and other job seekers can register on the Alaska Labor Exchange System (ALEXsys) and view a Reemployment Services Orientation. The orientation describes all of the group-oriented and online employment and training services offered through the AJCN. Completion of the orientation is required of selected UI claimants identified through a standard profiling model as likely to exhaust UI benefits, but all job seekers registered in ALEXsys have access to the orientation and are encouraged to view it. There are five career paths, called Career Tracks, described in the orientation: Job Search, Training, ABE/GED, Apprenticeship, and Self-Employment. The combination of workshop-oriented service delivery and the newly-released ALEXsys Workshop Auto-scheduler allow staff to reach multiple job seekers at once and to schedule reemployment services and other workshops electronically; job seekers can view local job center workshop schedules and descriptions and enroll in group workshops that pique their interests.

Studies show that job seekers who receive clear reemployment information, and who choose a specific reemployment path soon after losing their jobs, are the most likely to become reemployed quickly and to get jobs that best suit their lifestyles. Alaska's goal is to provide job seekers comprehensive information that enables them to make informed choices immediately upon entering the system. This effectively guides them to the resources they need in order to move into the next career. Use of self-assessment tools like Career Ready 101 and WorkKeys are also encouraged.

The entry points into reemployment services start when: (1) a claimant files for UI benefits via the Benefit Internet Filing (BIF) system; (2) attend a rapid response meeting; (3) enter the job center resource room; or (4) seek work via the online ALEXsys system from a public or private computer.

All workers filing for UI are required to register for employment services unless the nature of their employment presents a valid reason for deferring registration (seasonal employment, union membership, short-term lay-off, etc.). With the exception of those deferred, all UI claimants must register in ALEXsys and post an online resume to maintain eligibility for UI benefits.

UI claimants and other job seekers can view the Reemployment Services Orientation and Career Tracks separately or systematically in order to grasp a bigger reemployment picture. This allows them to self-identify the career path they wish to pursue.

These are the five Career Tracks:

1. Job Search: This track focuses on the key elements of a successful job search or career plan. Comprehensive reemployment information includes skill and interest assessment resources, job search techniques, and labor market information. Effective resume writing and interviewing are also covered.

2. **Training:** This track discusses occupational training as a means to a better career. It covers how training may be funded, what labor market factors job seekers need to take into consideration before choosing a training program, and how training may impact a UI claim.
3. **General Educational Development/Adult Basic Assistance (GED/ABE):** Job seekers receive information on how to obtain assistance with adult basic education needs as well as completing their GED. An overview of the program and a directory of services are provided.
4. **Registered Apprenticeship:** This track describes the apprenticeship “earn while you learn” employment model, typical apprenticeship jobs in Alaska, and appropriate contact information.
5. **Self-Employment:** This track describes the benefits, considerations, and risks of entrepreneurship. It reminds UI recipients considering self-employment to remain able and available for full-time work and offers several helpful links to more resources such as the Small Business Development Center.

These tracks serve as catalysts to quickly assist the job seeker from the UI entry point to referral to an Employment Services Specialist, Registered Apprenticeship Specialist, Business Counselor, or Career Support and Training Specialist. Reemployment services augment regular Wagner-Peyser funded services and are coordinated with internal partners.

All registered UI claimants are included in the "profiling" pool and their likelihood of exhausting benefits before finding reemployment will be analyzed and ranked. Alaska targets UI claimants who were laid off and are eligible for the Workforce Investment Act Dislocated Worker program.

IX. C.4.c UI Work Test

Describe how the state administers the unemployment insurance work test and how feedback requirements (under §7(a)(3)(F) of the Wagner-Peyser Act) for all UI claimants are met.

Alaska’s Unemployment Insurance program and Employment Services databases interface to register UI claimants for ES. The UI claims taker may determine that the claimant is in need of reemployment services based on the claimant’s attachment to work and other factors. This may require that the claimant register in the Alaska Labor Exchange System (ALEXsys), and post their resume within a limited time from the date of their initial claim.

ALEXsys helps facilitate reemployment services online and within job centers. Job center staff will be available to assist job seekers in the completion of their registration and posting of their resume. Non-compliance will result in the possible denial of UI benefits.

All UI claimants with full registration in ALEXsys are identified for reemployment services based on the likelihood of exhausting their benefits. Employment Services offers priority to Veterans, Dislocated Workers, and all other UI claimants. ALEXsys and the UI database communicate to exchange reporting data and tracking of profiled claimants for non-participation.

IX. C.4.d Aligning Services for WIA and TAA

Describe the state's strategy for integrating and aligning services to dislocated workers provided through the WIA Rapid Response, WIA dislocated worker, and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs. Does the state have a policy supporting co-enrollment for WIA and TAA?

The state's approach to the integration and alignment of services to dislocated workers provided through the WIA rapid response, WIA dislocated worker, and Trade Adjustment Assistance programs is driven by policy, technical assistance, sharing of best practice information, and performance management. As part of a WIA/TAA Integration work plan, Trade Act program operational responsibilities were transferred from DBP Dislocated Worker Unit to ESD's technical unit. The transfer better aligned the services that are delivered to dislocated workers. As a part of integration efforts, staff representing TAA, Trade Readjustment Allowances, Rapid Response, ESD's Operations Division and DBP routinely meet to share information, discuss program issues, and strategize over service delivery.

Rapid Response staff educates employers and employees on the different services available to workers after a layoff is announced, including those workers who are or might be Trade Act certified. If it appears that a layoff could be the result of foreign trade and might be eligible for Trade Act certification, Rapid Response will include information on the process of petitioning for certification under the TAA and ATAA programs in their presentations. Rapid Response staff is well versed in WIA funded program eligibility as well as Trade Act program eligibility and can effectively deliver Rapid Response services to either group. AJCN staff members are integral and active members of the Rapid Response team. AJCN participation in the planning and delivery of Rapid Response services ensures a seamless transition between Rapid Response and AJCN activities, including core and intensive services.

DBP [Policy #495.00](#) Concurrent Enrollment and a dual enrollment technical assistance guide for field staff use address 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 service strategies to maximize successful outcomes for trade affected dislocated workers. Co-enrollment is driven by what is needed for the dislocated worker. Participants are co-enrolled in TAA and WIA funded programs when it will provide them with the services needed to obtain reemployment.

IX. C.4.e Barriers to Achievement

How is the state workforce investment system working collaboratively with business and industry and the education community to develop strategies to overcome barriers to skill achievement and employment experienced by the populations listed in paragraph (a.) above and to ensure they are being identified as a critical pipeline of workers?

The state has engaged businesses and industry to assist targeted job seeker populations, referenced in (a) above, to overcome barriers to employment through layoff aversion, Rapid Response, TAA/NAFTA, veterans' programs, National Emergency Grants, and reemployment services and activities. Equal opportunity assistance and service integration initiatives, such as the Disability Program Navigator Initiative, promote awareness of "hard to serve" populations, and reinforce connections to employers within Alaska's communities.

By carefully developing relationships with employers, Alaska has been able to incrementally expand the menu of services to employers including an integrated job development approach to address the special circumstances of low-income adults and youth, unemployed individuals, veterans, persons with disabilities, and industry specific affected workers, such as commercial salmon industry workers. Job training providers,

academic institutions, case management and counseling, and ABE/GED programs continue to integrate with job center services for collaboration across funding streams to assist these populations in eliminating barriers to skill attainment and employment. The majority of resources are dedicated to these populations to ensure that participants have the credentials required for the jobs they apply for and that Alaska's jobs are filled with Alaskans.

IX. C.4.f Accessible One-Stop Services

Describe how the state will ensure that the full array of One-Stop services is available to individuals with disabilities and that the services are fully accessible?

With respect to equal opportunity measures described in Section VII B., Alaska will continue to provide full access to all AJCN services to persons with disabilities. Additionally, Alaska will ensure full access to One-Stop services through observance of state Administrative Order 129, which identifies responsibilities of 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. Disability Resource Coordinators will receive in depth training and be stationed in all job centers.

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 to 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 and the department is dedicated to continue this with a permanent Lead Disability Resource Coordinator position.

IX. C.4.g LVER/DVOP Roles

Describe the role LVER/DVOP staff have in the One-Stop Delivery System? How will the state ensure adherence to the legislative requirements for veterans' staff? How will services under this Plan take into consideration the

agreement reached between the Secretary and the state regarding veterans' employment programs? (§§112(b)(7), 112(b)(17)(B); 322, 38 U. S. C. Chapter 41; and 20 CFR §1001. 120).)

The state has LVER/DVOP staff located in eight One-Stop job centers that assist veterans. Employment Security Division staff that provide services to veterans will generally consist of Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) and Disabled Veterans Outreach Programs (DVOP) staff. Currently one DVOP and one LVER staff are working fulltime in Anchorage. This is a pilot project to evaluate whether a fulltime staff will increase performance. There are eight positions that are .5 FTE's; many of these staff members provide services in resource rooms the other .5 FTE.

All One-Stop job center staff and partners will provide employment services to all veterans and spouses in all One-Stop job centers in Alaska. 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 now 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; and
- 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 as such places as:
- VR&E
 - HVRP
 - VA Medical Center and Vet Centers
 - Homeless Shelters
 - Civic and Service Organizations
 - Community Stand Downs
 - Military Installations
 - WIA Partners
 - State Vocational Rehabilitation Services

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.

LVER staff primary duties shall be to conduct outreach to employers in the area and, in conjunction with employers, provide veterans with full range of employment, training and placement service to meet the needs of veterans. This includes promoting veterans as job seekers who have highly marketable skills and experience

Other LVER services to Veterans includes:

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

LVER is responsible for providing veteran program activities to the Field Office Manager for the quarterly Manager's Report.

Veterans' representatives facilitate the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), to help military personnel transition into civilian life; assist veterans to gain employment in federal civil service; and perform intensive case management to all veterans with identified barriers to employment. Veterans' representatives are also providing statewide coordination of employment outreach services to units of the Reserve Components and National Guard, and to Veterans who are transitioning service from Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Noble Eagle, and other mobilizations in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

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 Ft. 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. LVER/DVOP 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 is afforded to veterans where there are no veterans' representative (DVOP/LVER) located 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 connecting veterans directly to a veterans' representative or supportive service expeditiously.

IX. C. 4. h Access for LEP Persons

Department of Labor regulations at 29 CFR 37, require all recipients of federal financial assistance from DOL to provide meaningful access to limited English proficient (LEP) persons. Federal financial assistance includes grants, training, equipment usage, donations of surplus property, and other assistance. Sub-recipients are also covered when Federal DOL funds are passed through from one recipient to a sub-recipient. Describe how the state will ensure access to services through the state One-Stop delivery system by persons with limited English proficiency and how the state will meet the requirements of ETA Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 26-02, (May 29, 2003) which provides guidance on methods of complying with the Federal rule.

Per Alaska's equal opportunity Methods of Administration, the state and its WIA recipients provide universal access to all Limited English Proficient persons, in all programs and activities. Individuals receive equally effective communication in their native language through a variety of media, depending upon 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 vital documents. Brochures, recruitments, announcements, and notices are occasionally transmitted in Native Alaskan 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.

Pursuant to Title II of WIA, and Title V, 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 individuals 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-Peysner services. These two services are provided by 1) 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.

IX. C. 4. i Access for Migrant Workers

Describe the state's strategies to enhance and integrate service delivery through the One-Stop delivery system for migrant and seasonal farm workers and agricultural employers. How will the state ensure that migrant and seasonal farm workers have equal access to employment opportunities through the state One-Stop delivery system? Include the following: The number of Migrant and Seasonal Farm workers (MSFWs) the state anticipates reaching annually through outreach to increase their ability to access core, intensive, and training services in the One-Stop Career Center System.

Alaska has a limited agricultural industry primarily confined to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, with the few agricultural employers availing themselves of the H2-A agricultural visa program. Alaska will continue to monitor commercial agricultural activity. The new labor exchange system will improve the One-Stop Operator's ability to identify any potential such 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 MSFWs are offered the same range of employment services, benefits and protections, including counseling, testing and job training referral services, as is provided to non-MSFWs. To assure statewide compliance, the ESD will make every effort to achieve the federal requirements for "qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate services" to MSFWs.

IX. C. 5. a Priority of Service

What procedures and criteria are in place under 20 CFR 663. 600 for the governor and appropriate local boards to direct One-Stop Operators to give priority of service to public assistance recipients and other low-income individuals for intensive and training services if funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities are determined to be limited? (§§112(b)(17)(A)(iv) and 134(d)(4)(E).)

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DBP WIA Adult Program Participant Eligibility and Priority of Service [Policy #310.00](#), was revised May 24, 2010 to identify at all times veterans and eligible spouses are given priority over non-covered persons for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services provided under a qualified job training program. This policy provides criteria for determining general and service eligibility under the WIA Adult Program. It also addresses guidelines for coordination, self-sufficiency determination, documentation needs and non-discrimination requirements. This policy ensures 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; and
- Implements 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, the Chief of Field Operations, Employment Security Division, 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; and
- Individuals who are not self-sufficient.

IX. C. 5. b Priority of Service for Veterans

What policies and strategies does the state have in place to ensure that, pursuant to the Jobs for Veterans Act (P. L. 107-288) (38 USC 4215), priority of service is provided to veterans (and certain spouses) who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for all employment and training programs funded by the Department of Labor?

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 shall 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 receives training on the Jobs for Veterans Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and other legislation that impacts veteran priority, preference, and employability. The Tech Unit sends out weekly tech alerts to all staff; the alerts may contain modifications that are made to program policies and guidance.

The One-Stop staff and veterans staff will use a needs-based approach to identify veterans with special needs, i.e. disabled veterans, recently separated veterans, etc., and they will be subsequently referred for the appropriate services. All veterans and covered persons who are pursuing employment will be registered in the State's (ALEXsys) Alaska Labor Exchange System. Veterans with barriers to employment will be provided with the necessary initial assessment and the required documented intensive case management services by DVOP staff unless there is not a DVOP available to provide the assessment. ALEXsys provides a complete menu of customer-focused online workforce services; reference Title 38, USC, Chapters 41 and 42, Section 4215.

After the Jobs for Veterans Act was enacted into Public Law 107-288, the state revised, published and issued WIA Adult Program Participant Eligibility and Priority of Service [Policy #310.00](#), and Workforce Investment Act (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 workers, governor's discretionary funded projects and National Emergency Grant and how this priority will be applied.

These policies follow the "Jobs for Veterans Act." Management within the AJCN has a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the program and the job duties of LVER and DVOP staff.

AJCN job centers have developed and continue to follow a planned team approach to serving veteran clients and other customers. Teams work to support the roles of the LVERs and DVOPs and provide services to veterans. The state follows all Special Grant Provisions, Veteran Program Letters, and DOL/VETS Law 107-288 and United States Code (USC) Title 38.

Following publication of the Jobs for Veterans Act regulations on December 19, 2008 ESD worked to educate staff of any changes effecting Veterans' Priority of Service. The ES Veterans' representatives and managers participate in frequent meetings with their counterparts from Veterans Affairs: the *Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E)* counselors. A Point of Contact was established to help provide the required referral and reporting as specified under the Chapter 31 requirements of Veterans Priority of Service.

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, through the ALEXsys labor exchange system, provides for a Veterans preference. The definition of Veteran has been clarified in the ALEXsys system for users. An additional feature is the "virtual recruiter" that will send messages to Veterans when job orders contain a 'Vet Rep Check' status. The alerts appear via e-mail or the Veteran's message center. Employers are reminded that Alaska provides priority of service to veterans as required by law. This means that all job orders are reviewed by staff, and veterans alerted of new jobs, prior to releasing the job order to the public.

D. Rapid Response

IX. D. 1 Rapid Response Services

Identify the entity responsible for providing Rapid Response services. Describe how Rapid Response activities involve local boards and Chief Elected Officials. If Rapid Response activities are shared between the state and local areas, describe the functions of each and how funds are allocated to the local areas.

The Rapid Response coordinator, located in the Employment Security Division, jointly administers and oversees the Rapid Response and Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs. All layoffs and industry declines are tracked by the coordinator and addressed regardless of the size. A team of Rapid Response specialists cover specific areas of the state. The Rapid Response coordinator provides specialized training and technical assistance to the Rapid Response team members on a regular basis to ensure that the specialists are proficient at working with businesses that are going through transitions regardless of where they are in the business cycle.

IX. D. 2. a Rapid Response Process Methods

What methods are involved in receiving notice of impending layoffs (include WARN Act notice as well as other sources)?

Notices of impending layoffs come from a variety of sources including workers filing UI benefits, job center staff assisting potential dislocated workers, newspaper articles, radio, news, or word-of-mouth. All potential layoff information is forwarded to the Rapid Response coordinator to ensure one point of contact and non-duplication of services. The Rapid Response coordinator initiates contact with the employer, worker group, or union with the assistance of the Rapid Response specialist located in the area. All WARN notices are kept on file with the Rapid Response coordinator and forwarded to public officials such as the governor, local mayor, senators and representatives for the affected area, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development commissioner and directors as well as U.S. DOL.

IX. D. 2. b Rapid Response Services

What efforts does the Rapid Response team make to ensure that Rapid Response services are provided, whenever possible, prior to layoff date, onsite at the company, and on company time?

The Rapid Response team meets on a regular basis to identify potential layoffs and industry declines. Information from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Research and Analysis section is regularly used to identify industry trends and downturns in the economy. A priority for the Rapid Response team is to publicize Rapid Response services through networking and presenting to local Chambers of Commerce, Rotary clubs, etc. A rapid response [web site](#) has been developed and provides information for employers and workers. Rapid Response and WARN information is readily available via the Web site as well as contained in the online *Alaska Employer Handbook*. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development's UI Tax Section is also a very valuable resource for identifying potential layoffs. The UI Tax section often obtains information from employers when filing their quarterly UI contribution reports that indicate if the company will be staying in business through the following quarter.

Once a potential layoff is identified, the Rapid Response coordinator contacts the company official, educates them on Rapid Response services and builds a rapport that creates an amicable relationship. This connection generally results in the company providing the meeting space and meeting time at the worksite for worker informational meetings. Fortunately, in Alaska a majority of companies make the workers' interest a priority and welcome Rapid Response services. The companies are willing to provide work time and resources for Rapid Response activities.

IX. D. 2. c Rapid Response Activities

What services are included in Rapid Response activities? Does the Rapid Response team provide workshops or other activities in addition to general informational services to affected workers? How do you determine what services will be provided for a particular layoff (including layoffs that may be trade-affected)?

Each individual layoff event and economic decline is unique. Due to Alaska’s vast geography and cultural diversity, Rapid Response services must be tailored to the area, industry, and circumstances. When a layoff or economic decline is identified, the Rapid Response coordinator contacts the employer, worker group, or union to identify the specifics of the layoff and the workers. All worker informational meetings include, at the very least, presentations from UI, ES, WIA-job training and employment counseling. Other workshop topics may include financial planning, insurance planning, economic development, the Small Business Administration, trade adjustment assistance, stress relief, etcetera. Other Rapid Response activities include the facilitation of labor management committees, the creation and staffing of transition centers, peer support groups, assistance with employee stock ownership plans and feasibility studies. Rapid Response funds are also used for additional assistance when needed.

IX. D. 3 Seamless Transition

How does the state ensure a seamless transition between Rapid Response services and One-Stop activities for affected workers?

All layoffs are addressed, regardless of size. When addressing the smaller layoffs that do not warrant a worker informational meeting, a contact list of affected individuals is obtained from the employer, and each worker is contacted by the rapid response specialist. In layoffs where worker informational meetings are held, each worker completes a registration form and the rapid response specialists enter the workers information into both the Alaska Labor Exchange System as well as the WIA Management Information System. This ensures that any worker in the One-Stop will be able to easily identify a dislocated worker and the appropriate services provided.

IX. D. 4 Business Service

Describe how Rapid Response functions as a business service? Include whether Rapid Response partners with economic development agencies to connect employees from companies undergoing layoffs to similar companies that are growing and need skilled workers? How does Rapid Response promote the full range of services available to help companies in all stages of the economic cycle, not just those available during layoffs? How does the state promote Rapid Response as a positive, proactive, business-friendly service, not only a negative, reactive service?

Rapid Response and WARN information is included in the Alaska Employer Handbook and linked off of the AJCN employer Web site. The Rapid Response program is also actively promoted to businesses through Chambers of Commerce and Rotary meetings. When appropriate, Rapid Response also partners with the DOLWD/R&A Section to perform a skills gap analysis of a dislocated worker group to identify skills transferable into high growth industries and businesses in need of skilled workers. Rapid response supports businesses in all stages of the business cycle via a network of available resources to assist in a transition.

The Rapid Response program established relationships and referral processes with other resources in the community that are successful in assisting with transitions, whether it is the need for technical assistance or financial assistance. The Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development are a resource frequently used as they offer programs and services to aid businesses in transition. The Small Business Administration and Small Business Development Centers are an excellent resource for business planning. The US Department of Agriculture, Rural and Community Development provide assistance with loans and grants.

IX. D. 5 Rapid Response Partnership

What other partnerships does Rapid Response engage in to expand the range and quality of services available to companies and affected workers and to develop an effective early layoff-warning network?

Most all of the invaluable resources used by Alaska have previously been mentioned, such as the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development UI Tax and Research and Analysis sections. Others include the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and University of Alaska Marine Advisory Program that are used to identify economic declines in the fishing industry in certain areas of the state. The Alaska Department of Natural Resources is available for information on oil and gas, mining, and timber declines. Utilizing partner agencies such as these provides an early warning network, especially if a business is having difficulty and seeking assistance.

IX. D. 6 Rapid Response Tracking

What systems does the Rapid Response team use to track its activities? Does the state have a comprehensive, integrated Management Information System that includes Rapid Response, Trade Act programs, National Emergency Grants, and One-Stop activities?

The Rapid Response coordinator tracks all Rapid Response activities at a very detailed level. Tracking mechanisms used are Microsoft WORD and Excel as well as the WIA management information system. All WIA and NEG information is also tracked in the MIS. A high priority of the Rapid Response coordinator is to design a streamlined tracking system that can be used to report all Rapid Response activity, expenditures, and accruals for quarterly reporting purposes. Over the next 12 months a rapid response component will be added to the Alaska Trade Act System (TAS).

IX. D. 7 Rapid Response Other Activities

Are Rapid Response funds used for other activities not described above; e. g. , the provision of additional assistance to local areas that experience increased workers or unemployed individuals due to dislocation events?

When needed, Rapid Response funds are made available for additional assistance to areas with high unemployment due to dislocation events. In recent past, Alaska has not had to use Rapid Response funding for additional assistance purposes.

E. Youth

IX. E. 1 Youth Strategies

Describe the state's strategy for providing comprehensive, integrated services to eligible youth, including those most in need. (§112(b)(18).)

Alaska has a fully integrated youth workforce development system. Title IB Youth programs contribute to the workforce investment system by providing comprehensive services to eligible in-school and out-of-school, at-risk youth within a planned statewide workforce investment system. Youth ages 14 - 21 are targeted with services that include academic, occupational, career and technical education, employability and life skills training so that participants get appropriate credentials to become productive, contributing members of the economy. The following are an integral part of the administration's new energy, vision and innovation:

- To promote a “shared vision” that engages and supports the “neediest youth” through interagency policies, memoranda of agreements and intensive training and collaborations.

Out-of-school youth will be a major focus in the next two years due to impacts from state legislation requiring all high school students to pass a qualifying examination before graduation. The state graduation rate is 60 percent. All youth vendors provide access to the GED program and several provide access to diploma programs for those who qualify.

Youth in and out of foster care are served in Alaska with collaboration and support from the Casey Family Programs and the Office of Children's Services. Providers are certified in Ansell-Casey Life Skills assessment to maximize services.

Youth experiencing disabilities are served inclusively through all Title I-B programs through specialized programs. Enhanced awareness and support for youth with disabilities was provided through intermediaries supported through a State Alignment grant with the Office of Disabilities and Employment Policy. This project established Community Oversight Teams (COT) which involves parents, youth, education, private enterprise, vocational rehabilitation, the Alaska Job Center Network, and a myriad of community and faith-based organizations to blend and braid resources. Although this five-year project is no longer funded by US DOL, the Community Oversight Teams are still functioning. This project managed to bring agencies together that didn't work together previously and has proven to be beneficial in more effectively serving youth with disabilities.

Services for youth offenders are targeted in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to, providers earning bonus points on proposals for innovative offender service strategies, and delivering services to younger, adjudicated youth through a special program located within the McLaughlin Youth Center. Business collaborations are established to serve youth offenders to include collaboration between McLaughlin Youth Center and local registered apprenticeships and businesses.

Homeless youth are prioritized by giving bonus points in requests for grants to applicants demonstrating innovative services and through a service agreement with Covenant House, a facility in Anchorage with which a primary provider collaborates. Training is provided by peers with expertise serving homeless youth in both formal training and informal one-on-one settings.

Alaska will serve migrant youth who meet the certification requirements from the U. S. Department of Education. Programs in rural Alaska that serve eligible migrant youth will be encouraged to meet the special

needs of these youth. These youth are often disadvantaged and below grade level. Migrant youth in southeast Alaska whose families may be engaged in the logging and fishing industries and other youth in western and northern coastal Alaska who are engaged in fishing or subsistence will receive services, in addition to any youth in the agricultural areas in the Matanuska-Susitna or Delta regions who qualify under the regulations.

Alaska Native youth are served by all vendors, but several vendors serve a high concentration of Alaska Native students. Collaboration with the US DOL programs provided through the Division of Indian and Native American programs is emphasized. Outreach through the Regional Non-Profit organizations and the for-profit organizations are utilized to enhance services to this population.

Intensive annual cross-training is provided to all youth providers with invitations to members of juvenile justice, children's services, vocational rehabilitation, Alaska Native organizations and other providers of youth services. An emphasis these next few years will be to formalize protocols that ensure that these populations are adequately served.

- Engage multiple partners and build a sustainable youth workforce development system.

Alaska will 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.

Instead of providing an array of independent programs, the state will identify emerging workforce needs and work with business and industry to prepare youth for future opportunities. Collaborations utilizing federal, state and local resources will be mobilized to meet individual needs for youth in addition to statewide workforce priorities. Other resources will be leveraged to enhance youth services and develop sustainable, effective strategies that prepare youth to enter Alaska's high wage, high demand occupations.

- Develop access to oil, gas and mineral resources, health and behavioral health, to produce jobs and put Alaskans to work by providing opportunities for high school students to increase their awareness and appreciation of pathways to careers in Alaska's high growth job sector.

The first step is to prepare youth for high growth, high demand industries, such as energy, construction, and transportation, health and behavioral health, with the necessary skill sets. Alaska will engage youth in career pipelines through paid and unpaid internships, project-based learning opportunities, pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeship programs.

- Develop a demand driven workforce system that supports healthy and productive communities.

High growth, priority industries such as behavioral health and health care, construction, information technology, education, natural resource development, (i.e. mining and petroleum), transportation, hospitality and tourism, and seafood harvesting and processing, require youth pursuing careers to meet mathematics, reading and writing competencies.

In order for youth to qualify for the high-paying jobs available in the priority industries, career pathways which promote adequate preparation in mathematics, reading and writing must be defined early in the secondary education system. Special enhancements to include job clubs, homework clubs, tutoring, trades mathematics and assisting technologies, in addition to special projects that enhance basic skills development,

will be utilized to prepare youth for these priority industries and higher education. Online and home school options will also be utilized in providing multiple paths to post-secondary education.

- Engage youth in career pathways to reduce the out-migration of talent from Alaska and promote good paying jobs for Alaska's people.

The youth program is committed to developing opportunities through paid and unpaid internships, project-based learning opportunities, pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeship to engage youth early in career pathways to meet Alaska's current and future workforce needs. School to business partnerships will be given priority.

Early access and exposure to opportunities within the state will be a focus of the youth program. Youth will be engaged through internships. Teacher externships will also promote opportunities for students through in-depth knowledge of available opportunities in high growth industries. Earn and learn opportunities through registered apprenticeships will be prioritized in youth placements in addition to special academies and projects that provide exposure for youth to high growth industries. Partnerships with industries will be developed to prepare youth for future opportunities that are emerging. Youth academies that give youth the opportunity to determine interests and to preselect career pathways at the earliest opportunity will be fostered.

The Alaska Youth Council

The Alaska Youth Council, a subcommittee of the Alaska Workforce Investment Board, will hold a primary role through planning, developing and recommending innovations and practices to be incorporated into agency policies, procedures and capacity building. Developing the collaborative relationships with both public agencies and private enterprise will be paramount to this effort. The Alaska Youth Council members will also participate in selection of vendors by serving as reviewers for the applications received during the Request for Grant process.

IX. E. 2 Job Corps Coordination

Describe how coordination with Job Corps and other youth programs will occur. (§112(b)(18)(C).)

Alaska Job Corps Center

The Job Corps has representation on the Youth Council. The youth program providers collaborate with the Alaska Job Corps through referrals and co-enrollments and special assistance in General Equivalency Diploma test preparation, special youth development and leadership projects. The Alaska Job Corps staff and youth provide training to grantees in leadership development and through tours for youth providers. The youth programs also utilize interns through the Alaska Jobs Corps in both paid and unpaid positions.

Alaska Military Youth Academy

Connections and coordination with the Alaska Military Youth Academy, a residential program for youth are a priority of the program. This facility plays a unique role serving younger out-of-school youth. Youth who have dropped out of school between the ages of 16-18 are served in this facility with a highly structured program. Homeless youth and youth offenders are welcome in this program. Basic skills, career and technical education and service learning components provide linkages to sustainable employment for these youth.

The Denali Commission

The Denali Commission provides an opportunity to plan and coordinate employment, education and training activities with federal, state, and local community and economic development opportunities in rural Alaska, and to leverage new federal funds for youth training. The new Youth Initiative focuses on Alaska's High Growth Job Training Initiative for Energy and training opportunities to support infrastructure development in rural Alaska.

IX. E. 3. a-d Statewide Youth Support Activities

How does the state plan to utilize the funds reserved for statewide activities to support the state vision for serving youth? Examples of activities that would be appropriate investments of these funds include:

- a. Utilizing the funds to promote cross agency collaboration;*
- b. Demonstration of cross-cutting models of service delivery;*
- c. Development of new models of alternative education leading to employment;*
or
- d. Development of demand-driven models with business and industry working collaboratively with the workforce investment system and education partners to develop strategies for bringing these youth successful into the workforce pipeline with the right skills.*

After funding mandatory statewide activities the state will focus the remaining funds on projects related to building capacity for training in demand driven industries. Other activities include creating awareness in youth about occupations in demand industries. Learning centers and career and technical education programs that focus on high demand occupations will receive greater consideration during the proposal evaluation phase. Alaska developed a policy that provides guidance for the use of statewide activities funds in areas of high concentrations of eligible youth. The policy directs that an annual determination be made of the percent of the statewide funds to be distributed in areas of high concentrations of eligible youth.

IX. E. 3. e Program Design

Describe how your state will, in general, meet the Act's provisions regarding youth program design. (§§112(b)(18) and 129(c).)

Alaska has an integrated, comprehensive system of Title IB youth program design and delivery which utilizes state, federal and local resources to maximize services to eligible youth. The Title I-B program serves eligible youth, and collaborates with the business community, community and faith-based organization, state and federal agencies, education, labor organizations and other federal programs to include the Job Corps and programs offered through Alaska Native organizations through the US DOL Division of Indian and Native American programs to youth.

Alaska provides direct services through a dual approach utilizing youth vendors that are competitively selected in addition to providing services through the Alaska Job Center Network in selected sites. Alaska also has a well-developed core of vendors, businesses and youth agency partners with vast expertise, capacity and established track records in all of the ten elements that can be developed further and networked with the help of staff and communities. The Alaska Job Center Network provides linkages for eligible youth in rural hubs and in areas where out-of-school youth are prevalent.

The Division of Business Partnerships will implement programs through a competitive process to select training providers. Multi-year awards are considered to maintain continuity of programs and performance. The Alaska Youth Council sets the direction and theme for accomplishing a variety of more progressive goals consistent with the WIA such as:

- Increased visibility of youth programs and stronger linkages in the business community;
- Increased emphasis on academic learning as it connects to the workplace and to emerging industries in high growth areas;
- A stronger focus on out-of-school youth and the “neediest youth” as defined under the Shared Vision for Youth; and,
- A better focus on youth development activities, such as leadership and mentoring opportunities, including organizational and teamwork skills.

F. Business Services

IX. F. 1 Business Services

Provide a description of the state’s strategies to improve the services to employers, including a description of how the state intends to determine the employer needs in the local areas and on a statewide basis. (§§112 (a) and 112(b)(2).)

Primary employer information needs are provided by labor market information compiled in the employer surveys conducted by the DOLWD/R&A Section.

As participants in the USDOL sponsored National Business Engagement Consortium, Alaska invited employers to participate in focus groups designed to discern the level of knowledge employers have about the Alaska Job Center Network, the services available to them, and the services they would like to see provided.

Alaska has positioned account representatives in business connection offices to assist all businesses including high growth, high demand businesses, such as oil and gas producers and seafood employers. These representatives provide a single-point of contact for employers to increase and improve Alaska's menu of business services. The goal is to provide these targeted businesses with a minimum of three qualified applicants for each job opening and to incrementally expand employer services to include job-development for veterans, public assistance clients, and persons with disabilities. On-the-job training opportunities are also included in this process.

IX. F. 2 Integrate Business Services

Integrate business services, including Wagner-Peyser Act services, to employers through the One-Stop system.

ESD is continually building on its 2002 Prism award-winning strategies to strengthen and increase services to employers. Current services include listing job orders, recruiting workers, prescreening applicants, providing information, and forms for tax credits, conducting UI Tax and small business workshops, and identifying a single point of contact for businesses. During the first two years of this plan, ESD, DPA, and DVR have formed a business outreach and job development group called "Job X." Meeting on a monthly basis, the group coordinates operational efforts so that duplicated services are reduced. The DOLWD is also

continuing its relationships with the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development to provide women and minorities small business workshops on a monthly basis.

IX. F. 3 Maximize Employer Participation

Streamline administration of Federal tax credit programs within the One-Stop system to maximize employer participation? (20 CFR part 652. 3(b), §112(b)(17)(A)(i).)

The federal tax credit programs available to Alaska businesses are excellent tools to employ qualified Alaskans while helping the business bottom line. The Alaska Job Center Network has maximized marketing the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and Welfare to Work Tax Credits to employers. Educational and marketing efforts inform Alaskan employers through seminars, workshops, and Job Fairs about the available tax advantages. The front line staff and partners in the job centers pre-qualify job seekers for the tax credit programs by issuing Conditional Certifications. Training, technology and tax credits are coordinated to better assist Alaska employers run their businesses.

G. Innovative Service Delivery Strategies

IX. G. 1-2 Innovative Service Delivery Strategies

Describe innovative service delivery strategies the state has or is planning to undertake to maximize resources, increase service levels, improve service quality, achieve better integration or meet other key state goals. (§112(b)(17)(A).)

An innovative service delivery strategy that the state uses is the State Training and Employment Program, which is paid for by one-tenth of one percent of worker contributions to the UI Trust Fund. The purpose of the program, as established in state statute, is to reduce current and future claims against unemployment benefits, foster new jobs due to the availability of a skilled labor force, and increase training opportunities to the state's workers to protect against fluctuations in the economy and to prepare for technological changes in the workplace. STEP funds are granted and a portion provided to the One-Stop Operator, ESD, in funding individual training accounts. This program is overseen by the AWIB and is administered similarly to WIA Title 1B, although the eligibility and application criterion is somewhat more flexible. STEP was approved by the legislature to be a permanent program and will continue to be one of Alaska's innovative service delivery strategies.

The Disability Employment Initiative has brought together the best practices from the Customized Employment project, the Work Incentives project, the Medicaid Infrastructure grant, StartUp Alaska Customized Self Employment project and Disability Program Navigator project to create a strong team based case management approach to serving individuals. A permanent lead Disability Resource Coordinator position has been established and job centers are staffed with rotating disability resource coordinators that provide direct customer services and participate in integrate resource teams which includes local providers and asset development projects. The Division of Public Assistance is included in this model and utilizes the Family Center Services approach to serve a larger pool of hard-to-serve individuals and families by providing "wrap-around" services and case management. The group dedicated to ensure the sustainability of the best practices learned from Customized Employment, Disability Program Navigator and Family Centered Services is the JCSIC or the Job Center Services Integration Committee. This committee is made up of decision makers from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, and the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education.

ALEXsys, the Alaska Labor Exchange System provides web-based, real-time labor exchange to both job seekers and employers yet continues to be connected to the mainframe UI system for and work test for reemployment services. ALEXsys allows employers to directly list their jobs and to search the database for qualified applicants. The system has been put into production in 2006 and has continued to be upgraded. Enhancements have included a Workshop Auto-scheduler, which allows customers to sign up for job center workshops independently, and a Virtual Recruiter, which allows clients to sign up for automated notifications when a job becomes available in their field of interest.

The state has continued to be engaged with the local oil and gas producers to contribute to training the workforce in preparation for extracting valuable natural gas and oil reserves from the North Slope. DOLWD works with partners from labor unions, education, economic development, and petroleum service companies to strategically plan the investments and training needed to employ the maximum number of resident Alaskans possible during this project.

The High Growth Job Training Initiative for Energy provided the state with many innovative approaches to improving performance and services. The first innovation is Fast Tracking. With Fast Tracking, industry brokers are trained on the eligibility and planning criteria of the workforce investment system then work with employers to identify potential new workers. Through development of a training plan and determination of program eligibility, the industry broker rapidly deploys a training-ready individual to employers for placement. Second is the Career Guides model that places career advisors from the workforce system into the school system. The Career Guide provides information and guidance related to Alaska's high-wage, high demand occupations and information and in-school efforts that young people should pursue to ensure placement in the industry.

Other models include the industry to industry partnerships to develop a competent skilled workforce, teacher externships, industry academies and career publications. The models have all proven valuable and as such are supported by the Alaska legislature through the Youth First Initiative.

To address the increased volume of individuals seeking work and training, ESD provides regular workshops in the job centers on topics of most interest. Customers are served in groups to help meet capacity issues. Workshops include the five reemployment services tracks: New job with priority on high growth/high demand occupations; WIA Training to fill skills gaps; WIA on-the-job training and Registered Apprenticeships; Adult Basic Education; and Self-Employment. Other topics may include Career 101/KeyTrain, WorkKeys®, Alaska Career Ready Certificates, Navigating ALEXsys, Strengthening Your Resume, and Practice Interviews.

Registered Apprenticeship is another innovative service strategy aimed at increasing the number of jobs and the availability of training. By leveraging the capacity of the Alaska Job Center Network, more employers and sponsors can be developed to deliver apprenticeship training. This strategy will continue to provide the labor market with job ready applicants while providing the job seeker a strategy for developing their skills to be globally competitive.

Registered Apprenticeship has provided the state's workforce investment system a strategy for aligning secondary education with postsecondary training. Using the career path model allows education to align their pre-vocational training with the needs of the workforce. This school to apprenticeship model is experiencing a resurgence of value as employers understand that it is not realistic to expect the education system to produce full matriculated workers. Further, as employers invest in the training of their workforce they are

able to tailor training to meet their specific occupational and industry needs. The partnership between state and federal programs is reaping benefits in the form of better skilled workers and more responsive employers.

H. Strategies for Faith-based and Community Organizations

IX. H Strategies for Faith-based and Community Organizations

Strategies for Faith-based and Community Organizations (§112(b)(17)(i).) Enhancing outreach opportunities to those most in need is a fundamental element of the demand-driven systems goal to increase the pipeline of needed workers while meeting the training and employment needs of those most at risk. Faith-based and community organizations provide unique opportunities for the workforce investment system to access this pool of workers and meet the needs of business and industry. Describe those activities to be undertaken to: (1) increase the opportunities for participation of faith-based and community organizations as committed and active partners in the One-Stop delivery system; and (2) expand the access of faith-based and community-based organizations' clients and customers to the services offered by the One-Stops in the state. Outline those action steps designed to strengthen state collaboration efforts with local workforce investment areas in conducting outreach campaigns to educate faith-based and community organizations about the attributes and objectives of the demand-driven workforce investment system. Indicate how these resources can be strategically and effectively leveraged in the state's workforce investment areas to help meet the objectives of the Workforce Investment Act.

In order to clarify the enhanced role of faith-based organizations in workforce development and the removal of legal barriers to the delivery of WIA services by faith-based organizations, DBP published a WIA Sectarian/Religious Activity [Policy #498.00](#). This policy describes how community-based organizations, including faith based organizations, may be included in workforce development activities. It also establishes the permissible uses of federal financial assistance and the conditions for receipt of such support. The federally established distinction between 'direct funding' and 'indirect funding' provides the means to allowing for participant choice.

Outreach and recruiting for a wide range of community organizations, including faith based organizations, is clearly recognized and of value. Utilizing these organizations in the community in a variety of ways will increase the level of assistance available to client populations and serve as a source of recruiting participants for workforce development programs. DOLWD plans to continue to use established and successful means of notifying community based organizations of pending competitive bids through our websites, mailing notices, newspaper publications, press releases, and maintaining and continually adding to their local bidder's lists.

DOLWD will be available to provide technical assistance to community and faith-based organizations that are interested in bidding or becoming involved in the federal workforce development programs. DOLWD workforce development professionals, grant recipients and WIA participants observe the following faith-based and community organizations activities guidance:

- WIA participants may attend sectarian/religious institutions using a Training Authorization voucher, ITA or ISS. Training programs must have approval to operate a postsecondary institution in Alaska by the Commission on Postsecondary Education. Additionally, for those services provided as an ITA, the vendor providing a service must apply for and satisfy the eligibility requirements of the ETPL program/process. A statement signed by the participant must be in the case file to establish the voluntary nature of the WIA client's choice to attend the training. Unlike the situation with

directly funded WIA activities, there is no need to separate an organization's sectarian/religious activities physically or chronologically from voluntary WIA funded activities.

- If selected for use by a WIA participant, the faith-based or community organization's facility may provide childcare for the participant's children. As such, the faith-based or community organization's childcare facility may receive reimbursement from WIA funding for the supportive service provided using an Authorization for Support Services or other similar voucher/form.
- Facilities owned and/or operated by faith-based or community organizations may be used as service providers and/or training facilities for non-sectarian/religious training activities. DOLWD recognizes the importance of these sites as a way to serve and train participants. The procedures and standards by which a sectarian/religious organization qualifies to be a service provider may not differ significantly from those the AWIB specifies for a non-sectarian organization.

X. State Administration

X. A Infrastructure/MIS to Support Activities

What technology infrastructure and/or management information systems does the state have in place to support the state and local workforce investment activities such as a One-Stop operating system designed to facilitate case management and service delivery across programs, a state job matching system, web-based self service tools for customers, fiscal management systems, etc. ? (§§111(d)(2), 112(b)(1), and 112(b)(8)(B).)

The Wagner-Peyser system is integrated with the UI database system, allowing ease in Employment Services registrations of UI claimants and the subsequent reporting of participation or non-participation in the Worker Profiling and Reemployment program. This provides the basis for job referrals based on participant activities. Additionally, the Internet skills-based Alaska labor exchange system (ALEXsys) receives daily updates from the state's Management Information System 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 will include the ability for employers to establish job orders online allowing for more efficient, effective and timely referrals in response to the job order.

The WIA/State Training and Employment Program MIS provides the ability to collect and report all data necessary to meet federal and state reporting requirements relative to the WIA Title IB and STEP programs. The MIS also includes basic case management capabilities allowing one-stop staff to maintain comprehensive records documenting interaction with clients, planned and actual services for participants, training and supportive services 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. It also provides the capability to track individual costs by participant, service and vendor.

X. B Statewide Activities

Describe the state plan for use of the funds reserved for statewide activities under WIA §128 (a)(1).

The decision by Congress to reduce the amount of statewide activities funding under the Workforce Investment Act compels the state workforce administrator to align funding around required activities and to support allowable activities only when it is clear that some other long term resource will support and allow program development. Under this structure the statewide activities will focus on making training programs available through Individual Training Accounts in the least costly manner and focus program evaluation and continuous improvement on the program providers within the local areas.

The allowable statewide activities will likely not occur in Alaska except in those instances where leveraged resources may support capacity building, program development and additional services to individuals eligible under the WIA. With limited fiscal resources the state workforce agency will attempt to persuade systemic change and development.

X. C Waiver/Workflex Authority

Describe how any waivers or workflex authority (both existing and planned) will assist the state in developing its workforce investment system. (§§189(i)(1), 189 (i)(4)(A), and 192.)

The state's workforce development system depends on the flexibility provided through eight different waivers. Each of the waivers influences the ease with which training services are provided and the outcomes of those services. As a principle, the state of Alaska uses an industry based, demand driven approach to workforce development. The waivers requested by the state improve the workforce investment system by streamlining access to services, simplifying the accountability for services, aligning resources with the state's priority and demand populations, reinforcing services in industry's that may be seasonal yet are nonetheless foundational to a local economy, and creating transparency in the approach the state uses to develop its workforce investment system.

The state relies on the flexibility of WIA to deliver job training and workforce development services in a way that is relevant to the local economy and consistent with the availability and preparedness of the training provider system.

X. D. 1 Performance Management System

Describe the state's performance accountability system, including any state-system measures and the state's performance goals established with local areas. Identify the performance indicators and goals the state has established to track its progress toward meeting its strategic goals and implementing its vision for the workforce investment system. For each of the core indicators, explain how the state worked with local boards to determine the level of the performance goals. Include a discussion of how the levels compare with the state's previous outcomes as well as with the state-adjusted levels of performance established for other states (if available), taking into account differences in economic conditions, the characteristics of participants when they entered the program and the services to be provided. Include a description of how the levels will help the state achieve continuous improvement over the two years of the Plan. (§§112(b)(3) and 136(b)(3).)

The state established fundamental performance based budget systems with specific goals and measures for each program within the agency's annual budget. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development measures success by evaluating entered employment, employment retention and earnings change. DBP also tracks and reports the percentage of participants who received training in AWIB priority industries. As a single regional planning area, ESD and DBP work with the AWIB to determine the appropriate employment and retention goals. The divisions analyze past performance, current and future labor market information, and occupation projections to identify initial planned performance levels.

X. D. 2 Targeted Applicant Groups

Describe any targeted applicant groups under WIA Title I, the Wagner-Peyser Act or Title 38 Chapters 41 and 42 (Veterans Employment and Training Programs) that the state tracks. (§§111(d)(2), 112(b)(3) and 136(b)(2)(C).)

The Wagner-Peyser program will continue to offer universal access to its services, while extending a priority to veterans, UI claimants, dislocated workers, public assistance recipients, and persons with disabilities.

Alaska's stand-alone plan includes provision of services to adult, dislocated workers and youth, as well as seven special populations for which the state continues evolution of program strategies to meet the changing needs of business and industry:

- Dislocated workers, including displaced homemakers
- Low income individuals, including recipients of public assistance
- Individuals training for non-traditional employment
- Individuals with disabilities and/or multiple barriers to employment
- Veterans
- Youth entering apprenticeships
- UI claimants identified under Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services

X. D. 3 Performance Outcomes

Identify any performance outcomes or measures in addition to those prescribed by WIA and what process is the state using to track and report them?

The state is working toward performance-based budgeting. As a result, the department annually assesses internal goals/targets and measures relative to Wagner-Peyser and WIA participants to ensure outcomes are relative and focused on the needs of the state in terms of a current and future prepared workforce to meet the demands of the expanding regional economies. These are:

- Increase the percentage of workforce investment system participants that enter employment by one percent as compared to the previous year.
- Increase the percentage of workforce investment system participants who receive a staff assisted service by one percent as compared to the previous year.
- Increase the number of workforce investment system participants by one percent as compared to the previous year.
- Increase the number of workforce investment system participants who demonstrate increased basic skill knowledge (reading, writing and/or mathematics) by one percent as compared to the previous year.
- Increase to 97 percent the participants satisfied with services.
- At least 95 percent of trained participants will enter employment.

The data for these measures will be generated from the two databases used to track and report Wagner-Peyser and WIA participants. The state established an internal web-based application for reporting the results of the computations based on the participant records.

X. D. 4 Reporting Processes

Describe the state's common data system and reporting processes in place to track progress. Describe what data will be collected from the various One-Stop partners (beyond that required by DOL), use of quarterly wage records (including how your state accesses wage records), and how the statewide system will have access to the information needed to continuously improve. (§112(b)(8)(B))

The state is currently in the process of developing a data warehouse and an associated analysis and reporting system. The goal of this system is to bring together the diverse sets of data from the different applications that support and develop the labor force. This project, which is state funded, is in the requirements phase, and is scheduled to be complete in SFY 2013.

X. D. 5 Collaboration

Describe any actions the governor and state board will take to ensure collaboration with key partners and continuous improvement of the statewide workforce investment system. (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(1).)

DOLWD has consolidated job training with employment services in the job centers throughout the state. The four divisions, Business Partnerships, Employment Security, Vocational Rehabilitation and Public Assistance, continue to work with the AWIB toward integrating services to improve customer service to Alaskans.

Organizationally the required partners in the One-Stop remain within DOLWD. However, the alignment of work is split between policy, administrative oversight, and service delivery. The state continues in its efforts of developing, assessing, and adjusting its quality strategies that support job seekers and employers while maintaining a commitment to evolving economic development. The only strategic change visible to customers is an organization that is more responsive, able to provide assistance and be understandable by the public. The department realizes the need to expand regional involvement in workforce development. In an effort to assure good representation of workforce and economic development, the AWIB recognizes Regional Councils which provide the necessary linkages to local needs and resources.

The AWIB continues its close involvement with Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development; the Lt. Governor's Office; the Denali Commission, the Department of Education and Early Development, the University of Alaska, state Vocational and Technical training entities, and private sector businesses and industries to ensure consistency, commonality of purpose and goal to achieve success in Alaska's expanding economy.

The Alaska workforce development system continues its efforts in developing the knowledge, skills and abilities to meet the challenges of the changing social and economic needs. The new administration is committed to fostering growth in workforce and economic development during the next four years. The AWIB policies strongly support and advance the administration's goals in developing the workforce for Alaska's future. Oversight and administration of program performance rests with DBP while operation of the job centers is the responsibility of ESD.

X. D. 6 Performance Evaluation

How do the state and local boards evaluate performance? What corrective actions (including sanctions and technical assistance) will the state take if performance falls short of expectations? How will the state and local boards use the review process to reinforce the strategic direction of the system? (§§111(d)(2), 112(b)(1), and 112(b)(3).)

As a single regional planning area, other than the self-assessments required in each of the job centers, the AWIB evaluates performance. The Assessment and Evaluation Committee of the AWIB uses the data provided to identify weak points in service delivery or other matters related to preparing Alaskans for

advanced career opportunities yielding self-sustaining wages. The committee forwards findings and recommendations to DBP for follow through. DBP provides technical assistance and/or a monitoring of the function to resolve any deficiencies. DBP staff routinely review performance and alert the state administrator of potential problems. Should an entity fall below their goals, the administrator's staff work with them in identifying areas requiring attention, providing intensive training to staff, and monitoring or reviewing the activity to identify deficiencies.

X. D. 7 Reporting Requirements

What steps, if any, has the state taken to prepare for implementation of new reporting requirements against the common performance measures as described in Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL), 15-03, December 10, 2003, Common Measures Policy. In addition, what is the state plan for gathering baseline data and establishing performance targets for the common measures?

The Wagner-Peyser system enhancement, ALEXsys, incorporated the new reporting requirements prior to implementation. The WIA/STEP MIS now contains the capability to generate a Common Performance Measures Report based on the refined reporting requirements as detailed in Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 17-05. Recent enhancements to the MIS ensure capture of no less than the required elements necessary to meet the full complement of reporting requirements.

X. D. 8 Performance Indicators

Include a proposed level for each performance measure for each of the two program years covered by the plan. While the plan is under review, the state will negotiate with the respective ETA Regional Administrator to set the appropriate levels for the next two years. At a minimum, states must identify the performance indicators required under section 136, and, for each indicator, the state must develop an objective and quantifiable performance goal for two program years. States are encouraged to address how the performance goals for local workforce investment areas and training provides will help them attain their statewide performance goals. (§§112(b)(3) and 136.)

See performance chart on the next page.

Performance Indicators: The following chart identifies the projected performance measures goals identified through analyses of past performance, labor market information, projected industry and economic trends and projected unemployment rates for the indicated timeframes.

WIA Title I-B	PY 2010 Target	PY 2011 Target
Adult		
Entered Employment Rate	74.5%	74.5%
Employment Retention Rate	85%	85%
Average Six Months Earnings	\$ 16,250	\$ 16,250
Dislocated Worker		
Entered Employment Rate	81%	81%
Employment Retention Rate	88.5%	88.5%
Average Six Months Earnings	\$ 20,200	\$ 20,200
Youth		
Placement in Employment or Education	53%	53%
Attainment of a Degree or Certificate	62%	62%
Literacy and Numeracy Gain	33%	33%
Wagner-Peyser		
Entered Employment Rate	55%	55%
Employment Retention Rate	74%	74%
Average Earnings	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000

These performance standards reflect Alaska's economic circumstances, the expected national averages for performance standards and available data from the past two and a half years. Past history is used to set the baseline for the forthcoming years and adjusted measures as necessary to account for changes in definitions as well as expanding time frames for work preparation and training activities.

The recent economic downturn and higher than usual unemployment rate has 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) while there have been substantially fewer jobs posted. Over the last four years, Alaska's Entered Employment Rate has never exceeded 57 percent, and the most recent quarter was 51 percent. Due to the lower unemployment rates, the increase in the number of exiters and the decrease in job openings, the Employment Security Division renegotiated the Wagner-Peyser Entered Employment Rate for Program Years 2010 and 2011 from 64 percent to a more realistic and achievable level of 55 percent.

ALEXsys has been in-place since April 15, 2007. The state is fully utilizing data generated via the new system for all participants (9002A). The delineation from converted to solely ALEXsys data will produce a more accurate picture of the new labor exchange activities afforded by this additional method of service delivery in Alaska.

Alaska's diverse geography, economy and cultures compel the state to take an innovative approach to develop a sustainable statewide workforce. The above recommended performance measures for Alaska in PY 2011 demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement of the workforce investment system while

recognizing the realities of the state. The economy continues to remain constant in comparison to the contiguous states.

The allocation formula for funding WIA Title IB dislocated worker program is slow to respond to market changes that often have more impact on the success of WIA than the system. Allocation is not based upon real time needs; consequently, the state finds itself in times of feast or famine. Alaska no longer has excess funding and has high numbers of participants but limited resources to meet their ongoing career development needs. Stabilized funding will better serve Alaska and provide the capability to accurately predict performance and improve service delivery.

Alaska is working diligently to fill the skills gap recognized in previous years and ensure that skilled Alaskans are available. This is a challenging endeavor and brings industry, state entities, school districts and post-secondary education entities together to discuss needs and strategies necessary to resolve any deficiencies in the state's labor market.

X. E. 1 Appeals Process

Provide a description of the appeals process referred to in §116(a)(5)(m).

Alaska has two Local Workforce Investment Areas, Anchorage/Mat-Su and the Balance of State. The state board (AWIB) received a waiver (WIA regulations at 20 CFR 661. 300(f)) to allow the board to carry out the roles of a local board. Alaska's decision to establish a single regional planning area was in response to excessive administrative costs, inconsistencies in services and a desire to improve overall performance. If a unit of local government (including a combination of such units or WIA grant recipient) desires to create a new local investment area, but is not granted such designation, may submit a written appeal to the AWIB for review and further action. The appeal shall include:

- A clear description of the geographic area (Per WIA Section 116 (a)(3), a temporary designation lasting two years must include a population area greater than 200,000. A permanent designation must include a population area greater than 500,000);
- Population and economic information that substantiates the consistency of such local areas with Alaska labor market areas;
- The distance persons requiring service need to travel for service; and
- The resources of the local area that are available to effectively administer the activities carried out under a local area strategic plan.

AWIB receipt of the written appeal will start the 60-day appeal process. The AWIB shall respond in writing within 30-days of receipt of the request to the chief elected official(s) making the area designation request. Such response by the AWIB may seek further information or clarification of information provided to assist with a final determination and recommendation to the governor. Within 60-days of receipt of the appeal, the AWIB will deliver its recommendation to the governor for temporary or substantial designation, or to not recommend designation status. If the governor does not approve a local area or combination of areas request, the chief elected official(s) for the local area requesting designation may appeal directly to the Secretary of Labor.

X. E. 2 Compliance

Describe the steps taken by the state to ensure compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements outlined in §188.

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board, as the statewide planning and coordinating entity for the workforce investment system, approved Resolution 08-03, which states its commitment to WIA Section 188 and mandates the designation of one State Equal Opportunity Officer within the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The State Equal Opportunity Officer coordinates compliance through the Alaska Job Center Network with local job center Equal Opportunity Coordinators (EOCs), Unemployment Insurance Call Centers, and partner agency contacts to promote maximum integration of service delivery. EO representatives provide information and assistance to customers and staff involving equal opportunity and nondiscrimination, and are the local contact for referral of complaints.

State EO officer assists contacts with compliance requirements outlined in the Methods of Administration (MOA). The MOA is consistent with nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions under WIA 188 and 29 CFR Part 37. State EO officers monitor recipients regularly for compliance with the MOA, specifically: EO contact designations, notice and communication, universal access, disability, data collection, complaint processing and, where applicable, adherence to assurances.

Every effort is being taken to comply with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act to ensure access and inclusion for persons with disabilities. Ongoing training will promote awareness of ADA and other laws and regulations to ensure persons with disabilities receive access to the full array of job center services. Costs of assistive technologies and reasonable accommodations will be the responsibility of partners serving the requesting client(s) according to existing cost allocation agreements. All AJCN programs and activities shall make their services universally accessible for people with disabilities.

WIA recipients shall also maintain confidentiality in inquiring, relating, and storing data for disability purposes. Consistent with EO monitoring practices, applications and data will be reviewed for EO compliance.

XI. Assurances

1. The state assures that it will establish, in accordance with section 184 of the Workforce Investment Act, fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the state through the allotments made under sections 127 and 132. (§112(b)(11).)
2. The state assures that it will comply with section 184(a)(6), which requires the governor to, every two years, certify to the Secretary, that
 - a. the state has implemented the uniform administrative requirements referred to in section 184(a)(3);
 - b. The state has annually monitored local areas to ensure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements as required under section 184(a)(4); and
 - c. The state has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with section 184 (a)(3) pursuant to section 184(a)(5). (§184(a)(6).)
3. The state assures that the adult and youth funds received under the Workforce Investment Act will be distributed equitably throughout the state, and that no local areas will suffer significant shifts in funding from year to year during the period covered by this Plan. (§112(b)(12)(B).)
4. The state assures that veterans will be afforded employment and training activities authorized in section 134 of the Workforce Investment Act, and the activities authorized in chapters 41 and 42 of Title 38 US code. The state assures that it will comply with the veterans priority established in the Jobs for Veterans Act. (38 USC 4215.)
5. The state assures that the governor shall, once every two years, certify one local board for each local area in the state. (§117(c)(2).)
6. The state assures that it will comply with the confidentiality requirements of section 136(f)(3).
7. The state assures that no funds received under the Workforce Investment Act will be used to assist, promote, or deter union organizing. (§181(b)(7).)
8. The state assures that it will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of section 188, including an assurance that a Methods of Administration has been developed and implemented (§188.)
9. The state assures that it will collect and maintain data necessary to show compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions of section 188.(§185.).
10. The state assures that it will comply with the grant procedures prescribed by the Secretary (pursuant to the authority at section 189(c) of the Act) that are necessary to enter into grant agreements for the allocation and payment of funds under the Act. The procedures and agreements will be provided to the state by the ETA Office of Grants and Contract Management and will specify the required terms and conditions and assurances and certifications, including, but not limited to, the following:

- General Administrative Requirements:

- 29 CFR part 97 - Uniform Administrative Requirements for state and Local Governments (as amended by the Act)

-29 CFR part 96 (as amended by OMB Circular A-133) - Single Audit Act

-OMB Circular A-87 - Cost Principles (as amended by the Act)

•Assurances and Certifications:

-SF 424 B - Assurances for Non-construction Programs

-29 CFR part 37 - Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Assurance (and regulation) 29 CFR § 37.20

-CFR part 93 - Certification Regarding Lobbying (and regulation)

-29 CFR part 98 - Drug Free Workplace and Debarment and Suspension Certifications (and regulation)

•Special Clauses/Provisions:

Other special assurances or provisions as may be required under Federal law or policy, including specific appropriations legislation, the Workforce Investment Act, or subsequent Executive or Congressional mandates.

11. The state certifies that the Wagner-Peyser Act Plan, which is part of this document, has been certified by the state Employment Security Administrator.
12. The state certifies that veterans' services provided with Wagner-Peyser Act funds will be in compliance with 38 U.S.C. Chapter 41 and 20 CFR part 1001.
13. The state certifies that Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities will be provided by merit-based public employees in accordance with DOL regulations.
14. The state assures that it will comply with the MSFW significant office requirements in accordance with 20 CFR part 653.
15. The state certifies it has developed this Plan in consultation with local elected officials, local workforce boards, the business community, labor organizations and other partners.
16. As a condition to the award of financial assistance from the Department of Labor under Title I of WIA, the grant applicant assures that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws: -- Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United states on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United states or participation in any WIA Title I – financially assisted program or activity; – Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color and national origin; – Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities; – The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; and – Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs. The grant applicant also assures that it will comply with 29 CFR part 37 and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above. This assurance applies to the

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grant applicant's operation of the WIA Title I -financially assisted program or activity, and to all agreements the grant applicant makes to carry out the WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. The grant applicant understands that the United States has the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance.

17. The state assures that funds will be spent in accordance with the Workforce Investment Act and the Wagner-Peyser Act and their regulations, written Department of Labor Guidance implementing these laws, and all other applicable Federal and state laws and regulations.

Attachment 1

Local Planning Guidance for Single Workforce Investment Area States

D. I Local Plan Submission

Section 118 of the Workforce Investment Act requires that the board of each local workforce investment area, in partnership with the appropriate chief elected official, develop and submit a comprehensive local plan for activities under title I of WIA to the governor for his or her approval. In states where there is only one local workforce investment area, the governor serves as both the state and local chief elected official. In this case, the state must submit both the state and local plans to the Department of Labor for review and approval. States may (1) submit their local plan as an attachment to the state plan or (2) include these elements within their state plan, and reference them in an attachment. The state planning guidance on plan modifications and the plan approval process applies to a single workforce investment area state local plan, with one addition: The department will approve a local plan within ninety days of submission, unless it is inconsistent with the act and its implementing regulations, or deficiencies in activities carried out under the act have been identified and the state has not made acceptable progress in implementing corrective measures. (§ 112(c).)

D. II Plan Content

In the case of single workforce investment area states, much of the local plan information required by section 118 of WIA will be contained in the state plan. At a minimum, single workforce investment area state local plans shall contain the additional information described below, and any other information that the governor may require. For each of the questions, if the answers vary in different areas of the state, please describe those differences.

D. II. A. 1-2 Plan Development Process

Describe the process for developing the local plan. Describe the process and timeline used to provide an opportunity for public comment, including how local chief elected officials, representatives of businesses and labor organizations, and other appropriate partners provided input into the development of the local plan, prior to the submission of the plan. (§ 118(b)(7).) Include with the local plan any comments that represent disagreement with the plan. (§ 118(c)(3).)

Under the leadership of Governor Parnell, and advisement from the Alaska Workforce Investment Board, the state of Alaska is involved in ongoing dynamic planning efforts to develop the state's resource based economy and maximize its human capital. This is accomplished with a collaborative engagement of key industry, organized labor and economic development representatives, as well as educators, tribal, community and faith based organizations, along with regional and local officials.

After receiving the federal guidance for planning, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board, and Department of Labor and Workforce Development staff initiated planning discussions with multiple partners and key stakeholders. Alaska chose to develop a basic, stand-alone plan, which addresses priorities through the WIA and Wagner Peyser programs for PY 07 through PY 09. One-Stop mandatory programs were consulted. Changes, recommendations, comments and feedback as it related to the stand-alone plan came from varying perspectives. These included the private sector, through the board membership; the public sector (through the board, One-Stop Operator and Alaska Job Center Network); and through the public comment process.

Alaska will strive for performance excellence and continuous improvement, and will entertain internal systematic improvements, while being responsive to new federal initiatives or requirements that require program enhancements or evolution. Alaska looks forward to the new opportunities this plan will bring.

D. II. B. 1 One-Stop Services

Describe the One-Stop system(s) that will be established in the state. Describe how the system(s) will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services and ensure that such providers meet the employment and training needs of employers, workers and job seekers throughout the state. Describe the process for the selection of One-Stop operator(s), including the competitive process used or the consortium partners. (§118(b) (2) (A).)

The Alaska Job Center Network has been established as the One-Stop Operator's delivery system. It includes job centers, service providers, and affiliated agencies. It is represented by a well-recognized jobs logo, which was incorporated into the Department of Labor and Workforce Development logo. In addition to the current 23 job centers, the network includes an electronic or virtual delivery system that is accessible from job centers, and through personal home or business computers.

The formation and location of brick and mortar job centers is based on demand from our customers balanced with available service delivery resources. Comprehensive or full-service job centers are located in areas with high demand gauged by the number of job seekers needing assistance, the number of job openings employers are trying to fill, high demand industries, or a combination of these and possibly other factors. The full service job centers include all required One-Stop partners and frequently other partners that are not required. Satellite job centers are located in generally less populated areas where service delivery can be accomplished with fewer partners and two or more required partners collocate to deliver those services. The state currently has one affiliate job center where one required partner provides the services.

Alaska's system will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of service and meet the employment and training needs of employers, workers and job seekers throughout the state by monitoring actual employment and training performance in quarterly reviews and annual reports, comparing the report numbers to the negotiated levels of performance, and making necessary adjustments to meet or exceed the target performance levels through reallocation of front-line staff duties, staff resources, funding levels, or a combination of these, and possibly other, factors.

The Eligible Training Provider List enables customers to compare training providers' performance and give customers a choice of training programs to attend. The list is designed to help ensure that customer training needs are met.

As a single regional planning area, the state, through a consortium arrangement of the required partners, has selected the Employment Security Division as the One-Stop Operator. The Employment Security Division is the primary service provider with staff located in every job center across the state. The Employment Security Division delivers core and intensive services including the Wagner-Peyser public labor exchange to the universal customer, WIA adult and dislocated worker training programs, and unemployment insurance. The division is responsible for service integration, consistency and efficiency in its role as the One-Stop Operator in the state.

D. II. B. 2 One-Stop Youth Activities

Describe and assess the type and availability of youth activities, including an identification of successful providers of such activities. (§118(b)(6).)

Expansion of services to youth in the Alaska Job Center Network has been implemented to address the geographic challenges of the state and to promote continuity within the youth system. Youth ages 14-21 are targeted with services that include academic, occupational, vocational, work readiness and life skills training so that participants get appropriate credentials to become productive, contributing members of Alaska's economy. The first step is to prepare youth for Alaska's high growth, high demand industries, such as energy, construction, and transportation, with the necessary skill sets.

Cross-training with agencies and schools to provide more integrated services has been a priority for youth experiencing disabilities. A best practice in the Fairbanks region included an academy for teachers and a subsequent academy for youth and parents with collaboration between more than thirty agencies including leadership from the Fairbanks Job Center to expose youth and parents to the many resources available in the area. Due to the high level of teacher, youth and parent satisfaction with these academies, plans are being promoted to replicate this model in other regions. Originally, this model was developed with leadership from the Fairbanks Intermediary which was funded by the Office of Disability and Employment Policy. The development of community teams in the four regions has become sustainable due to the major benefit received by the community agencies involved resulting in more integrated services to youth with disabilities within the Title I-B system.

Youth in and out of foster care are served in Alaska through collaboration with the Casey Family Programs and the Office of Children's Services. Casey Family Programs provided training through a workshop which was held for all youth providers which included presentations from the Office of Children's Services Transitional Living Program (foster care) and an expert from a local provider that works with the homeless population. Many of the providers are certified in Ansell-Casey Life Skills assessment to maximize services.

Services for youth offenders are targeted through a variety of ways, including providers earning bonus points on proposals manifesting innovative offender service strategies; delivering services to younger, adjudicated youth through a special program located within the McLaughlin Youth Center; and transitioning out of school youth from detention centers.

Homeless youth are prioritized by giving bonus points in requests for proposals to applicants demonstrating innovative services and through a service agreement with Covenant House, a facility in Anchorage with which a primary provider collaborates.

The youth program has included youth migrating to summer fishing camps through priority programs, some in connection with school districts that address transition issues for migrant youth. Alaska Native and American Indian youth are prioritized through collaboration with Alaska Native organizations who are vendors that target these populations.

All services to youth identified under the Shared Vision for youth are enhanced through intensive cross-training and collaboration with other agencies. Other vulnerable populations that are not specifically defined in the TEGP for a shared vision also include other minority populations, homeless in-school youth and pregnant and parenting teens.

The youth program providers collaborate with the Alaska Job Corps through co-enrollments and special assistance in General Equivalency Diploma test preparation, special youth development and leadership

projects and referral and coordination of services. The Alaska Job Corps staff provides training to grantees in leadership development and offers tours for youth providers. The youth programs also utilize interns through the Alaska Jobs Corps in both paid and unpaid positions.

Connections to the Alaska Military Youth Academy, a residential program for youth, are a priority of the program. This facility plays a unique role in that it serves younger out-of-school youth. Youth who have dropped out of school between the ages of 16-18 are served in this facility with a highly structured program. Homeless youth and youth offenders are welcome in this program. Basic skills, vocational training and service learning components provide linkages to sustainable employment for these youth.

Alaska has an integrated, comprehensive system of Title I-B youth program design and delivery which utilizes state, federal and local resources to maximize services to eligible youth. The Title IB program serves eligible youth, and collaborates with the business community, community and faith-based organization, state and federal agencies, education, labor organizations and other federal programs to include the Job Corps and programs offered through Alaska Native organizations through the US DOL Division of Indian and Native American programs to youth.

Alaska provides direct services through a dual approach utilizing youth vendors that are competitively selected in addition to providing services through the Alaska Job Center Network in selected sites.

Alaska has a well-developed core group of vendors and youth agency partners with vast expertise, capacity and established track records in all of the ten elements that can be further developed and networked together. Addition of youth services to select sites in the Alaska Job Center Network has added another dimension to services, promoting continuity in rural hub areas that have limited vendors available for year-round services, especially for out-of-school youth.

D. II. C. 1 System Infrastructure

Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds, as determined by the governor. Describe how funding for areas within the state will occur. Provide a description of the relationship between the state and within-State areas regarding the sharing of costs where co-location occurs. (§118(b)(8).)

The governor has designated the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Business Partnerships, as the grant recipient for WIA Title I funds. The division distributes these funds through a number of financial assistance agreements with other state agencies and non-state entities. The primary state recipient of WIA funding is the Employment Security Division of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, which is the designated One-Stop Operator.

Upon notification of the allocation of WIA funding for a year, the director of DBP, in coordination with the director of ESD, determines how the WIA funds will be allocated within the state. The maximum amount for state activities allowed under sections 128(a)(1) and 133(a)(1) of the Act are reserved for use by DBP. The directors then decide the amount of Dislocated Worker funds to dedicate to Rapid Response activities and the amount of funds, if any, to transfer between the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. These decisions are based upon the directors' assessment of the need for the various program activities.

The directors also determine the amount and type of WIA funding that will be provided to the Employment Security Division. This funding typically includes the majority of the funding for Adult, Dislocated Worker,

Rapid Response services, and lesser amounts for Youth and statewide Projects. A decision is also made on the amount of funding for administration for the Employment Security Division.

WIA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker services are primarily provided through the Alaska Job Center Network. DBP provides these funds through a Reimbursable Services Agreement, which specifies the services to be provided, program requirements, and financial/budget information. Reimbursable Services Agreements are only valid for one state fiscal year. Upon determination of the amount of WIA funding to be provided to the ESD, that director determines the amounts to be allocated to the job centers within the Alaska Job Center Network. These decisions are also based upon the director's assessment of need in each of the job centers. Funds may be reallocated between job centers throughout the year based upon changes in need.

During some fiscal years, the decision may be made to augment the services of the job centers by granting some Adult or Dislocated Worker services outside of the Alaska Job Center Network. In such instances, the grant funds are awarded through one of the procedures identified in sub-section 2 of this part of the plan. The grant agreements resulting from such awards are negotiated, administered, and monitored by staff of DBP.

A Request for Grant Applications process, as described in sub-section 2, is used for the provision of services under the WIA Youth program. The grant application solicitation may be, in some instances, for multi-year grant awards. That is, a grant award may be made for one year with one or more renewals based upon successful performance by the grantee. At the time of renewal, a formal evaluation process is used for assessing whether or not a grant should be renewed. Grant agreements are negotiated and administered by staff of DBP.

Rapid Response activities are conducted within the state by staff of the ESD. At the beginning of the state's fiscal year, a Reimbursable Services Agreement between DBP and ESD for Rapid Response activities is negotiated and executed. The agreement specifies the services to be provided, the program requirements, and budget.

In some situations, it may be necessary for longer term Rapid Response activities to be completed by an organization other than ESD. In these instances, the DBP would use one of the procedures identified in sub-section 2 of this part of the plan to select the service provider. DBP in coordination with ESD Rapid Response personnel would negotiate the grant scope and budget. The grant agreements are prepared and administered by staff of the DBP. The director of DBP determines at the beginning of a program year the amount of funds dedicated for the activities required and authorized under 29 CFR 665.200 and 665.210. In some instances, the director may decide to have activities completed by non-state agencies. The DBP would use one or more of the procedures listed in sub-section 2 of this part of the plan for awarding grants for these statewide activities.

The services provided through the Alaska Job Center Network vary from community to community depending upon the resources of the various partner agencies. Local cost sharing plans have been developed for the various offices. The plans are negotiated by the partners and detail the contributions of each to the operation of the job centers.

D. II. C. 2 Competitive Grant Process

Describe the competitive process to be used to award the grants and contracts in the state for WIA title I activities. (§ 118(b)(9).)

The procurement of goods and services by the state is governed by Alaska Statutes 36.30, state Procurement Code, and its accompanying Alaska Administrative Code regulation at 2 AAC 12. Alaska Statute 36.30.850 (b)(1) of the state Procurement Code states that the code does not apply to grants. Similarly, AS 36.30.850 (c) indicates the code does not apply to contracts between two state agencies, or between the state and its political sub-divisions or other governments.

The DBP and the ESD follows the state procurement code for the procurement of all goods and services that do not involve grants or financial assistance agreements with other state, local or other governmental entities. The requirements of AS 36.30, the state Procurement Code, may be accessed at the following:

<http://www.law.State.ak.us/doclibrary/doclib.html>.

Grants with other governmental entities will conform to the requirements set forth in the US DOL regulations at 29 CFR 97.37 as they pertain to sub-grants with local and Indian tribal governments. All grants or financial assistance agreements negotiated by the DBP with other governmental agencies will contain the provisions and references cited in the regulations. For grants to non-governmental agencies, DBP and ESD will utilize competitive solicitation procedures. The level of competition required is dependent upon the anticipated size of the grant or on the amount of funds available.

Attachment 1

Program Administration Designees and Plan Signature

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

Address: P.O. Box 115509, Juneau, AK 99811-5509
Telephone: 907.465.4890
Facsimile: 907.465.3212
E-mail: corine.geldhof@alaska.gov

State WIA Title I Administrative Agency: Same

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

Address: P.O. Box 111149, Juneau, AK 99811-1149
Telephone: 907.465.2700
Facsimile: 907.465.2784
E-mail: commissioner.labor@alaska.gov

WIA Title I Liaison: **Kyle Taylor, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Business Partnerships**

Address: 1016 W. 6th Ave., Ste. 105, Anchorage, AK 99501-1963
Telephone: 907.269.3016
Facsimile: 907.269.0068
E-mail: kyle.taylor@alaska.gov

Wagner-Peyser Act Grant Recipient/State Employment Security Agency: **Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Employment Security Division**

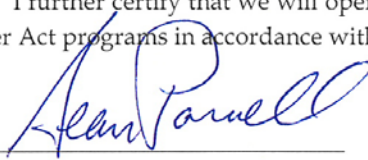
Address: P.O. Box 115509, Juneau, AK 99811-5509
Telephone: 907.465.2712
Facsimile: 907.465.4537
E-mail: paul.dick@alaska.gov

**State Employment Security Administrator: Clark Bishop, Commissioner, Alaska
Department of Labor and Workforce Development**

Address: P.O. Box 111149, Juneau, AK 99811-1149
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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. Subsequent changes in the designation of officials will be provided to the U.S. Department of Labor as such changes occur.

I further certify that we will operate our Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act programs in accordance with this Plan and the assurances herein.



Sean Parnell, Governor

4/22/11
Date