

AMERICAN SAMOA STATE PLAN MODIFICATION 2026-2027

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American Samoa PYs 2024-2027

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OVERVIEW

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

OPTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A STATE PLAN

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

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

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

document) where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program where such planning requirements exist separately for the program. The Combined State Plan partner programs are—

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

[1] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State

Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

HOW STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS ARE ORGANIZED

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

- The **Strategic Planning Elements** section includes analyses of the State's economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development

activities. These analyses drive the required vision and goals for the State's workforce development system and alignment strategies for workforce development programs to support economic growth.

- The **Operational Planning Elements** section identifies the State's efforts to support the State's strategic vision and goals as identified in the Strategic Planning Elements section. This section ensures that the State has the necessary infrastructure, policies, and activities to meet its strategic goals, implement its alignment strategy, and support ongoing program development and coordination. Operational planning elements include:
 - o State Strategy Implementation,
 - o State Operating Systems and Policies,
 - o Assurances,
 - o Program-Specific Requirements for the Core Programs, and
 - o Program-Specific Requirements for the Combined State Plan partner programs. (These requirements are available in a separate supplemental document, Supplement to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements. The Departments are not seeking comments on these particular requirements).

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

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

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

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

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

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

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

This is a unified plan

COMBINED PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM(S)

Indicate which Combined Plan partner program(s) the state is electing to include in the plan. Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)

No

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

No

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

No

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

No

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

No

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et seq.) No

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

No

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

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

No

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

No

I.B. PLAN INTRODUCTION OR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

The paramount objective of the American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Programs and Services are "To Equip Individuals facing Educational and Employment obstacles to cultivate the Skills and Knowledge requisite for Employers." This mission is particularly critical in today's rapidly changing job market, where many individuals encounter significant barriers that hinder their ability to secure stable employment. For instance, those who have experienced interruptions in their education due to economic hardships or personal circumstances may find it challenging to develop the necessary vocational skills. To address these issues, ASWDB and WIOA Programs provide a range of services, including training programs, mentorship opportunities, and job placement assistance. By offering tailored support, they aim to empower individuals to overcome their unique challenges and successfully navigate the workforce landscape. The focus is not only on immediate job placement but also on fostering long-term career development, thereby ensuring that participants are well-equipped to meet the evolving demands of local employers. In this way, the ASWDB and WIOA Programs play a vital role in enhancing the overall economic vitality of American Samoa while simultaneously uplifting individuals and families.

In a community rich with diverse cultures and principles, the territory of American Samoa has cultivated an extensive array of diversity within its workforce. The strength and integrity of the relationship between employers and employees—whether in governmental, for-profit, or non-profit organizations, as well as private sectors or semi-autonomous agencies—have created ample opportunities for growth. Career advancement often correlates with heightened responsibility, expertise, and meaningful contribution. As employees cultivate new skills and embrace more challenging roles, they ought to be rewarded with just and equitable compensation. Advancement in one's career typically necessitates a degree of stability within an organization. Employees require a nurturing environment where they can concentrate on honing their skills and pursuing promotional opportunities without the looming threat of job insecurity. Organizations that emphasize stability through equitable employment practices and sustainable growth strategies can foster an atmosphere that is conducive to career progression. The American Samoa workforce is forged through diligent employees, reliable employers, and a collaborative community of partnership. Given the limited financial resources at our disposal and the scarcity of domestic industries propelling economic growth, the

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) represents not merely an opportunity; it is an essential imperative.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

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

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

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

1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

A. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the State, including sub-State regions and any specific economic areas identified by the State. This must include— **II. a. 1. A. Economic Analysis**

I. EXISTING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

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

The business climate in American Samoa shows a slight increase in licensed businesses, with 3,838 licenses recorded as of December 31, 2025. This represents a 0.05% increase from the previous year, indicating stable processing with no significant delays.

- 1. Business Licensing Trends:** American Samoa has experienced fluctuations in registered business licenses over the past decade. The number of licenses decreased from 3,813 in 2015 to a low of 2,858 in 2018, then generally increased to 4,616 in 2021 before dropping and recovering to 3,838 in 2025. The current number reflects a 0.05% increase compared to 2024 and 0.05% increase from the first quarter of the previous year.
- 2. Top Business Activities:** Retail dominates business activities, accounting for 13% (487 licenses) of all registered businesses. Food establishments follow with 11% (417 licenses), and alcoholic/beer licenses represent 7% (270 licenses). Other significant sectors include landscaping/janitorial (6%), commercial transportation (5%), import & export (5%), commercial/residential rental & lease (4%), construction/engineering (4%), wholesale (3%), and sewing shops (3%). The top 10 business activities collectively make up 61% of all business licenses.
- 3. Top Businesses by Employment:** Starkist Samoa, Co. is the largest employer with 2,496 full-time employees in its fishing base. Other major employers include Nana's Corporation (construction, 144 employees), Paramount Builders, Limited (construction, 140 employees), American Industries, Inc. (retail, 126 employees), and AST Telecom, LLC (communication services, 105 employees). The top 10 businesses

by employment account for a subtotal of 3,419 full-time employees out of a grand total of 8,488.

4. **Business Categorization and Ownership:** As of December 31, 2025, the business landscape consists of renewals, new businesses, and additional changes. Local corporations form the largest ownership type at 49%, followed by sole ownership at 29%. Partnerships and LLCs each constitute 10%, while foreign corporations and non-profit organizations each make up 1% of the businesses.

Overall, American Samoa's business environment is characterized by a stable number of licensed businesses, with retail and food services as leading sectors and a few large corporations significantly contributing to employment. The majority of businesses are local corporations, indicating a strong local entrepreneurial presence.

Beyond the canneries, we must harness our most enduring resource: the ocean. We should advocate for expanding workforce training in Sustainable Fisheries Management, Marine Conservation, and ocean-based Renewable Energy. This path honors our cultural heritage while unlocking access to federal climate-resilience funding and creating technical employment that protects our coastlines. With that workforce foundation in place, we can modernize coastal industries without abandoning the values that built them. Strengthen permitting pathways for offshore wind, tidal energy, and responsible aquaculture so projects move from concept to construction with transparency and community input. Expand support for living shorelines—such as oyster reefs, eelgrass restoration, and nature-based breakwaters—to reduce erosion while improving water quality. Pair these investments with funding for monitoring and research, including workforce-led surveys that track fish stocks, habitat health, and climate impacts in real time. When communities help collect the data, they also help shape the decisions.

We should also ensure that our ports and coastal infrastructure are ready for a changing climate. Upgrade wastewater systems, stormwater controls, and resilient cold-chain logistics so seafood and other marine products stay safe during extreme weather. Establish grants for small businesses transitioning to low-carbon practices, from cleaner engines and efficient refrigeration to reduced waste and better traceability. By combining sustainable jobs, practical infrastructure, and measurable environmental outcomes, we can build a coastal economy that endures—protecting families, strengthening our food systems, and restoring confidence in the future. Based on the top ten businesses by employment in American Samoa, Starkist Samoa remains the foremost employer in full-time positions, recording a lead of 2,496 employees in 2025. The cannery sector continues to sustain this strong workforce capacity, benefiting from the relative accessibility of these roles for non-residents through established application

processes, while also offering the advantage of weekly pay. This sustained dominance underscores the cannery’s pivotal role in the local labor market, not only by providing steady work opportunities but also by maintaining a consistent demand for skilled and semi-skilled personnel. In turn, the availability of formal hiring channels helps streamline recruitment, enabling qualified applicants from outside the territory to compete for openings more efficiently.

2025 Top 10 Businesses by Employment as of December 31, 2025

Name of Applicant	Business Name	Business Activity	FT. Emp.
Starkist, Samoa Co.		Fishing Base	2496
Nana’s Corporation		Construction	144
Paramount Builders, Limited		Construction	140
American Industries	Neil’s Home Center	Retail	126
AST Telecom, LLC	Bluesky Communication	Communications Services	105
American Samoa 2000, Inc	McDonald’s American Samoa	Restaurant	101
Silva Group Corporation		General Construction	100
Tools, Inc	Tool Shop	Retail	74
Forsgrens Food, Inc	Carl’s Jr.	Restaurant	70
Ottoville Investment One, Inc	Tradewinds Hotel	Hotel	63
Subtotal for top 10	3419		
Grand Total	8488		

Reference: ASDOC Business Division Database

ii. Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

American Samoa has a high demand for labor, particularly male workers, in the Agriculture and Construction sectors. This demand is driven not only by economic realities but also by the territory's unique cultural context and diversified day-to-day lifestyle, where many families rely on both subsistence activities and community-based development. In practice, employers in these sectors often report that it is difficult to recruit and retain enough workers to meet seasonal planting cycles, maintenance needs, and ongoing project timelines, especially when the work requires sustained physical strength and on-the-ground presence.

American Samoa's economic landscape is characterized by a significant, persistent demand for a robust labor force, with a particular and noticeable shortage of workers in key production sectors. This high demand is most pronounced within the Agriculture and Construction industries. For agriculture, the need for labor is closely linked to food security and long-term sustainability initiatives—such as preparing land, planting, weeding, harvesting, and maintaining crops and soil health. Because many agricultural tasks are time-sensitive and must be completed efficiently to protect yields, worker shortages can quickly affect local supply. At the same time, construction labor remains essential due to continuous infrastructure development and housing projects, including roadwork, utility upgrades, renovations, and new home construction, all of which require steady staffing and reliable attendance. As these projects expand or resume after delays, the demand for skilled and unskilled labor intensifies.

A distinguishing feature of this labor demand is its gender-specific nature, with a strong and consistent preference for male workers in these physically demanding trades. This preference is deeply intertwined with, and a direct result of, the territory's unique cultural context and the traditional division of labor within its diversified lifestyle. In many communities, cultural expectations and societal norms often place the burden of physical, manual labor—such as lifting heavy materials, clearing land, carrying tools, and performing strenuous work on farms and job sites—squarely on male members. For example, responsibilities during communal farming periods or during the building of community structures may be organized around customary roles, reinforcing the perception that men are the primary workforce for physically intensive tasks.

Consequently, addressing this labor shortfall requires culturally sensitive strategies that acknowledge the territory's traditional values while simultaneously promoting workforce development and skills training to meet the urgent needs of these economically vital sectors. To be effective, training programs may need to be designed with input from local leaders, families, and employers, ensuring that new skill pathways align with community expectations. Practical initiatives could include hands-on apprenticeships with mentoring by experienced workers, certification focused on safety and construction fundamentals, and agriculture-focused skills development that supports sustainable practices. At the same time, outreach efforts can emphasize that strengthening the workforce—through targeted recruitment, improved job matching, and accessible training—helps protect community livelihoods and long-term development goals, while respecting the cultural frameworks that shape labor roles.

iii. Employers' Employment Needs- Agriculture in American Samoa

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

The agricultural sector in American Samoa is poised for significant growth, as evidenced by the release of the 2023 Census of Agriculture data. This comprehensive report, compiled by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), delivers a detailed and quantitative snapshot of the current agricultural landscape across the U.S. territories, with specific and critical focus on American Samoa. This release is more than just a statistical compilation; it provides a foundational set of insights essential for several key groups.

For **policymakers**, the data offers the necessary empirical evidence to formulate effective, targeted, and data-driven policies to support and sustain local farming and fisheries. For **investors**, the figures strongly suggest a robust and underdeveloped market for locally-sourced agricultural products, signaling significant potential for capital injection and infrastructure development. Finally, for **stakeholders** throughout the agriculture value chain—including farmers, processors, distributors, and retailers—the census provides actionable intelligence on crop yields, livestock inventories, farm characteristics, and economic contributions.

Crucially, the raw figures within the 2023 Census suggest a significant and dynamic market for agricultural and aquaculture products within the territory. This market strength, coupled with the detailed insights on the types and scale of current agricultural operations, creates compelling opportunities for both local and international investors. These investments could be directed toward modernization of farming techniques, development of climate-resilient infrastructure, expansion of processing and storage facilities, and establishment of improved distribution networks. Ultimately, leveraging the data from the NASS census will be vital to supporting and significantly expanding these essential local industries, moving American Samoa closer to greater food security and economic diversification.

Agricultural Sector Growth and Economic Implications in American Samoa: the NASS data underscores a period of significant growth for the agricultural sector in American Samoa, showcasing a robust expansion in both participation and economic output since the last census conducted in 2018:

- **Increase in the Number of Farms:** American Samoa experienced a notable 13% increase in the number of farms, bringing the total count to 7,157. This significant

growth signals a burgeoning community interest in cultivation and farming, suggesting a broader base of agricultural activity across the territory. This proliferation of smaller, family-owned, and potentially subsistence-level farms indicates a strong cultural connection to the land and a potential for increased food security.

- **Surge in Total Value of Sales:** Most significantly, the total value of agricultural sales has seen a dramatic increase. American Samoa's sales reached an impressive **\$35.3 million**. This substantial figure not only highlights a robust and expanding market for locally sourced agricultural products but also underscores the sector's growing contribution to the territory's overall economy.

Dominant Agricultural Products and Investment Opportunities

The economic growth is primarily anchored by the production of key staple crops, with taro (a traditional root vegetable) maintaining its position as the dominant crop driving a considerable portion of the sales value. The strong market performance of taro and other local produce suggests several avenues for further development and investment:

- **Targeted Investment:** The evident demand and economic return indicate opportunities for investors to support the expansion of existing industries, particularly through modernizing farming techniques, improving post-harvest handling, and establishing reliable cold chain logistics.
- **Diversification Potential:** While taro is the market leader, the overall growth suggests a favorable climate for diversifying agricultural output into other high-value crops, livestock, or aquaculture, which could further stabilize the sector against market fluctuations.
- **Policy Support:** The data provides the empirical basis for policymakers to design and implement targeted support programs, such as agricultural extension services, technical training, and financial incentives, aimed at capitalizing on this positive momentum and ensuring sustainable, long-term growth for American Samoa's farming community.

In summary, the 2023 Census of Agriculture data paints a picture of a dynamic, growing agricultural sector in American Samoa—one that is ripe for further investment, innovation, and strategic policy support to realize its full economic potential.

II. a. 1. B. Workforce Analysis

i. Employment and Unemployment

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

Total employment saw a substantial decline in the years following 2022, reflecting a noticeable change in hiring patterns across the broader economy. Specifically, employment dropped by 39.7% from Fiscal Year 2022 (FY2022) to Fiscal Year 2023 (FY2023). Although conditions improved somewhat after that, employment still did not return to pre-drop momentum, since the total then rose by 18.8% in FY2024. In other words, the sharp contraction in FY2023 followed by a partial rebound in FY2024 suggests that the employment trends were influenced by short-term factors rather than a smooth, continuous shift.

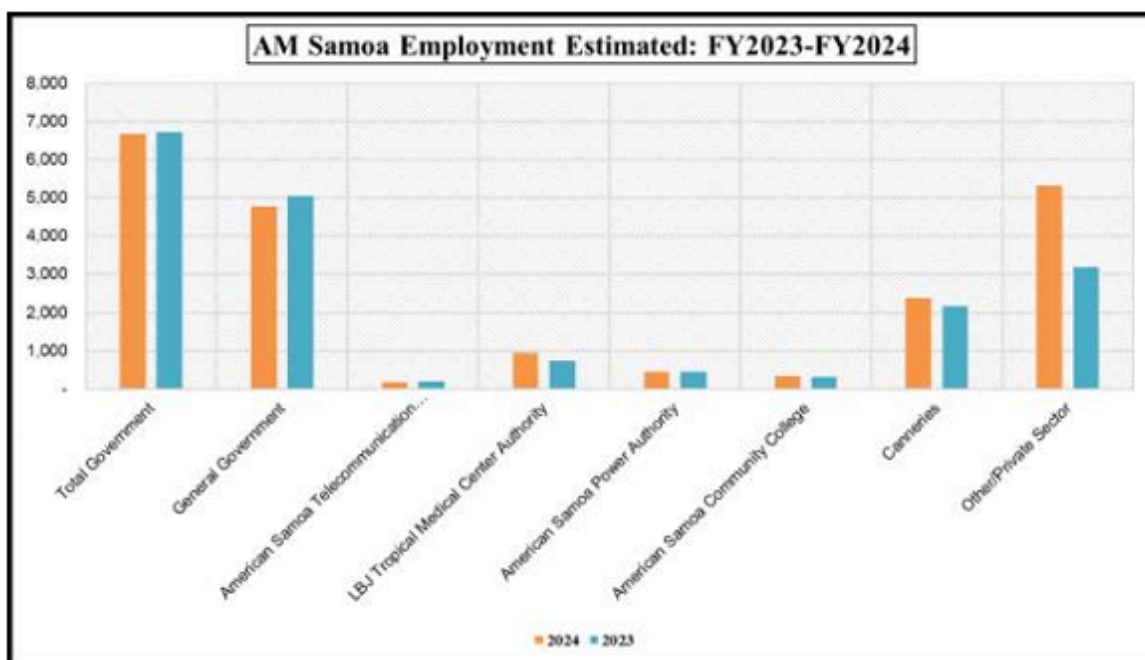
This sharp drop in FY2023 and the slight increase in FY2024 were largely due to changes in the private sector, while government jobs played a more consistent role throughout the period. For example, government employment acted as a stabilizing element: it continued to increase gradually even when overall employment fell. In FY2023, government jobs represented 55.6% of total employment, underscoring how heavily the government sector contributed to maintaining staffing levels during a difficult year. By FY2024, however, the government's share decreased slightly to 46.4%, which indicates that the private sector's partial recovery was not enough to outweigh the earlier decline and that overall composition remained altered.

At the same time, while government employment has continued to rise steadily, private sector jobs have started to fall below their 10-year average. This is an important signal because it implies that the private sector did not merely pause hiring—it moved into a weaker pattern compared with its longer-term baseline. As a result, the employment landscape appears to be shifting toward a greater reliance on government employment, with the private sector no longer providing the same level of support as it has typically done over the last decade.

Table 10.1 CURRENT EMPLOYMENT ESTIMATES: 2013 TO 2024

Labor force status	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Total Employment	14,388	12,122	16,925	17,018	16,399	16,783	16,472	16,408	17,930	17,853	17,565	16,089
Total Government	6,677	6,739	7,224	6,877	6,614	6,195	5,498	5,849	6,585	6,804	6,556	6,198
General Government	4,777	5,050	5,456	5,087	4,814	4,417	3,894	4,268	4,898	5,217	4,840	4,614
American Samoa Telecommunication Authority	183	188	177	179	194	165	188	176	209	182	184	170
LBJ Tropical Medical Center Authority	937	752	884	893	902	921	748	743	738	725	744	642
American Samoa Power Authority	448	440	429	430	421	410	393	395	452	403	480	483
American Samoa Community College	332	309	278	288	283	282	275	267	288	277	308	289
Carriers	2,384	2,180	2,275	2,631	2,361	2,533	2,573	2,312	2,843	2,759	2,500	2,108
Other/Private Sector	5,327	3,203	7,426	7,510	7,424	8,055	8,401	8,247	8,502	8,290	8,509	7,783

SOURCE: DOC Statistics and Analysis Division.



ii. Labor Market Trends

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

Fair Labor Standards Act – Minimum Wage Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-28) establishes minimum wage requirements for eighteen industry classifications in American Samoa.

The legislation stipulates incremental wage increases of \$0.40 per hour every three years (e.g., 2018, 2021, 2024) until the territory's minimum wage reaches parity with the U.S.

federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour. Effective July 1, 2021, the American Samoa Government increased the minimum wage for government employees to \$7.25 per hour, aligning with the federal standard.

In 2020, the median household income in American Samoa was recorded at \$28,352, with total aggregate income for residents approaching \$419 million that year. Per capita income demonstrated notable growth, rising from \$6,311 in 2010 to \$8,425 in 2020, indicating an upward trajectory in individual earnings. Despite these gains, economic vulnerability persists, as 54.6% of individuals and 50.7% of families resided below the national poverty line in 2020. Additionally, the role of extended family structures remains significant; among the 3,974 grandparents living with their grandchildren, 63.6% were responsible for caregiving, underscoring the importance of intergenerational support in childcare within the territory.

Table 10.2. LABOR FORCE: 2000, 2005, 2010 & 2020

Subject	2020	2010	2005	2000
Persons 16 yrs. & over	32,727	34,767	39,460	33,945
In labor force	18,357	18,387	23,650	17,664
Percent of persons 16 years and over	56.1	62.6	59.9	52.0
Civilian labor force	18,174	18,300	23,650	17,627
Employed	15,780	16,616	21,290	16,718
Also did subsistence activity	-	1,614	-	2,904
Unemployed	2,394	1,684	2,360	909
Unemployment rate	13.2	9.2	10.0	5.2
Armed Forces	183	87	-	37
Not in labor force	14,370	16,380	15,810	16,281
Subsistence activity only	-	633	-	2,276

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census of Population & 2000 Census of Population, 2005 American Samoa Household Income and Expenditure Survey - Preliminary Report.

Table 10.3. AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT BY STATUS: 2013 TO 2024

Year	Total	Contract employees	Local hire employees	Special programs
2024	4,777	..	..	..
2023	5,050	..	..	..
2022	5,456	500	4,567	382
2021	5,087	393	4,317	377
2020	4,814	..	..	..
2019	4,417	..	..	..
2018	3,894	..	..	..
2017	4,268	485	3,147	636
2016	4,898	1,018	3,089	791
2015	5,217	1,287	3,027	903
2014	4,840	1,399	3,345	96
2013	4,614	529	3,901	184

NOTE: General Government Employment excluding Government Enterprises and Breakdown by employment type is not available for 2018-2020.

Revision in bold/italics

SOURCE: Department of Human Resources, Personnel Division.

Table 10.4. EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY DISTRICT AND COUNTY, AMERICAN SAMOA: 2010 and 2020

	Total 16+ years	In labor force							Not in labor force	
		Total	Civilian labor force				Unemployed	Armed Forces	Total	Subsist. only
			Employed		Unemployed					
			Total	Subsistence	Number	Percent				
Employment Status 2020	32,727	18,357	18,174	15,780	-	2,394	7.3	183	14,370	-
DISTRICTS 2010										
American Samoa	34,767	18,387	18,300	16,616	1,614	1,684	9.2	87	16,380	633
Eastern District	14,670	7,801	7,755	6,981	649	774	10.0	46	6,869	221
Manu'a District	717	378	378	338	151	40	10.6	-	339	91
Swains Island	15	3	3	3	-	-	-	-	12	2
Western District	19,365	10,205	10,164	9,294	814	870	8.6	41	9,160	319
COUNTIES 2010										
Ituau	3,044	1,643	1,636	1,500	139	136	8.3	7	1,401	51
Ma'oputasi	6,539	3,557	3,539	3,145	295	394	11.1	18	2,982	100
Sa'ole	1,356	688	684	617	73	67	9.8	4	668	33
Sua	2,124	1,087	1,077	979	86	98	9.1	10	1,037	18
Vaifanua	1,607	826	819	740	56	79	9.6	7	781	19
Faleasao	112	68	68	61	22	7	10.3	-	44	5
Fitiuta	169	84	84	77	28	7	8.3	-	85	29
Ofu	116	67	67	58	42	9	13.4	-	49	30
Olosega	106	66	66	54	38	12	18.2	-	40	18
Ta'u	214	93	93	88	21	5	5.4	-	121	9
Swains Island	15	3	3	3	-	-	-	-	12	2
Lealataua	3,195	1,729	1,722	1,535	191	187	10.9	7	1,466	51
Leasina	1,117	576	575	491	43	84	14.6	1	541	21
Tualatai	2,149	1,124	1,121	991	87	130	11.6	3	1,025	37
Tualata	12,904	6,776	6,746	6,277	493	469	7.0	30	6,128	210

NOTE: 2020 Census data is only available in aggregate totals.

SOURCE: 2010 American Samoa Census Profile ; 2020 Census Demographic Profile

Table 10.5. WORK STATUS IN 2009 BY DISTRICT AND GENDER: 2010

Status	Total	District		
		Eastern	Western	Manu'a/ Swains
16 years and over, worked in 2009	34,767	14,670	19,365	732
Males	17,400	7,373	9,643	384
Worked in 2009	10,480	4,424	5,829	227
1 to 13 weeks	441	175	262	4
14 to 26 weeks	286	108	176	2
27 to 39 weeks	500	228	267	5
40 to 47 weeks	634	320	310	4
48 to 49 weeks	365	203	158	4
50 to 52 weeks	8,254	3,390	4,656	208
Did not work in 2009	6,920	2,949	3,814	157
Females	17,367	7,297	9,722	348
Worked in 2009	8,025	3,350	4,543	132
1 to 13 weeks	333	134	197	2
14 to 26 weeks	328	129	193	6
27 to 39 weeks	417	164	249	4
40 to 47 weeks	525	239	275	11
48 to 49 weeks	314	152	157	5
50 to 52 weeks	6,108	2,532	3,472	104
Did not work in 2009	9,342	3,947	5,179	216

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010 Census American Samoa.

Table 10.6. OCCUPATION FOR DISTRICT AND COUNTY, AMERICAN SAMOA: 2010

District County	Employed civilian population 16 years and over	Management, professional, related occupation	Service occupations
DISTRICTS			
American Samoa	16,616	4,464	2,799
Eastern District	6,981	1,727	1,274
Manu'a District	338	125	70
Swains Island	3	2	-
Western District	9,294	2,610	1,455
COUNTIES			
Ituau	1,500	364	241
Ma'oputasi	3,145	753	492
Sa'ole	617	164	117
Sua	979	267	221
Vaifanua	740	179	203
Faleasao	61	23	11
Fitiuta	77	23	21
Ofu	58	20	15
Olosega	54	22	9
Ta'u	88	37	14
Swains Island	3	2	-
Lealataua	1,535	428	305
Leasina	491	109	73
Tualatai	991	280	157
Tualauta	6,277	1,793	920

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Table 10.6. OCCUPATION FOR DISTRICT AND COUNTY, AMERICAN SAMOA: 2010 (continued)

District County	Sales and office occupations	Construction, extraction maintenance	Production, transportation, and material moving
DISTRICTS			
American Samoa	3,497	2,357	3,499
Eastern District	1,451	1,011	1,518
Manu'a District	38	75	30
Swains Island	1	-	-
Western District	2,007	1,271	1,951
COUNTIES			
Ituau	364	221	310
Ma'oputasi	649	498	753
Sa'ole	120	87	129
Sua	205	121	165
Vaifanua	113	84	161
Faleasao	8	13	6
Fitiuta	7	15	11
Ofu	8	11	4
Olosega	3	17	3
Ta'u	12	19	6
Swains Island	1	-	-
Lealataua	327	206	269
Leasina	84	80	145
Tualatai	206	133	215
Tualauta	1,390	852	1,322

SOURCE: 2010 American Samoa Census Profile

Table 10.7. INDUSTRY FOR DISTRICT AND COUNTY, AMERICAN SAMOA: 2010 & 2020

	Employed	Agriculture forestry, fishing & hunting mining	Construc- tion	Manufac- turing	Wholesale trade	Retail trade	Transpor- tation, ware- housing, & utilities	Infor- mation	Finance insurance, real estate
BY INDUSTRY 2020	15,780	313	1,214	2,922	271	1,738	1,097	364	311
DISTRICTS 2010									
American Samoa	16,616	501	1,096	2,753	335	1,614	1,100	385	391
Eastern District	6,981	365	377	1,202	110	634	417	160	134
Manu'a District	338	4	51	2	1	7	46	5	1
Swains Island	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Western District	9,294	132	668	1,549	224	973	637	220	255
COUNTIES 2010									
Ituau	1,500	48	117	239	35	185	71	29	24
Ma'oputasi	3,145	269	121	619	38	317	205	74	86
Sa'ole	617	5	43	77	12	54	58	12	7
Sua	979	39	43	142	17	50	44	32	7
Vaifanua	740	4	53	125	8	28	39	13	10
Faleasao	61	-	12	-	-	1	9	-	-
Fitiuta	77	2	10	-	-	1	8	-	-
Ofu	58	-	8	-	-	-	14	3	-
Olosega	54	1	11	-	1	-	6	-	-
Ta'u	88	1	10	2	-	5	9	2	1
Swains Island	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Lealataua	1,535	11	106	188	27	134	94	26	38
Leasina	491	7	32	138	9	36	34	13	7
Tualatai	991	12	69	189	17	90	65	30	18
Tualauta	6,277	102	461	1,034	171	713	444	151	192

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Table 10.7. INDUSTRY FOR DISTRICT AND COUNTY, AMERICAN SAMOA: 2010 & 2020 (continued)

	Professional management, administrative	Education, health & social services	Arts, entertainment, recreation, hotel & food services	Other services, (except public administration)	Public administration
EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY 2020	505	3,495	1,038	602	1,910
DISTRICTS 2010					
American Samoa	330	3,324	932	626	3,229
Eastern District	118	1,383	370	209	1,502
Manu'a District	2	116	4	12	87
Swains Island	-	2	-	-	-
Western District	210	1,823	558	405	1,640
COUNTIES 2010					
Ituau	37	268	102	44	301
Ma'oputasi	38	529	185	97	567
Sa'ole	13	143	38	22	133
Sua	14	258	25	29	279
Vaifanua	16	185	20	17	222
Faleasao	-	25	-	1	13
Fitiuta	1	26	2	5	22
Ofu	-	24	-	3	6
Olosega	-	18	-	1	16
Ta'u	1	23	2	2	30
Swains Island	-	2	-	-	-
Lealataua	35	325	63	43	445
Leasina	5	86	26	8	90
Tualatai	13	199	49	33	207
Tualauta	157	1,213	420	321	898

NOTE: 2020 Census data is only available in aggregate totals.

SOURCE: 2010 American Samoa Census Profile

Table 10.8. CLASS OF WORKER FOR DISTRICT AND COUNTY, AMERICAN SAMOA: 2010 & 2020

	Employed civilian 16 years and over	Private wage and salary workers	Government workers	Self-employed in own not incor- porated business
CLASS OF WORKER 2020	15,780	9,103	6,193	484
DISTRICTS 2010				
American Samoa	16,616	8,839	7,257	520
Eastern District	6,981	3,536	3,224	221
Manu'a District	338	53	278	7
Swains Island	3	2	1	-
Western District	9,294	5,248	3,754	292
COUNTIES 2010				
Ituau	1,500	837	624	39
Ma'oputasi	3,145	1,812	1,229	104
Sa'ole	617	259	322	36
Sua	979	353	608	18
Vaifanua	740	275	441	24
Faleasao	61	12	46	3
Fitiuta	77	14	61	2
Ofu	58	10	48	-
Olosega	54	2	52	-
Ta'u	88	15	71	2
Swains Island	3	2	1	-
Lealataua	1,535	650	846	39
Leasina	491	299	188	4
Tualatai	991	523	443	25
Tualauta	6,277	3,776	2,277	224

NOTE: The 2020 Census data is only available in aggregate totals.

SOURCE: 2010 American Samoa Census Profile

Table 10.9. MINIMUM HOURLY WAGE RATES UNDER THE FAIR LABOR STANDARD ACT FOR AMERICAN SAMOA: 2001 - 2024

Industry	2024-2027	2021-2023	2018- 2020	2015- 2017	2009- 2014	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Tuna canning and processing, and can manufacturing	6.36	5.96	5.56	5.16	4.76	4.26	3.76	3.26	3.26	3.26	3.26	3.26	3.26
Petroleum marketing	6.95	6.55	6.15	5.75	5.35	4.85	4.35	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.82
Shipping and transportation:													
Classification A - Stevedoring lighterage and maritime shipping agency	7.19	6.79	6.39	5.99	5.59	5.09	4.59	4.09	4.09	4.09	4.09	4.09	4.03
Classification B - Unloading of fish	7.02	6.62	6.22	5.82	5.42	4.92	4.42	3.92	3.92	3.92	3.92	3.92	3.87
Classification C - All other activities	6.98	6.58	6.18	5.78	5.38	4.88	4.38	3.88	3.88	3.88	3.88	3.88	3.83
Construction	6.70	6.30	5.90	5.50	5.10	4.60	4.10	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.55
Retailing, wholesaling and warehousing	6.20	5.80	5.40	5.00	4.60	4.10	3.60	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.06
Bottling and dairy products	6.29	5.89	5.49	5.09	4.69	4.19	3.69	3.19	3.19	3.19	3.19	3.19	3.15
Printing	6.80	6.20	5.80	5.40	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.45
Finance and insurance	7.09	6.69	6.29	5.89	5.49	4.99	4.49	3.99	3.99	3.99	3.99	3.99	3.94
Ship maintenance	6.61	6.21	5.81	5.41	5.01	4.51	4.01	3.51	3.42	3.34	3.34	3.34	3.3
Tour and travel services	6.58	6.18	5.78	5.38	4.98	4.48	3.98	3.48	3.39	3.31	3.31	3.31	3.22
Hotel	6.10	5.70	5.30	4.90	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.00	2.93	2.86	2.86	2.86	2.82
Private hospitals and educational institutions	6.40	6.03	5.63	5.23	4.83	4.33	3.83	3.33	3.33	3.33	3.33	3.33	3.29
Government employees	7.25	7.25	5.21	4.81	4.41	3.91	3.41	2.91	2.84	2.77	2.77	2.77	2.73
Garment manufacturing industry	5.76	5.38	4.98	4.58	4.18	3.68	3.18	2.68	2.68	2.68	2.68	2.68	2.64
Publishing	6.73	6.33	5.93	5.53	5.13	4.63	4.13	3.63	3.63	3.63	3.63	3.63	3.58
Miscellaneous activities	5.80	5.40	5.00	4.60	4.20	3.70	3.20	2.70	2.63	2.57	2.57	2.57	2.54

Note: The Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-28) as amended, applies the minimum wage rates shown above to industries in American Samoa. This law also provides for additional increases in the minimum wage of \$0.40 per hour to occur every three (3) years (e.g. 2018, 2021, 2024, etc.) on September 30, until reaching the minimum wage generally applicable in the U.S.

The American Samoa Government raised the government's minimum wage from \$5.21 to the federal level of \$7.25 effective July 1st, 2021.

SOURCE: Federal Registers; U.S. Department of Labor.

Table 10.10. HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 2009 FOR DISTRICT AND COUNTY, AMERICAN SAMOA: 2010 & 2020

	House- holds	Less than \$2,500	\$2,500 to \$4,999	\$5,000 to \$9,999	\$10,000 to \$14,999	\$15,000 to \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$29,999	\$30,000 to \$39,999	\$40,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$74,999	\$75,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 to more	Median h-hold income (\$)	Mean h-hold income (\$)
HOUSEHOLD INCOME 2020	9,834	550	146	644	1,209	1,820	757	1,192	840	1,247	612	817	28,352	41,752
DISTRICTS 2010														
American Samoa	9,688	504	182	1,087	1,203	2,048	739	1,169	740	1,100	467	449	23,892	34,254
Eastern District	3,982	218	82	485	497	806	327	491	305	430	192	149	23,350	32,736
Manu'a District	282	30	7	40	43	76	20	28	13	17	6	2	17,614	22,053
Swains Island	6	1	-	-	1	1	-	2	-	1	-	-	27,500	27,161
Western District	5,418	255	93	562	662	1,165	392	648	422	652	269	298	24,705	36,012
COUNTIES 2010														
Ituau	818	46	15	110	90	168	65	104	68	72	49	31	23,276	32,858
Ma'oputasi	1,782	96	34	238	224	377	137	204	127	190	86	69	22,398	32,619
Sa'ole	406	24	10	51	52	82	36	57	25	46	13	10	22,647	29,584
Sua	543	33	11	45	67	96	47	72	54	68	25	25	27,438	35,877
Vaifanua	433	19	12	41	64	83	42	54	31	54	19	14	24,583	32,005
Faleasao	38	3	3	1	4	13	1	4	2	5	1	1	22,000	28,622
Finuta	66	8	2	9	11	16	8	8	1	3	-	-	17,917	18,833
Ofu	55	6	1	8	7	16	4	7	3	3	-	-	18,438	20,904
Olosega	45	4	-	9	11	8	3	2	4	2	2	-	13,125	21,544
Ta'u	78	9	1	13	10	23	4	7	3	4	3	1	16,500	22,682
Swains Island	6	1	-	-	1	1	-	2	-	1	-	-	27,500	27,161
Lealataua	875	39	16	93	103	181	60	119	79	99	42	44	25,430	34,866
Leasina	297	14	8	26	42	76	28	41	17	30	7	8	22,426	29,332
Tualatai	589	29	10	76	56	143	44	58	51	64	29	29	23,125	34,185
Tualuta	3,657	173	59	367	461	765	260	430	275	459	191	217	25,062	37,123

NOTE: The 2020 Census data is only available in aggregate totals.

SOURCE: 2010 American Samoa Census Profile

Table 10.11. PER CAPITA INCOME IN YEAR BEFORE CENSUS: 1969 TO 2019

Per capita income	American Samoa	Eastern	Western	Manu'a
Per capita income in 2019	\$8,425	-	-	-
Per capita income in 2009	\$6,311	\$6,191	\$6,429	\$5,441
Per capita income in 1999	\$4,357	\$4,350	\$4,356	\$4,509
Per capita income in 1989	\$3,039	\$3,090	\$3,067	\$2,025
Per capita income in 1979	\$1,867	\$1,860	\$1,971	\$1,165
Per capita income in 1969	\$596	\$656	\$586	\$200
1969 PCI in 1979 dollars	\$1,168	\$1,288	\$1,149	\$392
Percent change (2009-1999)	44.8	42.3	47.6	20.7

NOTE: The 2020 Census data is only available in aggregate totals.

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Censuses of Population.

Table 10.12. PLACE OF WORK FOR DISTRICT AND COUNTY, AMERICAN SAMOA: 2010 & 2020

	Workers 16 years and over	Worked in American Samoa			Worked outside American Samoa
		Total	Same county	Different county	
PLACE OF WORK 2020	15,724	15,367	11,335	4,032	357
DISTRICTS 2010					
American Samoa	16,482	16,430	12,386	4,044	52
Eastern District	6,946	6,912	6,609	303	34
Manu'a District	333	333	312	21	-
Swains Island	3	3	-	3	-
Western District	9,200	9,182	5,465	3,717	18
COUNTIES 2010					
Ituau	1,493	1,484	1,372	112	9
Ma'oputasi	3,113	3,101	3,003	98	12
Sa'ole	617	615	588	27	2
Sua	984	982	938	44	2
Vaifanua	739	730	708	22	9
Faleasao	60	60	57	3	-
Fitiuta	76	76	74	2	-
Ofu	58	58	56	2	-
Olosega	54	54	53	1	-
Ta'u	85	85	72	13	-
Swains Island	3	3	-	3	-
Leakhtaua	1,520	1,516	1,066	450	4
Leasina	485	485	259	226	-
Tuahtai	978	976	568	408	2
Tuahtuta	6,217	6,205	3,572	2,633	12

NOTE: The 2020 Census data is only available in aggregate totals.

SOURCE: 2010 American Samoa Census Profile

Table 10.13. PLACE OF WORK FOR VILLAGES, AMERICAN SAMOA: 2010

Village	Workers 16 years and over	Worked in American Samoa			Worked outside American Samoa
		Total	Same county	Different county	
Aasu	119	119	64	55	-
Afao	44	44	31	13	-
Afono	149	149	143	6	-
Agugulu	18	18	13	5	-
Alao	144	143	139	4	1
Alega	22	22	20	2	-
Alofau	185	185	176	9	-
Amaluia	37	37	24	13	-
Amanave	77	77	58	19	-
Amaua	31	31	29	2	-
Amouli	250	250	238	12	-
Anua	6	6	6	-	-
Aoa	217	217	206	11	-
Aoloau	183	183	92	91	-
Asili	49	49	40	9	-
Atu'u	115	112	111	1	3
Aua	566	564	544	20	2
Auasi	37	36	32	4	1
Auma	72	71	51	20	1
Aumi	52	52	49	3	-
Aunu'u	126	125	123	2	1
Auto	95	95	86	9	-
Avaio	13	13	12	1	-
Faga'alu	308	308	303	5	-
Faga'itua	145	145	138	7	-
Fagal'i	80	80	54	26	-
Fagamalo	13	13	11	2	-
Faganeanea	52	52	50	2	-
Fagasa	237	237	228	9	-
Fagatogo	559	556	539	17	3
Failolo	26	26	17	9	-
Faleasao	60	60	57	3	-
Falenu	538	537	273	264	1
Fatumafuti	29	29	28	1	-
Futiga	198	198	114	84	-
Ili'ili	983	981	579	402	2
Laul'i	246	244	242	2	2
Leloaloa	144	143	138	5	1
Leone	614	614	413	201	-
Leusoali'i	33	33	31	2	-

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Table 10.13. PLACE OF WORK FOR VILLAGES, AMERICAN SAMOA: 2010 (continued)

Village	Workers 16 years and over	Worked in American Samoa			Worked outside Americn Samoa
		Total	Same county	Different county	
Luma	46	46	35	11	-
Maia	43	43	43	-	-
Malaeimi	372	372	220	152	-
Malaeloa/A	183	183	103	80	-
Malaeloa/I	148	148	85	63	-
Maloata	6	6	3	3	-
Mapusagafou	302	302	192	110	-
Masausi	59	59	54	5	-
Masefau	114	114	109	5	-
Matu'u	124	124	118	6	-
Mesepa	159	159	84	75	-
Nua	32	32	17	15	-
Nu'uuli	1,296	1,287	1,008	279	9
Ofu	58	58	56	2	-
Olosega	52	52	51	1	-
Onenoa	36	36	36	-	-
Pagai	37	37	37	-	-
Pago Pago	1,069	1,066	1,033	33	3
Pava'ia'i	685	684	415	269	1
Poloa	53	51	37	14	2
Puapua	305	305	232	73	-
Sa'ilele	15	15	13	2	-
Satala	109	109	104	5	-
Se'etaga	82	82	60	22	-
Sili	2	2	2	-	-
Si'ufaga	39	39	37	2	-
Swains	3	3	-	3	-
Tafuna	2,432	2,426	1,478	948	6
Taputimu	235	234	133	101	1
Tula	137	134	131	3	3
Utulei	208	208	197	11	-
Utumea East	11	11	11	-	-
Utumea West	12	11	5	6	1
Utusia	14	14	14	-	-
Vailoatai	397	396	236	160	1
Vaitogi	530	528	299	229	2
Vatia	205	200	196	4	5

SOURCE: 2010 American Samoa Census Profile

Table 10.14. POVERTY STATUS AND WORKERS IN FAMILY IN 2009 BY ETHNIC ORIGIN OR RACE, AMERICAN SAMOA: 2010

	One Ethnic Origin or Race								Two or More Ethnic Origins or Races
	Total	Pacific Islander			Asian		Origin or Race		
		Total	Samoaan	Tongan	Native	Filipino		Asian	
All income levels in 2009									
All families [1,2]	8,834	8,638	7,725	299	91	207	109	207	196
With related children under 18 years	7,344	7,187	6,535	262	61	147	60	122	157
With related children age under 5 years	3,998	3,924	3,592	150	36	61	24	61	74
Families with female householder, no husband present [1,2]									
With related children under 18 years	1,630	1,592	1,479	41	16	33	11	12	38
With related children under 5 years	1,303	1,278	1,204	33	10	17	6	8	25
With related children under 5 years	660	652	618	19	5	6	2	2	8
All individuals									
Under 18 years	55,009	53,560	48,931	1,605	447	1,193	748	636	1,449
Related children under 18 years	23,185	22,423	21,301	625	100	226	80	91	762
18 to 64 years	23,110	22,356	21,254	624	99	225	64	90	754
18 years and over	29,567	28,922	25,654	907	329	938	640	454	645
65 years and over	31,824	31,137	27,630	980	347	967	668	545	687
Unrelated individuals	2,257	2,215	1,976	73	18	29	28	91	42
Unrelated individuals	2,709	2,611	1,390	77	119	394	432	199	98
Below poverty level in 2009									
All families [1,2]	4,810	4,752	4,311	227	47	87	44	36	58
With related children under 18 years	4,399	4,346	3,958	213	38	74	34	29	53
With related children under 5 years	2,592	2,560	2,337	127	24	39	16	17	32
Families with female householder, no husband present [1,2]									
With related children under 18 years	895	883	818	28	8	15	8	6	12
With related children under 5 years	787	778	728	25	6	9	5	5	9
With related children under 5 years	422	420	395	14	4	4	1	2	2

Continued on next page.

Table 10.14. POVERTY STATUS AND WORKERS IN FAMILY IN 2009 BY ETHNIC ORIGIN OR RACE, AMERICAN SAMOA: 2010 (Continued)

	One Ethnic Origin or Race							Two or More Ethnic Origins or Races	
	Total	Pacific Islander			Asian		Origin or Race		
		Total	Samoaan	Tongan	Native	Filipino			Asian
Individuals with Income in 2009									
Below 50 percent of poverty level	15,048	14,847	13,435	810	137	225	167	73	201
Below 125 percent of poverty level	37,167	36,438	33,307	1,391	296	779	492	173	729
Below 185 percent of poverty level	45,549	44,558	40,934	1,489	368	970	569	228	991
Workers in family in 2009									
Families [1,2]	8,834	8,638	7,725	299	91	207	109	207	196
No workers	786	779	702	33	10	7	11	16	7
1 worker	2,798	2,746	2,427	128	35	38	33	85	52
2 workers	3,102	3,030	2,693	85	35	86	45	86	72
3 workers	2,148	2,083	1,903	53	11	76	20	20	65
Mean family income (dollars) [1,2]									
No workers	14,339	13,861	13,864	4,267	10,050	2,971	3,982	47,494	67,529
1 worker	22,150	21,926	21,243	12,984	23,049	19,518	35,382	50,296	33,940
2 workers	35,750	35,427	34,699	25,028	35,571	30,676	44,029	68,676	49,364
3 or more weeks	57,694	57,525	58,036	38,802	48,791	42,946	60,275	116,025	63,106

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census American Samoa.

Table 10.15. INDIVIDUAL POVERTY STATUS FOR DISTRICT AND COUNTY, AMERICAN SAMOA: 2010 & 2020

	Number in Poverty						Percent in Poverty					
	Individuals	18 years and over	65 years and over	Related children 0-17 yrs.	Related children 5-17 yrs.	Unrelated individual 15+ years	Individuals	18 years and over	65 years and over	Related children 0-17 yrs.	Related children 5-17 yrs.	Unrelated individual 15+ years
Below Poverty level 2019	26,480	15,116	1,142	11,310	8,487	1,856	54.6	49.5	36.7	63.1	62.8	69.6
DISTRICTS 2010												
American Samoa	31,809	16,727	847	15,009	10,694	1,882	57.8	52.6	37.5	64.7	46.3	69.5
Eastern District	13,191	7,170	377	5,995	4,268	978	57.7	54.4	44.4	64.1	71.2	71.4
Manu'a District	740	401	34	337	248	55	64.8	54.2	4.0	71.2	73.6	67.9
Swains Island	2	2	-	-	-	2	11.8	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Western District	17,876	9,154	436	8,677	6,178	847	57.7	51.2	51.3	65.3	71.2	67.4
COUNTIES 2010												
Ituau	2,644	1,501	69	1,136	788	223	57.0	56.8	2.6	62.0	29.8	73.8
Ma'oputasi	5,991	3,253	163	2,729	1,934	563	58.7	54.3	2.7	65.5	32.3	70.8
Sa'ole	1,329	691	41	637	456	62	60.9	52.0	3.1	68.0	34.3	66.0
Sua	1,767	954	57	812	617	80	53.4	54.0	3.2	59.7	34.9	67.2
Vaifanua	1,460	771	47	681	473	50	57.6	52.8	3.2	64.3	32.4	83.3
Faleasao	74	42	4	32	26	11	45.7	56.8	5.4	56.1	35.1	55.0
Fitiuta	205	108	15	97	72	9	75.9	52.7	7.3	84.3	35.1	64.3
Ofu	99	60	4	39	35	7	56.3	60.6	4.0	61.9	35.4	50.0
Olosega	99	54	4	45	34	8	55.9	54.5	4.0	60.8	34.3	80.0
Ta'u	263	137	7	124	81	20	73.7	52.1	2.7	75.6	30.8	87.0
Swains Island	2	2	-	-	-	2	11.8	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Lealataua	2,755	1,438	77	1,306	939	148	54.4	52.2	2.8	61.7	34.1	71.5
Leasina	1,171	610	30	559	391	28	64.8	52.1	2.6	73.2	33.4	62.2
Tualatai	2,110	1,061	37	1,045	749	88	59.5	50.3	1.8	66.4	35.5	68.2
Tualauta	11,840	6,045	292	5,767	4,099	583	57.6	51.1	2.5	65.3	34.6	66.6

NOTE: The 2020 Census data is only available in aggregate totals.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census American Samoa.

iii. Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

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

To effectively address the educational and skill level requirements of the American Samoa workforce, the American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB), in collaboration with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) core partners and the territory's employers, must strategically tackle the following critical content areas. This coordinated effort is essential for fostering a competitive and skilled local labor market.

Education as a Foundation: a robust and accessible educational foundation is the bedrock of a skilled workforce. Efforts must focus on strengthening K-12 education, ensuring high school graduates possess foundational literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking skills necessary for post-secondary education or entry-level employment. This also necessitates improving career

pathways counseling and integrating career and technical education (CTE) early in the curriculum to expose students to various in-demand trades and professions.

Skill Development Need: The current workforce requires targeted upskilling and reskilling to meet the evolving demands of local industries, particularly in sectors such as tourism, sustainable development, healthcare, and technology. There is a pressing need for programs that provide specialized vocational training, apprenticeship opportunities, and certifications in high-demand fields. This includes soft skills training (e.g., communication, teamwork, problem-solving), which are universally valued by employers but often cited as lacking. Focus must be placed on rapidly developing technical skills through short-term, intensive training modules to quickly bridge existing skill gaps.

Impact on Employment: A lack of alignment between the skills of the workforce and the needs of employers directly contributes to underemployment, high turnover rates, and a reliance on imported labor for specialized roles. By investing in relevant skill development, American Samoa can achieve several positive outcomes:

- **Increased Local Employment:** More skilled residents will qualify for higher-wage jobs, reducing unemployment and increasing overall economic participation.
- **Enhanced Economic Competitiveness:** A skilled workforce attracts and retains businesses, contributing to economic diversification and growth.
- **Improved Productivity:** Employees with the right skills are more efficient and productive, leading to better outcomes for local businesses.
- **Reduced Brain Drain:** Providing opportunities for advanced skill development locally can help retain talented young professionals.

Future Skills Outlook: Proactive planning for the skills of the future is crucial for long-term economic resilience. The ASWDB must analyze global and regional trends, anticipating the skills that will be necessary for jobs in the next five to ten years. Key areas include:

- **Digital Literacy and Technology:** Proficiency in basic computing, data analysis, and familiarity with emerging technologies (e.g., automation, cybersecurity) are becoming essential across all sectors.
- **Green Skills:** As the territory focuses on climate change resilience and sustainability, skills related to renewable energy installation, sustainable agriculture, and environmental management will be in high demand.
- **Entrepreneurship and Innovation:** Fostering a culture of innovation requires skills in business development, market analysis, and creative problem-solving to encourage local enterprise and job creation.

Policy Implications: To effectively implement these strategies, supportive policies and legislative changes are necessary. This includes:

- **Streamlining WIOA Partner Collaboration:** Developing formal mechanisms to ensure seamless coordination and data sharing among ASWDB, education providers, and government agencies.
- **Incentivizing Employer Engagement:** Creating tax incentives or grant programs for local employers who invest in on-the-job training, registered apprenticeships, and providing feedback on skill needs.
- **Funding and Resource Allocation:** Advocating for sufficient and flexible funding to support quality training programs, adult basic education, and career services that are responsive to immediate and future workforce needs.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Implementing a robust labor market information system to regularly collect, analyze, and disseminate data on in-demand occupations, wage levels, and skill shortages to inform program development and resource allocation.

iv. Comparison of Economic and Workforce Analytical Conclusion. Describe areas of opportunity for meeting hiring, education, and skills needs identified in the economy compared to the assets available in the labor force in the state.

Comparison of Economic and Workforce Analytical Conclusion: Bridging the Gap Between Opportunity and Asset. This analytical conclusion serves to compare and synthesize the findings from recent economic assessments and workforce analyses within American Samoa, specifically focusing on identifying areas of opportunity for meeting critical hiring, education, and skills needs. A comparison of the identified economic demands with the existing assets and capabilities of the current labor force is essential for strategic planning.

I. Economic Demand and Identified Opportunities: The current economic landscape in American Samoa, driven primarily by the canning industry (tuna processing), government services, and a nascent tourism sector, presents distinct areas of opportunity:

- **Manufacturing/Industrial:** The tuna processing sector remains the largest private employer. While entry-level production roles are consistently in demand, there is a growing need for skilled maintenance technicians, industrial electricians, quality assurance specialists, and supply chain logistics managers.
- **Healthcare and Social Assistance:** With an aging population and ongoing efforts to modernize the healthcare infrastructure, there is a critical and immediate need for registered nurses, certified nurse assistants, medical technologists, and specialists in

fields like physical and occupational therapy.

- **Information Technology and Communications:** As digitization efforts expand across government and private businesses, opportunities are emerging for

II. Conclusion: Areas of Opportunity for Alignment

The principal areas of opportunity for aligning the workforce assets with economic demands lie in targeted investment in high-demand, credential-based training and strategic educational partnerships.

1. **Prioritize STEM and CTE Pathways:** Significant investment is required to bolster Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) curricula, focusing on certification-based training in industrial maintenance, IT networking, and electrical trades to feed the immediate needs of the canning and government sectors. cybersecurity analysts, network administrators, software developers (particularly those skilled in mobile applications and local language interfaces), and IT support specialists.
2. **Sustainable and Renewable Energy:** American Samoa's long-term energy goals require a workforce skilled in solar panel installation, maintenance of renewable energy systems, and energy grid management. This represents a significant, yet currently underserved, area of future opportunity.
3. **Tourism and Hospitality:** Growth in eco-tourism and cultural tourism demands skilled workers in hotel management, culinary arts, certified tour guiding (with a focus on cultural and environmental knowledge), and specialized customer service.

III. Labor Force Assets and Challenges: The existing American Samoan labor force possesses several key assets, but also faces structural challenges that create gaps with economic demand:

Assets:

- **Strong Cultural Foundation:** The local workforce demonstrates strong communal ties, a high degree of adaptability, and a powerful work ethic rooted in traditional Samoan values (Fa'a Samoa).
- **High Literacy Rate:** The population generally maintains a high baseline literacy rate, providing a strong foundation for technical training.
- **Existing Technical Infrastructure:** The local community college and vocational training centers provide foundational skills in construction trades, basic automotive repair, and administrative support.

Challenges and Gaps:

Area of Economic Demand	Labor Force Gap/Challenge
Specialized Technical Skills (e.g., Industrial Maintenance, IT, Renewable Energy)	Shortage of workers with accredited certifications, specific trade licenses, or degrees in highly technical fields. Reliance on imported labor for specialized roles.
Advanced Healthcare Professionals (e.g., RNs, Medical Techs)	Limited local capacity for degree programs, resulting in significant "brain drain" as students train off-island and do not return.
Management and Leadership	A lack of middle-to-senior management experience in the private sector, often leading to promotions based on tenure rather than formal management training or relevant degrees.
Soft Skills/Work Readiness	A need for enhanced workplace soft skills, including professional communication, time management, and critical thinking, to meet international business standards.

- 4. Develop Healthcare Retention Strategies:** Establish robust scholarship and stipend programs linked to mandatory return-to-service agreements for students pursuing nursing and medical technology degrees off-island. Furthermore, expand local capacity for accredited entry-level healthcare certifications (e.g., CNA, Phlebotomy).
- 5. Cultivate Entrepreneurship and Small Business Support:** Recognize small businesses as a critical job creator. Provide resources for mentorship, financial literacy, and digital marketing skills to empower local entrepreneurs, particularly in the emerging tourism and artisanal sectors.
- 6. Enhance Digital Literacy:** Implement universal digital literacy training programs to ensure the entire labor force can engage with the increasing demand for technological integration across all industries, from administrative tasks to advanced manufacturing controls.

By focusing on these strategic areas, American Samoa can effectively bridge the skills gap,

converting economic opportunities into sustained employment for its local labor force.

II.a.2 Workforce Development, Education, and Training Activities Analysis

A. The State's Workforce Development Activities

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

Department of Human Resources-WIOA has established partnerships with prestige platforms such as the Job Corps that have been around for decades providing workforce development and opportunities across the Pacific realm. In the month of April, Hawaii Job Corp Center representatives flew to American Samoa to outreach and recruit people for jobs in their programs out of Hawaii. Another group that will be traveling to American Samoa to recruit workers are called Riverview Senior Living. These organizations have enabled development activities to include education and training activities for the job seekers community. The Department of Human Resources-WIOA has successfully cultivated robust partnerships with several prominent organizations, significantly broadening the scope of workforce development opportunities available to the community. A cornerstone of these collaborations is the longstanding relationship with the Job Corps, a prestigious platform that has been at the forefront of providing comprehensive workforce training and development across the Pacific realm for decades.

A recent, notable engagement demonstrating the strength of this partnership occurred in April, when representatives from the Hawaii Job Corps Center traveled directly to American Samoa. Their visit was highly focused on community outreach and the direct recruitment of local residents for various education, training, and job opportunities available through their programs based in Hawaii. This initiative provides a vital pathway for American Samoans seeking to gain specialized skills and secure employment outside the territory.

In addition to the Job Corps collaboration, the Department is also facilitating recruitment efforts with other key organizations. Later this year, a recruitment team from Riverview Senior Living is scheduled to travel to American Samoa. Riverview Senior Living represents a significant opportunity in the healthcare and elder care sectors, seeking to recruit dedicated workers to join their facilities.

These strategic organizational partnerships—including, but not limited to, the Hawaii Job Corps Center and Riverview Senior Living—are fundamental to the Department of Human Resources-WIOA's mission. They are instrumental in enabling and funding development

activities, critically including comprehensive education and training programs, designed specifically to empower and equip the local job seeker community with the necessary skills and certifications to thrive in both local and international job markets.

Apprenticeship: The overarching objective of American Samoa's workforce development initiatives is to ensure the tangible success of participants through comprehensive, hands-on training and rigorous educational activities. Apprenticeship programs are the critical mechanism through which this goal is realized, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical, in-demand workplace skills.

To guarantee the availability and quality of trades training, the workforce development strategy involves key collaborative partnerships. A significant alliance has been established with the Hawaiian Job Corps, a respected institution known for its structured vocational training programs. This collaboration provides a pathway for participants to access diverse and high-quality training methodologies. Furthermore, a partnership with Riverview Assisted Living Services directly supports training within the vital healthcare sector, offering a realistic clinical environment for aspiring professionals. Through these focused collaborations, the successful execution of trades training is a guaranteed component of the State Plan.

The trades and professions selected for these focused apprenticeship programs are strategically aligned with the current and projected labor market demands within American Samoa. The local economy frequently seeks skilled workers in the following high-priority areas:

1. **Welding:** Essential for infrastructure, construction, ship maintenance, and various industrial applications across the islands.
2. **Information Technology (IT):** Critical for modernizing the territorial government, supporting the rapidly growing private sector, and enhancing overall digital literacy and security.
3. **Engineering (Civil and Mechanical):** Vital for planning, designing, and maintaining public works, utilities, and major construction projects that drive economic growth.
4. **Healthcare:** Encompassing nursing assistants, medical records specialists, and other support roles crucial for improving the capacity and quality of public health services and long-term care for the territory's population.

These apprenticeship opportunities are designed to be career pathways, not just temporary training, providing participants with industry-recognized certifications and the practical

experience necessary for immediate and long-term employment success within the territory. The commitment to these programs ensures a sustainable pipeline of highly skilled local talent to meet the evolving needs of American Samoa's economy.

Community College Programs: The Trades and Technical Department established the Apprenticeship and Workforce Development (AWD) program to manage, develop, and carry out training initiatives. This aligns with the Trade and Technical Department's Mission Statement and ASCC Governance policies, which aim to "upgrade skills of incumbent workers" and "to provide current, relevant and applicable training in building occupational skills and technical capabilities of both traditional and non-traditional students and incumbent workers leading to a national certification and/or professional licensure." These efforts support the territory's workforce, economic, and community development. The training programs offered are effective, flexible, short-term, and convenient. Participants may be required to take English and Math courses through the Adult Education Literacy and Extended Learning (AELEL) program, based on the results of the AELEL Placement Test. AELEL English and Math courses can be taken at the same time as the AWD training programs. Participants will receive Continuing Education Units (CEU); however, CEUs are not equivalent to college credit. The training areas include:

- Air Condition and Refrigeration Technician
- Auto Body Technician
- Automotive Technician
- AutoCAD (Draftsman)
- Business
- Computer Networking
- Construction Worker
- Diesel
- Electrician
- Information Technology
- Land Surveying
- OSHA
- Welder

Job Readiness Workshops: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program, in close collaboration with its core partners, plays a crucial role in preparing job applicants for the modern workforce. These collaborative efforts, specifically involving the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and the Adult Education Learning Act (AELA), as well as the Department of Human Resources (DHR) - WIOA, focus on a comprehensive approach to skill enhancement.

A key component of this initiative is the series of Job Readiness Workshops. These workshops are meticulously designed to offer essential guidance to applicants, with a particular emphasis on improving crucial soft skills. Among these, typing proficiency is highlighted as a fundamental requirement for most administrative and office-based roles in today's digital environment. The curriculum covers a range of topics including effective communication, professional demeanor, interview techniques, and the development of a strong work ethic, all aimed at increasing an applicant's competitiveness in the job market.

Further strengthening this commitment to workforce development is the annual Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). This program is a cornerstone of WIOA's youth services and is specifically structured to cater to individuals between the ages of 16 and 24. SYEP provides a robust platform for comprehensive job readiness training and workshops, often integrating paid work experience with educational components. The program's design ensures that younger applicants not only receive theoretical instruction on job readiness but also gain practical, hands-on experience, thereby bridging the gap between education and employment. The goal of both the general workshops and the specialized youth program is to cultivate a skilled, capable, and ready workforce for American Samoa.

B. THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

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

The strengths of the workforce development program and activities is the opportunities of expansion for families to earn better living through higher pay. The workforce have become more in-tune with applying their newly acquired skills in the workplace. The workforce development program and its associated activities are built upon several key strengths, foremost among which is the substantial opportunity they provide for family economic advancement. By equipping individuals with higher-demand skills, the program creates pathways to employment that offers significantly better pay, thus enabling families to achieve a higher standard of living and greater financial stability.

Furthermore, a significant positive outcome has been the noticeable shift in the workforce's engagement with their training. Participants are demonstrating a greater integration and application of their newly acquired competencies directly into their work environments. This successful transition from the classroom or training site to the actual workplace is a critical indicator of the program's effectiveness, ensuring that the skills taught are relevant, practical, and immediately valuable to employers, thereby boosting overall productivity and individual career progression.

The core strengths of American Samoa's workforce development programs are deeply rooted in their capacity to generate substantial, tangible economic benefits for participating families. Foremost among these is the significant opportunity for family economic advancement. By strategically identifying and delivering training in high-demand, specialized skills, the program directly creates pathways to employment that offer considerably higher wages than previously accessible roles. This direct financial improvement is not merely a marginal increase in income; it represents a fundamental shift in the economic trajectory of families, enabling them to achieve a demonstrably higher standard of living, build greater financial resilience, and secure long-term stability. The ability to move families out of low-wage cycles and into careers offering sustainable, living wages is arguably the program's most profound and impactful outcome.

Furthermore, a critical and highly encouraging strength is the noticeable transformation in how the workforce engages with and applies their newly acquired expertise. There has been a significant positive shift in the integration of skills, with participants actively and effectively transferring their competencies from the learning environment—be it a classroom, workshop, or on-the-job training site—directly into their daily work environments. This successful transition and immediate practical application of knowledge is a pivotal indicator of the program's overall effectiveness and quality. It demonstrates that the training curriculum is not only relevant and rigorous but is also directly aligned with the current, practical needs of local employers. This seamless integration boosts immediate workplace productivity, validates the investment made in the training, and ensures that the skills provided are immediately valuable to businesses across the territory. This successful transition ultimately leads to accelerated individual career progression, increased job satisfaction, and a more competitive and highly-skilled American Samoan workforce overall.

The weakness is simply the lack of support from the government in collaborative efforts to ensure a seamless transition for trained individuals and also lacking the drive to put more time and money into improving the workers, versus hiring more people. A major weakness is the government's insufficient support for collaborative efforts, which hinders a smooth transition for trained individuals. Furthermore, there is a lack of emphasis and investment—in both time and funding—on improving the existing workforce, with a preference for simply hiring more personnel. The most significant weakness facing our workforce development and talent retention efforts stems directly from the government's insufficient and often inconsistent support for truly collaborative initiatives. This lack of robust governmental commitment acts as a critical bottleneck, severely hindering a smooth and effective transition for individuals who have successfully completed

specialized training programs. Instead of these newly skilled professionals being seamlessly absorbed into relevant public sector roles where their expertise is most needed, the system often leaves them unsupported, resulting in a failure to maximize the return on investment in their training.

Furthermore, a pervasive organizational preference exists for addressing human capital gaps through the short-sighted solution of **simply hiring more personnel** rather than prioritizing and investing in the existing workforce. This preference is evidenced by a palpable lack of emphasis and investment—both in terms of dedicated time and necessary funding—on continuous professional development, upskilling, and reskilling programs for current employees. The focus is overwhelmingly on external recruitment to fill immediate needs, which neglects the substantial long-term benefits of fostering loyalty, increasing institutional knowledge, and boosting the overall capability and morale of the established workforce. This failure to adequately invest in internal capacity building represents a fundamental systemic weakness that undermines sustainable growth and efficient public service delivery.

C. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

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

1.Programmatic Capacity: The ability of State entities to design, implement, manage, and sustain high-quality workforce programs, including sector-specific training, registered apprenticeships, on-the-job training, career counseling, and job placement services. This involves reviewing the current portfolio of services and identifying gaps or redundancies.

The orchestration of workforce development initiatives in American Samoa is centrally managed under the **Department of Human Resources (DHR)**, which is designated as the lead agency for the implementation of the **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)** programs. This strategic alignment is crucial for expanding the programmatic capacity, ensuring effective management, and promoting the long-term sustainability of vital workforce initiatives across the territory. As the overarching governmental body, the Department of Human Resources maintains a comprehensive focus on the local workforce ecosystem. Its responsibilities are broad and include critical oversight functions related to the territorial government's hiring needs:

- **Workforce Oversight:** DHR maintains a strategic view of the local labor market, identifying skill gaps and employment needs.
- **Personnel Management:** DHR, specifically through its Personnel Division, oversees

the standardized government processes for **recruitment, screening, and the ultimate hiring** of individuals across various government departments and agencies. This centralized hiring authority ensures consistency and adherence to merit-based principles within the American Samoa Government (ASG).

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) — Programmatic Implementation

Operating **under the purview** of DHR, WIOA acts as the primary mechanism for delivering specific, federally-funded workforce training and education services. WIOA's distinct role involves:

- **Targeted Recruitment and Selection:** WIOA maintains its own, distinct **recruitment and selection procedures**. These processes are meticulously governed by specific **requirements established by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)**, ensuring compliance with federal standards for eligibility and service provision. This separation of function allows WIOA to focus resources on eligible participants seeking career advancement through specialized training.
- **Provision of Short-Term Training Services:** WIOA offers a portfolio of critical, time-limited training programs designed to quickly enhance participant skills and employability. These services include:
 - **Work-Based Learning (WBL):** Providing participants with practical, hands-on experience in an actual work setting.
 - **On-the-Job Training (OJT):** Offering subsidized training to employers to offset the cost of skills development for new hires or current employees.
 - **Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP):** A crucial initiative focused on providing young individuals with foundational work experience, professional development, and income generation during the summer months.

Overarching Goal and Career Pathway Integration: The collaborative efforts between the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) are unified by a singular, overarching objective: **to prepare participants for successful entry into the career pathway**. This goal is achieved by ensuring that every participant receives **adequate, high-quality training and education** tailored to the needs of the local economy. The true measure of success is the participant's readiness to enter the workforce, culminating in the final step of the career preparation cycle: **being hired through the Personnel Division of DHR**. This integrated model ensures a seamless transition from WIOA-provided training to stable employment within the ASG or the local private sector, effectively bridging the gap between education, training, and long-term career success.

Infrastructure and Resource Capacity

An evaluation of the physical infrastructure (e.g., training facilities, equipment, technology) and financial resources (e.g., dedicated funding streams, grant management capability) available to support these activities. This should address the adequacy of facilities for accommodating anticipated participant numbers and the suitability of equipment for modern industry standards.

The Department of Human Resources (DHR) in American Samoa, which includes the federally-funded Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Division, recently underwent a significant logistical change. This necessity arose from the mandated vacating of the entire Executive Office Building (EOB) in mid-2025, which required all residing governmental departments and agencies to secure new premises.

In response to this major transition, DHR, along with its WIOA Division, successfully secured **two separate office locations**. This strategic move ensures broader accessibility for the public and greater operational flexibility. Both new locations are fully functional, public-facing, and have been adequately equipped to meet the operational demands of the department and the needs of the community. This includes sufficient office space, appropriate furniture, and an ample supply of necessary materials. The relocation was particularly beneficial for the WIOA Division. Its new office space is **considerably larger** than the previous location within the EOB. This increased footprint is a critical improvement, as it allows the WIOA Division to better accommodate a **higher volume of individuals**—whether job seekers participating in training and workshops, or community members accessing career services—thereby enhancing its service delivery capacity. Unified Departmental Operations and Public Communication

Despite the physical separation of some functions across two locations, DHR and the WIOA Division maintain a highly integrated operational structure. They function as a **unified department** on a daily basis, collaborating closely on the core mission: to **recruit, train, and employ job seekers within American Samoa**.

To ensure seamless public interaction and information flow, the department utilizes a streamlined communication strategy:

- **Single Main Email Address:** All inquiries directed to DHR, including WIOA-related questions, are routed through one primary email address. This ensures consistent intake and efficient response management.
- **One Primary Website:** The department uses a single main website platform for all public communications. This website serves as the central hub for disseminating critical information, posting job opportunities, sharing program details, and providing

updates on services.

Financial Structure

It is essential to note the distinct financial composition of the department:

- The **WIOA Division is 100% federally-funded**, operating entirely through grants and allocations from the U.S. Department of Labor.
- All **other divisions within the Department of Human Resources (DHR) are locally-funded**, supported by the American Samoa Government's local budget.

This dual-funding structure underscores the importance of close administrative and operational alignment between the locally- and federally-supported components of the department.

Human Capital Capacity: A detailed assessment of the current staffing levels, expertise, and professional development needs of personnel responsible for delivering workforce services. This includes career counselors, instructors, program managers, and administrative support. The analysis must identify areas where specialized skills are lacking or where capacity building is necessary to meet future demands.

Workforce Agency Leadership and Program Oversight

The strategic direction and day-to-day operations of the Workforce Agency are under the dedicated leadership of a Chief. This individual holds the singular and critical responsibility for the comprehensive management, oversight, and successful execution of all programs authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The complexity of this role necessitates extensive, high-level engagement and close collaboration with a diverse array of entities, including various government agencies, key partnering organizations, and essential community and private sector stakeholders. This cooperative approach is fundamental to ensuring that WIOA programs and services are delivered effectively, efficiently, and in alignment with both federal mandates and the specific needs of the local workforce.

Detailed Organizational Structure and Staff Functions

The internal organization of the Workforce Agency is meticulously structured to ensure both robust management and impactful direct service delivery. The staff is broadly categorized into two main groups: the Management Team and the Direct Program Staff.

Management Team The Management Team provides the crucial administrative, strategic, and coordination backbone of the agency. This team is composed of the following key

personnel, each with defined responsibilities:

- **Assistant Chief:** Supports the Chief in all administrative and strategic functions, often serving as the acting head in the Chief's absence and overseeing specific departmental projects.
- **Program Manager:** Responsible for the design, planning, monitoring, and evaluation of all WIOA-funded programs, ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations and achieving performance metrics.
- **Training Coordinator:** Focuses on the development and implementation of effective training strategies, identifying in-demand skills, and coordinating with educational institutions and employers to secure quality training opportunities for participants.
- **Caseworkers:** Serve as the direct service professionals, managing participant caseloads, providing individualized career counseling, developing employment plans, and coordinating supportive services to facilitate successful program completion and job placement.
- **Intake Specialist:** Manages the initial entry point for all prospective WIOA participants, conducting preliminary eligibility screening, collecting necessary documentation, and orienting individuals to the available services.
- **Finance Team:** Handles all fiscal operations, including budgeting, accounting, payroll, procurement, and financial reporting, ensuring the responsible and compliant use of all grant funds.

Direct Program Staff The Direct Program Staff constitutes the team responsible for the hands-on delivery of services to the community. This entire operational cohort is led directly by the **Chief of WIOA**. All staff members whose primary function is the direct interaction with and service provision to WIOA participants, including but not limited to the Caseworkers and Intake Specialist, fall under the Chief's immediate supervision. This streamlined reporting structure ensures clarity of command and consistent program application.

Administrative and Fiscal Functions All essential administrative and fiscal operations that sustain the agency's infrastructure and ensure financial accountability are the sole responsibility of the **Finance Team**. This includes maintaining all financial records, processing disbursements, managing grant budgets, and preparing comprehensive financial audits and reports as required by federal and local authorities.

Data and Performance Management Capacity

The capability of State entities to collect, analyze, and utilize data effectively for continuous program improvement, performance measurement, and accountability. This includes the functional capacity of Management Information Systems (MIS) to track participant outcomes, measure return on investment, and inform strategic planning.

The Program Staff plays a crucial and foundational role in the entire reporting and performance management cycle. Their primary responsibilities include the meticulous collection, input, and ongoing management of all program-related data and performance metrics. This daily effort is essential, as staff members are responsible for recording all service activities, participant interactions, and outcomes into the **Hire American Samoa System (HASS)**. This system serves as the primary operational database, capturing the granular details of service delivery.

Once this data is accurately recorded and maintained by the Program Staff, it is subsequently submitted to the **Chief** for rigorous analysis and compilation. The Chief's role is to interpret this raw data, assess program effectiveness against established goals, and prepare it into the required reporting formats.

Specifically, the Chief is responsible for the formal submission and certification of key federal reports. These reports are prepared in the **Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL)** format, which is the standardized data structure required by federal authorities. The submission and certification process is executed electronically using the **Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS)**, the official platform for submitting performance data.

Furthermore, the Chief holds sole responsibility for the financial transparency and accountability of the program. This entails certifying all required **Finance reports** through the dedicated **Performance Management System (PMS)**. This certification ensures that all expenditures align with approved budgets and federal guidelines, completing the comprehensive cycle of both programmatic and fiscal reporting.

Partnership and Outreach Capacity: The effectiveness of State entities in forging and maintaining productive partnerships with the private sector, educational institutions (secondary and post-secondary), community-based organizations, and other governmental agencies to coordinate service delivery and ensure programs are demand-driven.

The analysis must conclude with actionable findings, identifying both strengths and critical areas for improvement, and providing strategic recommendations to bolster the overall capacity of State entities to fully execute the identified workforce development agenda.

The overarching Shared Vision that guides the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

(WIOA) and its Core Partners in American Samoa is a commitment to transformative workforce development. This vision seeks to significantly enhance access to high-quality education, sustainable economic opportunity, and meaningful employment for *all* job seekers across the territory. A central focus is placed on actively supporting those individuals who face the most significant barriers to securing employment, ensuring equitable access to the workforce system.

Concurrently, the vision is dedicated to the critical task of cultivating a highly skilled, adaptable, and competitive workforce. This endeavor is meticulously aligned with the current and projected demands of American Samoa's diverse range of employers. By effectively bridging the skills gap, the partnership aims to serve as a vital engine for economic growth.

Furthermore, this shared commitment is designed to stimulate the holistic vitality and resilience of local communities throughout American Samoa. By fostering employment and economic stability, the WIOA and its partners contribute directly to the social and civic health of the territory. Ultimately, the comprehensive goal is to foster and sustain a territorial economy that is not only robust and diverse internally but also exceptionally competitive and resilient within the broader regional and global economic context. This holistic approach ensures that American Samoa's human capital and economic structures are prepared to thrive in the modern international marketplace..

AMERICAN SAMOA STATE PLAN 2024-2027: A FRAMEWORK FOR WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE

The overarching goal of the American Samoa State Plan for 2024-2027 is to cultivate a dynamic and responsive workforce system through a Shared Vision focused on four critical priorities. These priorities are specifically tailored to address the unique demographic and geographic challenges of the territory, ensuring that the services provided under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) are both effective and universally accessible.

The Four Core Priorities of the Shared Vision:

- 1. Improving Public Awareness and Access to the Workforce System:** A foundational priority is dedicated to enhancing the visibility and understanding of the One-Stop Center Network and its services. This involves developing and implementing targeted outreach campaigns to inform the public—including job seekers, incumbent workers, and employers—about the comprehensive training,

career counseling, and business services available. The aim is to dismantle barriers to entry and ensure that all residents are aware of and can easily utilize the resources designed to foster career advancement and economic stability.

2. **Coordinating Business Services Across Partners to Ensure Delivery of Streamlined and High-Quality Solutions:** To effectively serve the local business community, the plan mandates a shift toward a truly integrated service delivery model. This priority focuses on establishing seamless coordination among all WIOA partners, educational institutions, and economic development agencies. The objective is to provide businesses with a single point of contact for services such as talent recruitment, customized training, labor market information, and rapid response, thereby offering streamlined, high-quality solutions that meet current and future workforce demands.
3. **Serving Rural and Remote Communities:** Given American Samoa's distinctive geography, with a small population dispersed across remote islands and villages, this priority is crucial. The strategy involves innovating service delivery methods, potentially including mobile units, technology-driven virtual services, and partnerships with local community centers and churches. The goal is to overcome physical distance and logistical hurdles, ensuring that residents in even the most isolated locations have equitable access to the full spectrum of workforce services, training, and career development opportunities.
4. **Career Pathways/Sector Partnerships:** This priority emphasizes the development and implementation of robust career pathways aligned with the territory's high-demand industry sectors. By strengthening collaboration between employers (through Sector Partnerships), educators, and the workforce system, the plan seeks to create clear, articulated sequences of education and training. These pathways will allow individuals to progress from entry-level positions to higher-skilled, higher-wage employment, ultimately building a sustainable pipeline of skilled talent that directly supports the economic growth of American Samoa.

The One-Stop Center Network and System Design:

The One-Stop Center Network is the primary vehicle for supporting and implementing these four priorities within its operational capacity defined by WIOA. The territory's unique environment—characterized by a small population base and significant geographic dispersion—demands an adaptive and flexible approach. This has necessitated the development of a **modified one-stop system**. This modified design is critical for:

- **Maximizing Scarce Resources:** By integrating services and co-locating partners where feasible, the system ensures that limited financial and personnel resources are utilized efficiently.
- **Providing Quality Services in Diverse Locations:** The OSC Network is structured to move beyond the traditional brick-and-mortar model, incorporating satellite centers, partner-provided access points, and advanced virtual services to maintain a consistent standard of quality across all service delivery points, regardless of location.

This strategic plan, therefore, represents a commitment to transforming American Samoa's workforce infrastructure into a resilient, coordinated, and highly accessible system that fosters economic prosperity for both its residents and its businesses.

II. b. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

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

1. VISION

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

2. GOALS

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

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

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

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

[9] Veterans, unemployed workers, youth and any other populations identified by the State. American Samoa envisions achieving the following: strengthening access to education, economic opportunity, and employment for the job-seeking community. To make this vision practical and measurable, identified participants include, but are not limited to, individuals with substantial barriers to employment. For example, this may include youth who need pathways to graduation or career readiness, adults who require upskilling due to changing industry demands, and workers facing challenges such as limited work history, disabilities, lack of transportation, or difficulties with childcare. In response, DHR/WIOA will invest in education and training support—such as tutoring, credential programs, job-readiness workshops, and workforce development services that connect people with internships, apprenticeships, and other hands-on experiences.

At the same time, American Samoa will cultivate a skilled, competitive workforce aligned with the needs of employers by partnering with local businesses, aligning training curricula with current hiring priorities, and supporting sector-focused career pathways. Furthermore, the state aims to invigorate the vitality of local communities by encouraging participation in community projects, strengthening local leadership, and improving access to career

services across the territory. Ultimately, these efforts are intended to advance a robust state economy by increasing employment stability, boosting workforce productivity, and expanding opportunities for sustainable, family-supporting careers.

Economic Opportunity GOAL:

Cultivate and sustain a robust workforce ecosystem in partnership with the WIOA core partners, leveraging Effective Training Providers (ETPs) to strengthen talent pipelines and employment outcomes.

Strategy 1: Create and maintain a compelling environment that attracts, retains, and expands employers across federal, public, and private sector industries.

Strategy 2: Establish and uphold the economic infrastructure essential to generate, support, and scale employment opportunities.

Strategy 3: Promote the emergence of new markets and incentivize innovation to broaden economic participation and career pathways.

Strategy 4: Strengthen and deepen strategic partnerships with core agencies to enhance program quality and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

Strategy 5: Expand and elevate collaboration with the American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB) to ensure full compliance with Department of Labor requirements.

Strategy 6: Broaden and elevate public awareness of WIOA programs through education and training delivered via advanced technology.

3. PERFORMANCE GOALS

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

Based on the performance data reported in the most recent Quarterly Report for Program Year (PY) 2025, a critical and significant need for improvement in the consistency and quality of data reporting across all core WIOA programs has been formally identified. This deficiency is primarily attributed to a persistent lack of sufficient, detailed, and timely reporting by program staff, compounded by significant operational challenges in strictly following and implementing the proper performance guidelines and reporting protocols established by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).

These challenges are especially pronounced across the three core programs: Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth), Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy), and Title IV

(Vocational Rehabilitation). The lack of coordination and uniform interpretation of reporting requirements among these distinct programs has created discrepancies and inaccuracies in the overall performance metrics. Additionally, shifts in government leadership present an ongoing obstacle to maintaining consistency with WIOA requirements.

In direct response to these identified systemic issues, the respective Program Managers have initiated a concentrated effort, working in continuous and close consultation with the DOL Performance Specialists assigned to American Samoa. This collaborative partnership is focused on developing and implementing a robust corrective action plan designed to streamline data collection processes, enhance staff training on reporting mandates, and ultimately improve the overall administrative and operational performance of the territory's WIOA system.

It is further reported that, at the time of the drafting and submission of this specific State Plan Modification, American Samoa is currently in the process of formally establishing and reporting its *baseline data* for its key WIOA performance measures. The establishment of this baseline is a foundational step, essential for setting realistic performance goals for the upcoming years and for accurately measuring future progress and the effectiveness of the implemented corrective actions.

Plan of Action: Enhanced Strategy for Performance Improvement

The Department of Human Resources (DHR), in collaboration with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program, is committed to a sustained and rigorous process for addressing performance challenges and driving program effectiveness. This commitment is formalized in a proactive Plan of Action centered on deep analysis and collaborative problem-solving with our federal partners.

Core Strategy: Continuous Engagement and Diagnostic Analysis

DHR/WIOA will continue to work closely and collaboratively with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). This close relationship will be maintained through scheduled, mandatory **monthly calls**. These calls are not merely status updates but serve as crucial platforms for **diagnostic analysis**. The primary objective of this ongoing engagement is to methodically **dissect the underlying problems** that are currently affecting the program's performance and negatively impacting its efficiency and success metrics.

Action Steps for Problem-Solving and Implementation:

1. **Deep-Dive Performance Review:** Each monthly call will feature a comprehensive

review of performance data, identifying specific metrics that are lagging (e.g., entered employment rate, median earnings, or measurable skill gains).

2. **Root Cause Identification:** The focus will shift from symptom management to **root cause analysis**. This involves jointly investigating potential systemic issues, such as barriers to participant enrollment, quality of training programs, effectiveness of career services, or administrative bottlenecks.
3. **Collaborative Solution Development:** Based on the diagnostic findings, DHR/WIOA and DOL will co-develop tailored, evidence-based **solutions**. This may include refining local policies, implementing new operational procedures, reallocating resources, or providing targeted technical assistance to staff.
4. **Implementation and Monitoring:** Once a solution is agreed upon, DHR/WIOA will be responsible for its swift and effective **implementation**. Progress will be continuously monitored and reviewed in subsequent monthly calls to ensure the corrective action is yielding the desired results and that performance is trending upward toward established goals.

This dedicated, continuous cycle of diagnosis, collaboration, and action ensures a responsive and adaptive approach to maintaining the highest standards of WIOA program performance in American Samoa.

C. STATE STRATEGY

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

1. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT, INCLUDING INDUSTRY OR SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS RELATED TO IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS AND CAREER PATHWAYS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA SECTION 101(D)(3)(B), (D). "CAREER PATHWAY" IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(7) AND INCLUDES REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP. "IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTOR OR OCCUPATION" IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(23)
2. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE STATE TO ACHIEVE FULLY INTEGRATED CUSTOMER SERVICES CONSISTENT WITH THE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS DESCRIBED ABOVE. ALSO DESCRIBE STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN REGARD TO WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED IN SECTION II(A)(2)

State Strategy

The effective strategies and measures to be implemented by American Samoa emphasize industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors, occupations, and career pathways. Paramount to this approach, the Implementation Plan supports, strengthens, and standardizes collaboration efforts among the core agencies.

Implementation Strategies for the American Samoa State Plan (2026-2027): This section details the critical strategies and associated activities that will underpin the successful execution of the American Samoa State Plan, focusing on inter-agency cooperation, resource alignment, and governance through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

1. Establishment of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Standards of Agreement
A foundational Territory-wide Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Standards of Agreement will be developed and formally utilized to govern and guide the implementation of all core partner programs and their associated training and services delivery across American Samoa. This official instrument is essential for ensuring a unified and coherent workforce development system.

The core strategies and corresponding activities that will be funded and executed by the various entities responsible for the respective core program activities will be meticulously documented and formalized within this official MOU/Standards of Agreement. The development and implementation of this comprehensive MOU/Standards of Agreement will proceed in two distinct, sequential phases:

- **Phase I: Coordination of Services and Partner Responsibilities**
 - **Focus:** This initial phase is dedicated to establishing robust coordination and cooperative protocols among all WIOA core and required partners.
 - **Key Objectives:** The primary goal is to foster a strong spirit of cooperation, improve the collective understanding of the workforce system among partners, and clearly specify the roles, responsibilities, and accountability of each partner entity as defined under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This ensures that services are streamlined and non-duplicative for the Territory's residents.
- **Phase II: Resource Sharing and Integrated Service Delivery (Addendum)**
 - **Focus:** Phase II will serve as a formal addendum to the initial MOU or Standards of Agreement.
 - **Key Objectives:** This phase will specifically address the mechanisms for formal and effective **resource sharing** among all Partners. This includes aligning financial, personnel, technological, and physical resources (e.g.,

co-location of staff, shared equipment, common intake systems) to maximize the efficiency and reach of workforce delivery services across all regions of the Territory. This collaborative approach is vital for overcoming the challenges inherent in serving a geographically dispersed population.

2. Synchronization and Alignment with the American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB)

The American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB) serves as the Territory's principal governance and oversight body for all WIOA-related initiatives. Effective synchronization with the ASWDB is paramount to maintaining program integrity and strategic alignment.

- **ASWDB's Role in Program Review and Recommendation:** The ASWDB is explicitly responsible for the comprehensive review and analysis of all WIOA programs, plans, and outcomes, followed by the formulation of official recommendations to the Governor.
- **Subcommittee Deliberation and Oversight:** The ASWDB's specialized subcommittees will play a critical role in deliberating on all plans, activities, and strategies proposed by WIOA and its core partners. This detailed scrutiny is necessary to ensure the following:
 - **Alignment with Proposed Services:** All activities and expenditures are directly aligned with the goals and service provision outlined in the Territory's Strategic State Plan.
 - **Continuous Reporting and Accountability:** The subcommittees will ensure a continuous flow of accurate, up-to-date performance data and program updates are reported to the full ASWDB, and subsequently to the Governor of American Samoa, maintaining a clear line of accountability to the Territory's highest executive office.

Career Pathways: The ambitious vision and overarching goals for American Samoa are contingent upon the strategic and effective deployment of its Education and Training services. While the realization of these objectives demands the establishment of meticulous processes, robust systems, and cross-sector collaboration, they are firmly within reach. A key challenge faced was the conclusion of the Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) Program, which ceased operations due to the expiration of its federal grant funding immediately preceding the preparation of this plan.

Despite this setback, American Samoa remains steadfastly committed to the sustainability and continued operation of its three critical Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs): Teacher Aide, Information Technology, and Finance Tech. The strategy for maintaining these valuable workforce development pipelines centers on the foundational strength derived from established inter-agency partnerships. Specifically, the WIOA and its partners will aggressively leverage resources, funding streams, and programmatic alignment with the **Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Core Program** and the **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Core Program**. This integrated approach ensures that the apprenticeship programs receive essential support for recruitment, related technical instruction, supportive services for apprentices, and on-the-job learning monitoring, guaranteeing the continuation of these vital career pathways for the territory's residents. This commitment underscores a strategic pivot from reliance on time-limited grants to sustainable, institutionalized workforce development infrastructure.

American Samoa calls for an aggressive expansion of Registered Apprenticeships beyond the current core sectors. Recommendation of The development of employer-led apprenticeship pathways in Construction, Automotive Technology, and Sustainable Energy. To support this, the Board will focus on incentivizing private sector participation by simplifying the "employer of record" process and providing clear technical assistance for small businesses to join apprenticeship programs. The American Samoa's Workforce Development Board (ASWDB) is committed to a strategic and aggressive expansion of apprenticeship programs available to the community. This initiative moves beyond the current core sectors to establish a more diversified and robust workforce pipeline. The Board strongly advocates for an assertive increase in the number of Registered Apprenticeships (RAs) across American Samoa.

A key recommendation is the immediate development of new, employer-led apprenticeship pathways in three critical, high-growth sectors:

1. **Construction:** Focusing on skilled trades necessary for modern infrastructure development, including specialized areas such as heavy equipment operation, advanced carpentry, and electrical and plumbing systems, to meet the territory's growing demand for resilient building projects.
2. **Automotive Technology:** Establishing programs for high-tech vehicle maintenance, electric vehicle (EV) diagnostics and repair, and advanced engine technology to service the evolving local transportation sector.
3. **Sustainable Energy:** Creating pathways for careers in renewable energy installation, maintenance, and system management, specifically targeting solar photovoltaic (PV)

and wind energy technologies, aligning with the territory's goals for energy independence and environmental sustainability.

To effectively implement this expansion and ensure its long-term success, the ASWDB will concentrate its efforts on two primary support mechanisms for the private sector:

- **Incentivizing Private Sector Participation:** The Board will actively work to incentivize businesses, particularly Small- to Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), to become sponsors of Registered Apprenticeships. This includes exploring and advocating for local tax credits, performance-based grants, and other financial incentives tied to the successful graduation of apprentices.
- **Streamlining Administrative Processes:** A major focus will be on simplifying the administrative burdens associated with apprenticeship sponsorship. This includes a dedicated effort to simplify the "employer of record" process, making it less complex for businesses that wish to host apprentices but may lack extensive HR departments.
- **Providing Comprehensive Technical Assistance:** The ASWDB will offer dedicated and clear technical assistance to help small businesses navigate the initial setup and ongoing management of an apprenticeship program. This support will cover curriculum development, registration requirements, accessing funding, and ensuring compliance with federal and local standards, thereby lowering the barrier to entry for private employers.

III.a.I. State Board Functions

The American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB) holds a pivotal position in the territory's workforce landscape, having been formally designated by the Governor to provide comprehensive oversight and strategic direction for all activities authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

The ASWDB's mandate is broad and essential to the success of American Samoa's workforce development initiatives. Its core responsibilities include:

Policy and Strategic Approval: The Board is charged with the critical task of reviewing and formally approving program policies developed by the Workforce Agency – WIOA. This includes authorizing the territory's overarching State Plan strategy, which sets the agenda for workforce development, as well as approving significant investment decisions and funding allocations proposed by the agency. This ensures that all WIOA-funded activities align with the territory's economic and labor force goals.

Performance and Fiscal Oversight: The ASWDB maintains crucial oversight functions across two key domains:

- **Program Performance:** The Board monitors and evaluates the programmatic performance of the WIOA Division, ensuring that it is meeting established performance metrics, achieving intended outcomes for job seekers and businesses, and operating effectively and efficiently
 - i. **Program Performance Monitoring and Evaluation by the Workforce Development Board**

The Workforce Development Board (WDB) is fundamentally responsible for the rigorous oversight and continuous evaluation of the programmatic performance of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Division. This critical function ensures that the WIOA program in American Samoa is not merely operational but is delivering tangible results in alignment with federal mandates and local strategic priorities.

Key Components of Performance Oversight:

1. **Monitoring Established Performance Metrics:** The WDB systematically monitors performance against a comprehensive set of established federal and state WIOA performance metrics. This includes, but is not limited to, measures such as:
 - **Employment Rate:** The percentage of program participants who are employed in the second and fourth quarters after exiting the program.
 - **Median Earnings:** The median earnings of program participants in the second

quarter after exit.

- **Credential Attainment:** The percentage of participants receiving training services who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma (or its recognized equivalent) during participation or within one year after exit.
- **Effectiveness in Serving Employers:** Metrics related to repeat business customers, retention of participants in employment, and satisfaction of businesses with the quality of services and referrals.

2. **Achieving Intended Outcomes for Job Seekers and Businesses:** Beyond compliance with federal metrics, the Board evaluates the program's success in achieving its broader strategic outcomes:

- **For Job Seekers:** Ensuring participants gain the in-demand skills, education, and supportive services necessary to secure high-quality, sustainable employment and advance their careers. This involves assessing the quality of training providers, the relevance of occupational skills training offered, and the efficacy of career services.
- **For Businesses:** Ensuring that the WIOA system is responsive to the needs of the local economy by supplying a pipeline of skilled workers. This includes evaluating the use and impact of business services such as customized training, incumbent worker training, and rapid response activities during layoffs.

3. **Operational Effectiveness and Efficiency:** The Board critically assesses the internal operations of the WIOA Division to ensure maximum effectiveness and fiscal efficiency. This involves:

- **Resource Allocation:** Reviewing the budget and expenditures to ensure resources are strategically allocated to high-impact activities that directly serve participants and businesses.
- **Service Delivery:** Evaluating the integration and seamless delivery of services across the comprehensive American Samoa Workforce Center system (One-Stop Centers) to ensure accessibility, quality, and coordination among core WIOA partners.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Utilizing performance data and evaluation findings to identify areas for improvement, implement best practices, and drive policy adjustments to enhance the overall effectiveness and impact of the WIOA program.

Through this rigorous and data-driven approach, the Workforce Development Board guarantees accountability to the public, ensures compliance with WIOA legislation, and most importantly, maximizes the program's success in building a skilled workforce and

strengthening the American Samoa economy.

- **Fiscal Administration:** The Board provides essential oversight concerning the fiscal administration conducted by the Department of Human Resources (DHR) as it relates to WIOA funds. This responsibility ensures accountability, transparency, and compliance with all federal and local regulations regarding the expenditure of public funds dedicated to workforce programs.

Fiscal Administration and Stewardship of WIOA Funds

The American Samoa Workforce Development Board holds a critical and essential role in the robust oversight of the fiscal administration related to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds, as managed by the Department of Human Resources (DHR). This responsibility is paramount to ensuring the integrity and effectiveness of the territory's workforce programs. The Board's oversight function is multi-faceted and encompasses a rigorous review of all financial policies, procedures, and expenditures. Specifically, the Board is tasked with:

1. **Accountability:** Ensuring that every dollar of WIOA funding is directly tied to the strategic goals and mandated activities of the State Plan, providing clear evidence of how public funds are contributing to workforce development and economic growth.
2. **Transparency:** Maintaining an open and accessible record of all financial transactions. This includes the regular review and approval of the DHR's financial reports, budgets, and audit findings, ensuring that the use of these public funds is clear to all stakeholders and the public.
3. **Compliance:** Guaranteeing strict adherence to the complex tapestry of federal financial regulations, including the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR Part 200, or Uniform Guidance), as well as all relevant local statutes and executive orders. This proactive compliance minimizes the risk of disallowed costs, mismanagement, and potential sanctions.

Through this diligent fiscal stewardship, the Board ensures that public funds dedicated to workforce programs are utilized efficiently, effectively, and in a manner that maximizes the impact on job seekers and businesses within American Samoa. The Board's actions reinforce public trust in the administration of these vital workforce development resources.

Direct Accountability to the Governor: Ensuring Strategic Alignment and Executive Engagement

A defining and structurally critical characteristic of the American Samoa Workforce Development Board's (ASWDB) governance is its direct and formal reporting relationship to

the Governor of American Samoa. This high level of direct accountability is not merely an administrative formality; it fundamentally underscores the strategic importance of the Board's decisions and initiatives within the territory's overall economic development agenda.

This direct line of communication ensures that the territory's top executive remains directly and consistently informed about the progress, challenges, and strategic direction of workforce development efforts across American Samoa. By having the Governor as the primary point of accountability, the ASWDB's strategies, which encompass key areas such as program funding, policy creation, industry sector alignment, and overall program performance under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), are guaranteed to align closely with the current administration's economic priorities and long-term vision for the territory.

Furthermore, this relationship facilitates decisive action and resource mobilization. When significant policy hurdles or resource gaps are identified by the Board, the direct link to the Governor allows for swift executive-level intervention and support, ensuring that bureaucratic delays are minimized and that critical initiatives—such as the development of high-demand training programs or the establishment of new public-private partnerships—can be executed effectively and efficiently. This structural setup establishes the ASWDB as a central, high-priority function of the territorial government, ensuring that workforce development is consistently treated as a strategic investment in American Samoa's economic future.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

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

This must include a description of—

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

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

American Samoa operates under a unique funding structure for its workforce development programs, receiving a **consolidated grant** from the federal government. This single award strategically combines funding streams traditionally designated for specific populations—namely, **Adult**, **Youth**, and **Dislocated Worker** programs—into one flexible financial pool.

This consolidation provides the Territory with significant **flexibility and efficiency** in resource allocation, allowing for the **interchangeable use** of funds across the various workforce programs as local needs dictate. This critical feature ensures that American Samoa can rapidly respond to shifting economic conditions, emerging skills gaps, or unexpected increases in demand within a particular program area (e.g., allocating more

resources to Dislocated Worker services during a local economic downturn or prioritizing Youth services for a new training initiative). The ability to reallocate funds without strict programmatic barriers is essential for maximizing the impact of the federal investment in the Territory's relatively small and often unique labor market.

Funding Stream	Program Year (PY)	Fiscal Year (FY)	Primary Purpose
Youth	\$337,424	–	Employment, training, and education services for youth 14-24
Adult	\$62,758	\$259,714	Employment and training services for adults 18+
Dislocated Worker	\$170,522	\$338,138	Services for laid-off workers and those displaced from employment
Total (PY25)	\$570,704	\$597,852	Annual award (one program year)

Program	How It Works	Who It Serves
Summer Youth Employment	Subsidized work placements at government agencies and private employers during summer months	Youth 14-24 seeking work experience; historically the largest use of WIOA funds
Work-Based Learning (WBL)	WIOA funds 100% of participant wages in a real workplace for a defined training period. Designed for participants who need supported work experience before they are independently employment-ready. Program parameters (hours and duration) should be formally defined in the state plan .	Participants with significant barriers to employment; those who need workplace experience before they can secure and hold a job independently.
On-the-Job Training (OJT)	Employer-WIOA cost-share contract. An employer hires a work-ready participant into an actual vacancy, then trains them in job-specific skills. WIOA reimburses	Work-ready participants matched to employer vacancies. OJT is appropriate when a participant is ready to be hired and the training need is job-specific skill

	up to 50% of wages during training (typically up to 6 months). Requires the employer to commit financial resources and a genuine hiring intent.	development, not foundational work readiness. Produces employer investment and accountability that WBL does not require.
Career Services & Case Management	Assessment, individual employment planning, job search support, referrals to training and community resources, and 12-month follow-up post-placement. Required for all enrolled participants.	All WIOA-eligible participants across adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs. WIOA statute does not limit eligibility to non-degree holders if those non-degree holders experience barriers to employment, earnings, or career.

Grant Award Structure and Fund Draw-down Protocol

The financial management operates on a structured, multi-year basis. Specifically, each program year is associated with a new grant award, and each award carries its own multi-year period of performance. A standard and expected operational reality is that up to three distinct award periods may be active and require simultaneous management at any given time.

The First-In-First-Out (FIFO) Rule for Expenditures:

To ensure fiscal compliance and proper utilization of funds, a strict "first-in-first-out" (FIFO) rule governs the draw-down of grant funds. This mandates that program staff must exhaust the available balance of the *oldest* active award before initiating draw-downs from *newer* awards.

A crucial component of the annual formula funds is the Governor's Reserve. The Governor has the discretionary authority to reserve up to fifteen percent (15%) of the total annual formula funds for activities deemed essential to statewide goals. This financial pool offers broad flexibility in its application, enabling the territory to respond to emergent needs or invest in high-priority initiatives that benefit the entire state. However, it is important to recognize that this amount is *finite*. Consequently, the deployment and utilization of the Governor's Reserve funds must be strategically prioritized to ensure maximum impact and alignment with the overarching goals of the State Plan.

To ensure future compliance, enhance service impact, and achieve true system integration, American Samoa is transitioning away from the initial model and will instead implement a **distributed co-location model**. This strategic shift is firmly supported by federal guidance, specifically **Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 05-25**. This approach is considered the optimal method because it directly and substantially advances the federal pillar of an integrated workforce system and is projected to deliver the most compliant and impactful service delivery for job seekers and employers in American Samoa.

The implementation of a distributed co-location strategy offers numerous significant advantages:

1. **Elimination of Facility Overhead:** By integrating services into existing partner locations rather than constructing or maintaining a separate, dedicated facility, this model substantially reduces facility-related operational costs and overhead for the ASWDB and partner agencies.
2. **Embedded WIOA Services:** This model strategically embeds Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) services directly within locations where job seekers and other consumers are already accessing public assistance or support services. This "bring-the-service-to-the-customer" philosophy enhances accessibility and familiarity.
3. **Facilitation of Natural Co-enrollment:** The physical proximity and operational integration make it significantly easier for individuals to be seamlessly co-enrolled in multiple beneficial services across different programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc Rehab), and various adult learning and educational programs.

4. **Reduction of Service Duplication:** By fostering close operational collaboration and shared intake processes among partners, the distributed co-location model minimizes the duplication of common services, resources, and administrative efforts, leading to greater efficiency and resource maximization.
5. **Creation of Documented Integration:** Crucially, this model mandates and documents a higher level of operational and fiscal integration among core partners.

III.a.2.B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

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

In a strategic effort to streamline workforce development services, enhance accessibility, and maximize resource utilization, the proposed co-location network is designed to achieve deep alignment with the core programs and activities mandated by mandated and optional one-stop partners. This network aims to consolidate essential functions across employment, training, education, human services, and other supportive programs, thereby eliminating duplication of effort and creating a seamless service experience for participants. The structure of this integrated service delivery model is organized into five key sites, each specializing in critical aspects of the workforce pipeline:

Site 1 – Community College (Education and Training Hub) The Community College serves as the nexus for educational and occupational training initiatives. Its functions are centered on early engagement and preparing individuals for career advancement.

- **Career Pathway Intake:** Initial assessment and guidance for participants to identify suitable career pathways that align with regional labor market demands and individual aptitude.
- **On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Apprenticeship Enrollment:** Facilitating the direct placement and formal enrollment of eligible participants into structured OJT and registered apprenticeship programs, serving as the administrative and oversight body for these partnerships with employers.
- **Training Provider Coordination:** Acting as the central coordinator for all eligible training providers (ETPs), ensuring the quality, relevance, and accessibility of training programs offered throughout the territory.
- **In-School Youth Engagement:** Implementing proactive outreach and structured programs, such as dual enrollment and career exploration, specifically targeted at preparing in-school youth for successful post-secondary transition and entry into the workforce.

- **ETPL and Workforce Pell Positioning:** Strategic management of the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and active guidance for participants to leverage financial aid opportunities, particularly Workforce Pell Grants, to fund their training.

Site 2 – H&HS Department (SNAP/TANF) (Human Services Integration) The Department of Human and Social Services (H&HS) site is pivotal for integrating workforce services directly with public benefit programs, creating a natural and necessary pipeline for economic self-sufficiency.

- **Direct Co-enrollment of Benefit Recipients:** Implementing a streamlined process for the immediate and systematic co-enrollment of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients into WIOA services, maximizing resources and accelerating their transition to work.
- **WIOA Intake at the Point of Public Benefit Interaction:** Embedding WIOA intake specialists directly within H&HS offices to capture individuals seeking public assistance, ensuring workforce services are presented as an integral component of the support package from the very first interaction.
- **Natural Pipeline for Disconnected Workers:** Serving as a critical access point for individuals who are unattached from the formal labor market or educational systems, leveraging existing relationships with the community established through benefit programs.
- **Alignment with Benefit Cliff Navigation:** Providing specialized case management and resources designed to help participants understand, plan for, and successfully transition through the "benefit cliff"—the point where earnings increase enough to cause a substantial, sudden loss of public assistance.

Site 3 – Vocational Rehabilitation (Specialized Support Services) This site focuses on ensuring equitable access and specialized support for participants with disabilities, formalizing cooperation under the WIOA framework.

- **Coordinated Service Delivery for Participants with Disabilities:** Establishing a unified approach for assessing needs, developing individualized service strategies, and delivering services, thereby preventing fragmented support for participants with disabilities.
- **Shared Eligibility and Case Management:** Developing protocols for mutual recognition of eligibility determinations and shared access to case management systems, facilitating a 'no wrong door' approach and reducing administrative burden on participants.
- **Aligned Performance Reporting Across Programs:** Collaborating on data collection and reporting mechanisms to ensure accurate, non-duplicative, and

comprehensive tracking of outcomes for individuals served by both WIOA and Vocational Rehabilitation programs.

Site 4 – External Job Placement Partners (Community Outreach and Private Sector Linkages) extends the network's reach into the community and establishes strong links with the private sector for direct employment opportunities.

- **Community-Based Outreach for Hard-to-Reach Populations:** Utilizing non-traditional, community-based locations (e.g., churches, village councils, non-profits) for outreach and initial intake, specifically targeting populations facing significant barriers to employment, such as formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans, and individuals with limited English proficiency.
- **Potential Pay-for-Performance Contract Holders for Private Sector Placements:** Structuring partnerships with specialized employment agencies or community organizations under results-driven, performance-based contracts, incentivizing successful, sustained private sector job placements for WIOA participants.

Site 5 – DHR Recruitment (Public Sector Employment Pipeline) The Department of Human Resources (DHR) site is dedicated to creating a formal, direct pipeline for WIOA participants into American Samoa Government (ASG) employment.

Formal Coordination between WIOA Participant Assessment and ASG Recruitment: Implementing structured mechanisms, such as fast-track interviews or preferred candidate status, that formally link the comprehensive assessments and training outcomes of WIOA participants with the specific hiring needs and recruitment cycles of the American Samoa Government agencies.

4. ASSESSMENT

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

Assessment of Workforce Development System Effectiveness and Continuous Improvement

The State of American Samoa is committed to an ongoing and comprehensive assessment of the overall effectiveness of its workforce development system. This assessment is fundamentally linked to, and measured against, the strategic vision and specific goals outlined in sections (b)(1), (2), and (3) of this plan. The primary objective is to ensure the system is yielding the desired outcomes in terms of economic prosperity, worker skill attainment, and employer satisfaction.

Methodology for Effectiveness Assessment:

1. **Performance Indicator Tracking:** The State will utilize established and quantifiable performance indicators to continuously monitor system outputs. These include, but are not limited to:
 - **Credential Attainment and Completion Rates:** Measuring the percentage of participants who successfully complete training programs and receive recognized credentials.
 - **Employment and Retention Rates:** Tracking the percentage of participants who secure employment post-program and their sustained employment over specified periods (e.g., 6 months and 1 year).
 - **Median Earnings:** Monitoring the change in median earnings for program participants compared to pre-program earnings and the local industry benchmark.
 - **Employer Satisfaction and Engagement:** Conducting regular surveys and interviews with local businesses to gauge their satisfaction with the quality of the talent pool produced by the system and their level of engagement in workforce planning.
2. **Regular Program Evaluation:** The State will institute a systematic schedule for both internal and external evaluations of core workforce programs. These evaluations will employ mixed-methods approaches, including quantitative analysis of data and qualitative data collection through interviews and focus groups with participants, staff, and employers. Key evaluation questions will focus on:
 - **Program Relevance:** Assessing the alignment between training curriculum and current and future labor market needs.
 - **Service Delivery Efficacy:** Evaluating the efficiency and accessibility of service delivery across all access points.
 - **Equity and Access:** Analyzing program participation and success rates among diverse populations to ensure equitable access and outcomes.
3. **Stakeholder Feedback Mechanisms:** A structured approach to collecting diverse feedback will be maintained, encompassing:
 - **WIOA State and Local Board Feedback:** Utilizing the expertise and perspective of Board members through regular reporting and strategic planning sessions.
 - **Customer Surveys:** Implementing routine surveys for job seekers and employers to gather direct input on their experience and perceived value of the services.
 - **Public Comment and Consultation:** Maintaining transparent processes for receiving input from the broader community and non-traditional stakeholders.

Utilization of Assessment Results for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI):

The results derived from these assessments—including formal evaluation findings, performance indicator analysis, and qualitative feedback—will not be merely documented but will serve as the primary catalyst for continuous or quality improvements across the entire workforce development system.

- 1. Strategic Planning and Resource Allocation:** Assessment data will directly inform the annual review of the State Plan's strategic goals and the subsequent allocation of resources. Programs demonstrating high impact and alignment with strategic goals will be prioritized, while those showing underperformance will undergo mandatory restructuring or discontinuation.
- 2. Policy and Procedural Refinement:** Evaluation findings that reveal systemic barriers or inefficiencies will trigger the review and necessary revision of State and local operating policies and procedures to streamline service delivery and enhance customer experience.
- 3. Targeted Technical Assistance and Professional Development:** Data indicating performance gaps in specific local areas or programs will be used to deploy targeted technical assistance, training, and professional development for frontline staff and system partners, focusing on best practices to improve service quality and outcomes.
- 4. Innovation and Pilot Programs:** The assessment process will proactively identify emerging industry needs or successful national models. This intelligence will be leveraged to initiate pilot programs and innovative approaches to service delivery that address identified weaknesses or capitalize on new opportunities for workforce preparation.

In summary, American Samoa's approach ensures that the assessment of workforce development effectiveness is a dynamic, data-driven, and cyclical process, moving from measurement to analysis, decision-making, and subsequent action, thereby ensuring the system's sustained relevance and maximizing its contribution to the State's economic vitality.

III.A.2.D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

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

The employment landscape in American Samoa is uniquely characterized by the inclusion of *all* local employers as Eligible Training Providers (ETPs). This comprehensive approach significantly broadens the spectrum of career pathways and training options available to job seekers across the territory, ensuring extensive, hands-on opportunities for workforce development.

Under the mandate of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the crucial function of Employer Relations is multifaceted and strategic. It is dedicated to cultivating robust, mutually beneficial partnerships between the workforce system and the local business community. Key responsibilities within this function include:

1. **Outreach and Partnership Development:** Proactively engaging with employers across all sectors to understand their specific workforce needs, fostering strong working relationships, and integrating them into the WIOA ecosystem as training partners.
2. **Review of Skills-Based Job Descriptions:** Collaborating with businesses to ensure that job descriptions are clear, accurate, and focused on essential skills and competencies, which facilitates better matching of job seekers to appropriate roles and training.
3. **Development of Training Pipelines:** Creating streamlined pathways for critical work-based learning models, specifically **On-the-Job Training (OJT)** and **apprenticeships**. These pipelines are vital for equipping the local workforce with immediately applicable, high-demand skills while helping employers build a stable, skilled labor pool.
4. **Management of Performance-Based Funding (PBF) Contracts:** Overseeing and administering contracts with ETPs that link training outcomes directly to funding. This performance-driven approach ensures accountability and maximizes the effectiveness and return on investment of federal workforce funds.

- 5. Maintenance of Employer Records and Data:** Ensuring the integrity and accuracy of all employer data and interaction history within the **HireAmericanSamoa (HASS)** information system. This centralized database is essential for efficient service delivery, tracking performance metrics, and compliance reporting.

By executing these functions, Employer Relations acts as the critical bridge, aligning the skills and potential of American Samoa's job seekers with the dynamic needs of its employers, thereby strengthening the territory's overall economic vitality and workforce resilience.

The American Samoa Community College (ASCC), in accordance with the Adult Education Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), had established written provisions for assisting eligible providers. This assistance covered developing and implementing programs to achieve the title's objectives, as well as measuring program progress against those objectives, including meeting the State adjusted levels of performance described in section 116(b)(3). Key components of this work included:

- **Transition to Post-Secondary Education:** Developing and implementing a system to facilitate the transition of adult education students to post-secondary or higher education, including creating necessary linkages with these institutions.
- **Workforce Integration:** Integrating literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, which involved promoting linkages with employers. The American Samoa Community College (ASCC), in its capacity as the primary eligible provider for adult education services under the Adult Education Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), has meticulously established comprehensive written provisions to effectively assist all eligible sub-providers and partners. This robust framework is designed not only to facilitate the development but also the sustained implementation of adult education and literacy programs. These programs are strategically engineered to achieve the core objectives of Title II of AEFLA, which include improving literacy, English language proficiency, and ultimately, career readiness for adult learners across American Samoa.

A critical component of this overarching assistance is the rigorous mechanism for measuring and evaluating program progress. This involves the systematic collection and analysis of performance data against established metrics, ensuring accountability and continuous improvement. Crucially, this measurement process is aligned with and reports on the State adjusted levels of performance, as described in section 116(b)(3) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This ensures that ASCC's adult education efforts contribute directly to the broader workforce development goals of the territory.

Key components of this comprehensive work include: **Transition to Post-Secondary Education and Training:** ASCC is committed to developing, implementing, and continually refining a seamless and effective system to facilitate the transition of adult education students to credit-bearing post-secondary or higher education programs, as well as to registered apprenticeships and high-quality occupational training. This effort encompasses:

- **System Development:** Establishing clear pathways, counseling services, and support mechanisms that address the unique barriers faced by adult learners.
- **Linkage Creation:** Cultivating strong, formalized linkages and articulation agreements with ASCC's post-secondary divisions and other relevant training institutions. This ensures that adult education credentials and achievements are recognized and valued, minimizing the need for students to repeat coursework.
- **Integrated Student Support:** Providing comprehensive advising on financial aid, course selection, and career planning to maximize the likelihood of successful post-secondary enrollment and completion.

Workforce Integration and Occupational Skill Training: A fundamental pillar of ASCC's strategy is the integration of essential foundational skills—literacy and English language instruction—directly with relevant occupational skill training. This integrated approach, often referred to as Integrated Education and Training (IET), is designed to accelerate students' entry into the workforce and improve their economic self-sufficiency. This critical integration involves:

- **Programmatic Design:** Developing IET models where the adult education content is contextualized to the specific demands and terminology of the occupational training component (e.g., healthcare, tourism, construction).
- **Employer Linkage Promotion:** Proactively engaging with local and regional employers to identify current and future workforce needs. This collaboration is vital for tailoring skill training to in-demand occupations, creating opportunities for work-based learning experiences (such as internships and externships), and establishing direct hiring pipelines for program completers.
- **Career Pathway Alignment:** Ensuring that all integrated programs align with defined career pathways within American Samoa's key economic sectors, providing students with a clear trajectory for career advancement.

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) consistently evaluates its strategies to cultivate new employer relationships and provide support to businesses that hire individuals with disabilities. Its flexible strategies encompass expanding work-based learning

opportunities, on-the-job training, and customized employment. Furthermore, OVR is collaborating with its core partner, the Department of Human Resources – Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA), and the American Samoa Community College (ASCC) to establish internship and apprenticeship programs.

The following are OVR’s employer outreach and networking strategies to work with employers to increase competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities:

1. continuous outreach to employers/businesses to recruit and hire people with disabilities will consistently be encouraged through engagement with Department of Commerce, Department of Human Resources job bank, Chamber of Commerce, core partner DHR Employment of Training Division, etc.;

2. increase outreach to employers to recruit and hire people with disabilities. This will include identifying any measurable skill gains that result from the customer's acquisition of an industry recognized credential.

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) is committed to significantly increasing competitive integrated employment and meaningful career exploration opportunities for individuals with disabilities. To achieve this critical objective, OVR will implement a comprehensive suite of employer outreach and networking strategies, detailed below:

1. Sustained and Strategic Employer Engagement: OVR will move beyond transactional interactions to build and maintain deep, sustained relationships with the business community. This continuous engagement is vital to ensure that employers and businesses view the recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities as a core component of their talent acquisition strategy.

Partnership with Economic Development Agencies: OVR will maintain consistent and active engagement with key economic drivers, including the Department of Commerce, to integrate disability employment into broader workforce and economic development initiatives.

Leveraging Workforce Infrastructure: The existing infrastructure of the Department of Human Resources (DHR) Job Bank will be fully utilized to share qualified candidate profiles and promote OVR's services directly to employers utilizing the platform. Furthermore, the core partner DHR Employment and Training Division will serve as a primary liaison, ensuring seamless referral of OVR customers to appropriate training and job placement services.

Collaboration with Business Leadership: Active participation in and coordination with the Chamber of Commerce and other industry-specific associations will be prioritized. allows OVR to address employer needs directly, share best practices for inclusive hiring, and highlight the value and skills that individuals with disabilities bring to the workforce. Engagement will include workshops, employer recognition events, and dedicated job fairs.

2. Targeted Outreach, Skill Gain Identification, and Work-Based Learning Coordination

In essence, the collaborative efforts of WIOA and AEFLA move beyond mere program completion; they are focused on delivering tangible, positive, and sustained economic and career outcomes for all participants.

Details of Training Providers for AEFLA is as follows:

AELEL under section 222 (a) (2), shall use its funding for the following adult education and literacy activities to develop or enhance the adult education system of the Territory or its outlying islands.

(A) Align adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop

partners, including eligible providers, to implement the strategy identified in the unified State plan under section 102, including the development of career pathways to provide access

employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities.

(B) Establishment or operation of high quality professional development programs to improve the instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under section 231(b), including instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel of a State or outlying area, and dissemination of information

about models and promising practices related to such programs. AELEL's funding, under section 222 (a) (2), will be used for the following adult education and literacy activities to enhance the Territory's or its outlying islands' adult education system:

1. **Alignment and Career Pathways Development:** Aligning adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop partners (including eligible providers). This is essential for implementing the strategy outlined in the unified State plan (section 102), particularly in developing career pathways that provide individuals in adult education and literacy activities with access to employment and training services.
2. **Professional Development:** Establishing or operating high-quality professional development programs to improve instruction under local activities (section 231(b)). This includes:
 - Instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction for adults.
 - Instruction addressing the specific needs of adult learners.
 - Instruction provided by volunteers or State/outlying area personnel.
 - Dissemination of information regarding models and promising practices related to these programs.

(C) The provision will move forward and undergo technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities receiving funds under this title, including - th

development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available and appropriate, in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, distance education, and staff training; the role of eligible providers as a one-stop partner to provide access to employment, education, and training services; and assistance in the use of technology, including for staff training, to eligible providers, especially the use of technology to improve system efficiencies.

(D) The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of will continue, and the improvement in adult education and literacy activities and the dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the State.

Details of Training Partnership for OVR and WIOA: Comprehensive Personnel Development and Strategic Workforce Management

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) is dedicated to delivering exemplary customer service and ensuring the provision of high-quality rehabilitation services, which necessitates a robust and comprehensive personnel development program. This program is critical to guaranteeing that all services are delivered by licensed and highly-qualified professionals. OVR is firmly committed to providing ongoing and targeted training to all employees, with a particular focus on staff who have direct, client-facing responsibilities.

To maintain accountability and ensure continuous improvement, OVR's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) division diligently updates its training records annually. These detailed records meticulously document all training activities, including: the nature of training requests made by staff, the completion status of the training, the name of the external or internal training provider, the names of the employees who participated, and the precise dates of completion. This systematic record-keeping allows OVR to track professional growth and identify future training needs.

The Department of Human Resources (DHR), in collaboration with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs, plays a pivotal role in shaping OVR's long-term workforce strategy. This strategic partnership involves a deep analysis of current and emerging labor market trends within American Samoa. By understanding these trends, DHR/WIOA can effectively identify critical resource and skill gaps within the OVR workforce. This intelligence then informs the development and implementation of successful workforce projects designed to close these gaps.

DHR/WIOA takes a leading role in several essential areas that directly impact OVR's operational success: personnel management, targeted training initiatives, and new program development. Their key mandate is to ensure the successful recruitment, comprehensive training, and long-term retention of qualified staff who are essential for achieving VR's critical goals. This holistic approach guarantees that the OVR team possesses the necessary skills and stability to provide consistent, high-quality services.

Furthermore, DHR's Employment and Training division actively supports OVR's recruitment pipeline through strategic outreach and partnerships. This division maintains a valuable partnership with educational programs at the American Samoa Community College (ASCC), fostering a direct link between academic training and employment opportunities. DHR also actively participates in local job fairs, which serves as a crucial platform for outreach and candidate engagement. They consistently work to foster strong community relations to enhance their recruitment efforts and utilize their centralized job bank as a primary tool for sourcing and attracting diverse and qualified candidates for OVR positions

III.A.2.F. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

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

Activities to Implement the State's Strategy

In alignment with Section III. a. 2. A. of the State Plan, the American Samoa workforce system has strategically outlined three core program activities to serve as the foundational guidelines for ensuring eligible participants can successfully access and obtain postsecondary credentials. These strategies are: 1. Building Workforce System Capacity to Serve Participants with More Significant Barriers to Employment, 2. Enhanced Service to Youth, and 3. Implementing a Career Pathways/Sector Approach.

The primary impetus for enhancing workforce system capacity—particularly in the context of increasing participant access to postsecondary credentials—rests with the Adult Education agency (AEFLA). As the designated education and certification institution within the territory, AEFLA is uniquely positioned to spearhead this effort. This involves not only the provision of foundational education but also the systemic development of internal capabilities to effectively receive, assess, and support participants who face significant barriers to employment.

A critical area identified for substantial improvement is the participant referral system. To address this, American Samoa is committed to the ongoing pursuit and establishment of formal Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the American Samoa Community College (ASCC). These MOUs are intended to formalize and streamline the flow of participants between workforce services and the educational institution, ensuring seamless access to necessary academic support and training programs that ultimately lead to recognized postsecondary credentials. The goal is to create an integrated system where the capacity of the entire workforce ecosystem is maximized to support even the most challenging participant cohorts.

2. Enhanced Service to Youth

American Samoa is actively working toward a paradigm shift in the delivery of services to its youth population, moving toward comprehensive, year-round operation rather than fragmented, short-term engagements. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) agency is currently engaged in crucial discussions to formulate a more **gauging and impactful approach** for youth to obtain postsecondary credentials.

A significant partnership is being cultivated between the WIOA agency and the AEFLA/ASCC agencies to specifically accommodate **Out-of-School Youth (OSY)**. The strategy focuses on a highly individualized approach to improving their educational status. This begins with a comprehensive process of identifying and assessing their specific barriers to employment. Following this assessment, an **Individual Employment Plan (IEP)** is developed for each OSY participant. This IEP serves as a structured guide, outlining the

necessary educational and support services—including remedial work, career counseling, and job readiness training—required to facilitate their pathway toward obtaining a relevant certificate or degree, thereby transitioning them successfully into the skilled workforce.³

Career Pathways/Sector Approach

The development and implementation of sustainable career pathways are being driven collaboratively through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) agency. AEFLA has successfully developed and implemented a curriculum that has been formally approved by the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS).

Key features of this curriculum include:

- **Incorporating essential components of reading instruction** as they specifically relate to adult learners.
- **Developing robust content and theoretical models** for Integrated Education and Training (IET).
- **Establishing clear frameworks** for the overall Career Pathways approach.

To ensure quality and monitor the implementation of these pathways, the American Samoa Community College (ASCC) has established a **curriculum review committee**. The State Director for AEFLA is an active member of this committee, providing direct oversight and input to:

- Monitor and review the ongoing implementation of the curriculum.
- Assure the successful incorporation of all components of the curriculum related to adult education and career readiness.

The focus on developing curricula content and theoretical models for integration (IET) directly underpins the goal of establishing clear, navigable career pathways for participants. Furthermore, ASCC has fully aligned its core curriculum standards with the **American Samoa Department of Education College, Career and Readiness Standards**, ensuring that all postsecondary offerings are relevant, rigorous, and directly preparatory for high-demand sector jobs.

III.a.2.G. COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

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

The successful execution of the activities identified in section (A) is fundamentally connected to the broader economic development landscape of American Samoa, and therefore requires a comprehensive, Territory-wide approach. This necessity stems from the interconnected nature

of the Territory's economic drivers, recognizing that isolated initiatives, however well-intentioned, will fail to achieve the synergistic impact required for sustainable growth.

Effective coordination is not merely an optional best practice, but a critical imperative that must be strategically embedded into the operational framework of all relevant government agencies and private sector stakeholders. This formalized coordination must transcend informal communication and involve established economic development entities, specifically including the Department of Commerce, which is central to policy implementation; the American Samoa Economic Development Authority (ASEDA), responsible for financing and public-private partnerships; and crucially, relevant private sector organizations, whose input and investment are vital for job creation and market expansion.

Furthermore, this unified approach requires the deliberate and systematic integration of existing Territorial strategies to ensure coherence and prevent duplication of effort. This includes anchoring all actions within the framework of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which serves as the overarching blueprint for American Samoa's long-term economic vision. Beyond the CEDS, integration must extend to sector-specific master plans, such as those related to tourism, fisheries, and infrastructure development, ensuring that the activities in section (A) are harmonized with these specialized objectives to maximize their collective impact on the Territory's prosperity.

This integrated approach is essential for three primary reasons:

1. **Maximizing Impact:** By aligning program activities with ongoing Territorial priorities and resource flows, the initiative can leverage existing infrastructure, expertise, and funding sources, thereby multiplying the positive effect on the local economy and community.
2. **Precluding Duplication of Effort:** A lack of coordination risks the costly and inefficient replication of services, research, or infrastructure projects already underway or completed by other agencies. Systematic coordination ensures resources are deployed efficiently to address unmet needs and fill critical gaps, rather than revisiting well-covered ground.
3. **Ensuring the Sustainability of Outcomes:** Activities that operate in isolation are inherently vulnerable once initial funding cycles end. However, by embedding the project's outcomes and operations within the structure of existing, long-term economic development strategies and activities, the Territory takes ownership, ensuring that the benefits and progress achieved are maintained and built upon well into the future.

Therefore, inter-agency agreements, joint planning sessions, and consistent information sharing mechanisms must be established to ensure continuous and productive synergy across all stakeholders involved in the economic advancement of American Samoa.

B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the State operating systems and policies that will support the implementation of the State strategy described in section

II Strategic Elements. This includes—

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

The American Samoa Department of Human Resources (DHR), in its capacity as the administrator for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program, formalized a critical partnership with GEOGRAPHIC SOLUTIONS, commonly referred to as GEOSOL. This agreement officially commenced on July 1, 2023. This strategic collaboration designates GEOSOL as the sole provider and exclusive information system responsible for managing, accessing, and visually presenting all relevant data and comprehensive documentation pertaining to the WIOA program within American Samoa. This system is integral to the efficient operation, reporting, and oversight of the workforce development initiatives funded and managed under the WIOA framework.

In its dedication to the coordinated and effective implementation of comprehensive services and programs across American Samoa, the GEOSOL platform has been instrumental in furnishing an extensive array of resources and tools designed to support individuals in their career, education, and labor market endeavors.

Core Services for Individuals are foundational and begin with **Individual Registration**, establishing a personalized entry point into the system. Once registered, users gain access to **My Resources**, a consolidated hub for critical personal information management, including **My Messages** for system communications, **My Background** for personal and professional history review, **Upcoming Events** for scheduled activities and workshops, **My Appointments** for managing booked consultations, and a personalized **My Homepage** serving as a dashboard summary.

Career Services are robust and designed to guide individuals through professional development and job seeking. These services offer practical advice via **Career Tips**, and an intelligent matching system through **Career Explorer**, which assesses and aligns users' **job skills** and **personal skills** with potential career paths. Further exploration is facilitated by **Career Informer**, which provides detailed insights into various occupations, and the **Job Market Explorer**, offering a dynamic view of current employment opportunities and trends.

Education Services provide comprehensive support for learning and skill development. Users can search for accredited providers through **Training Providers/Schools** and identify relevant programs through **Training and Educational Programs**. The platform tracks educational outcomes with **Educational Program Completers**, offers access to supplemental learning via **Online Learning Resources**, and streamlines the administrative process with **Create Training Application**. A detailed record of educational history and goals is maintained in the **Education Profile Informer**.

Labor Market Services furnish essential economic and workforce data to inform individual decisions. These services include authoritative **Labor Market Facts**, detailed demographic and economic data through the **Area Profile**, sector-specific analysis with the **Industry Profile**, deep dives into specific occupations via the **Occupation Profile**, and a comprehensive summary of the educational landscape and its connection to the workforce in the **Education Profile**.

My Individual Profile acts as the user's comprehensive digital record within the system, consisting of the **Personal Profile** with biographical and contact information, the **Search History Profile** tracking past inquiries and explorations, and the **Assessment Profile**, which captures and analyzes self-reported and evaluated **Job and Personal Skills**.

For ease of navigation and quick access to essential features, the **Quick Menu** provides immediate links to **My Resources**, **My Individual Profile**, and **My Appointments**.

The system also includes an accessible **Assistance Center** for user support and guidance, ensuring help is readily available. Finally, it reinforces its commitment to continuous learning through curated **Online Learning Resources**, which provide direct links to reputable external online learning websites and platforms.

Workforce Staff: CORE SERVICES FOR STAFF MANAGING INDIVIDUALS:

- I. Manage Individuals (create an individual account and assist an individual). My OneStop Profile (personal profile and search history profile). Reports (Master Summary, Registered Individuals, Background Information, Contact, Feedback Surveys, and Tracking). My Staff Resources (My Messages, My Appointments, My Search Lists, My Job Skill Sets, My Templates, My Reports, and Upcoming Events). Requires: Core Services for Individuals Module.
- II. CORE CASE MANAGEMENT MODULE: Case Management Profile (Common Intake, Case Assignment, Case Load, Case Notes, Activities, Programs, Individual Employment Plan (IEP), Objective Assessment Summary (OAS), Assessment Plan,

and Manage Providers). Reports (Case Load). Requires: Core Services for Staff Managing Individuals Module.

- III. WIOA CASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM: Case Management Program (WIOA Application, WIOA Participation Record, WIOA Enrollment Activities, Case Closure, WIOA Outcomes (Exit), WIOA Follow-Ups, Youth Goals, and/or Youth Numeracy Literacy Tracking). Reports (Predictive Reports, Soft Exit Reports, Federal Reports - 9090, 9091, WIOA Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) File for Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS), WIOA Data Validation File). Optional integration with Standard and Advanced Fund Tracking Modules to assist managing funds. Requires: Core Case Management Module.

Workforce Staff: Detailed Core Services and Module Dependencies

The management of individual profiles and cases within the American Samoa Workforce System relies on a structured, modular approach to ensure comprehensive service delivery and accurate reporting.

1. CORE SERVICES FOR STAFF MANAGING INDIVIDUALS MODULE: This foundational module is essential for all workforce staff to initiate and manage their relationship with program participants.

- **Manage Individuals:** This core function allows staff to create new individual accounts within the system. It encompasses the entire process of initial intake, data collection, and ongoing assistance to ensure the individual's journey through workforce programs is tracked effectively.
- **My OneStop Profile:** This integrated component provides two crucial views for the individual:
 - **Personal Profile:** Contains all demographic, background, and eligibility information collected during the intake process.
 - **Search History Profile:** Tracks the individual's system activity, including job searches, resource utilization, and program inquiries, helping staff understand their engagement level.
- **Reports:** A suite of essential reports is available for high-level monitoring and data analysis:
 - **Master Summary:** A comprehensive overview of all registered individuals and their current status.
 - **Registered Individuals:** A detailed listing of all system users.
 - **Background Information:** Aggregated data on participant demographics,

education, and prior employment.

- **Contact:** Logs of all staff-to-individual and system communications.
- **Feedback Surveys:** Data collected from participant satisfaction surveys.
- **Tracking:** Time-stamped logs of key activities and milestones for each individual.
- **My Staff Resources:** This section provides staff-specific tools for efficient workflow management:
 - **My Messages:** Internal communication and system alerts.
 - **My Appointments:** Scheduling and management of meetings with individuals.
 - **My Search Lists:** Saved searches for specific types of individuals or resources.
 - **My Job Skill Sets:** Staff competency and training records.
 - **My Templates:** Standardized documents and forms for common processes.
 - **My Reports:** Custom and frequently run staff reports.
 - **Upcoming Events:** Internal and external events relevant to program delivery.
- **Required Dependency:** This module is necessary for the proper functioning of the **Core Services for Individuals Module**, which focuses on the participant-facing interface and tools.

-----2. CORE CASE MANAGEMENT MODULE

Building upon the foundation of the Staff Managing Individuals Module, this module provides the necessary tools for in-depth service planning and comprehensive case management.

- **Case Management Profile:** The central hub for all case-related information and actions:
 - **Common Intake:** A standardized process to capture and verify essential participant data across various programs.
 - **Case Assignment:** Functionality to assign cases to specific staff members based on workload, specialization, or program requirements.
 - **Case Load:** A dashboard view providing staff and supervisors with an overview of assigned cases, their current status, and progression.
 - **Case Notes:** A secure, chronological log of all interactions, decisions, and observations related to the individual's case.
 - **Activities:** Tracking of all case-related actions, such as referrals, workshops attended, and assessments completed.

- **Programs:** Enrollment and tracking details for the specific workforce programs the individual is participating in.
- **Individual Employment Plan (IEP):** The mandated document outlining the individual's career goals, necessary services, and planned milestones.
- **Objective Assessment Summary (OAS):** Documentation of the initial and ongoing objective assessment results, used to determine skill gaps and service needs.
- **Assessment Plan:** A plan detailing the sequence and type of assessments required for a comprehensive evaluation.
- **Manage Providers:** Tools for connecting individuals with external training, education, or support service providers.
- **Reports:**
 - **Case Load:** Specific reports focusing on staff capacity, case distribution, and case status analytics.
- **Required Dependency:** This module *requires* the **Core Services for Staff Managing Individuals Module** to function, as basic individual profiles must be established before in-depth case management can begin.

-----3. WIOA CASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM MODULE

This specialized module integrates the specific requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) into the core case management framework, ensuring federal compliance and accurate performance reporting.

- **Case Management Program:** Specialized tools for WIOA-mandated processes:
 - **WIOA Application:** Digital forms and workflow for capturing all information required for WIOA eligibility determination.
 - **WIOA Participation Record:** Detailed tracking of program entry, exit, and milestones for performance calculation.
 - **WIOA Enrollment Activities:** Recording of specific service activities, such as On-the-Job Training (OJT), customized training, and career services.
 - **Case Closure:** Documenting the formal process for exiting an individual from WIOA services.
 - **WIOA Outcomes (Exit):** Capturing the required post-exit employment, educational attainment, and earnings data.
 - **WIOA Follow-Ups:** Management of the mandated follow-up periods (2nd and 4th quarters post-exit) to collect performance data.
 - **Youth Goals:** Specific tracking of milestones related to WIOA Youth

- objectives, including educational and occupational skill attainment.
 - **Youth Numeracy Literacy Tracking:** Monitoring and reporting on the progress of youth participants in improving basic skills.
- **Reports:** Critical reports for compliance and performance monitoring:
 - **Predictive Reports:** Tools to estimate performance outcomes and identify cases at risk of negative outcomes.
 - **Soft Exit Reports:** Tracking individuals who have ceased receiving services but have not been formally exited, for timely follow-up.
 - **Federal Reports:** Generation of mandated compliance files:
 - **9090 and 9091:** Key quarterly performance reports.
 - **WIOA Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) File for Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS):** The standardized data submission file required by the federal government.
 - **WIOA Data Validation File:** Support documentation for audit and data quality review.
- **Optional Integration:** The module offers the ability to integrate with the **Standard and Advanced Fund Tracking Modules** to provide comprehensive financial oversight, linking participant services directly to their respective funding streams and improving fiscal management.
- **Required Dependency:** This specialized module *requires* the foundational **Core Case Management Module** to ensure all standard case management and individual tracking functions are in place before applying WIOA-specific rules and reporting.

Over the course of two and a half years, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) team has worked diligently and strategically in partnership with GEOSOL to fundamentally transform the structure of the system that was in place in 2023. This significant undertaking was necessitated by American Samoa's decision to pilot the Guam Hire System, which required a shift away from the previous integrated framework. Consequently, WIOA's primary objective became the creation of a completely independent, or "Stand Alone Effort." This complex and multi-faceted process of transitioning the system, which involved extensive coordination, technical development, and rigorous testing, was successfully completed on February 19th, 2026. This achievement marks a crucial milestone, establishing a locally controlled and independent system to manage the territory's workforce development initiatives.

2. THE STATE POLICIES THAT WILL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S STRATEGIES (FOR EXAMPLE. CO-ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND UNIVERSAL INTAKE PROCESSES WHERE APPROPRIATE). IN ADDITION, PROVIDE THE STATE'S GUIDELINES FOR STATE-ADMINISTERED ONE-STOP

PARTNER PROGRAMS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO A ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM
AND ANY ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR ONE-STOP PARTNER
CONTRIBUTIONS.

The WIOA Assessment Report served as a detailed analysis, explicitly identifying multiple areas where the territory's WIOA program operations were found to be non-compliant with federal guidelines and regulations established by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).

Crucially, the report did not merely point out deficiencies; it provided a robust set of recommended action plans. These plans are specifically targeted at three key governmental entities to ensure a unified and effective response:

1. **The Department of Human Resources/WIOA Office:** Focusing on direct program administration, service delivery, and compliance monitoring.
2. **The American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB):** Focusing on governance, policy setting, strategic oversight, and accountability.
3. **The Governor's Office:** Focusing on executive support, resource allocation, interagency coordination, and overall strategic direction.

The implementation of these recommended actions is deemed absolutely essential and non-negotiable. Their purpose is to comprehensively and effectively mitigate the multi-faceted issues that threaten the long-term viability and integrity of the WIOA programs in American Samoa. These critical issues span three main categories:

- **Programs and Services:** Addressing deficiencies in the quality, accessibility, and effectiveness of workforce training, career services, and partner program integration.
- **Finance and Fiscal Management:** Ensuring strict adherence to federal financial guidelines, improving grant management, and enhancing accountability for the use of WIOA funds.
- **Operational Sustainability:** Building robust, compliant, and enduring operational structures, policies, and internal controls necessary to ensure the continuous, effective, and federally compliant delivery of workforce services well into the future.

The American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB) is moving forward with a critical review of its internal structure and operational mandates. To directly address the requirements concerning the **Separation of Roles Model**, the ASWDB has scheduled a forthcoming, supplementary meeting within the current month. The purpose of this urgent convening is to engage in thorough deliberation and consensus-building on the proposed model, ensuring clarity, efficiency, and compliance across all associated entities.

Furthermore, a fundamental component of strengthening the **Governance and Compliance Foundation** is the strict adherence to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). WIOA specifically mandates the creation and dissemination of a comprehensive written document. This document is essential for clearly and unequivocally delineating the specific roles, responsibilities, and accountability frameworks for the following key officials and departments:

- **The ASWDB:** Its oversight and policy-setting functions.
- **The WIOA Chief (Executive/Director):** The ultimate responsibility for program execution and day-to-day management.
- **The Fiscal Officer (WIOA-Specific):** The responsibility for managing and reporting on federal grant funds.
- **The DHR Finance Division:** The role in managing and reconciling financial transactions and audits for the broader department.
- **The DHR Director (Department Head):** The final executive oversight, administrative authority, and responsibility for the entire Department of Human Resources, including WIOA programs.

The production and subsequent distribution of this detailed document is a non-negotiable requirement. Its goal is to ensure that all concerned parties possess an unambiguous understanding of their statutory duties and inter-agency reporting lines, thereby minimizing conflicts of interest, enhancing transparency, and solidifying a robust, compliant governance structure for the territory's workforce development initiatives.

To meet Federal Guidelines, the below model is highly recommended:

Party	Proposes	Prepares/Drafts	Approves	Reports To
WIOA Division	Operational policies, program procedures, participant recommendations	Policy drafts, performance reports, financial data for board review. Drafting policy for board approval is the recommended operating model.	Participant eligibility determinations within board-approved policy	Board (program); DHR (admin)
Board (Volunteer Members)	Strategic direction, board KPIs, governance priorities	Board agendas with staff support	Policies, state plan, strategic investments, waiver requests	Governor
Governor	Workforce vision; board appointments	—	Authorizes state plan; delegates grant administration authority to DHR; resolves conflicts between Board and DHR direction	—
DHR Director (Grant Administrator)	—	Executes grant agreements and state plan submission within the Governor’s delegated authority	Fiscal compliance certifications; procurement approvals	Governor
WIOA Finance	—	Quarterly financial reports, grant draw-down summaries, and expenditure-to-budget comparisons for Board review; PMS submissions; payment vouchers. The Board’s financial oversight function depends on receiving these reports.	Fiscal certifications to USDOL	Board (financial reporting); DHR Director (admin)

The American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB) is actively developing and finalizing formal policies that will govern co-enrollment processes across various programs and establish the operational framework for the One-Stop Center network. These critical policies are forthcoming and will be presented to the board for thorough review and formal approval.

In a significant strategic move to optimize service delivery and resource utilization, the ASWDB intends to pursue the American Job Center (AJC) comprehensive waiver from the U.S. Department of Labor. This waiver is sought to formally recognize and utilize the existing collaborative network of workforce service providers, effectively replacing the requirement for a single, centralized physical AJC location. The primary objective of securing this comprehensive waiver is to ensure that the co-location network collectively meets the full spectrum of community workforce services and resources that a traditional, comprehensive AJC would be required to provide. By leveraging the combined strengths and resources of this established network, American Samoa can ensure accessible, integrated, and high-quality workforce development services are available throughout the territory, tailored to the unique needs of its residents and employers.

3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

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

The Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) serves as the fundamental legislative mandate and operational mechanism through which the federal government strategically invests in American Samoa's workforce development capacity. Far exceeding the scope of a mere jobs program, WIOA is the comprehensive statutory framework that underpins the territory's entire workforce system.

This legislation carries several critical responsibilities:

- **Authorization and Governance:** WIOA officially authorizes the establishment and operation of the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB), empowering it to serve as the key policy and oversight body for all federally funded workforce activities within the territory.
- **Funding Allocation:** It strictly governs the processes and formulas by which federal training and administration funds are distributed to the territory, ensuring transparency and adherence to national priorities.
- **Service Definition and Eligibility:** WIOA meticulously defines the core, intensive, and training services that must be delivered, and—critically—establishes the eligibility criteria for the various populations (including adults, dislocated workers, and youth) who can benefit from these services.
- **Accountability and Performance Standards:** The Act establishes rigorous performance standards and measures of accountability by which the territory's workforce system is evaluated. These standards focus on key outcomes such as participant employment rates, median earnings, attainment of credentials, and measurable skill gains, ensuring the effective and efficient use of public funds.

In essence, WIOA represents a cohesive workforce development investment, systematically designed to achieve the overarching goal of increasing long-term economic participation, enhancing skills, and raising the sustained earnings potential across the entire eligible population of American Samoa. It is the engine driving a demand-driven workforce system responsive to the needs of local employers and individual job seekers.

The WIOA Division, housed within DHR, delivers the following programs:

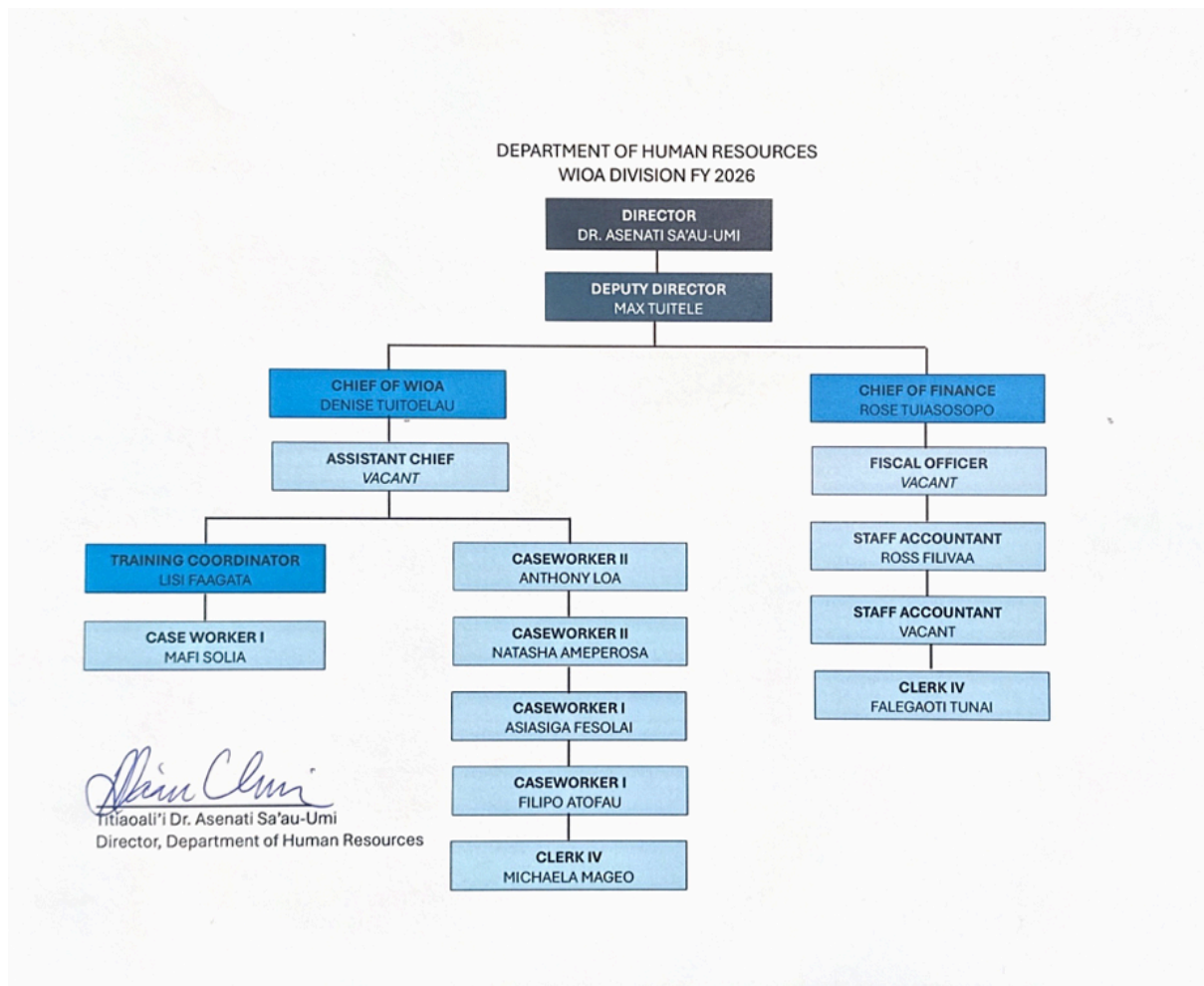
The Summer Youth Employment Program provides work experience for youth aged 14 to 24 and historically constitutes the largest allocation of WIOA funds.

Work-Based Learning (WBL): is designed for participants facing significant barriers to employment, providing them with the requisite workplace experience necessary to secure and maintain independent employment.

OJT is appropriate when a participant is ready to be hired and the training needed is job-specific skill development, not foundational work readiness. Produces employer investment and accountability that WBL does not require.

Career Services and Case Management are available to all WIOA-eligible participants in the adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs. WIOA statute does not restrict eligibility to individuals without degrees if those individuals encounter barriers to employment, earnings, or career advancement.

DHR/WIOA ORG CHART



Inclusive Partners Organizational Chart



B. STATE BOARD

Provide a description of the State Board activities that will assist State Board members and staff in carrying out State Board functions effectively. Also, provide a membership roster for the State

Establishment and Composition of the American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB)

The American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB) is a critical entity established to align with federal regulations, specifically 20 CFR 679.110-120. This regulatory framework mandates the composition and operational standards for state workforce development boards under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The ASWDB is designed to be a comprehensive partnership, bringing together various stakeholders from the American Samoa community.

Membership and Affiliations:

Consistent with WIOA requirements, the Board's membership is carefully structured to ensure broad representation from key sectors essential to economic and workforce success. The composition includes, but is not limited to, representatives from:

- **Business:** A majority of the members must be representatives of the business sector, reflecting both small and large enterprises within American Samoa's economy. These individuals are selected based on their experience and knowledge of in-demand occupations and local labor market needs.
- **Workforce:** Representatives from organized labor, including various trade and public sector unions, as well as individuals with expertise in workforce development, are vital to the Board's perspective.
- **Education:** Key figures from post-secondary education institutions, including the American Samoa Community College, and secondary education, ensure that training and curricula align with employer demands.
- **Government/Community:** Representatives from state and local government agencies responsible for economic development, welfare, vocational rehabilitation, and other related programs provide essential coordination and integration points for workforce services.

The history of the Workforce Development Board (WDB) in American Samoa has been marked by significant instability and organizational challenges, particularly in maintaining consistent engagement and fulfilling its oversight mandate under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Approximately six years ago, the territory's WDB faced a critical breakdown when the sole board chair became unreachable, leading to a complete halt in communication and activity with the United States Department of Labor (USDOL). This lack of sustained leadership severely hampered the territory's WIOA initiatives.

A subsequent attempt to establish a functional board occurred between 2021 and 2023. However, this iteration also proved to be unstable. During this period, the Vice Chair reportedly lacked awareness of the board's crucial oversight responsibilities, resulting in a rapid dissolution of productive board activity and further jeopardizing compliance efforts.

In a pivotal move for the territory's workforce system, the WDB was formally reconstituted in the 2023-2024 fiscal year under a new Board and Chair. This reconstitution initiated a period of renewed engagement. The new leadership immediately focused on examining single-state workforce development system models to develop a more resilient and compliant structure tailored to American Samoa's unique needs. This effort culminated in the successful submission of the current American Samoa State Plan, which was widely recognized as a significant step forward and a major benefit to the territory's WIOA endeavors.

Despite this progress and the renewed commitment, USDOL continued to report systemic issues that needed urgent attention. Specifically, the federal agency cited the persistent absence of formal board meeting documentation, a failure to establish clear lines of authority after past governance issues had blurred them, and a recurring inability to maintain consistently productive engagement with federal partners.

It is crucial to note, however, that even within this historical context of instability, each successive attempt to form and sustain a WDB demonstrated a measurable level of improvement over its predecessor. The current board represents a deliberate and meaningful "reset" for American Samoa's workforce development infrastructure.

To address the deeply rooted compliance and structural concerns, USDOL has re-engaged with the territory, and structural meetings have been scheduled. The immediate focus of these critical meetings is to clearly define and solidify the complex relationship dynamics and compliance requirements among the Workforce Development Board, the Department of Human Resources (DHR), the WIOA Division, and the Governor's Office, thereby establishing a stable, accountable governance framework for the future.

American Samoa Workforce Development Board:



PULAALI'I NIKOLAO PULA
GOVERNOR

PULUMATAALA AE AE JR.
LT. GOVERNOR

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT**

PAGO PAGO, AMERICAN SAMOA 96799
Telephone: (684) 633-4116 | (684) 633-4121

November 7, 2025

GENERAL MEMORANDUM NO. 257 – 25

To: Secretary of Samoan Affairs, CEOs, Presidents and Executive Directors of Authorities, Directors, Agency and Office Heads

From: Governor of American Samoa

Subject: Reconstitute Membership of the WIOA State Workforce Development Board

The Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides financial support for various programs beneficial to our Territory, including summer youth employment, adult education, and vocational rehabilitation. One of the requirements for our continued receipt of these funds is to maintain an updated local "State Workforce Development Board" as specified in 29 U.S.C. §3111 and 20 C.F.R. §679.110.

Pursuant to my authority under A.S.C.A. §4.0111 and 29 U.S.C. §3111, the Workforce Development Board is established. It shall consist of the following:

- Pulaali'i Nikolao Pula, Governor
- One Senator appointed by the President of the Senate
- One Representative appointed by the Speaker of the House

In order for the Board to more effectively perform its statutory duties and to better serve our people, I appoint the following people to the Workforce Development Board:

Businesses

- William Spitzenberg PIOA Consulting
- Tapusalaia Maneafaiga 4Kona Taxi
- Onosa'i Faleauto Va'a Jr. Va'a Construction Company
- Laosamoa Poasa Star Kist
- Nadine Solofa Taufaaasau ACE Hardware
- Patricia Vaivao Paradise Pizza
- Cathie Haleck-Paaga Halecks Enterprise
- Folasaitu Sorepa Thomas ASTCA
- Lisa Gebauer Blue Sky
- Edward "Kuki" Avegalio Hydroponics Farm
- Peter Young Young Electrical Services, LLC

Government

- Faiivae Iuli Godinet Office of Samoan Affairs
- Kuresa Paopao Territorial Administration on Aging
- Sofa'i Tuato'o Department of Education
- Adrian Vasai Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Frederick Suisala ASCC Trades & Technical Division
- Dr. Asenati Umi ASG Department of Human Resources
- Denise Tuitoelau ASG DHR Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA)
- Donna Achica ASCC Adult Education Literacy and Extended Learning (AELEL)
- Tafaimamao Tupuola Pacific Center in Human Security
- Veterans Affairs Rep. Veterans Affairs
- Eileen Tyrell Office of Governor, Workforce Development Lead

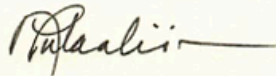
Community At Large

- Edna Noga Oceania Community Development Network/STEAM

The Chairperson shall be William Spitzenberg.

This memorandum supersedes General Memorandum 036-22, and any other appointments to this board made prior to today's date.

Please do not hesitate to contact Eileen Tyrell at 633-4121, ext. 1134 or via email at eileen.tyrell@go.as.gov, if you have any questions or need further clarification.



Pulaali'i Nikolao Pula
Governor

Membership of the American Samoa Workforce Development Board - 2024 is as follows:



PULAALI'I NIKOLAO PULA
GOVERNOR

PULUMATAALA AE AE JR.
LT. GOVERNOR

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT**
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Telephone: (684) 633-4116 | (684) 633-4121

November 7, 2025

GENERAL MEMORANDUM NO. 257 – 25

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From: Governor of American Samoa
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- Tafaimamao Tupuola Pacific Center in Human Security
- Veterans Affairs Rep. Veterans Affairs
- Eileen Tyrell Office of Governor, Workforce Development Lead


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- Edna Noga Oceania Community Development Network/STEAM

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Please do not hesitate to contact Eileen Tyrell at 633-4121, ext. 1134 or via email at eileen.tyrell@go.as.gov, if you have any questions or need further clarification.



Pulaali'i Nikolao Pula
Governor

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

III.b.4.A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE AND ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNER PROGRAMS.

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

In accordance with the mandates set forth in section 116(b) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), American Samoa is firmly committed to upholding its rigorously established standards. This adherence is crucial for ensuring the sustained efficacy of our programs and the demonstrable effectiveness of the services delivered to our participants.

A key strategic priority for the upcoming monthly governing board meeting is the formal establishment of a dedicated Assessment Committee. This committee will be instrumental in the continuous improvement process and will be specifically tasked with a critical objective: to develop a comprehensive Implementation Plan. This plan is designed to systematically address and operationalize the foundational content areas of WIOA, which are vital for meeting federal accountability requirements and driving successful workforce outcomes:

- **Performance Indicators:** The core of WIOA accountability rests upon six primary indicators of performance. These indicators are outcomes-focused, measuring the success of participants after they have exited the program. They include, but are not limited to, measures such as the rate of entry into unsubsidized employment, the retention of employment over time, the median earnings of employed participants, and the attainment of postsecondary credentials or diplomas, or successful completion of training programs. The committee will analyze American Samoa's current performance against these benchmarks and identify strategic levers for improvement.
- **Reporting Requirements:** Both states and local workforce areas operate under a federal mandate to meticulously collect and accurately report specific participant information. This data collection is not arbitrary; it is the essential raw material required to calculate and validate all mandated performance measures. The Assessment Committee's Implementation Plan will ensure that American Samoa's data collection systems and reporting protocols are fully compliant, efficient, and capable of providing the necessary transparency to our federal partners. This includes adherence to the required data elements and submission timelines.
- **Implementation Guidance:** To ensure national consistency and effective program execution, the U.S. Departments of Labor (DOL) and Education (ED) issue comprehensive regulatory guidance. This guidance provides the authoritative framework for the interpretation and practical implementation of the WIOA performance indicators and reporting requirements. The Assessment Committee will be responsible for translating this federal guidance into actionable local policies and procedures, thereby ensuring that all programs and service providers within American Samoa operate in full alignment with the most current federal stipulations.

The ongoing evaluation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) services underscores a critical need for program expansion and dynamic, real-time adjustments. This is essential to ensure that individual participants consistently make measurable progress toward their employment and career goals. Beyond mere service delivery, the systematic collection and analysis of evaluation information is paramount. This data provides invaluable intelligence derived directly from participants' experiences with WIOA services. More significantly, it acts as a diagnostic tool to pinpoint and resolve deep-seated, recurring systemic issues within the American Samoa Government (ASG) processes—specifically concerning payments, procurement, and other administrative bottlenecks that frequently create disruptive setbacks to the timely and effective delivery of services. A rigorous assessment process is currently administered to meticulously analyze these identified problems and issues. The resulting data is then integrated into the strategic planning cycle to critically evaluate both current operational frameworks and long-term strategic initiatives aimed at developing a robust and highly skilled local workforce.

In alignment with federal requirements, the Section 116 performance indicators have illuminated several critical areas requiring significant improvement and focused intervention. These key performance indicators—including employment rates after program exit, successful enrollment in subsequent training or post-secondary education programs, and the attainment of recognized industry-relevant credentials—serve as essential metrics. By tracking and analyzing these indicators, the WIOA agency can effectively determine which individual programs are most successful and, crucially, can refine offerings to align with the specific services and skills requested or demanded by local Employers. Furthermore, an objective assessment of the quality of services is performed. The outcomes of these assessments are instrumental in helping WIOA accurately measure the relevance, effectiveness, and overall quality of the available services within the broader context of the entire workforce development system.

Finally, the intentional and robust inclusion of participant satisfaction data represents a fundamental component of service quality assurance and continuous improvement. Capturing this feedback is absolutely key not only for identifying problematic areas within service delivery but also for apprehending and proactively addressing participants' emergent needs and wants. This is achieved through the collection and analysis of real-time statements and feedback mechanisms, ensuring the WIOA system remains responsive, person-centered, and maximally effective.

B. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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

A comprehensive assessment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) core programs was notably absent in previous program years, failing to meet the requirements set forth in section 116(b) of the Act. This significant gap was primarily attributable to the non-existence of an official, recognized, and fully effective American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB) to oversee and guide this critical evaluative process. However, a pivotal step has now been taken with the recent establishment and activation of the new American Samoa Workforce Board. This newly formed body is currently in the initial stages of convening, and a key item on its immediate agenda is to rectify the long-standing absence of WIOA core program assessments. To achieve this, the Board has established an Assessment Committee. This Committee is tasked with the crucial responsibility of developing and generating the necessary reports and metrics that will constitute a formal and thorough assessment of the effectiveness, outcomes, and compliance of the WIOA core programs operating within American Samoa. This structured approach aims to ensure that future program years will have the required data and analysis in accordance with federal mandates.

C. EVALUATION

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

The American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB), in its commitment to continuous improvement and accountability for all Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) core programs and services, will undertake a comprehensive initiative to develop and implement a robust evaluation framework. This framework will center on a newly devised, multi-faceted evaluation tool.

The development of this tool will be a collaborative process, spearheaded by the ASWDB members, with input from relevant stakeholders, including WIOA core program providers (Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs; Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy; Title III Wagner-Peyser; and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation).

The primary objective of the evaluation tool is to ensure meticulous alignment with all existing and prospective assessment processes utilized across the WIOA core programs. This alignment is critical to:

1. **Standardize Measurement:** Establish uniform metrics for assessing program performance, outcomes, and effectiveness across all WIOA core service providers.
2. **Ensure Regulatory Compliance:** Verify that all programs are meeting federal and local performance accountability measures as outlined in the WIOA legislation and American Samoa's state plan.
3. **Facilitate Data-Driven Decisions:** Provide the ASWDB with consistent, high-quality data to inform strategic planning, resource allocation, and necessary programmatic adjustments.
4. **Identify Best Practices and Areas for Improvement:** Systematically review service delivery models, training methodologies, and customer outcomes to replicate successful practices and target underperforming areas for corrective action.

The tool itself will likely encompass various components, including qualitative and quantitative indicators, such as participant completion rates, employment rates, median earnings, attainment of credentials, and measures of customer satisfaction with the one-stop service delivery system. The ASWDB anticipates that this enhanced evaluation structure will significantly strengthen the accountability and effectiveness of American Samoa's entire workforce development system, ensuring optimal outcomes for all residents seeking employment and skills advancement.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

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

A. FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

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

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

The current structure of American Samoa’s Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth funding is characterized by an almost exclusive concentration (100%) of resources toward the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). While the SYEP undeniably serves a vital purpose in offering participants an initial exposure to the world of work, this funding model channels nearly all youth service dollars into a single, time-bound intervention. For instance, many participants gain early familiarity with workplace expectations—such as arriving on time, following supervision, completing assigned tasks, and engaging with employers in structured settings—often for the first time. In addition, SYEP can provide short-term employment experience that helps build basic job readiness skills, strengthen confidence, and familiarize youth with local job environments, even if the work itself is temporary.

However, despite these clear benefits, the seasonal focus creates inherent limitations in achieving the long-term, sustained outcomes that WIOA is designed to deliver. Because SYEP is largely confined to the summer months, the opportunity to provide continuous support—such as ongoing career coaching, assistance with credential attainment, internships that extend beyond a brief period, or follow-up case management—is significantly reduced. As a result, youth may leave the program after a short work cycle with improved exposure to work but without the reinforced, progressive pathway that helps them secure durable employment, remain engaged in education, or transition into training opportunities. Consequently, while the SYEP model contributes meaningful immediate value, the near-total reliance on a single seasonal program limits the system’s ability to support the longer-term skills development and employment stability that WIOA seeks to promote across multiple stages of a young person’s journey.

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

The WIOA Division has historically defaulted to Work-Based Learning (WBL), using 100% subsidized wages, rather than On-the-Job Training (OJT), where employers contribute a cost-share of approximately 50%. In practice, this means more participants are placed quickly into subsidized work experiences rather than into training roles that require employers to share financial risk. While WBL can be highly effective—particularly for participants with significant barriers to employment such as limited work history, gaps in employment, or barriers related to transportation, childcare, or skills—relying on WBL almost exclusively reduces the opportunity for employers to be true co-investors in training. For example, a participant who needs intensive job readiness supports may benefit from subsidized wages;

however, if the employer's investment is minimal, the employer may have less incentive to tailor training to specific performance goals or to commit to long-term hiring decisions.

By contrast, OJT is explicitly designed to create stronger engagement and accountability because it requires employers to commit real financial resources and to make a genuine hire at the end of the training period. As a result, employers are more likely to define clear training plans, assign mentors, measure skill development, and maintain consistent expectations throughout the training cycle. Furthermore, OJT can produce stronger outcomes because it ties funding to workforce development activities that directly support business needs. In addition, employer cost-share encourages a more deliberate selection of candidates and helps ensure that training is aligned with occupational demands, such as progressing from entry-level tasks to higher-skill responsibilities in roles like healthcare support, advanced manufacturing, or logistics and warehousing.

Impact: The preference for WBL over OJT is a structural misalignment with the federal Industry-Driven Strategies pillar, which emphasizes employer investment in workforce development rather than fully subsidized participation without meaningful employer ownership. Therefore, a rebalanced approach—using WBL for participants with the greatest barriers to employment while making OJT the default option for work-ready participants—would increase employer engagement, strengthen performance metrics (including placement, retention, and credential or skill attainment), and improve alignment with the federal waiver and funding opportunities AS is seeking to pursue. Ultimately, this shift would preserve the strengths of WBL for those who need the most support while restoring the employer-driven accountability and co-investment that OJT is intended to deliver.

Solution: The American Samoa Workforce Development Board will convene to implement a rebalancing strategy that both broadens opportunities and services and leverages available funding with greater, more exponential impact.

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

The Dislocated Worker program is functionally aligned with Work-Based Learning (WBL) with respect to the funding of training activities. Funding streams are determined according to the participant's eligibility classification. While enrollment under the Dislocated Worker program is comparatively modest relative to the Adult and Youth programs, the eligibility requirements are indispensable for program documentation, as they enable the identification and delineation of Basic, Individualized, and Follow-up services for these participants. As previously discussed, the American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB) has

embedded strategic planning for all major WIOA agency programs into the agenda framework of its meetings, with the objective of strengthening service delivery and establishing a more robust process for the utilization of funding. In addition, ASWDB council plans are submitted to the Governor for review and approval; these plans specify the interrelationship between WIOA services, the American Samoa Government (ASG), and both public and private sector partners.

B. FOR TITLE II

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

The allocation of funds to Title II is not an activity currently carried out through coordination between WIOA and Title II. As a result, the American Samoa Workforce Board does not have an established cross-program process that links how Title II funds are planned, distributed, and monitored in relation to WIOA goals and employer-driven workforce priorities.

Therefore, the American Samoa Workforce Board must engage its Core Partner Agency in active discussions to determine whether this arrangement can be implemented, and if so, what steps are required to operationalize it in practice.

To ensure the approach is feasible and sustainable, these discussions should address key operational questions such as how funding decisions would be aligned with the timing of workforce planning, how partner roles and responsibilities would be documented, and how participants and employers would be identified and served. In addition, the Workforce Board should ensure that any implementation reflects the purpose and design of Vocational Rehabilitation services, which are intended to be workforce-oriented and employer-engaged rather than isolated from broader workforce development efforts. For example, coordination could include developing shared strategies for connecting individuals with disabilities to job openings, using employer input to guide service priorities, and establishing common performance measures that reflect both training outcomes and successful employment. By focusing on these elements, the Board can work toward an arrangement that supports coherence across programs while maintaining compliance with relevant requirements.

II. DESCRIBE HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE DIRECT AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS TO APPLY AND COMPETE FOR FUNDS AND HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE THAT IT IS USING THE SAME GRANT OR CONTRACT ANNOUNCEMENT AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR ALL ELIGIBLE [(WIOA Title II Section 231(c)(1)-(2)] PROVIDER

The newly established Workforce Development Board must first convene with the Title II programs and services to determine the stipulations regarding eligibility for other providers to apply and compete for funds under the WIOA Title II Section 231(c)(1)-(2). If prior Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) exist between Title I and II, the ASWDB will meet to discuss an effective and realistic approach to this critical collaborative process; this will ensure the stability of services and the development of a robust referral system.

The recently established American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB) is mandated to initiate a critical consultation process with the providers of programs and services funded under Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This initial convening is essential to meticulously define and document the precise stipulations and requirements regarding eligibility for other potential providers to apply and compete for the Title II funds as outlined in WIOA Section 231(c)(1)-(2). This step ensures a transparent, competitive, and fair process for resource allocation, fostering a broad and diverse network of high-quality service providers dedicated to adult education and literacy.

Furthermore, the ASWDB must conduct a thorough review to determine the existence and status of any prior Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) that may have been established between the WIOA Title I programs (primarily focused on workforce development services for adults, dislocated workers, and youth) and the WIOA Title II programs (focused on adult education and literacy). If such foundational agreements are identified, the ASWDB will promptly convene a dedicated session with key stakeholders from both Titles. The primary objective of this meeting will be to collectively deliberate and design an effective, practical, and sustainable approach to this critical collaborative process. This necessary integration is paramount not only to ensure the continuity and stability of essential workforce and educational services for the residents of American Samoa but also to facilitate the development and implementation of a robust, client-centric referral system. Such a system will be vital in streamlining access to the comprehensive range of services available under WIOA, ensuring that individuals receive the integrated support they need to achieve career success and educational advancement.

C. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

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

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) in American Samoa is solely responsible for the administration of all vocational rehabilitation services within the territory, including those specifically mandated under the Unified State Plan for individuals who are blind. Unlike some other state and territorial jurisdictions that may designate a separate agency or division to exclusively serve the blind or visually impaired population, the American Samoa OVR has chosen an integrated service delivery model. Consequently, the services for individuals who are blind are not outsourced or delegated to a separate entity but are instead directly carried out and managed by the OVR agency itself. This centralized approach ensures a seamless continuity of services, leveraging the existing expertise, resources, and infrastructure of the main OVR office to address the unique employment and independent living needs of individuals with visual impairments.

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

The process to consider to enable the information system to maximize the data elements to support assessment and evaluation is to allow the core partner agencies - AELEL and OVR access to the HASS system, and have them input their data on their own. By doing so, the system can capture more complete, real-time information—such as participant progress, service participation, barrier types, and outcome indicators—directly from the partners who are closest to service delivery. WIOA will coordinate with the vendor (GEOSOL) to enable the partners' access but conduct a training session first. For example, the training can cover how to enter accurate demographic and employment-related data, how to document assessments and referrals, and how to update records consistently when a participant moves from one service stage to another.

Prior to meeting with GEOSOL, WIOA and its core partners need to meet and finalize the core services that are notable, to include in the system, that produces effective assessment and evaluation of all parties. This step should clarify which services will be tracked (e.g., intake, assessment, referral, skill training, job coaching), what data fields are required for each service, and what outcome measures will be used to determine whether services are effective.

Collectively, WIOA aims to build and sustain a more robust partnership with its core agencies by considering the following:

1. Provide access to employment referral services to all individuals with disabilities or experiencing educational/employment training barriers referred from their worksites. For instance, worksites can submit referrals to ensure individuals receive appropriate next steps

such as employment readiness resources, targeted referrals, and individualized support based on identified barriers.

2. Refer individuals with disabilities or those experiencing educational/employment training barriers to the Voc-Rehab Center or the Adult Education Office for additional services such as skill training, job coaching, and other support services. As an example, an individual who requires both literacy upgrading and supported employment planning could be routed to the most relevant office while ensuring the HASS system reflects the referral and service milestones.

3. Provide ongoing training and support to all staff members to ensure they are able to provide the highest level of services to individuals with disabilities or individuals with educational/employment training barriers. This could include refresher sessions on documentation standards, disability-informed service practices, and how to effectively interpret assessment results to guide participant next steps.

4. Collaborate with the Voc-Rehab or AELEL center to develop and establish policies and procedures that promote and sustain the marketability of individuals with disabilities or those experiencing educational/employment training barriers in the workforce. For example, joint procedures can outline how to support employer engagement, skills verification, and consistent communication between partner agencies so that participants remain job-ready.

5. Track and evaluate outcomes to measure the effectiveness of policies, procedures, and services related to workforce development for individuals with disabilities or those experiencing educational/employment barriers. This may include monitoring referral turnaround time, training completion rates, employment outcomes, retention, and measurable gains in employability.

6. Continuously improve policies, procedures, and services to ensure that they meet emerging needs, challenges, and opportunities. For instance, results from ongoing outcome reviews can lead to adjustments in service design, additional partner training topics, or updates to system data fields to address new barriers identified among participants.

6. PROGRAM DATA

A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

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

The Hire American Samoa System (HASS) is accessible to both individuals (applicants) and employers (job sites), supporting the overall goal of connecting people with available work opportunities in American Samoa. Currently, however, the application input process is strictly limited to WIOA staff. This restriction exists because of system configurations that align with the established structure of WIOA and its core partner agencies, meaning that the system was initially designed for staff-mediated activity rather than direct consumer entry. As a result, applicants and employers can participate in the workflow, but the actions that create or update records—such as submitting applications and completing routine steps in the system—are primarily handled by WIOA staff members. To address this gap, the system developers require increased activity and data input from both consumer groups (applicants and employers) so the system can be used more comprehensively. Since the primary activities entered into the system are applications and routine actions, HASS has limited the privileges of system access within American Samoa to prevent inconsistent or uncontrolled data entry.

In response to this service limitation, WIOA, under the guidance of the Workforce Development Board, will expand its outreach, basic, intake, and follow-up services by employing a co-location process. Under this approach, services will be brought closer to where applicants and employers can realistically access them, while still aligning with Department of Labor laws and regulations related to effective program delivery and employment sustainability. For example, co-locating support in a shared service setting can help ensure that applicants who want to apply are guided through the intake steps, and that employers seeking talent can be enrolled efficiently so that job orders and recruitment information can move through the system without unnecessary delays. This co-location strategy is intended to increase adoption of HASS, improve data accuracy, and strengthen the end-to-end employment pathway.

In March 2026, American Samoa became the first territory to fully implement a Stand Alone Effort under the Hire American Samoa System service. Previously, American Samoa utilized the Guam interface of their hire system for several years. While this arrangement allowed operations to continue, it also introduced complications—particularly because data from other territories was visible. For instance, applicants or staff might encounter information that was not relevant to their jurisdiction, and administrative oversight could be more complex because

the system environment was shared across territories. American Samoa now appreciates that it is managing and controlling its own information system. With that control, the territory can better tailor system use to local needs, reduce confusion, and ensure that records and reporting remain within American Samoa's program boundaries.

Looking ahead, internal training sessions, conducted by Geographic Solutions (GEOSOL), are forthcoming. These sessions will be designed to improve day-to-day functionality for both consumer groups and system users. Specifically, the training will focus on enabling individuals to complete the application process independently, including key actions such as entering personal information accurately, confirming submission steps, and understanding what to do next after submitting an application. In addition, the training will cover enrolling employers into HASS so employers can directly recruit potential employees. As a result, employers will be able to create and manage opportunities in the system more smoothly, while applicants will experience a more direct and user-friendly process that supports faster connection to employment.

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

The Workforce Development Board (WDB) serves as the primary governing body appointed by the Governor of American Samoa to oversee activities related to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This crucial body is comprised of dedicated volunteers drawn from various sectors of the community, all committed to enhancing workforce development initiatives across the territory.

Key Responsibilities and Functions:

The Board is tasked with several high-level, strategic responsibilities essential for the success and accountability of the territory's workforce system:

1. **Strategic Oversight:** Providing a comprehensive vision and direction for all WIOA-funded programs and activities, ensuring they align with the territory's economic development goals.
2. **State Plan Approval:** Reviewing, modifying, and ultimately approving the American Samoa State Plan, which outlines the four-year strategy for workforce investment.
3. **Policy Review:** Developing and reviewing local policies that govern the operation of the workforce system, including eligibility, service delivery, and coordination with partner programs.
4. **Performance Accountability:** Monitoring the performance of WIOA programs

against established federal and territorial benchmarks, ensuring effective use of public funds and positive outcomes for job seekers and employers.

Operational Structure: It is vital to note that the Workforce Development Board operates solely at the strategic and governance level. The Board is **not responsible for the day-to-day program delivery** or the direct management of workforce centers or service staff. Their role is purely supervisory and policy-focused, allowing service providers to concentrate on delivering effective training and employment services.

Reporting and Authority: As the Governor's appointed body, the Workforce Development Board reports directly to the Governor of American Samoa, providing transparency and accountability at the highest executive level of the territorial government. This direct reporting line ensures that WIOA strategies are fully integrated into the Governor's broader economic and human capital development agenda.

IV. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S DATA SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES TO PRODUCE THE REPORTS

REQUIRED UNDER SECTION 116, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM.
(WIOA SECTION

116(D)(2)).

The foundation of data management for the workforce development programs in American Samoa rests on the **Hire American Samoa System (HASS)**. This comprehensive system is meticulously designed to capture essential information across the entire service delivery lifecycle. Data collection within HASS is structured into four distinct phases, ensuring a thorough record of each participant's journey:

1. **Intake:** Initial registration and collection of demographic and eligibility information.
2. **Application:** Detailed documentation of the participant's goals, skills assessment results, and requested services.
3. **Training Service:** Recording of participation, progress, and completion in various training activities, workshops, and supportive services.
4. **Follow-up:** Tracking post-program outcomes, including employment status, wages, and retention.

Once these various data elements are accurately inputted into HASS based on the level and type of service provided to the participant, the system vendor, **GEOSOL**, takes on the critical responsibility of data transformation. The raw HASS data is converted into the standardized **PIRL (Participant Individual Record Layout)** files. These essential reporting files are then generated, managed, and securely stored within the dedicated **Geosol portal** (accessible via [\[https://extranet.geosolinc.com/dotnet/Default.aspx\]](https://extranet.geosolinc.com/dotnet/Default.aspx)(<https://extranet.geosolinc.com/dotnet/Default.aspx>)). Access to the vendor's data system is strictly controlled and limited exclusively to the **WIOA Chief**. This centralization of access serves a dual purpose: it maintains data integrity and provides a single point of contact for communicating any necessary software issues, technical glitches, or complex data-related questions directly to the GEOSOL support team.

Following the conversion and preparation of the data, the GEOSOL team is responsible for transforming the standardized PIRL files into a human-readable, aggregate report format suitable for federal submission. These official performance reports are subsequently uploaded onto the **Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS)**.

WIPS serves as the authoritative federal platform for data validation and final report submission. Upon uploading, WIPS automatically verifies the accuracy and completeness of

the report data against federal guidelines and performance measures. Only after this rigorous verification process is complete does the **Chief of WIOA** officially certify the reports, making them official and ready for submission to the federal government.

Performance reports are generated and submitted on a recurring, rigorous schedule: **quarterly** and on an **annual basis**. The WIPS system is specifically noted for its highly efficient design, being **very easy to navigate and exceptionally user-friendly**, which streamlines the critical process of federal reporting and compliance.

B. ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPANTS' POST-PROGRAM SUCCESS

Describe how lead State agencies will use the workforce development system to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment. States may choose to set additional indicators of performance.

Case workers consistently report a systemic difficulty in maintaining meaningful and reliable contact with program participants, particularly in the period immediately following their exit from core WIOA services. This challenge presents a critical compliance risk and directly impedes the accurate measurement of program efficacy.

WIOA Follow-up and Compliance Requirement

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) mandates a stringent follow-up monitoring period extending for 12 months post-exit for all participants. The goal of this requirement is to confirm sustained employment, assess the quality of job placement, and measure wage progression. However, the absence of formalized, reliable contact agreements established during a participant's enrollment, coupled with a lack of systematic, automated tracking mechanisms, makes this essential 12-month requirement exceedingly difficult to meet on a consistent basis across the territory.

Data Integrity and Systemic Gaps

An audit of the HireAmericanSamoa system reveals a significant and verifiable gap between the volume of core services documented as being provided to participants and the corresponding low volume of follow-up activities logged. This discrepancy suggests that while participants are successfully completing initial training and placement, the mandated data on their long-term outcomes is not being collected, recorded, or synthesized effectively.

Impact on Performance Metrics and Federal Standing

The failure to establish and maintain robust post-exit contact has a direct and detrimental impact on American Samoa's performance against WIOA's primary statutory performance indicators:

1. **Q2: Employment Retention:** The percentage of participants employed in the second quarter after exit.
2. **Q4: Employment Retention and Median Earnings:** The percentage of participants employed in the fourth quarter after exit, and the median earnings of those participants.

These metrics are the primary indicators the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) uses to evaluate the overall effectiveness and success of the territory's workforce program. Weak or non-existent follow-up therefore systematically undermines the territory's officially reported outcomes. Furthermore, this failure negatively influences American Samoa's standing and competitiveness when applying for critical competitive federal grants and supplemental federal support, as demonstrated, verifiable outcomes are often a prerequisite

for consideration.

Critical Importance for Future Funding Initiatives

The demonstrated ability to track and document successful participant outcomes is particularly vital for future high-profile initiatives, such as positioning for the **Workforce Pell Grant program**. Strong, documented, and verifiable employment outcomes are a non-negotiable condition of provider eligibility for this specific federal funding stream. If the WIOA system in American Samoa cannot consistently and demonstrably prove positive participant outcomes in terms of retention and earnings, it severely weakens the case for aligning the territory's workforce training institutions and programs to qualify for, and effectively utilize, the significant resources offered by the Workforce Pell initiative.

C. USE OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) WAGE RECORD DATA

Explain how the State will meet the requirements to utilize quarterly UI wage records for performance accountability, evaluations, and as a source for workforce and labor market information, consistent with Federal and State law. (This Operational Planning element applies to core programs.)

Not applicable to American Samoa

D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

Describe the privacy safeguards incorporated in the State's workforce development system, including safeguards required by section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and other applicable Federal laws.

Privacy Safeguards

1. **Compliance with Federal Laws:** The state's workforce development system adheres to all applicable federal laws, including section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g), commonly known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA protects the privacy of student education records and governs the release of such records.
2. **Confidentiality Policies:** The workforce development system has established comprehensive confidentiality policies to protect the privacy of individuals' records and information. These policies outline the procedures for handling, storing, and sharing sensitive data in compliance with federal and state regulations.
3. **Access Controls:** Access to participant records and information is strictly controlled to ensure that only authorized personnel have access on a "need to know" basis. This includes implementing secure login credentials, role-based

access controls, and regular audits of access logs to monitor for unauthorized activity.

4. **Data Encryption:** Sensitive data stored within the workforce development system is encrypted to prevent unauthorized access or interception. Encryption protocols are implemented to secure data both in transit and at rest, reducing the risk of data breaches or unauthorized disclosures.
5. **Physical Security Measures:** Physical safeguards are in place to protect physical records and storage devices containing sensitive information. This includes restricted access to facilities where records are stored, surveillance systems, and secure storage containers to prevent theft or unauthorized access.
6. **Training and Awareness Programs:** Personnel involved in the workforce development system receive training on privacy policies and procedures to ensure compliance with confidentiality requirements. Training programs cover topics such as data handling best practices, confidentiality protocols, and the importance of safeguarding individual records.

7. **Record Retention Policies:** The workforce development system maintains strict record retention policies to govern the storage and disposal of participant records. These policies outline the appropriate retention periods for different types of records and specify the methods for secure disposal to prevent unauthorized access or disclosure.
8. **Audit and Monitoring Mechanisms:** Regular audits and monitoring activities are conducted to assess compliance with privacy safeguards and identify any potential vulnerabilities or breaches. Audits may include reviewing access logs, conducting security assessments, and evaluating adherence to privacy policies and procedures.
9. **Compliance Oversight:** A designated compliance officer or team is responsible for overseeing privacy compliance within the workforce development system. This includes monitoring regulatory changes, conducting internal assessments, and addressing any compliance issues or violations promptly and effectively.

By implementing these privacy safeguards, the state's workforce development system ensures that individuals' records and information are protected from unauthorized access, disclosure, or misuse, while also promoting trust and confidence in the system among participants and stakeholders.

7. PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS.

A. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT THE PRIORITY OF SERVICE PROVISIONS FOR COVERED PERSONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE JOBS FOR VETERANS ACT, CODIFIED AT SECTION 4215 OF 38 U.S.C., WHICH APPLIES TO ALL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS FUNDED IN WHOLE OR IN PART BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.

B. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MONITOR PRIORITY OF SERVICE PROVISIONS FOR VETERANS.

C. DESCRIBE THE TRIAGE AND REFERRAL PROCESS FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND OTHER POPULATIONS DETERMINED ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE SERVICES FROM THE JOBS FOR VETERANS STATE GRANTS (JVSG) PROGRAM'S DISABLED VETERANS' OUTREACH PROGRAM (DVOP) SPECIALIST/CONSOLIDATED POSITION.

Staff members are tasked with providing information to covered persons on available resources, services, and support options. In practice, this means they should clearly communicate what assistance can be accessed, who is eligible, and what steps are required to get started. For example, staff may explain how to locate relevant documents, where to submit a request or application, and what timelines to expect for review or follow-up. In addition, they should be prepared to answer common questions, such as how benefits are determined, what documentation might be needed, and how changes or updates to a

person's status are handled. To ensure understanding, staff may use plain language, provide written materials, and offer guidance on next steps, while also directing covered persons to the appropriate point of contact when more specialized help is required. Services under DOL job training programs and ensuring that individuals are aware of their rights to priority as veterans or covered spouses. This information should be communicated verbally or in writing at various points in the program, including entry, orientation, eligibility determination, assessment, and during program activities.

It's also important to note that covered persons under the Jobs for Veterans Act include veterans and the spouses of veterans meeting specific criteria, such as service-connected disability or the spouse of a missing or deceased veteran. Proof of veteran and covered spouse status must be documented and maintained in the applicant's file. Overall, the priority of service for veterans is a key component of WIOA-funded programs, ensuring that those who have served in the military and their spouses receive prioritized access to employment and training services.

8. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

In accordance with Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), American Samoa is steadfast in its commitment to ensuring that its programs and services uphold equality for all individuals and across every demographic category, including race, age, sex, and—most notably—persons with disabilities. The approved and executed Memorandum of Understanding between the WIOA Agency and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, effective June 3, 2024, underscores the shared standards and mutually agreed objectives of both agencies.

The following guiding principles must be consistently observed:

1. ****Inclusive Workforce Integration:**** Develop and implement evidence-based practices designed to facilitate the effective integration of individuals with disabilities into the workforce while strengthening their employability and competitiveness in the labor market.

2. **Outcome Monitoring and Assessment:** Create and maintain robust mechanisms to monitor, evaluate, and continuously improve the efficacy of policies, procedures, and workforce development services delivered to individuals with disabilities.

3. **Employment Standards and Compliance:** Ensure that employment opportunities extended to individuals with disabilities meet, and where practicable exceed, all applicable business and industry standards.

9. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each one-stop center is able to meet the needs of English language learners, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and

Each of the core partners is also required to ensure equity and inclusion across their programs and services as well as complete staff training in working with ELL individuals and families.

In the absence of a brick-and-mortar One-Stop Center, the co-location model will still enable the target population to receive services. Training will be conducted at the WIOA Office.

Program staff will coordinate scheduled time slots to advance One-Stop network outreach, leveraging ASG-run television programming that is widely followed by residents and online subscribers. We will actively recruit individuals who are native Tongan, Filipino, Fijian, and Chinese to participate in live interviews and talk shows, extending an open invitation to their respective communities to access employment services and job-seeking support in their native languages.

Bilingual informational brochures will also be developed and distributed to church communities. American Samoa is a small island with multiple resource networks that work in partnership to serve multicultural populations. Many residents who do not speak English primarily engage through church communities organized by ethnic groups. For instance, within the Catholic Diocese, separate Tongan, Filipino, and Fijian communities serve local families. We will reach out to these ethnically specific groups to share information about the One-Stop delivery system, including how to access the One-Stop Center, what documents to bring, and which services will be available.

Translated materials, instructions, and user guides will be available for staff and participants to use in the WIOA office. In addition, multilingual facility signage will be posted throughout the center to ensure users can easily navigate resources—such as locating the consumer technology area, where individuals can access computer workstations, create a login, and reach the American Samoa Job Bank; as well as finding information related to apprenticeship programs, completing required applications, and other essential service steps.

COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

Describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination among the core programs, and with the required one-stop partner programs and other programs and activities included in the Unified or Combined State Plan.

As of current, there are no scheduled meetings with the core partners however it is a priority, especially with an active board in place. The clear description of separation of authorities in developing an effective and robust WIOA is the outcome of a strong and reliant framework of services specific to the job seeker community, underlining the WIOA Title I, II, and IV. After the unsuccessful launching of the One-Stop Center, WIOA division came to a realization that

there are plenty of services we are not providing to the people, and it's basically because we forget to understand the main goals of WIOA - to enable Opportunities and Innovation for the people of our territory. Another ultimate sign of collaboration of the WIOA core partnership, we are each other's official government board members. Both OVR and AEFLA Directors are in the ASWDB and WIOA is Chairperson for the State Rehabilitation Committee. These elevated forms of professional relationships embed a connected and in-synched knowledge of what we can plan and coordinate for easy access to services, conduct consistent outreach programs to educate people on the combined services we provide.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;	Yes
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;	Yes
3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs;	
<p>4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administrating the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public;</p> <p>(b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;</p>	Yes
<p>5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;</p>	Yes
<p>6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3);</p>	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;	Yes
8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;	Yes
9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs;	Yes
10. The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);	Yes
11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and	Yes
12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.	Yes

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

The State must address all program-specific requirements in this section for the WIOA core programs regardless of whether the State submits either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE I-B

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following with respect to activities carried out under subtitle B—

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

A. IDENTIFY THE REGIONS AND THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS DESIGNATED IN THE STATE

American Samoa does not administer any additional regions or local workforce development areas, as it operates as a singular Service Delivery Area encompassing the entirety of the

territory. It is crucial to acknowledge that, owing to the limited population of American Samoa and the housing conditions associated with Title I programs under the auspices of the Department of Human Resources (DHR) – a governmental agency – operations and directives are also governed by established governmental policies and procedures. The comprehensive framework for workforce development in American Samoa is intricately designed to accommodate the unique challenges posed by its geographic isolation and demographic constraints. As a consequence, the DHR is committed to implementing targeted strategies that maximize resource allocation and enhance the efficacy of local services. These initiatives are tailored to address the specific needs of the community, ensuring that the workforce is adequately prepared to meet both current and future demands.

Moreover, collaboration among various stakeholders, including government entities, local businesses, and educational institutions, plays a pivotal role in fostering a resilient economic environment. By cultivating partnerships that emphasize skills training, career development, and employment opportunities, the DHR seeks to empower residents and stimulate sustainable growth throughout the territory.

In light of these efforts, the overarching goal remains to create a vibrant workforce capable of thriving in an increasingly competitive global marketplace. Through continuous assessment and iterative improvements to programs and policies, American Samoa aspires to elevate the standard of living for its residents while promoting social equity and economic advancement for all.

B. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS AND POLICY USED FOR DESIGNATING LOCAL AREAS, INCLUDING

PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING WHETHER THE LOCAL AREA MET THE CRITERIA FOR

“PERFORMED SUCCESSFULLY” AND “SUSTAINED FISCAL INTEGRITY” IN ACCORDANCE WITH

106(B)(2) AND (3) OF WIOA. DESCRIBE THE PROCESS USED FOR IDENTIFYING REGIONS AND

PLANNING REGIONS UNDER SECTION 106(A) OF WIOA. THIS MUST INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION

OF HOW THE STATE CONSULTED WITH THE LOCAL BOARDS AND CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS

IN IDENTIFYING THE REGIONS

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and procedures for designating local areas and identifying regions in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This policy ensures compliance with Sections 106(a), 106(b)(2), and 106(b)(3) of WIOA.

American Samoa does not administer any additional regions or local workforce development areas, as it operates as a singular Service Delivery Area

C. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS AND POLICY REFERRED TO IN SECTION 106(B)(5) OF

WIOA RELATING TO DESIGNATION OF LOCAL AREAS

Not applicable to American Samoa as the territory does not operate any other regions and local workforce development areas as it operates as a Single Service Delivery for the entire territory.

D. PROVIDE THE APPEALS PROCESS AND POLICY REFERRED TO IN SECTION 121(H)(2)(E) OF WIOA RELATING TO DETERMINATIONS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

In the meeting that convened in Apr 14, 2026 The ASWDB has established a Policy Committee that will focus on all policies and procedures for WIOA programs and performance, with the inclusion of Financial matters. The American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB), at its meeting convened on April 14, 2026, officially established a dedicated Policy Committee. This critical committee has been specifically tasked with a broad and comprehensive focus on all policy and procedural matters governing the implementation and execution of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs within American Samoa.

The scope of the Policy Committee's responsibilities extends to ensuring regulatory compliance and operational effectiveness across all facets of WIOA programs, including performance accountability metrics and strategic planning. Significantly, the committee's mandate explicitly includes the review and establishment of policies and procedures related to Financial matters. This inclusion ensures that all fiscal policies, budgeting processes, and financial reporting for WIOA funds are managed with the utmost transparency, efficiency, and adherence to federal and local regulations. The formation of this committee underscores the ASWDB's commitment to robust governance and continuous improvement in service delivery for the territory's workforce and employers.

A. PROVIDE STATE POLICIES OR GUIDANCE FOR THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM AND FOR USE OF STATE FUNDS FOR WORKFORCE INVESTMENT
ACTIVITIES

American Samoa Workforce Development System

1. **Statewide Workforce Development Plan:** Develop and periodically update comprehensive statewide workforce development plan that outlines strategic goals, objectives, and priorities for enhancing the skills and employability of the workforce. This plan should align with federal guidelines under WIOA and reflect input from key stakeholders, including employers, educational institutions, community organizations, and workforce development agencies.
2. **Performance Accountability:** Establish performance accountability measures to assess the effectiveness of workforce development programs and investments in achieving desired outcomes, such as employment retention, wage growth, skill attainment, and credential attainment. This includes defining performance indicators, setting performance targets, and conducting regular evaluations to track progress and identify areas for improvement.
3. **Equitable Access and Inclusivity:** Ensure equitable access to workforce development services and opportunities for all individuals, including those from underserved or marginalized communities, individuals with disabilities, veterans, youth, and older workers. Develop outreach and recruitment strategies to reach diverse populations and remove barriers to participation through targeted interventions and support services.
4. **Priority Populations:** Identify priority populations with unique workforce needs or barriers to employment, such as dislocated workers, low-income individuals, English language learners, and individuals with limited education or skills. Allocate resources and design programs specifically tailored to address the needs of these populations, including specialized training, support services, and career pathways.
5. **Workforce Training Programs:** Invest state funds in high-quality workforce training programs that align with labor market demands and industry needs. Prioritize funding for programs that lead to industry-recognized credentials, certifications, or degrees

with value in the local or regional job market. Emphasize sector-based approaches that target growth industries and emerging sectors with high-demand occupations.

6. **Employer Engagement and Partnerships:** Foster strong partnerships with employers, industry associations, and business organizations to identify workforce needs, inform training curriculum development, and facilitate work-based learning opportunities, such as apprenticeships, internships, and on-the-job training. Encourage employers to participate in advisory boards, sector partnerships, and other collaborative efforts to shape workforce development strategies.
7. **Financial Management and Oversight:** Establish rigorous financial management practices and oversight mechanisms to ensure the responsible stewardship of state funds allocated for workforce investment activities. Develop clear guidelines for budgeting, expenditure tracking, fiscal reporting, and audit compliance to maintain transparency, accountability, and integrity in financial operations.

8. Continuous Improvement and Innovation: Foster a culture of continuous improvement and innovation within the statewide workforce development system by promoting evidence-based practices, data-driven decision-making, and learning agendas. Encourage experimentation with new approaches, technologies, and interventions to address evolving workforce challenges and seize emerging opportunities in the labor market.

B. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO USE GOVERNOR'S SET ASIDE FUNDING FOR MANDATORY AND DISCRETIONARY ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING HOW THE STATE WILL CONDUCT EVALUATIONS OF TITLE I ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES.

The entire program's operations to raise the standard of services provided to employers and job seekers throughout the Territory are heavily dependent on the Governor's set aside funds. The Governor's funds will be used for oversight staff to administer the required activities as outlined in WIOA Regulations 20 CFR Part 652.200. These activities include the Administering and monitoring the WIOA program, providing technical assistance in carrying out WIOA activities, operating a fiscal and management accountability information system, along with maintaining performance and information on the cost of attendance (including tuition and fees). As of current, American Samoa utilizes the bulk of the set aside funds during the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) to ensure the effective operations of activities scheduled for the 8- week long program. Examples of the SYEP activities include: Career Day/Job Extravaganza, Culture Day, and Meeting with a Mentor. The Summer Youth Employment Program have expanded exponentially over the years as the hands-on experience with employers have been very effective training strategies but also, the activities outside of the office entails networking, public speaking, and just overall perception of what the American Samoa Workforce is.

C. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE RAPID RESPONSE FUNDS TO RESPOND TO LAYOFFS AND PLANT CLOSINGS AND COORDINATE SERVICES TO QUICKLY AID COMPANIES AND THEIR AFFECTED WORKERS. STATES ALSO SHOULD DESCRIBE ANY LAYOFF AVERSION STRATEGIES THEY HAVE IMPLEMENTED TO ADDRESS AT RISK COMPANIES AND WORKERS.

The State will leverage Rapid Response funds to address layoffs and plant closures by coordinating services and delivering timely assistance to impacted workers. To ensure these resources are used effectively, the State will develop and implement a comprehensive Rapid Response strategy that prioritizes support for employees affected by layoffs or plant closures. This strategy will encompass all core Rapid Response services, including informational briefings, comprehensive assessments, job search support, career guidance, and training opportunities.

To address at-risk companies and vulnerable workers, the State will pursue proactive layoff aversion measures. These actions will help employers prevent layoffs or plant closures by identifying and resolving potential workforce-related challenges before they escalate. Such interventions may include providing technical assistance, offering financial incentives, supplying training support, or extending other resources that enable businesses to sustain operations and retain their workforce.

With respect to incumbent worker training, the State will reserve up to 20 percent of the combined total of adult and dislocated worker allocations for this purpose. In addition, the State may utilize statewide activities funds under WIOA section 134(a)(3)(A)(i), together with Rapid Response funds, to support statewide incumbent worker training initiatives. These funds will be used to provide training that enables current employees to refresh and advance their skills, strengthen competencies within their fields, and pursue career ladder progression, as well as to transition into new industries with in-demand occupations.

The State will also ensure that local areas have the tools and capacity required to deliver Rapid Response services effectively. This includes providing technical assistance, training, and other resources to support local workforce areas as they design, refine, and implement their Rapid Response plans promptly and with fidelity to program goals.

In summary, the State will use Rapid Response funds to deliver support, assistance, and training to affected workers; establish and carry out layoff aversion strategies; and expand incumbent worker training opportunities. The State will further provide targeted support to local areas to promote effective, consistent implementation of Rapid Response services.

D. DESCRIBE THE STATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO PROVIDE RAPID RESPONSES IN CASES OF NATURAL DISASTERS INCLUDING COORDINATION WITH FEMA AND OTHER ENTITIES

Early Identification and Assessment: In the wake of a natural disaster, Rapid Response promptly identifies and evaluates the individuals, workers, and businesses whose operations and livelihoods have been disrupted. WIOA staff and caseworkers assess the extent of impact and determine the most urgent needs to ensure timely assistance.

Resource Mobilization: To strengthen and accelerate rapid response efforts, the state mobilizes resources through in-state capacity as well as through partnerships with federal agencies and non-governmental organizations. This includes securing appropriate funding, supplies, and qualified personnel to deliver rapid response services and support recovery activities.

Adaptability and Continuity: Rapid response policies are structured to remain responsive to varying disaster conditions and evolving circumstances. Through continuous review and

periodic updates, protocols are refined to preserve effectiveness and ensure alignment with newly emerging needs.

Communication and Outreach: Accessible, clearly defined communication channels disseminate information regarding available services and resources. Outreach efforts are designed to reach vulnerable populations and promote equitable access to assistance programs, reducing barriers to participation and engagement.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms track the implementation of rapid response activities and measure their impacts. This includes monitoring service uptake, examining participant outcomes, and evaluating overall effectiveness in limiting disaster-related disruptions to employment and community liabilities.

Coordination with FEMA and Other Entities: The state works in close partnership with FEMA and other key organizations to sustain a unified and coordinated response. By exchanging relevant information, aligning resources, and leveraging shared expertise, partners collectively address both immediate needs and longer-term recovery requirements for affected individuals and communities. By implementing these policies and procedures, the state delivers timely, comprehensive support to disaster-affected individuals and businesses—advancing recovery efforts while strengthening resilience in impacted communities.

E. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE PROVIDES EARLY INTERVENTION (E.G., RAPID RESPONSE) AND ENSURES THE PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE CAREER SERVICES TO WORKER GROUPS ON WHOSE BEHALF A TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA) PETITION HAS BEEN FILED.

(SECTION 134(A)(2)(A) AND TAA SECTION 221(A)(2)(A) .) THIS DESCRIPTION MUST INCLUDE HOW THE STATE DISSEMINATES BENEFIT INFORMATION TO PROVIDE WORKERS IN THE GROUPS IDENTIFIED IN THE TAA PETITIONS WITH AN ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROVISION OF TAA BENEFITS AND SERVICES IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY ARE TRANSPARENT TO THE DISLOCATED WORKER APPLYING FOR THEM (TRADE ACT SEC. 221(A)(2)(A) AND SEC. 225; GOVERNOR-SECRETARY AGREEMENT). DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE FUNDS THAT HAVE BEEN RESERVED FOR RAPID RESPONSE TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR EVERY WORKER GROUP THAT FILES A TAA PETITION AND HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THE PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE CAREER SERVICE TO WORKERS IN THE GROUPS IDENTIFIED IN THE PETITION (TAA SEC. 221(A)(2)(A)).NOTE: UNTIL THE TAA PROGRAM IS REAUTHORIZED, THE REQUIREMENTS TO PROVIDE RAPID RESPONSE AND APPROPRIATE CAREER SERVICES TO WORKER GROUPS ON WHOSE BEHALF A PETITION HAS BEEN FILED IS NOT APPLICABLE.

Currently, Trade adjustment Assistance (TAA) is not applicable to the Territory of American Samoa.

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

If the State is utilizing work-based training models (e.g. on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, and customized training) as part of its training strategy and these

strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan, describing the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

Current WBL - The structure in which the Work-Based Learning program is operated through the WIOA agency's intake and initial assessments and then funneled through different Employers of the territory. The ultimate goal of the WBL program is to elevate occupational skills through worksite instruction and well-supervised job tasks in a structured paid work experience. As of current, all training aspects of the program are executed through the hands-on opportunities provided in the worksites, to include the departments within the American Samoa Government. As for the private sectors, the ASWDB and WIOA are working on a more robust collaboration process that entails 100% inclusion between all parties, to benefit a more extensive population of participants and employers.

Strategic WIOA: To effectively rectify this strategic and structural issue, American Samoa (AS) must implement a comprehensively revised approach. This revised strategy is crucial not only for enhancing overall program performance metrics but, more importantly, for better aligning the territory's workforce initiatives with the objectives of the federal waiver AS is pursuing, as well as maximizing the territory's eligibility for and access to various federal funding opportunities.

The core of this necessary revision involves a deliberate rebalancing of the two primary training strategies:

1. **Work-Based Learning (WBL) Prioritization:** WBL will be strategically prioritized and reserved for participants who present the most significant and complex barriers to employment. This includes individuals with limited work history, specific physical or educational challenges, or those requiring more intensive supportive services and a gradual introduction to the work environment. The WBL model, in this context, serves as an essential stepping stone, focusing on foundational work readiness and soft skills development.

Strategic Prioritization of Work-Based Learning (WBL) for High-Barrier Participants:

The Work-Based Learning (WBL) component within our plan is designed as a highly targeted and strategic intervention, reserved specifically for participants who face the most significant and complex barriers to sustained employment. This prioritization model ensures that valuable WBL resources are directed where they can have the maximum transformative impact, serving as a critical gateway to the workforce for those most in need.

Identification of Target Population:

The primary cohort for WBL enrollment includes, but is not limited to, individuals presenting with:

- **Limited or Non-Existent Work History:** Participants who have been unemployed for extended periods, those re-entering the workforce after a significant absence, or younger individuals with no prior professional experience.
- **Specific Physical or Educational Challenges:** This encompasses individuals with documented disabilities, those requiring accommodations, or participants lacking fundamental literacy, numeracy, or high school equivalency, which necessitate a practical, hands-on learning environment over a traditional classroom setting.
- **Need for Intensive Supportive Services:** Participants whose personal circumstances—such as housing instability, substance abuse recovery, or managing complex family situations—require a greater degree of case management, counseling, and wrap-around support services to stabilize their lives before or concurrent with beginning work.

WBL as an Essential Stepping Stone:

In this context, WBL is not merely an optional add-on but an essential, structured stepping stone. The model is intentionally focused on:

- **Foundational Work Readiness:** Imparting the basic skills and knowledge required to function effectively in a professional environment, including time management, punctuality, attendance, and adherence to workplace policies.
- **Soft Skills Development:** Cultivating crucial interpersonal skills, such as professional communication, teamwork, conflict resolution, accountability, and the ability to accept constructive feedback. These skills are fundamental to long-term career success and retention.
- **Gradual Introduction to the Work Environment:** Providing a carefully managed, lower-stress entry point into actual workplaces. This allows participants to acclimate to the demands and culture of an employment setting under the supervision of a supportive mentor or coach, mitigating the risk of early failure often associated with direct, unsupported job placement.

By strategically reserving WBL for this high-barrier population, the program maximizes its potential to transition individuals from dependency or chronic unemployment into a sustainable working life, ultimately fostering both personal and economic self-sufficiency.

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy for service design and delivery (e.g., outreach to sponsors and prospective sponsors, identifying potential participants and connecting them to apprenticeship opportunities).

The American Samoa Workforce Development Board and WIOA are currently focused on re-establishing a Registered Apprenticeship Program (ASE). This initiative is necessary because the previous program concluded two years ago upon the exhaustion of its grant funding. The proposed structure for the re-established ASE is as follows:

The Payment For Performance (PFP) outcome is credential attainment plus 6-month retention. The Shift from Traditional Pay-for-Performance (PFP) to a Public-Private Co-Investment Model Traditional Pay-for-Performance (PFP) models in workforce development are fundamentally transactional, typically structured to reward a training provider *only* when a participant achieves a defined, predetermined outcome, such as credential attainment or job placement. While this approach introduces accountability for the training delivery, for American Samoa, a higher-value, more sustainable application is a proactive **public-private co-investment model**.

This co-investment framework fundamentally redefines the relationship between workforce development agencies and employers. Instead of employers acting as passive recipients of job candidates, they become **co-designers and co-funders of the talent pipelines**. This ensures the training is directly aligned with genuine labor market demands and specific employer needs.

The Limitations of the Current Engagement Model: The existing Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) engagement model in American Samoa operates in a one-directional manner. In this traditional flow:

1. **WIOA identifies** and enrolls a participant.
2. **WIOA presents** the prepared participant to an employer.
3. The **employer accepts or declines** the candidate.

Crucially, under this current paradigm, the employer has virtually **no formal role** in several vital stages:

- **Defining the specific skills** and competencies needed for the job.

- **Validating the relevance** and quality of the training curriculum.
- **Committing to a hiring outcome** before the training begins.

Implementing the Co-Investment Model: The proposed co-investment model explicitly reverses this passive dynamic. Employers are brought to the table as primary stakeholders, providing both insight and financial commitment. Key features include:

- **Joint Curriculum Design:** Employers actively help **define what the program trains for**, ensuring the skills taught are precisely those required for open positions. This reduces the skills gap and increases the immediate employability of participants.
- **Guaranteed Hiring Commitment:** Employers commit to **hiring from the program's cohort** upon successful completion, offering a clear career pathway and higher retention prospects for the participants.

Funding and Structure of the Co-Investment: This model is ideally suited for structured, proven talent development paths, such as **Registered Apprenticeship programs**. The financial responsibilities are shared:

- **Public Funding (WIOA and ASCC):** WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) and the American Samoa Community College (ASCC) are primarily responsible for funding the **related instruction component** of the Registered Apprenticeship program, covering classroom time, materials, and instructor costs.
- **Private Funding (Employer):** The employer is responsible for funding the **on-the-job learning (OJL) wages**, recognizing the participant as a productive employee from day one.
- **WIOA OJT Cost-Share Option:** To incentivize employer participation, WIOA can cover up to **50% of the OJL wages** through the On-the-Job Training (OJT) cost-share mechanism for eligible participants, significantly mitigating the employer's initial investment risk.

Defining the Pay-for-Performance Outcome: In this elevated co-investment PFP structure, the performance outcome is set higher than simple job placement. The desired outcome that triggers the final payment or measure of success is:

- **Credential Attainment:** Successful completion of the training and receipt of a recognized, industry-aligned credential.
- **Plus 6-Month Retention:** The participant must remain employed with the committing employer for a minimum of six months following placement, ensuring job quality and long-term stability. This dual metric holds both the training system and the

employer accountable for successful outcomes.

3. TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

Provide the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

The procedure, eligibility criteria, and requirements for training providers will be the focal responsibility of the Policy and Procedure Committee for the American Samoa Workforce Development Board. This means that the committee will set clear expectations for how providers are selected, what documentation is required, and how compliance will be evaluated over time. In particular, the committee will ensure that providers meet consistent standards for capacity, instructional quality, and alignment with program goals, so that participants receive training that is both appropriate and accountable.

However, the current WIOA engagement model is one-directional: WIOA identifies a participant and presents them to an employer or training provider who accepts or declines. Under this approach, the training provider typically plays a limited role in shaping the curriculum or defining what “success” looks like. For example, even if an employer is hiring for a specific set of skills—such as advanced welding techniques, certification-level IT support, or CDL readiness—the training provider may not have meaningful input into the required competencies, the sequencing of instruction, or the validation methods used to confirm skill acquisition. As a result, the training provider has no role in defining the skills needed, validating training outcomes, or committing to a hiring outcome.

By contrast, a co-investment model reverses this process and creates shared responsibility among stakeholders. Instead of employers and training providers simply receiving participants, training providers help define what the program trains for—co-developing course content, performance standards, and assessment tools that reflect real employer needs. In addition, providers would commit to hiring from the training pipeline, which could include measurable commitments such as interview guarantees, priority placement, or defined hiring targets for program completers. With this model, rather than treating training as a standalone service, the system becomes outcome-focused—ensuring that participants are prepared for jobs that employers actually fill, and that training providers have both a voice in training design and an obligation tied to employment results.

4. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR FOR THE ADULT PRIORITY OF SERVICE REQUIREMENT IN WIOA SECTION 134 (C)(3)(E) THAT REQUIRES AMERICAN JOB CENTER STAFF, WHEN USING WIOA ADULT PROGRAM FUNDS TO PROVIDE INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES AND TRAINING SERVICES, TO GIVE PRIORITY OF SERVICE TO RECIPIENTS OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT (INCLUDING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS).

The co-location model described provides a stronger and more sustainable path forward for structuring partner integration. A formal debrief and partner engagement or re-engagement plan is needed before the next service delivery initiative is launched. The ambitious initiative to establish a centralized One Stop Center (OSC) was designed as the singular, dedicated facility for integrating and delivering comprehensive Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) services, thereby fulfilling the federal requirement for an American Job Center (AJC) within the territory.

Challenges Leading to the Failed Launch:

The launch of the OSC ultimately failed, a setback attributable to several critical factors that hindered its operational viability and partner buy-in:

1. **Insufficient Partner and Cost-Sharing Alignment:** A fundamental flaw was the lack of consensus and commitment among key workforce partners regarding shared governance and, critically, equitable cost-sharing arrangements. This misaligned financial burden and lack of shared ownership proved to be an insurmountable obstacle.
2. **Lack of Clear Operational Transparency:** Prior to the execution of the contract, there was an absence of clear, mutually agreed-upon operational protocols, service integration models, and performance metrics. This lack of transparency eroded confidence among potential partners.
3. **Non-Sustainable Funding Allocation:** The allocated funding structure for the OSC was determined to be unsustainable in the long term, posing a significant and unacceptable risk to the continuous availability of essential funds needed for participant direct services. The territory could not afford to jeopardize its core service delivery capacity.

Impact and Consequences:

The failure of the OSC launch has resulted in several significant, negative consequences for

the territory's workforce system:

- **Damaged Trust with Key Partners:** The failure has regrettably damaged the essential working relationship and trust with crucial workforce and community partners, making future collaborative ventures more challenging.
- **Unused Equipment Liability:** The territory incurred a financial and logistical liability from equipment and infrastructure purchased for the dedicated facility, which now remains unused and represents a suboptimal expenditure of public funds.
- **Absence of a Compliant AJC Solution:** Most importantly, the territory remains without a federally compliant American Job Center solution, which is a foundational component of effective WIOA service delivery.

Path Forward and Mitigating Action:

While the failure of the centralized OSC has been a significant setback, it is crucial to recognize that this negative outcome is *not* irreversible. The experience has, in fact, informed a stronger, more resilient strategy for service delivery.

The alternative **co-location model** that is now being considered offers a more practical, fiscally responsible, and sustainable path forward for structuring true partner integration. This model leverages existing facilities and resources, mitigating the financial risks associated with a new, single-point facility.

Essential Next Steps:

Before any new service delivery initiative is formally launched, two critical steps must be undertaken to rebuild trust and ensure future success:

1. **Formal Debriefing:** A comprehensive, formal debrief must be conducted with all involved and potential partners to analyze the causes of the OSC failure, capture lessons learned, and identify constraints and requirements for a successful model.
2. **Partner Engagement/Re-engagement Plan:** A clear and proactive plan is required for re-engaging partners. This plan must prioritize transparency, demonstrate a shared vision, and establish sustainable, mutually agreed-upon governance and cost-sharing agreements for the future co-location service delivery framework.

5. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S CRITERIA REGARDING LOCAL AREA TRANSFER OF FUNDS BETWEEN THE ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

Pursuant to WIOA Section 133(b)(4), AS may transfer up to 100% of a Program Year allocation for Adult employment and training activities between two programs. For American

Samoa, this flexibility is accompanied by specific accountability requirements. Specifically, American Samoa is required to track, monitor, and report Adult and Dislocated Worker expenditures by Program Year for each allotment portion at both the state and local levels. To support these reporting obligations, and to ensure that any local transfer activity is properly reflected in USDOL reporting, the Department of Human Resources (DHR) has established procedures designed to facilitate accurate, timely, and verifiable reporting. For example, DHR procedures include documentation requirements that show the original allotment amount, the portion transferred, and how expenditures are coded to the correct Program Year and allotment category.

While up to a 100% transfer is permitted, American Samoa is reminded that the ability to shift funds does not reduce the obligation to provide appropriate service delivery to both Dislocated Worker (DW) and Adult customers. In other words, transfers must support program operations rather than disrupt them. Accordingly, American Samoa is required to include in an Administrative Adjustment a clear justification for requesting the transfer. This justification should describe the program needs prompting the transfer (such as changes in local labor market demand, participant enrollment patterns, or identified service gaps) and explain why the transfer is necessary at this time. In addition, American Samoa must provide a detailed explanation of how services to both Adult and Dislocated Worker participants will be sustained following the transfer, including compliance with the Priority of Service requirements. For instance, the Administrative Adjustment should describe how staff will continue to screen and document eligibility, how priority groups will be identified and served first, and how continued outreach will be conducted so that DW and Adult participants do not experience delays in assessment, case management, or training referrals.

Requests to transfer may be submitted no later than the fifth (5th) working day of June of the current Program Year's funds. American Samoa may transfer up to 100% of the base Adult and Dislocated Worker allocations of the current year assignment; however, Youth funds may not be transferred. This limitation helps ensure that Youth program funding remains dedicated to Youth employment and training services as required under WIOA. Transfer requests must be submitted through the ASWDB for the Governor's review and approval, meaning that American Samoa's local planning and recommendations must be coordinated through the ASWDB process before final authorization is granted. By following this timeline and approval structure, American Samoa helps ensure continuity of services, maintains proper funding alignment, and supports United States Department of Labor's oversight and reporting needs.

6. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S POLICY ON WIOA AND TAA CO-ENROLLMENT AND WHETHER AND HOW OFTEN THIS POLICY IS DISSEMINATED TO THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS AND REQUIRED ONE-STOP PARTNERS. TRADE ACT SEC. 239(F), SEC. 235, 20 CFR 618.325, 20 CFR 618.824(A)(3)(I).

American Samoa currently does not have a TAA co-enrollment service

7. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S FORMAL STRATEGY TO ENSURE THAT WIOA AND TAA CO-ENROLLED PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE NECESSARY FUNDED BENEFITS AND SERVICES. TRADE ACT SEC. 239(F), SEC. 235, 20 CFR 618.816(C)

American Samoa currently does not have a TAA co-enrollment system

8. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PROCESS FOR FAMILIARIZING ONE-STOP STAFF WITH THE TAA PROGRAM. 20 CFR 618.804(J), 20 CFR 618.305

Currently, American Samoa does not have a TAA program service

C. YOUTH PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.

With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA, States should describe their strategies that will support the implementation of youth activities under WIOA. State's must-

1. IDENTIFY THE STATE-DEVELOPED CRITERIA TO BE USED BY LOCAL BOARDS IN AWARDING GRANTS OR CONTRACTS FOR YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AND DESCRIBE HOW THE LOCAL BOARDS WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ABILITY OF THE PROVIDERS TO MEET PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES BASED ON PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR THE YOUTH PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 116(B)(2)(A)(II) OF WIOA.¹¹ FURTHER, INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE STATE ASSISTS LOCAL AREAS IN DETERMINING WHETHER TO CONTRACT FOR SERVICES OR TO PROVIDE SOME OR ALL OF THE PROGRAM ELEMENTS DIRECTLY.

¹¹ Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

American Samoa is its own service area therefore it doesn't award grants or contracts to other boards

2. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE ASSISTS LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS IN ACHIEVING EQUITABLE RESULTS FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL AND IN-SCHOOL YOUTH. DESCRIBE PROMISING PRACTICES OR PARTNERSHIP MODELS THAT LOCAL AREAS ARE IMPLEMENTING AND THE STATE'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING AND SCALING THOSE MODELS WITHIN THE STATE FOR BOTH IN-SCHOOL AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH.

As a distinct service delivery area under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), American Samoa is afforded a highly efficient and self-contained process for the approval and subsequent implementation of its WIOA program plans. This unique designation removes the requirement for oversight or approval from an external body, allowing the territory to tailor and deploy workforce development initiatives with greater speed and responsiveness to local needs.

Crucially, the WIOA program in American Samoa operates in a synergistic funding arrangement, functioning as a sub-grantee of the American Samoa Community Service Block Grant (AS-CSBG). This integrated financial and operational model facilitates a holistic approach to addressing poverty and workforce challenges within the community.

A prime and successful example of this sustained inter-agency collaboration is the annual execution of the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). This program leverages the combined resources and administrative structures of both WIOA and AS-CSBG to provide meaningful work experience, essential career exposure, and valuable income for the territory's youth, thereby investing directly in American Samoa's future workforce.

Out-of-School Youth (OSY) are defined as individuals who are not currently attending any school and must satisfy at least one of the following requirements:

- They are a school dropout
- They fall within the age range of 16-24
- They are involved in the juvenile, adult, or justice system
- They are low-income and have received a diploma or its equivalent
- They have deficiencies in basic skills
- They are learning English as a second language
- They are homeless, runaway, or in foster care
- They are pregnant or parenting
- They have a disability
- They are low-income and require additional assistance .

In-School Youth (ISY) are students who are currently attending school and must meet one or

more of the following conditions:

- They fall within the age range of 14-21
- They have basic skills deficiencies
- They are learning English as a second language
- They have a history of offending
- They are homeless
- They are pregnant or parenting
- They have a disability
- They require additional assistance

The collective funding efforts, including CSBG and supplemental allocations from the American Samoa Government, are strategically directed toward the following target populations:

- Youth aged 14–24 who are long-term unemployed;
- Youth originating from low-income households, as defined by the established household income formula, U.S. Census poverty guidelines, and DHSS poverty thresholds;
- Youth experiencing significant barriers to employment, such as high school dropouts, adolescent parents, individuals involved in the juvenile justice system, children in foster care, and youth with documented disabilities;
- Youth presenting with academic deficiencies, specifically those reading below an 8th-grade proficiency level.

3. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE ASSISTS LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS IN IMPLEMENTING INNOVATIVE MODELS FOR DELIVERING YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING EFFECTIVE WAYS LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARDS CAN MAKE AVAILABLE THE 14 PROGRAM ELEMENTS DESCRIBED IN WIOA SECTION 129(C)(2); AND EXPLAIN HOW LOCAL AREAS CAN ENSURE WORK EXPERIENCE, INCLUDING QUALITY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP AND REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP, IS PRIORITIZED AS A KEY ELEMENT WITHIN A BROADER CAREER PATHWAYS STRATEGY.

Youth Workforce Investment Activities – The Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) is the most prominent initiative for youth participants in American Samoa. Eligibility for the Youth Program is determined in accordance with program requirements, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) ensures that all statutory conditions are met. Key eligibility factors include school dropouts, youth who are single parents, individuals from low-income households, youth with limited language proficiency and cultural barriers, and eligible ex-offenders. Consistent with WIOA Section 129(c)(2), the SYEP includes the following elements:

- The educational component may be delivered concurrently or sequentially with work experience. In particular, the SYEP is conducted during the summer and provides participants with meaningful, hands-on work experience at approved employers or designated worksites that have committed to training opportunities.

- The program incorporates elements such as tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based strategies for dropout prevention and recovery. These supports are designed to help participants meet requirements for completion of a secondary school diploma (or its recognized equivalent).

In addition, the SYEP coordinates closely with the American Samoa Community College (ASCC), specifically its Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program. Through ASCC/AEFLA, participants who are out of school—whether employed or unemployed—may pursue certification programs in fields including Accounting, Teacher Aides, and Certified Nurse Aides. American Samoa works diligently with its core partners to address the individualized needs of youth participants and to promote successful educational and workforce outcomes.

American Samoa has a significant opportunity to strengthen the delivery of services to its OSY and ISY populations. In response, the following core focus areas have been identified to enhance WIOA services and more effectively support youth:

- Youth currently involved in the juvenile justice system or those who are ex-offenders
- Youth with a history of involvement with Child Protective Services
- Teen pregnancy or youth who are single parents
- Youth with disabilities

The American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB) will be apprised of the specific needs and circumstances associated with the OSY and ISY populations. In addition, planning efforts are underway to establish appropriate methods for gauging youth participation, including the use of incentives to encourage sustained engagement. While American Samoa is a small territory, the youth population remains substantial; therefore, careful planning and consistent execution are essential to ensure meaningful impact for the broader community.

American Samoa is also developing the Policies and Procedures governing Out-of-School and In-School Youth, which will be updated upon completion.

4. PROVIDE THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE STATE POLICY FOR “REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO ENTER OR COMPLETE AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT” CRITERION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(III)(VIII) AND FOR “REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO COMPLETE AN EDUCATION PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT” CRITERION FOR IN-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(IV)(VII). IF THE STATE DOES NOT HAVE A POLICY, DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT LOCAL AREAS WILL HAVE A POLICY FOR THESE CRITERIA.

Strategies for identifying and assessing the needs of out-of-school youth who require additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment, which may include a description of the types of services and activities available to address these needs.

- Policies and procedures for determining eligibility for youth services based on the out-of-school criterion, which may include documentation requirements, data reporting, and other related procedures.
- The role of partners, such as schools, community organizations, and workforce development entities, in ensuring that out-of-school youth are identified, referred, and supported in accessing the services and activities that they require.
- Strategies for ensuring that out-of-school youth receive coordinated and comprehensive services, which address academic and career needs, and include access to supportive services like transportation, childcare, and housing assistance.

The language contained in the State policy for "requiring additional assistance to complete an education program, or to secure and hold employment" criterion for in-school youth specified in WIOA section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII) may include:

- Strategies for identifying and assessing the needs of in-school youth who require additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment, which may include a description of the types of services and activities available to address these needs.
- Policies and procedures for determining eligibility for youth services based on the in-school criterion, which may include documentation requirements, data reporting, and other related procedures.
- The role of partners, such as schools, community organizations, and workforce development entities, in ensuring that in-school youth are identified, referred, and supported in accessing the services and activities that they require.
- Strategies for ensuring that in-school youth receive coordinated and comprehensive services, which address academic and career needs, and include access to supportive services like career counseling, school-based apprenticeships, and other work-based learning opportunities.

D. SINGLE-AREA STATE REQUIREMENTS

In States where there is only one local workforce investment area, the governor serves as both the State and local chief elected official. In such cases, the State must submit any information required in the local plan (WIOA section 106(d)(2)). States with a single workforce area must include—

1. ANY COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD THAT REPRESENT DISAGREEMENT WITH THE PLAN. (WIOA SECTION 108(D)(3).)
2. THE ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISBURSAL OF GRANT FUNDS, AS DETERMINED BY THE GOVERNOR, IF DIFFERENT FROM THAT FOR THE STATE. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(15).)
3. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND AVAILABILITY OF WIOA TITLE I YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND SUCCESSFUL MODELS, INCLUDING FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(9).)

1. There were no public comments regarding the Unified State Plan
2. The State is responsible for disbursement of funds for all program services of WIOA
3. Type and availability of WIOA title I YOUTH activities and successful models, including youth with disabilities.

Youth Program: Summer YOUTH Employment Program

Goal: To EQUIP our Youth through Educational and Employment Training utilizing the WIOA core programs and services.

The central and overriding objective of the American Samoa State Plan for 2024-2027 is a strategic and concerted investment in the human capital and potential inherent within our youth population. This ambitious goal is to be realized through the systemic delivery of high-quality, comprehensive educational and career training programs. These programs are specifically designed to fully leverage and integrate the entire range of services and resources made available under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), serving as the foundational legal and programmatic framework for this endeavor.

The ultimate and comprehensive aim of this strategic investment is multifaceted. Firstly, it is to ensure that every young person participating in the Plan is not merely prepared for initial entry into the competitive labor market but is also profoundly equipped for **long-term career success**. This preparation goes beyond securing a first job, focusing instead on developing the critical skills, professional competencies, and adaptive mindsets necessary for career progression, mobility, and resilience in a dynamic economic environment. Secondly, the Plan is equally committed to fostering **sustained personal growth**. This encompasses the development of soft skills, financial literacy, leadership qualities, and civic responsibility,

thereby nurturing well-rounded individuals who can contribute meaningfully to their families, communities, and the broader economic stability of American Samoa. Through this cohesive strategy, the State Plan seeks to establish a robust pipeline of skilled, educated, and career-ready young professionals, directly addressing local workforce needs and contributing to the enduring socio-economic vitality of the territory.

Objectives:

- 1. Develop essential skills and competencies necessary for personal and professional growth:** This objective focuses on a holistic approach to skill development. It includes foundational academic skills (literacy, numeracy), critical "soft skills" (communication, teamwork, problem-solving, work ethic, and time management), and specific technical competencies relevant to high-demand sectors within the American Samoa economy. The training is designed to foster adaptability and a commitment to lifelong learning, empowering youth to navigate an evolving professional landscape successfully.
- 2. Nurturing and cultivating the talents and passions of youth:** Recognizing that individual success is often driven by intrinsic motivation, this objective emphasizes identifying and developing the inherent talents, interests, and passions of each program participant. By offering a variety of pathways and specialized training modules, the program seeks to connect youth with career fields where they can find fulfillment, maximizing engagement and retention. This personalized approach ensures that training is not merely a requirement but a pathway to a meaningful career.
- 3. Providing exposure to professional work environments through the Work Experience Program (WEP) and other avenues:** Direct, hands-on experience is a cornerstone of this plan. The Work Experience Program (WEP) places youth in structured, supervised positions within private, public, and non-profit organizations. This objective ensures that participants gain practical knowledge of workplace standards, procedures, and expectations. Beyond WEP, this includes job shadowing, mentorship opportunities, site visits, and internships, all designed to bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world application, making the transition to permanent employment smoother.
- 4. Offering adult support, counseling, and positive role models to guide and inspire youth:** A critical element of youth development is the provision of a robust support network. This objective ensures access to supportive services, including one-on-one career counseling, academic advisement, life skills coaching, and mental health resources. Furthermore, the program actively recruits and engages positive adult mentors—including successful professionals and community leaders—who serve as

inspiring role models, offering guidance, motivation, and practical advice to help youth overcome personal and professional barriers.

4. A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ONE-STOP PARTNERS.

The commitment of the American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB) and the partners operating under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding remains unwavering in providing all mandated services and programs. This dedication is maintained even as the partnership works diligently to finalize a strategic implementation plan for modernizing service delivery. This new approach centers on co-located, integrated projects that will serve as the primary access points for job seekers and employers, transitioning away from the traditional, singular 'brick and mortar' setting of a conventional American Job Center. This strategic shift is designed to enhance accessibility, streamline coordination among partner agencies, and ultimately provide a more comprehensive and efficient system of workforce development services across the territory, all while ensuring full compliance with WIOA requirements and the continuation of vital programs.

The American Samoa Community College (ASCC) holds the designated and critical responsibility for the comprehensive administration and effective delivery of all programs required under Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2022.

Core Mandate and Responsibility: This central and statutory role tasks ASCC with the full scope of developing, meticulously implementing, and robustly overseeing the necessary curriculum, high-quality instruction, and essential support services. This extensive framework is explicitly designed to meet the overarching goals of the WIOA statute for the territory of American Samoa:

1. **Improving Adult Literacy:** Enhancing the fundamental reading, writing, and numeracy skills of adult learners.
2. **Providing Basic Educational Skills:** Equipping individuals with the core competencies needed for personal and professional growth.
3. **Preparing Individuals for Postsecondary Pathways:** Facilitating successful transitions to further education, specialized technical training, and sustainable employment.

Scope of Programmatic Services: to fulfill this mandate, the ASCC's Adult Education and Family Literacy program encompasses a diverse and integrated range of services,

strategically aligned with both federal requirements and local workforce needs:

- **Basic Skills Instruction:** Foundational classes in mathematics, language arts, and social studies designed for individuals functioning below the high school level.
- **English Language Acquisition (ELA):** Comprehensive instruction, including English as a Second Language (ESL), focused on developing the necessary speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills for full civic and economic participation.
- **High School Equivalency Programs (HSE):** Preparation courses and testing support for individuals seeking to obtain a High School Equivalency credential, thereby removing a significant barrier to employment and further education.
- **Integrated Education and Training (IET) Models:** Services that simultaneously provide adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and occupational skills training, ensuring that learning is directly relevant to in-demand jobs.

Alignment with Workforce Development Strategy: ASCC's delivery of Title II programs is not a standalone academic function; it is a vital and integrated component of the broader workforce development strategies outlined in the WIOA legislation. This integration ensures that the adult education services directly support the talent pipeline for local industries, reduce unemployment, and contribute to the overall economic stability and prosperity of American Samoa. The college works in close collaboration with the Territorial Workforce Investment Board and other WIOA partners to ensure seamless transitions for students from the classroom to career pathways.

The **American Samoa Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (AS OVR)** serves as the principal agency within the territory for the administration and direct delivery of vital vocational rehabilitation services. Its core mandate and responsibilities are explicitly defined by **Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**, as subsequently and significantly amended by **Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**. This statutory authority requires AS OVR to administer comprehensive programs designed to prepare eligible individuals with disabilities for, and secure them in, gainful employment. The programs encompass a wide range of services, including vocational counseling, assessment, training, physical and mental restoration services, and job placement assistance, all tailored to achieve an employment outcome consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.

Furthermore, AS OVR holds distinct and separate administrative and programmatic responsibility for the required programs dedicated specifically to serving individuals who are **Blind and Visually Impaired**. The legal framework for these specialized services is also

established under **Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** (as amended by Title IV of WIOA). This dual administrative role ensures that both general vocational rehabilitation and specialized services for the blind and visually impaired are delivered effectively, consistently, and in compliance with federal regulations, aiming to maximize employment opportunities and promote independent living for all citizens with disabilities in American Samoa. AS OVR's operational plan, therefore, must integrate both sets of mandated requirements to form a cohesive and effective statewide service delivery system.

The **American Samoa Division of Career Technical Education (AS-DCTE)** plays a critical and multifaceted role in the American Samoa American Job Center Network, serving as the central administrative and programmatic body for several key workforce and educational initiatives. Its core responsibility lies in the effective management and oversight of statutorily *required* programs aimed at enhancing the skills, knowledge, and career readiness of the territory's residents.

Specifically, the AS-DCTE is the primary entity responsible for the administration and implementation of **postsecondary career and technical educational activities**. This function is carried out under the authority and guidelines established by the **Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act (Perkins Act)**, which provides federal funding to state and local career and technical education programs. The division ensures that these programs are relevant to the current and future workforce needs of American Samoa, offering high-quality, technically focused instruction that leads to industry-recognized credentials and sustainable employment.

Furthermore, the AS-DCTE is tasked with administering **adult education and literacy activities** as authorized under **Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**. This critical mandate involves providing foundational skills to adults, including instruction in basic literacy, numeracy, English language proficiency, and high school equivalency preparation. These programs are vital for improving the economic prospects of adults with low basic skills, enabling them to participate more effectively in the labor market and further their education or training.

5. THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS USED TO AWARD THE SUB GRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR TITLE I ACTIVITIES.

As American Samoa constitutes a single-area state, the Governor fulfills the dual role of both State and local chief elected official. To ensure adherence to this requirement, the processing of grant funding and/or contracts for Title I is aligned with the rules and procedures established by the American Samoa Government (ASG). Upon approval of the allocation by the Department of Labor, the WIOA agency formally notifies the ASG Treasury Department to initiate their processes for establishing accounts corresponding to the specific funding streams. The Department of Treasury then proceeds with its due process and subsequently informs WIOA when the funding is available for utilization.

6. HOW TRAINING SERVICES OUTLINED IN SECTION 134 WILL BE PROVIDED THROUGH INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS AND/OR THROUGH CONTRACTS, AND HOW SUCH TRAINING APPROACHES WILL BE COORDINATED. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MEET INFORMED CUSTOMER CHOICE REQUIREMENTS REGARDLESS OF TRAINING APPROACH.

American Samoa meticulously manages its WIOA grant funds by adhering to the requirements outlined in section 134 of the Act. This commitment ensures accountability, transparency, and the sustained ability to provide vital workforce development services to its residents. The processes are detailed as follows:

1. Establishment of Funding Levels: The determination of the initial grant amount is set forth by the federal government, specifically the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). American Samoa's WIOA program is consistently allotted the authorized funding amount, with notification and disbursement occurring simultaneously across all relevant states and territories.

- **Consistency of Allotment:** The funding level remains the same from year to year unless an official change is mandated by the Department of Labor based on federal appropriation decisions or revised formulas.
- **Treasury Oversight:** All subsequent processing related to the establishment of dedicated accounts for these distinct federal funding streams is the direct responsibility of the American Samoa Department of Treasury, ensuring proper segregation and tracking of funds.

2. Consistency with State Plans: a cornerstone of receiving and maintaining WIOA funding is the timely and compliant submission of the required State Plan to the Department of Labor.

This plan is the foundational document that outlines the territory's strategy for achieving the WIOA objectives.

- **Timely Submission:** The American Samoa WIOA office consistently meets the federal deadlines for submitting both comprehensive four-year State Plans and any required modifications. This punctual compliance is a non-negotiable requirement for the continuous reception of grant funds.
- **Strategic Alignment:** The WIOA State Plan details the objectives, priorities, and implementation strategies for the territory's workforce development system, ensuring that all local activities are in complete alignment with federal guidelines and the unique needs of the American Samoa labor market.

3. Distribution of Funds: the mechanism for the release and expenditure of WIOA funds is subject to an exhaustive, multi-layered review and approval process designed to maintain fiscal integrity and transparency at the local government level. This comprehensive approval cycle involves several key government offices:

- **Initial Review and Recommendation:** The process begins with a review and recommendation from the local WIOA Director, who verifies that the proposed distribution or expenditure aligns with the approved State Plan and programmatic needs.
- **Budgetary Scrutiny:** The request is then forwarded to the Budget Office, which performs a critical review to ensure the distribution is within the allocated budget, is fiscally sound, and adheres to the territory's overall financial management policies.
- **Treasury and Executive Approval:** Following Budget Office approval, the Office of Treasury processes the financial transaction details. Crucially, the final authorization rests with the Governor's office, providing the highest level of executive oversight and accountability.
- **Final Processing:** After gubernatorial approval, the request cycles back to the Office of Treasury for the final processing and official release of the funds. This meticulous, end-to-end approval path ensures that all distributions are thoroughly vetted before any expenditure.

4. Administrative Requirements: American Samoa is committed to meeting stringent federal administrative requirements, which encompass reporting, accountability, and oversight responsibilities for all recipients of federal WIOA funds.

- **Performance and Program Reporting:** The WIOA office demonstrates consistent compliance by routinely submitting required Performance and Program reports. These

reports are submitted through the federal **Workforce Information Performance System (WIPS)**, where they undergo rigorous federal review and approval to confirm the territory is meeting established performance indicators.

- **Financial Accountability:** In addition to programmatic reporting, the Finance reports are submitted and officially certified through the territory's designated fiscal system. This ensures a clear and auditable record of all expenditures, adhering to all federal and local accounting standards.

5. Maintenance of Effort (MOE): the principle of Maintenance of Effort is a crucial financial requirement that ensures the territory does not substitute federal funds for local funding that would otherwise be dedicated to workforce activities.

- **Fiscal Division Adherence:** The WIOA finance division is specifically tasked with the responsibility of monitoring and ensuring that the MOE requirement is strictly adhered to. This involves careful tracking of local expenditures dedicated to similar programs.
- **Mitigation of Funding Risk:** By scrupulously maintaining the required level of local effort, the territory proactively avoids any potential findings of non-compliance, which could lead to a delay, reduction, or complete halt in the continuous receipt of critical federal WIOA grant funds.

7. HOW THE STATE BOARD, IN FULFILLING LOCAL BOARD FUNCTIONS, WILL COORDINATE TITLE I ACTIVITIES WITH THOSE ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE II. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL CARRY OUT THE REVIEW OF LOCAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED UNDER TITLE II CONSISTENT WITH WIOA SECS. 107(D)(11)(A) AND (B)(I) AND WIOA SEC. 232.

The newly established American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB) is committed to the effective implementation of programs and services mandated by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The strategic deliberation and integration of WIOA requirements, specifically those outlined in WIOA Section 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i), and WIOA Section 232 (which pertains to adult education and literacy), will be a central focus of future board meetings.

To ensure a robust and structured approach to its responsibilities, the ASWDB has already established four core committees. These committees have been assigned distinct areas of responsibility to manage the content and oversight pertaining to WIOA Titles I (Workforce Development Activities) and Title II (Adult Education and Literacy). These committees are critical to building the foundational structure for the territory's workforce system:

1. **Professional Standards/Quality Assurance:** This committee is tasked with developing and monitoring the quality standards for all WIOA-funded programs and

service providers. Its scope includes ensuring consistency in service delivery, establishing performance metrics, and implementing a robust continuous improvement process to maximize participant outcomes and system efficiency.

2. **Ethics/Governance:** This committee is responsible for establishing and upholding the highest standards of ethical conduct for the ASWDB members, staff, and partners. Its duties encompass developing bylaws, reviewing conflict of interest policies, ensuring transparency in decision-making, and advising the full Board on matters of internal organizational governance and accountability.
3. **Licensure/Credentialing:** Focused on the crucial connection between training and employment, this committee will develop policies related to the recognition of industry-recognized credentials, occupational licenses, and other certifications. Its work will ensure that WIOA-funded training programs lead to valuable credentials that meet the needs of the American Samoa labor market, enhancing the employability of participants.
4. **Policy/Legislation:** This committee is charged with reviewing existing local, territorial, and federal legislation related to workforce development and proposing new policies to the Board. It will analyze the impact of federal WIOA regulations on American Samoa, recommend legislative changes to better align the territory's workforce system with economic development goals, and develop official operational policies for the ASWDB and its partners.

D.8 COPIES OF EXECUTED COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WHICH DEFINE HOW ALL LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL CARRY OUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR INTEGRATION AND ACCESS TO THE ENTIRE SET OF SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM, INCLUDING COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH ENTITIES ADMINISTERING REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The executive cooperative agreements between WIOA division, Adult Education Program, and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation are still under review by the American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB). Due to the new management of all 3 entities, consensus by all

parties was to move forward with new MOU's or agreements. Review and Development of New Workforce Development Agreements The American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB) is currently undertaking a comprehensive review of the existing executive cooperative agreements that govern the operations and partnership activities of three critical entities: the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) division, the Adult Education Program (AEP), and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR).

This rigorous review process was initiated as a direct consequence of significant leadership transitions that have recently occurred across all three partnering organizations. The recent appointments of new executives and program directors within the WIOA division, AEP, and OVR prompted a joint consultative meeting among the entities. Following this meeting, a unanimous determination was made by the new leadership cohort, in coordination with the ASWDB, that the time was opportune to commence the development of entirely new, formal agreements.

The current cooperative agreements, while foundational, are slated for replacement by updated Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) or other formal contractual documents. This transition is not merely a procedural update; it is an effort to ensure that the inter-agency relationships, service delivery models, shared resources, and collective performance goals are fully aligned with the current strategic vision of the ASWDB and the updated federal guidelines governing these programs. The development of these new MOUs is anticipated to establish clearer lines of communication, define more precise roles and responsibilities for each partner under the WIOA framework, and ultimately enhance the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Territory's integrated workforce development system.

E. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

States wanting to request waivers as part of their title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

Currently, the territory of American Samoa has not submitted or implemented any waivers to the federal requirements set forth by the relevant regulatory bodies. This

position reflects an adherence to the standard mandates and guidelines for the present operational period.

The American Samoa Workforce Development Board (WDB) recognizes the importance of continuously reviewing operational effectiveness and compliance. As such, the matter of potential future waivers—whether to streamline administrative processes, address unique local labor market challenges, or enhance service delivery—is a standing agenda item. The WDB is scheduled to hold a series of upcoming meetings where this topic will be a key point of discussion. These deliberations will involve a thorough analysis of:

1. **Current Federal Regulations:** A review of mandates where flexibility or a different approach could benefit the local workforce system.
2. **Local Context and Needs:** An assessment of specific economic and demographic factors in American Samoa that may warrant a deviation from the standard federal approach.
3. **Potential Impact of Waivers:** A projection of how any potential waiver might affect program outcomes, service recipients, and administrative efficiency.

The outcomes of these WDB meetings will determine if the territory will pursue any specific waivers in the future, with the ultimate goal of optimizing workforce development services for the residents of American Samoa.

1. IDENTIFIES THE STATUTORY OR REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR WHICH AWAIVER IS REQUESTED AND THE GOALS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, INTENDS TO ACHIEVE AS A RESULT OF THE WAIVER AND HOW THOSE GOALS RELATE TO THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;
2. DESCRIBES THE ACTIONS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, HAS UNDERTAKEN TO REMOVE STATE OR LOCAL STATUTORY OR REGULATORY BARRIERS;
3. DESCRIBES THE GOALS OF THE WAIVER AND THE EXPECTED PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES IF THE REQUEST IS GRANTED;
4. DESCRIBES HOW THE WAIVER WILL ALIGN WITH THE DEPARTMENT’S POLICY PRIORITIES, SUCH AS:
 - A. SUPPORTING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT;
 - B. CONNECTING EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRATEGIES;
 - C. SUPPORTING WORK-BASED LEARNING;
 - D. IMPROVING JOB AND CAREER RESULTS, AND
 - E. OTHER GUIDANCE ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT.
5. DESCRIBES THE INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER, INCLUDING HOW THE WAIVER WILL IMPACT SERVICES FOR DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS WITH MULTIPLE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT; AND

6. DESCRIBES THE PROCESSES USED TO:

- A. MONITOR THE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE WAIVER;
- B. PROVIDE NOTICE TO ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER;
- C. PROVIDE ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE REQUEST;
- D. ENSURE MEANINGFUL PUBLIC COMMENT, INCLUDING COMMENT BY BUSINESS AND ORGANIZED LABOR, ON THE WAIVER.
- E. COLLECT AND REPORT INFORMATION ABOUT WAIVER OUTCOMES IN THE STATE'S WIOA ANNUAL REPORT.

7. THE MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE REGARDING THE RESULTS AND OUTCOMES
OBSERVED THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EXISTING WAIVER, IN CASES WHERE THE
STATE SEEKS RENEWAL OF A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WAIVER.

American Samoa does not have any waivers in place.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient;	Yes
2. The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;	Yes
3. The State established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;	Yes
4. The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);	Yes
5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership;	Yes
6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
areas throughout the State in determining the distributions;	
7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7);	Yes
8. The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan;	Yes
9. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I;	Yes
10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.	Yes
11. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3);	Yes

ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not

propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data

reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

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

DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

1

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

YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

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

**PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR WAGNER-PEYSER PROGRAM
(EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)**

All Program-Specific Requirements provided for the WIOA core programs in this section must be addressed for either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

A. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL STAFF THE PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES UNDER THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT, SUCH AS THROUGH STATE EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING BUT

NOT LIMITED TO STATE MERIT STAFF EMPLOYEES, STAFF OF A SUBRECIPIENT, OR SOME COMBINATION THEREOF.

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF TO ENSURE STAFF IS ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

3. DESCRIBE STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING PROVIDED FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND WIOA STAFF ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES AND REFERRAL TO UI STAFF FOR ADJUDICATION

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

- B. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION AND MEANINGFUL ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING ASSISTANCE IN FILING A CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION THROUGH ONE-STOP CENTERS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA ASA CAREER SERVICE

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

- C. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UI CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

- D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE W-P FUNDS TO SUPPORT UI CLAIMANTS, AND THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN W-PAND UI, AS APPROPRIATE INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

1. COORDINATION OF AND PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS AS REQUIRED BY THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT;

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

2. REGISTRATION OF UI CLAIMANTS WITH THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE IF REQUIRED BY STATE LAW;

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE WORK TEST FOR THE STATE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION SYSTEM, INCLUDING MAKING ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENTS (FOR REFERRAL TO UI ADJUDICATION, IF NEEDED), AND PROVIDING JOB FINDING AND PLACEMENT SERVICES FOR UI CLAIMANTS; AND

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

4. PROVISION OF REFERRALS TO AND APPLICATION ASSISTANCE FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES.

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

E. AGRICULTURAL OUTREACH PLAN (AOP). EACH STATE AGENCY MUST DEVELOP ANAOP EVERY FOUR YEARS AS PART OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN REQUIRED UNDER SECTIONS 102 OR 103 OF WIOA. THEAOP MUST INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF NEED. AN ASSESSMENT NEED DESCRIBES THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

1. ASSESSMENT OF NEED. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

2. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY IN THE STATE MEANS: 1) IDENTIFYING THE TOP FIVE LABOR-INTENSIVE CROPS, THE MONTHS OF HEAVY ACTIVITY, AND THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF PRIME ACTIVITY; 2) SUMMARIZE THE AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS' NEEDS IN THE STATE (I.E. ARE THEY PREDOMINANTLY HIRING LOCAL OR FOREIGN WORKERS, ARE THEY EXPRESSING THAT THERE IS A SCARCITY IN THE AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE); AND 3) IDENTIFYING ANY ECONOMIC, NATURAL, OR OTHER FACTORS THAT ARE AFFECTING AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE OR ANY PROJECTED FACTORS THAT WILL AFFECT AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

3. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS MEANS SUMMARIZING MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKER (MSFW) CHARACTERISTICS (INCLUDING IF THEY ARE PREDOMINANTLY FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES, WHAT LANGUAGE(S) THEY SPEAK, THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MSFWs IN THE STATE DURING PEAK SEASON AND DURING LOW SEASON, AND WHETHER THEY TEND TO BE MIGRANT, SEASONAL, OR YEAR-ROUND FARMWORKERS). THIS INFORMATION MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DATA SUPPLIED BY WIOA SECTION 167 NATIONAL FARMWORKER JOBS PROGRAM (NFJP) GRANTEEES, OTHER MSFW ORGANIZATIONS, EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, AND STATE AND/OR FEDERAL AGENCY DATA SOURCES SUCH AS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL) EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

4. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The local offices outreach activities must be designed to meet the needs of MSFWs in the State and to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

A. CONTACTING FARMWORKERS WHO ARE NOT BEING REACHED BY THE NORMAL INTAKE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICES

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

B. PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO OUTREACH STAFF. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MUST INCLUDE TRAININGS, CONFERENCES, ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, AND INCREASED COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ON TOPICS SUCH AS ONE-STOP CENTER SERVICES (I.E. AVAILABILITY OF REFERRALS TO TRAINING, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, AND CAREER SERVICES, AS WELL AS SPECIFIC EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES), THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE AND EMPLOYMENT-RELATED LAW COMPLAINT SYSTEM (“COMPLAINT SYSTEM” DESCRIBED AT 20 CFR 658 SUBPART E), INFORMATION ON THE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS SERVING MSFWS IN THE AREA, AND A BASIC SUMMARY OF FARMWORKER RIGHTS, INCLUDING THEIR RIGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

C. INCREASING OUTREACH WORKER TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS INCLUDING THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

D. PROVIDING STATE MERIT STAFF OUTREACH WORKERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE THEY ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

E. COORDINATING OUTREACH EFFORTS WITH NFJP GRANTEES AS WELL AS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCIES AND MSFW GROUPS

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

5. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

A. PROVIDING THE FULL RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES TO THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY, BOTH FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS, THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. THIS INCLUDES:

I. HOW CAREER AND TRAINING SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER WIOA TITLE I WILL BE PROVIDED TO MSFWS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP CENTERS

II. HOW THE STATE SERVES AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH SERVICES

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

B. MARKETING THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE COMPLAINT SYSTEM TO FARMWORKERS AND OTHER FARMWORKER ADVOCACY GROUPS

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

C. MARKETING THE AGRICULTURAL RECRUITMENT SYSTEM FOR U.S. WORKERS (ARS) TO AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS AND HOW IT INTENDS TO IMPROVE SUCH PUBLICITY.

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. COLLABORATION

Describe any collaborative agreements the state workforce agency (SWA) has with other MSFW service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. Describe how the SWA intends to build upon/increase collaboration with existing partners and in establishing new partners over the next four years (including any approximate timelines for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements).

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must: 1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP; 2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP.

The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

C. DATA ASSESSMENT

Review the previous four years Wagner-Peyser data reports on performance. Note whether the State has been meeting its goals to provide MSFWs quantitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. If it has not met these goals, explain why the State believes such goals were not met and how the State intends to improve its provision of services in order to meet such goals.

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

Wagner-Peyser Act is not applicable to American Samoa.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time (sec 121(e)(3));	No
2. If the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111, State Workforce Agency staffing requirements;	No
3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser Act services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and	No
4. SWA officials: 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services; 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued; 3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued; 4) Approve corrective action plans; 5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days;	No

The State Plan must include	Include
<p>6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and</p> <p>7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing.</p>	
<p>5. The SWA has established and maintains a self-appraisal system for ES operations to determine success in reaching goals and to correct deficiencies in performance (20 CFR 658.601).</p>	No

WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and

- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY 2024 Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

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

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to adult education and literacy programs and activities under title II of WIOA, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

Describe how the eligible agency has aligned its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).

The Adult Education Literacy and Extended Learning (AELEL) Division, which operates under the administrative umbrella of the American Samoa Community College (ASCC), is undertaking a significant curriculum alignment initiative. This critical effort involves the

official adoption and implementation of the American Samoa Department of Education's (ASDOE) established College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for students in grades K-12, specifically focusing on the core areas of English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics.

This comprehensive transition is rooted in a formal, inter-agency agreement executed between the American Samoa Department of Education and the American Samoa Community College on September 14, 2019. The fundamental purpose of this agreement is to ensure a seamless articulation and vertical alignment between the standards governing K-12 education and those guiding adult education services. By adopting the same rigorous readiness standards currently utilized by the Department of Education, the AELEL Division is striving to enhance the quality and effectiveness of its programs, ensuring that adult learners are equipped with the foundational academic skills necessary for postsecondary success, whether in further academic pursuits or entry into the workforce. This implementation is not merely an optional programmatic change but is also a mandatory step taken to ensure full compliance with all federal and local regulatory requirements pertaining to adult education standards and accountability.

B. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of these local activities.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

- Adult education;
- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- Family literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that—
 1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
 2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Special Rule. Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

American Samoa will allocate AEFLA funding to eligible providers to cover personnel costs, instructional resources and materials, on-site technology expenses, and software programs necessary for adult education. The adult education program targets high school dropouts, individuals lacking basic English skills, and those 18 years of age or older.

Adult education programs will be provided through the following eligible providers:

(a). A Local Educational Agency (LEA):

American Samoa has delivered services and programs to elementary school Parent-Teacher Associations, including basic reading, beginning writing, and Integrated English Literacy and Civic Education (IELCE).

(b). A Community-Based or Faith-Based Organization:

American Samoa maintains partnerships with local churches to offer educational services to the faith-based community. Grant funding is accessible to eligible providers, with announcements and notifications placed in the media. Applications and proposals must be submitted by the deadlines announced through the media. Partnerships with faith-based organizations are crucial, as they serve a significant portion of the community. Successful collaboration requires the combined efforts of the State Director of Adult Education, Literacy, and Extended Learning (AELEL), religious leaders, and members to ensure concrete and smooth working relationships. Clear and confident efforts are essential for building a strong team. All partners will contribute their services and create positive learning experiences in English, mathematics, civics education, and lifelong skills.

(c). A Volunteer Literacy Organization:

American Samoa collaborates with the Tafuna Correctional Facilities (TCF)—the territory's only facility of its kind—to deliver literacy programs and activities to eligible individuals who are detainees. Classes in English literacy, Civics, and math are offered to aid their successful transition back into the community with enhanced knowledge. Priority is given to detainees eligible for release within one to five years who actively participate in the learning programs.

(d). An Institution of Higher Education (IHE):

The American Samoa Community College (ASCC) is the territory's sole IHE. Its Adult Education Literacy and Extended Learning program provides relevant services and training activities.

(e). A Public or Private Nonprofit Agency:

American Samoa continues to coordinate services with organizations such as the American Samoa Lions Club.

The Administrative Services Department, Department of American Samoa Telecommunication Authority, Department of the Port Administration, and the Department of the American Samoa Visitors Bureau are a few government agencies that are associated with AELEL. Eligibility requirements are: (1) Annual gross income, (2) a person or family member with a disability and (3) U.S citizenship or eligible immigration status. AEFLA requirements are to be followed and maintained for proper procedures program continuity.

(f). A library: American Samoa partners with the Feleti Barstow Library to provide education and literacy activities, focusing on skill enhancement in English, reading, writing, and listening.

(g). A public housing authority: American Samoa maintains partnerships with various American Samoa Government departments and offices, including the Administrative Services Department, the American Samoa Telecommunication Authority, the Port Administration Department, and the American Samoa Visitor's Bureau, which are all associated with AELEL.

Eligibility requirements for the program are:

1. Annual gross income.
2. A person or family member with a disability.
3. U.S. citizenship or eligible immigration status.

AEFLA requirements must be followed and maintained for proper procedures and program continuity.

(Part of original item [e] reworded): AELEL student projects also include a partnership with local Veterinarian Clinics to secure donations for community distribution. AELEL will also contact other non-profit organizations for prospective partnerships.

(h) Nonprofit Institution: The Community Division, operating under the Department of Education, is a qualified nonprofit institution capable of delivering adult education and literacy activities. American Samoa collaborates with this division due to its management of Parent-Teacher Associations for elementary and secondary schools, which facilitates the implementation of education and literacy activities for eligible individuals.

(i) Consortium/Coalition: A consortium or coalition of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities listed in paragraphs (a) through (h), which includes community-based or faith-based organizations. For example, a Congregational Christian Church in Atu'u village has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education, literacy, and extended learning opportunities to eligible individuals.

(j) Employer-Entity Partnership: A partnership between an employer and an entity described in paragraphs (a) through (i). The American Samoa Community College, for instance, partners with the Department of Manpower and Human Resources for a youth summer program. Through this partnership, the Department of Human Resources provides adult education and English skills training to prepare eligible youth for the workforce.

The Adult Education Literacy and Extended Learning State Director and the planning team conduct a quarterly review and program evaluation. This assessment considers the performance of eligible providers based on quality, need, units of instruction, and enrollment.

Eligible providers, who receive a grant or contract from the Adult Education Literacy and Extended Learning Division (AELEL), are required to:

- Submit a quarterly data and summary report of their program.
- Continue to create and provide services through one or more programs, focusing on individuals in the Territory who are most in need, as mandated by Sec. 231 (1)(2)(3).

Provide adult education and literacy services in coordination with other relevant services to this most-in-need population, in compliance with Sec. 231 (e)(1)(B)..

1. Workforce Preparation Activities (Sec. 203 (17)) - activities, programs, and services are designed to help individuals acquire basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and other competencies offered for the purpose of improving the productivity of the workforce through the improvement of literacy skills. AELEL will work with local companies and government agencies that will request special assistance with basic writing skills, reading skills, and other workplace skills that will enhance the employability of employees.

- CASAS Assessment tools will be administered and updated for federal regulations to meet program alignment for usage of proper curriculum. Such assessment mandate and results will provide positive reinforcement and literacy skills for employment opportunities.

2. Family Literacy Activities (Sec. 203(9)): Services under this section will be intensive in terms of hours and of sufficient duration to ensure sustainable changes for families. These services will focus on Early Childhood Programs and Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) programs. Joint teams will collaborate with staff and PTA members to develop appropriate programs that address basic literacy levels in reading, writing, and math. The goal of these programs is to better assist young adults with their education.

The CASAS Assessment will be utilized to determine the appropriate curriculum level for participants. All components of Sec. 203 (7) (a, b, c, d) will be addressed through these activities.

3. English Language Acquisition Program (Sec. 203 (6)): This program provides instruction specifically designed to help individuals with limited English proficiency develop competence in the English language.

Students will take the CASAS appraisal to determine their appropriate placement into ABE (Adult Basic Education) and ESL (English as a Second Language) skill levels. The ABE curriculum and appraisal levels are structured to enable students to acquire basic functional skills (such as essential life skills and English language skills) and/or progress toward earning a General Education Development (GED) certificate.

4. Integrated Education and Training (Sec. 203 (11))

Integrated Education and Training (IET) involves providing adult education and literacy activities concurrently with workforce preparation and specific occupational workforce training.

A key component of this effort is the continued collaboration between the American Samoa Community College's Trades and Technology Division (TTD) and the Adult Education Literacy and Extended Learning (AELEL) Division on the Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship programs. AELEL integrates adult education and literacy into the apprenticeship curriculum to support educational and career advancement for participants.

Assessment and Monitoring:

- The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) will be used for initial appraisal, as well as pretests and posttests to track student academic progress throughout the program.

Process for Service Providers: Service providers follow these steps to enroll students in IET classes:

a). **Student Contact and Assessment:** Service providers must contact the AELEL office to notify them of interested students. The AELEL director or a designated staff member will meet with the students at the service provider site to provide information about Adult Basic Education (ABE)/English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. CASAS will be administered during this meeting. After the scores are processed at the AELEL office, the class level with the highest number of students will be recommended for the course.

b). **Instructor Orientation and Class Logistics:** All Service Provider instructors are required to attend an orientation at the AELEL office. The service provider will notify the AELEL office of the intended class dates. AELEL will supply the necessary class materials, administer the student appraisal assessment, and manage the designated pretests.

Payment Structure: Service providers will be paid **\$350 per student** educated. The initial one-third of the total payment will be disbursed at the beginning of the class.

AELEL staff will conduct site visits and collect attendance records for the second payment, which constitutes one-third of the contract value and 5% of current expenses (e.g., classroom rental), upon confirmation of adherence to AELEL contract regulations. On the final day of class, following the completion of the 45 contact hours stipulated by the contract regulations, an AELEL staff member will administer post-tests. The final class attendance records will be collected, and the service provider is required to prepare a comprehensive narrative report

about the class. This narrative report must be submitted to the AELEL Director to facilitate the final payment, in accordance with the contractual agreement with the AELEL office. American Samoa utilizes a developed data system to meticulously track specifics regarding AELEL participants. Eligible providers furnish limited data for reporting purposes, which is subsequently maintained in physical files. These informational files are securely archived by AELEL for a period of up to five years, after which their deletion is recommended.

American Samoa has proposed the implementation of a plan to the local Department of Labor (DOL) to centralize all DOL programs. This centralization includes establishing a dedicated division responsible for collecting employment and unemployment data across all economic sectors. Furthermore, this division will assist the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis with ongoing projects pertaining to the compilation and updating of the gross domestic product and economic indicators for the territory.

C. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund eligible providers to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following correctional educational programs identified in section 225 of WIOA:

- Adult education and literacy activities;
- Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- Secondary school credit;
- Integrated education and training;
- Career pathways;
- Concurrent enrollment;
- Peer tutoring; and
- Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

The Tafuna Correctional Facilities (TCF) is American Samoa's sole correctional institution, housing 301 inmates as of March 2022. As a division of the Department of Public Safety (DPS), the TCF receives funding under the Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to deliver educational programs to criminal offenders.

A primary focus of this program is serving individuals anticipated to be released from the correctional institution within five years of their participation. All applications for Section

225 funding must demonstrate effectiveness in the relevant content areas and are evaluated against the 13 considerations outlined in Section 463.20. The designated Service Provider must ensure close coordination with the activities implemented by the DPS.

The Adult Education Literacy and Extended Learning (AELEL) division, operating under Section 225 of WIOA with funds from Section 222(a)(1), serves as the sole educational provider at the Tafuna Correctional Facility (TCF), American Samoa's only such facility.

Programs offered include:

- Adult basic education
- Special education (as determined by eligible agencies)
- English literacy
- Secondary school credit programs

These programs aim to assist participants in their transition upon exiting the facility. AELEL collaborates with faith-based organizations that provide ministry services at the facility. This unique partnership involves AELEL supplying instructors and instructional materials, utilizing time slots allocated for the ministry organizations' services.

The AELEL curriculum currently covers English, Math, Social Studies, and general literacy. Participants who are released before completing the program are encouraged to continue their studies at the college campus. Program participants will be assessed using the CASAS system. The Adult Education Literacy Division plans to introduce a high school credentialing program, in addition to the current English/Math literacy offering, for the TCF population as soon as on-site space becomes available.

D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Describe how the eligible agency will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA and in accordance with 34 CFR 463 subpart C, fund eligible providers to establish or operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) programs under section 243 of WIOA. Describe how adult English language learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, are served in IELCE programs.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be offered in combination with integrated education and training activities found in 34 CFR section 463.36.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section

243(a) of WIOA will be designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

1. Describe how the state will establish and operate integrated English Literacy and Civics education programs under section 243 of WIOA, for English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries.

N/A

2. Describe how the state will fund, in accordance with the requirements of Title II, Subtitle C, an integrated English Literacy and Civics education program and how the funds will be used for the program.

N/A

3. Describe how the integrated English Literacy and Civics education program under section 243 (a) of WIOA will be designated to prepare adults who are English language learners for and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

N/A

4. Describe how the integrated English Literacy and Civics education program under section 243 (a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

N/A

E. STATE LEADERSHIP

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT THE REQUIRED STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA

E. STATE LEADERSHIP

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT THE REQUIRED STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA

The American Samoa Employment and Literacy Enhancement (AELEL) agency is mandated to utilize no less than 82.5% of the grant funds for the awarding of grants, contracts, or program agreements as defined under sections 231 and 225. Of this allocation, a maximum of 12% shall be reserved for the execution of section 225. Furthermore, State Leadership activities, as outlined in section 223, shall not exceed 12.5% of the grant funds. Administrative expenses are limited to a maximum of 5% of the grant funds or \$85,000, whichever amount is greater. It should be noted that Section 225 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) permits up to 20% of the 82.5% grant fund allocation to be applied toward section 225 activities.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE

AELEL under section 222 (a) (2), shall use its funding for the following adult education and literacy activities to develop or enhance the adult education system of the Territory or its outlying islands.

(A) Align adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop partners, including eligible providers. This alignment is necessary to implement the strategy outlined in the unified State plan under section 102, which includes developing career pathways to ensure individuals in adult education and literacy activities have access to employment and training services.

(B) Development and Implementation of High-Quality Professional Development Programs
These programs are designed to enhance the instruction delivered through local activities as required by section 231(b). Key areas of focus include:

- Instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction for adults.
- Instruction addressing the specific needs of adult learners.
- Training for personnel, including volunteers and State or outlying area staff.
- Dissemination of information regarding successful models and promising practices related to these programs.

(C) The provision involves providing technical assistance to eligible adult education and literacy providers receiving funds under this title. This assistance includes:

- **Development and Dissemination of Best Practices:** Creating and sharing instructional and programmatic practices, based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research, in key areas: reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition, distance education, and staff training.
- **Strengthening One-Stop Partnership:** Assisting eligible providers in their role as a one-stop partner to ensure access to employment, education, and training services.
- **Technology Utilization:** Providing support to eligible providers in using technology, particularly for staff training and improving system efficiencies.

(D) The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of will continue, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities and the dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the State.

ASCC/AELEL may utilize State Leadership funds for one or more of the following permissible activities:

The AELEL Program establishes support networks, including literacy resource centers, for all eligible State or regional providers. Other activities include the development and

implementation of technology applications, such as translation technology or distance education, along with professional development to support the use of instructional technology. During the developmental stage, this involves creating and distributing curricula that incorporates essential components of English content as it relates to adult education. The core objective is to identify curriculum frameworks and ensure alignment with rigorous content standards.

The AELEL Program also focuses on developing contents and models for integration of education training leading to career pathways. The provision of assistance to eligible providers in developing and implementing programs that achieve the objectives in measuring the progress of programs in achieving objectives, including meeting the state adjusted levels of performance described in section 116(b)(3). The development and implementation of a system to assist in the transition of Adult Education to Post Secondary Education include promoting linkage with institutions of higher education. AELEL included Integration of literacy and English language instructions with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers, opportunities to move up to institutions of higher learning.

ASCC has developed and implemented programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners. Programs include new and promising assessment tools and strategies based on scientifically valid research to capture gains of such student achievement levels. ASCC continues to conduct outreach activities to share and disseminate essential information related to instructors, students, and employers.

F. ASSESSING QUALITY

Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II. Describe how the eligible agency will take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.

Describe how the eligible agency will use evaluations, data analysis, program monitoring, or other methods to improve the quality of adult education activities in the State.

Eligible providers who wish to offer adult education services and/or programs under WIOA, Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy, are required to submit a grant/program agreement application. This application will be evaluated based on established criteria. American Samoa plans to utilize fiscal year 2020 funds for the fiscal year competition.

The literacy program encompasses: workplace adult education and literacy activities, which involve the implementation of foundational skills in reading, writing, listening, mathematics, civics, and science concepts; family literacy, which includes writing instruction to assist parents with their children's academic endeavors; English language acquisition learner/activities, which involve the implementation of English language activities specifically for English as a Second Language learners; integrated English literacy and civics education, which includes the implementation of social studies and science concepts pertaining to democratic principles, utilizing English as the medium of instruction; workforce preparation, which includes the implementation of foundational skills in English and mathematics; and the integration of education and training, which includes the implementation of skills necessary for learners to acquire a specific occupation.

Furthermore, a description of the cooperative arrangements the eligible provider maintains with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities is required. Only those individuals most in need of services are considered eligible participants. Providers must administer pre- and post-evaluations of participants' program performance and include a performance report in the WIOA state plan.

The grant/program agreement application must contain the information and assurances specified in section 231(a-e).

Grant Applications:

American Samoa Community College Literacy Program Components

The American Samoa Community College's Grant Applications feature several Literacy programs:

1. **Workplace Adult Education and Literacy:** Focuses on implementing basic skills and concepts in areas such as reading, writing, listening, mathematics, civics, and science.
2. **Family Literacy:** Involves the implementation of writing skills to help parents support their children's academic work.
3. **English Language Acquisition:** Offers activities specifically designed for English as a Second Language (ESL) learners.
4. **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education:** Uses English as the medium of instruction to implement social studies and science concepts, particularly focusing on democratic principles.
5. **Workforce Preparation and Integrated Education and Training:**
 - Workforce preparation includes implementing basic English and math skills.
 - Integrated education and training focuses on implementing the skills necessary for learners to acquire a specific occupation.

A description of cooperative arrangements with the eligible provider has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations in need for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities:

Participant eligibility will be limited to those with the highest need for services. The program requires pre- and post- evaluations of participant performance, and a performance report must be included in the WIOA state plan.

2. In compliance to section 231(e) (1-13), eligible provider will be assessed accordingly the need of the agency.

The eligible provider will first submit a request to AELEL for participant assessment to determine their current skill levels. Based on the assessment results, AELEL will then provide appropriate placement for each participant. All participants will undergo registration, appraisal, and pre-testing at the start of the program, with post-testing conducted upon completion. The assessment results are crucial for identifying eligible individuals, including those with learning disabilities, and for evaluating past effectiveness in improving the literacy of eligible individuals to meet American Samoa's adjusted performance levels as mandated in section 116.

The program and activity assessments are designed to demonstrate several key alignments and qualities:

Alignment and Partner Collaboration:

- Demonstrate alignment between proposed activities and services and the American Samoa Unified Plan (specifically strategy and goals in section 108).
- Help identify the activities and services that will be provided by the one-stop partners.
- Demonstrate how activities coordinate with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community.
- Demonstrate whether flexible schedules and coordination with federal and local support services are offered to enable individuals to attend and complete the program.

Quality and Research Basis:

- Demonstrate that program and activities are of sufficient intensity and quality, based on rigorous research, to achieve substantial learning gains.
- Demonstrate that instructional practices include essential components of reading instruction.
- Demonstrate that program and activities are based on best practices derived from the most rigorous and appropriate research available.

Delivery and Personnel:

- Demonstrate how activities effectively use technology, services, and delivery systems, including distance education.
- Demonstrate how activities provide a learning context.
- Demonstrate that program and activities are delivered by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators who meet any established minimum qualifications.

Information Management and Specific Needs:

- Demonstrate a high-quality information management system with the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes as stated in section 116.
- Demonstrate the need for additional English language acquisition and civics education programs.
- Include a description, information, and assurances related to section 232.

Eligible Providers

Grants or program agreements are open to eligible providers who have demonstrated effectiveness in delivering adult education and literacy activities. Eligible providers include:

- Local educational agencies.
- Community-based or faith-based organizations.
- Volunteer literacy organizations.
- Institutions of higher education.
- Public or private nonprofit agencies.
- Libraries.
- Public housing authorities.
- Nonprofit institutions not already described that have the capacity to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals.
- A consortium or coalition of any of the above agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities (a-h).
- A partnership between an employer and an entity described in (a-j).

Notice of Availability

ASCC/AELEL announces the availability of the program with a notice published annually in June. This notice appears in the Samoa News, on the American Samoa Community College website (www.amsamoa.edu), and on KVZK TV. The program agreement's start date is contingent upon the official grant award notification from the Federal government.

Applications can be obtained from the State Agency Office of the State Director for Adult Education. This office is located on the Second Floor of the Multipurpose Building at the American Samoa Community College.

Contact Information:

- **Telephone: (684) 699-2722, extension 4301**
- **Email: d.achica@amsamoa.edu**

Process: The Director of Adult Education, Literacy, and Extended Learning conducts quarterly visits to all eligible sites for observation. A quarterly evaluation will be undertaken by a five-member adult education advisory council to deliberate on areas requiring improvement and issues pertaining to implementation. The council is comprised of a member from the local programs, the local DOE director or their designee, a member of the private sector, an English literacy instructor, and the Adult Basic Education director.

Grant/program agreement applications must be submitted to the AMERICAN SAMOA COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADULT EDUCATION LITERACY & EXTENDED LEARNING OFFICE, PO BOX 2609, PAGO PAGO, AS 96799. The Notice of Award will be issued by the AELEL State Director based on the advisory council's review and recommendation, within 30 days of the application submittal deadline. Eligible providers will be formally notified as to whether or not the project has received funding. Awardees will receive a formal notice of award letter. Furthermore, applicants whose proposals were not funded will be advised in writing, indicating the reason(s) for non-selection. An eligible provider aggrieved by the action of the advisory council, who alleges a violation of local or Federal law, rules, regulations, or guidelines governing the programs, may formally request clarification or reconsideration in writing to the State Director, within 10 business days from the date of the notification letter.

Evaluation of Applications

Evaluation of Applications and Equitable Access

The process for evaluating applications for grant/program agreements is meticulous, ensuring compliance with established federal and territorial requirements. Specifically, all applications must thoroughly address the foundational requirements outlined in Section 213 (a-e) of the relevant legislation. These sections typically encompass criteria related to program design, alignment with state goals, fiscal soundness, and capacity for effective service delivery.

Furthermore, in the context of awarding federally funded grants or contracts, applications will be rigorously evaluated against the specific performance and quality criteria detailed in Section 231 (a-e). This evaluation ensures that federal investments are directed toward programs demonstrating the highest potential for achieving measurable outcomes in adult education and literacy.

To maintain fairness and transparency, the American Samoa Community College/Adult Education and Literacy Excellence and Learning (ASCC/AELEL) office is mandated to ensure that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for available funds. This commitment necessitates the use of a uniform application process for all applicants. A key element of this equitable approach is the consideration and potential award of multiyear grant/contract applications to providers who demonstrate sustained capacity and success.

The Application and Interview Process

Prospective eligible providers must initiate the application process by contacting the AELEL Office, either by phone or email, to formally request a program interview. This interview serves as a critical step for the AELEL team to assess the provider's readiness and understanding of the program's objectives.

The Action Plan Requirement

A mandatory component of the application for all eligible providers is the submission of a comprehensive action plan detailing the methodology for implementing their proposed adult education and literacy services. This action plan must be structured to clearly articulate several key elements, including:

- **Plan Development and Implementation:** A detailed description of the process used to develop the action plan and the steps that will be taken to effectively implement it throughout the grant period.
- **Identification of Improvement Activities:** A clear strategy for identifying and implementing specific, evidence-based activities designed to improve adult education and literacy outcomes.

- **Program Operations:** An explanation of how the eligible provider will operate programs that deliver core adult education and literacy activities. This must also include a strategy for programs that provide such activities concurrently, such as integrated education and training models.
- **Target Population Assurance:** A concrete guarantee outlining the methods that will be used to ascertain that grant funds will primarily and effectively support the target populations as explicitly defined in Section 203(4). The only exception to this strict targeting requirement is for programs, services, or activities that are specifically and solely related to family literacy activities, which have distinct eligibility criteria.

Annual Evaluation of Adult Education and Literacy Activities

ASCC/AELEL will conduct an annual audit and an on-site evaluation of all providers. A close out report will be submitted at the end of the program agreement. ASCC/AELEL will conduct a comprehensive evaluation to ensure that local programs employ research in designing and implementing adult education programs at the end of program. This evaluation includes fiscal

reporting compliance, program reporting requirements, physical layout of project, methods and materials used, linkage or cooperative arrangements with other programs, staff development needs, outreach activities, student recruitment and retention efforts for those most in need of basic education.

Project evaluation will be conducted through the submission of required interim and close-out reports to assess the achievement of performance measures. Each mandatory close-out report must contain specific information, including:

- Attainment of goals for workers, the homeless, and other special populations.
- Confirmation that technology needs have been met.
- A review of the effectiveness of teacher training.
- Use of evaluation results to determine the achievement of the performance indicators outlined in section 116(b)(2)(A)(i) (I-VI).
- Data on the number of instructional hours, number of students, outreach activities, and expansion activities.

Furthermore, upon completion of the program year, a comprehensive report from the program must be submitted. This report will include data covering all program and student information as it relates to outcome assessment.

Data will be used to assess the attainment of the following performance measures;

- a). The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
- b). The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program
- c). The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
- d). The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized Post secondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within
1 year after exit from the program

e). the percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized Post secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment

f). indicators of effectiveness in serving employers established pursuant to clause

(iv). Monitoring and Evaluation

Eligible providers are required to submit a consolidated quarterly activity report to the ASCC/AEEL office. This report must include information detailing the progress of the programs in relation to their established target goals and objectives. To establish student baseline data, program providers may include relevant information after the first twelve hours of instruction. At a minimum, one interim assessment must be conducted to evaluate progress toward performance standards and to identify recommendations for program improvement.

The ASCC/AEEL will continue to utilize TOPSPRO for tracking programs and students. This tracking system will be used until the local Department of Education establishes its Longitudinal Data System and the ASCC/AEEL and WIOA core partners are granted access to that data system.

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

CERTIFICATIONS

The State hereby certifies that, in relation to the program plan:

1. The submitting State agency is the eligible entity to submit this plan.
2. The State agency is legally authorized under State law to execute the State's functions within this program.
3. The State possesses the legal capacity to implement every provision detailed in the plan.
4. All stipulations within the plan are in full compliance and consistent with State law.
5. A State officer, whose title is specified within this certification, holds the necessary legal authority to receive, manage, and disburse Federal funds allocated under this plan.
6. The State officer submitting this plan, whose title is also specified herein, is authorized to do so.
7. The submitting agency has formally adopted or otherwise officially approved this plan.

8. This plan will serve as the foundation for the State's operation and administration of the program.

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Federal Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned hereby certifies, to the best of their knowledge and belief, that:

1. No Federal appropriated funds have been or will be paid by or on behalf of the undersigned to any person to influence or attempt to influence any officer or employee of a Federal agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress regarding the award, modification, extension, renewal, or continuation of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
2. If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been or will be paid to any person to influence or attempt to influence any officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal agreement, the undersigned must complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," according to its instructions.
3. The undersigned agrees to mandate the inclusion of this certification's language in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements), and to require that all subrecipients certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact relied upon in making or entering into this transaction. Submission is a prerequisite for this transaction, as required by 31 U.S. Code § 1352. Failure to file the required certification may result in a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each instance.

STATEMENT FOR LOAN GUARANTEES AND LOAN INSURANCE

The undersigned attests, to the best of their knowledge and belief, that: If any funds have been or will be paid to any person to influence or attempt to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, or an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress... *(The original text cuts off here, and this statement would continue).*

Applicant's Organization **American Samoa Community**

College Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Donna V.**

Achica

Title of Authorized Representative: **State Director of Adult Basic Education**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable)

(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to OCTAE_MAT@ed.gov

Applicant and Certification Information

The undersigned representative for the Applicant's Organization, **American Samoa Community College**, hereby attests, to the best of their knowledge and belief, that:

Loan Guarantee and Insurance Statement

If any federal funds have been or will be used to pay any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress... *(This statement concerning lobbying activities is incomplete in the original text).*

Authorized Representative Details:

- **Full Name:** Donna V. Achica
- **Title:** State Director of Adult Basic Education

Lobbying Disclosure Requirement (If Applicable)

The SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>) must be completed.

If this form is applicable, please print, sign, and email it to OCTAE_MAT@ed.gov.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;	Yes
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;	Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;	Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;	Yes

5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;	Yes
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;	Yes
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and	Yes
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;	Yes

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) ofWIOA (regarding the supplement-not-supplant requirement);	Yes
2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) ofWIOA;	Yes
3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II ofWIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not “eligible individuals” within the meaning of section 203(4) ofWIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA;	Yes
4. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.	Yes
5. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II ofWIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).	Yes

AUTHORIZING OR CERTIFYING REPRESENTATIVE

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the

undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a

Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose

accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Please download and sign the forms below. Please scan and return the forms towioa@ed.govat the same time you submit your State Plan via the portal.

1. SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)
2. Grants.gov - Certification Regarding Lobbying
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)
3. SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (required, only if applicable)
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)

APPLICANT’S ORGANIZATION	Enter information in this column
Applicant’s Organization	American Samoa Adult Education Literacy and Extended Learning

APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION	Enter information in this column
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	Enter information in this column
First Name	Donna
Last Name	Achica
Title	State Director AELEL
Email	d.achica@amsamoa.edu

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS

ACT (GEPA) EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER

PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES OMB Control Number 1894-0005 Expiration
02/28/2026

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA Section 427 Form Instructions for State Applicants

State applicants must respond to the following four questions:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.
2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?
3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

- Applicants identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.
- Applicants use the associated text box to respond to each question. However, applicants might have already included some or all this required information in the narrative sections of their

applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) in their State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.

- Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity to apply.
- Applicants that have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.
- Applicants that believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

GEPA Section 427 Instructions to State Applicants for their Subrecipient Applicants

The State grantee provides a subrecipient applicant seeking Federal assistance instructions and guidance for how it must comply with the GEPA Section 427 requirement. The State grantee determines the form and content of the information a subrecipient applicant must include in its application regarding the steps it proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, its local-level project or activity. For example:

- The State grantee may require its subrecipient applicant to use and submit the GEPA Section 427 form that it is required to submit to the Department; or
- The State grantee may use a State-developed form that is sufficient to meet the GEPA Section 427 requirement.
- The State grantee maintains the subrecipient applicants' responses in the State office. Please refer to GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

1. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ENTITY'S EXISTING MISSION, POLICIES, OR COMMITMENTS ENSURE

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN, THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The first of four questions is:

Describe how your entity,s existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

The American Samoa Community College (ASCC) is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. The policy of ASCC must be in compliance with Federal and State laws. These laws prohibit discrimination of college programs and activities which cover students and applicants for admission to ASCC. Students with disabilities are able to register and join the AELEL program.

2. BASED ON YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY, WHAT BARRIERS MAY IMPEDE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, OR OTHER BENEFICIARIES?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The second of four questions is:

Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Titles VII of the Public Health Service Act; Title IX Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation

Act of 1973; and Section 402 of the Vietnam Era Veterans Assistance Act of 1974. The President of the American Samoa Community College has declared and reaffirmed

commitment to the College's pursuit of equal education and employment opportunities, and further declared that any harassment of students or employees on the basis of sex is prohibited. The ASCC Human Resources Officer handles complaints of this nature.

3. BASED ON THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO ADDRESS SUCH

BARRIERS TO EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or

activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The third of four questions is:

Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

Discrimination in all programs, activities, and work environments is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the American Samoa Community College. In accordance with the law, the College does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of age, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, religion, disability, genetic information, veteran's status, ancestry, national or ethnic origin, or political affiliation.

4. WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE, INCLUDING TARGETED MILESTONES, FOR ADDRESSING THESE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity. The State applicant is also responsible for ensuring that its subrecipient applicants complete the GEPA Section 427 form or a State developed form that sufficiently meets the GEPA Section 427 requirement for any local-level-project and activity and maintains the subrecipients' responses in the State office.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for AEFLA Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The final of four questions is: What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

ASCC is committed to assist and provide appropriate academic access services to students with a certified disability who meet the academic and essential requirements for admission or participation in the education program or activity given appropriate and reasonable accommodation. Students with a disability will not, on the basis of that disability, be denied full and equal access to academic and co-curricular programs or activities or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under programs or activities offered by ASCC. This is to ensure full compliance with all pertinent federal and state legislation, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended by the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) OF 1992. Students may contact Counseling Services to obtain information on accessibility to services, activities and facilities. Programs include but are not limited to: Academic majors and certificate and degree plans, including coursework and practical research; career training; counseling; financial aid;

physical education; recreation activities by student organizations; placement; and any other programs offered by the college. New and prospective students with certified disability should contact the Division of Student Services and refer to the Student Handbook for further details on college access and accommodation services. Individuals must make all requests at least one month prior to the start of their entering semester. Upon request, assistance and orientation to the ASCC process will be provided.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Goals for the Core Programs: Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);

- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); a

- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY

2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during

the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed- upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2026 Expected Level	PY 2026 Negotiated Level	PY 2027 Expected Level	PY 2027 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

1

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

**PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
(COMBINED OR GENERAL)**

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA.

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(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

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Select 'Edit' to edit the narrative.

Note, please do not edit the table header or formatting. Only edit the table contents.

If you accidentally edit the table headers and structure, open this link to the blank table. You can copy and paste the table into the narrative field and start over if needed.

Council Representative	Current Term Number/Vacant	Beginning Date of Term Mo./Yr.
Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)	1st year of the 3-YR Term	06/17/2025
Parent Training and Information Center	1st year of the 3-YR Term	06/17/2025
Client Assistance Program	1st year of the 3-YR Term	06/17/2025
Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor (Ex Officio if Employed by the VR Agency)	1st year of the 3-YR Term	06/17/2025

Business, Industry, and Labor	1st year of the 3-YR Term	06/17/2025
Business, Industry, and Labor	1st year of the 3-YR Term	06/17/2025
Business, Industry, and Labor	1st year of the 3-YR Term	06/17/2025

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Business, Industry, and Labor	1st year of the 3-YR Term	06/17/2025
Disability Advocacy Groups	1st year of the 3-YR Term	06/17/2025
Current or Former Applicants for, or Recipients of, VR services	1st year of the 3-YR Term	06/17/2025
Section 121 Project Directors in the State (as applicable)	1st year of the 3-YR Term	06/17/2025

State Educational Agency Responsible for Students with Disabilities Eligible to Receive Services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	1st year of the 3-YR Term	06/17/2025
State Workforce Development Board	1st year of the 3-YR Term	06/17/2025
VR Agency Director (Ex Officio)	1st year of the 3-YR Term	06/17/2025

3. IF THE SRC IS NOT MEETING THE COMPOSITION REQUIREMENTS IN SECTION 105(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AND/OR IS NOT MEETING QUARTERLY AS REQUIRED IN SECTION 105(F) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, PROVIDE THE STEPS THAT THE VR AGENCY IS TAKING TO ENSURE IT MEETS THOSE REQUIREMENTS.

4. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS IN SECTION 101(A)(21)(A)(II)(III) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, INCLUDE A SUMMARY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT (INCLUDING HOW IT WAS OBTAINED) INTO THE STATE PLAN AND ANY STATE PLAN REVISIONS, INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORTS, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS

During fiscal year 2025, the State Rehabilitation Council continued to work cohesively and productively with OVR, even though the operating environment had been very challenging due to the lingering adverse effects of the health crisis, which devastated the world. The sudden change in SRC leadership and SRC membership exacerbated the operating dilemmas experienced during the year. Despite the prevailing operational stumbling blocks, SRC, in cooperation with OVR, successfully completed the federally mandated tri-annual performance of the State Comprehensive Needs Assessment aimed to assess the real-time needs of the physically and mentally challenged population of the Territory of American Samoa.

The data collection for the CSNA, which included participant interviews, took place from January 2026 to March 2026. The analysis is scheduled to begin in April and conclude in June 2026. The report writing phase is planned for June and July 2026.

This endeavor was deemed a major accomplishment for both parties as this was the first time this major undertaking was handled internally without third-party consultants. Though mandated by federal law, the partnership between SRC and OVR extends beyond the shared accomplishment of mandated tasks. Specifically, the partnership is a call to action to advocate for and to ensure that the voices of the people requiring vocational rehabilitation services are heard and diligently and aggressively accommodated. Accordingly, the SRC, in seamless and transparent collaboration with OVR, will pursue the implementation of the following activities.

- Continue to review, analyze, and advise OVR regarding the performance of its duties and responsibilities that directly and indirectly impact the ability and capacity of consumers to achieve employment outcomes.
- Continue to review and gauge the effectiveness of OVR programs through canvassing and conducting consumer satisfaction assessments.
- Continue to maximize support and optimize advocacy for the needs of the disabled residents of the territory to make certain the attainment of economic

self-sufficiency, social independence, and community integration. Continue to review and assess the effectiveness of the adopted and implemented governing policies and procedures, guaranteeing the successful closure of envisioned employment outcomes for the disabled.

- Continue to assist and support OVR in the preparation of the State plan, WIOA Unified State Plan, prepare requisite amendments to the plans, and conduct federally mandated needs assessment.

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- Continue to scrutinize the degree to which the recommendations contained in the issued Comprehensive Needs Assessment Report are being implemented.
- Continue to collaborate with OVR in the development and implementation of community-wide awareness campaigns to bring necessary and serious attention to the plight of the disabled residents of the territory
- Continue collaboration and coordination with OVR to forge the successful attainment of positive outcomes inherent in the Pre-Employment Transition Services Program. ☒ Continue to partner with OVR and other public stakeholders in sensitizing the private sector regarding the special needs of the disabled population, with the hope of incentivizing their employment.
- Continue to prepare and submit the SRC Annual Report to RSA and the Governor

5. PROVIDE THE VR AGENCY'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS, INCLUDING AN EXPLANATION FOR THE REJECTION OF ANY INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

List each recommendation/input followed by the VR agency response

VR accepted the input and recommendations from the Council.

- The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department of Education's Special Education Division ought to revisit its present working relationship regarding services offered to fully address the needs of students identified as being afflicted by most significant disabilities.
- All agencies of the American Samoa Government receiving federal funds with the basic aim to improve the quality of life for the disabled population ought to come together to address the following issues: maximization of benefits accruing to the disabled population is being achieved with the present use of allocated federal funds; determine more effective ways to utilize available federal resources to improve the quality of services rendered to individuals with disabilities; devise an effective awareness program to bring attention to, and to sensitize the government and community to the needs of individuals with disabilities; and create an aggressive and vigilant advocacy program to advance the employment needs and the rights of all disabled individuals inclusive of those with the most significant disabilities.
- Accessibility to all public structures is federally mandated, but enforcement is being pursued in a lackadaisical manner.
- Extreme scarcity in the number of available jobs impels the need to pursue other employment options.
- Lack of relevant employment skills is deemed a major impediment for the individuals with the most significant disabilities. It behooves the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to ensure that appropriate postsecondary education and vocational training are being provided to clients with the most significant disabilities.

B. COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT (CSNA)

Section 101(a)(15), (17), and (23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to provide an assessment of:

1. THE VR SERVICES NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING WITHIN THE STATE, INCLUDING:

A. INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES AND THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

The Supported Employment Program and its services assist individuals in American Samoa with the most significant disabilities to include youth with the most significant of disabilities in obtaining competitive employment in an integrated setting, or employment in which individuals are working toward competitive employment, consistent with the skills, interests, and preferences of the ASOVR SEP client with support services that include collaborative efforts such as: Assessments - Job Development - Job Sampling - Job Coaching - Customized and Long-term Employment Support Severe funding limitations have historically hindered and thwarted efforts to maximize supported employment services to individuals afflicted by

disabilities. In spite of this service-debilitating constraint, one success story is highlighted, memorializing the journey undertaken by the client's quest to achieve her employment goal amid overwhelming challenges. The client is a determined and accomplished high school graduate, who is seeking

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employment with the American Samoa's Department of Education's (ASDOE) Special Education Division (SPED). Despite facing unique physical challenges due to deafness and epilepsy, the client has demonstrated outstanding resilience, commitment, and passion by taking control of her own quality of life manifested by graduating with her high school diploma as an individual with disabilities. This report highlights the client's accomplishments.

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department of Education's Special Education Division ought to revisit its present working relationship regarding services offered to fully address the needs of students identified as being afflicted by most significant disabilities. This would facilitate the collaborative fashioning of effective strategies that will improve the probability of achieving aspired employment outcomes. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should be accorded equal partnership status in the formulation and development of Individualized Educational Plans and Individualized Employment Plans. Student progress should be monitored cooperatively by SPED and OVR, enabling the injection of corrective actions if and when needed throughout the duration of the educational process. This collaboration will effectively create seamless transition from SPED to OVR and enhance the success probability in efficaciously achieving employment outcomes, along with community integration. A formalized Memorandum of Understanding should be developed, clearly

articulating the responsibilities of each partner with respect to the established content and parameters orchestrated and prepared jointly by the partners.

- All agencies of the American Samoa Government receiving federal funds with the basic aim to improve the quality of life for the disabled population ought to come together to address the following issues: maximization of benefits accruing to the disabled population is being achieved with the present use of allocated federal funds; determine more effective ways to utilize available federal resources to improve the quality of services rendered to individuals with disabilities; devise an effective awareness program to bring attention to, and to sensitize the government and community to the needs of individuals with disabilities; and create an aggressive and vigilant advocacy program to advance the employment needs and the rights of all disabled individuals inclusive of those with the most significant disabilities.
- Accessibility to all public structures is federally mandated but enforcement is being lackadaisically pursued. The Office of Protection and Advocacy (OPAD) should actively engage in the aggressive enforcement of ADA prescribed accessibility directives to avail unobstructed access to any public facility and business structures by individuals with disabilities particularly those with most significant disabilities.
- Extreme scarcity in the number of available jobs impels the need to pursue other employment options. Reasonable success experienced with disabled individuals pursuing the Self-employment option favorably suggests its incorporation as part of the educational curriculum for those students categorized as being disabled. This will compel the reconfiguration of the educational curriculum with the inclusion of a component that will impart entrepreneurship skills. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation ought to participate in the process, collaborating with the Special Education Division in advancing the Self-Employment option for students identified with the most significant disabilities.
- Lack of relevant employment skills is deemed a major impediment for individuals with the most significant disabilities; it behooves the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to ensure that appropriate postsecondary education and vocational training are being provided to clients with the most significant disabilities. Moreover, these capacity-building options should be supplemented with well-defined and well-orchestrated support systems that would yield maximum benefits for those with the most significant disabilities.

B. INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE MINORITIES AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM.

- It is critical to wage an aggressive and comprehensive awareness program throughout the disabled community to thoroughly and clearly discuss the full gamut of vocational rehabilitation services rendered by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Given the restricted level of financial resources, a website should be established for the purpose of disseminating information on available services. In light of the differing types and

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severity of disability, utilization of existing, more sophisticated technology is crucial to ensure that service information is received by all disabled individuals.

- The services of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation are to be translated into the languages of the existing minority groups to improve their awareness and hopefully entice them to seek assistance from members who are disabled.
- The counseling staff of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is accorded with frequent training opportunities to equip them with the skills to comprehensively address the needs of the racial and ethnic minorities.
- The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should develop and implement an outreach campaign to promote inclusiveness and full accommodation of the needs of all disabled residents of American Samoa, irrespective of color, race, creed, nationality, religious affiliation, or political association. The objective is to ensure that all disabled residents of American Samoa are made comprehensively aware of available services provided by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Collaborating with the Department of Commerce, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, LBJ Medical Center, American Samoa Community College, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Human and Social Services, Territorial Administration on Aging, and the Office of the Attorney General, to determine an accurate count of American Samoa's racial and ethnic minority population to help ensure that their needs are being served.

C. INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

The existing working relationship between the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the WIOA Program needs to be institutionally formalized in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that clearly defines the responsibilities and commitment of

each partner, which will ensure that the needs of individuals with disabilities are accorded equal priority on par with able-bodied persons.

- The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and WIOA collaborate on the development of a policy authorizing the earmark of a portion of WIOA funds to specifically address the needs of individuals with disabilities. Mirroring the adopted apportionment principle, a predetermined number of training slots should be reserved for individuals with disabilities to be incorporated in the policy.
- The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation collaborates with WIOA in identifying the types of training programs that fully address the special needs of individuals with disabilities, thereby increasing their employment potential and probability of achieving a positive employment outcome.
- The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, WIOA, and SPED should come together to align educational programs with the labor market demands, thus facilitating the development of career paths that will be nurtured by enrollment in appropriate training programs.
- The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation cooperates with WIOA to formulate appropriate training programs for individuals with the most significant disabilities, so they also receive equitable and priority attention enjoyed by other residents of American Samoa.

D. YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR NEEDS FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES. INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES FOR TRANSITION CAREER SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH SERVICES ARE COORDINATED WITH TRANSITION SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER IDEA.

The following recommendations are provided to OVR related to the needs of students and youth with disabilities in transition:

1. OVR staff are encouraged to conduct intake appointments at the school rather than having students come into the office to apply for services. OVR is encouraged to coordinate these intakes with the school staff so that they do not intrude on the school schedule. This will ensure that cases are opened before graduation and contribute to seamless service delivery once the students exit the school system.
2. OVR should ensure that they are using the tracking and reporting tool provided by the NTACT: C for pre-employment transition services so that the agency can report accurately to RSA.

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3. The need to establish high expectations for youth continues to be a recommendation. Youth with disabilities need to be encouraged to aim high and not to settle for a life of dependence on public support. Family education and peer mentoring can help set high expectations.

4. OVR should encourage the pursuit of post-secondary education by assisting individuals to obtain part-time employment while they go to school and utilize OVR resources for this purpose. This will help address the financial needs of individuals and will help OVR achieve their common performance measures associated with credential attainment and skills gains

- The contents of the existing Transition Service Program require reevaluation for possible reconstitution to ensure that the aspirations of the reauthorized Rehabilitation Act under the WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act) articulated below are effectively achieved.
- Maximize the efficacy of the job exploration counseling service.
- Optimize work-based learning experiences by availing job placement training opportunities.
- Formulate a comprehensive and effective transition program facilitating seamless access to postsecondary institutions of higher learning prospects.
- Instill workplace readiness training to build social as well as independent living skills to enhance the probability of achieving positive employment and higher educational outcomes.
- Explore all potential options, such as peer mentoring, to build self-advocacy capacity to ameliorate the probability of attaining positive closures with respect to transition goals.

The overall status of the existing educational services is deemed ineffective, thus necessitating aggressive attention. The special education curriculum is often considered ineffective. A more structured curriculum, for example, would yield greater benefits for the special education students. This recommended endeavor would require well-trained teachers. There is uneasiness that the current teacher corps lacks the required experiences to effectively impart the skills to empower the special education students to achieve their aspirations.

The Department of Education's Special Education Division and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should revisit the contents of the Transition Service Program for individuals transitioning from school to VR services. Of specific concern is the prompt termination of services to individuals who have exceeded the eligibility age (14 – 24).

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should be accorded the opportunity to collaborate with the Department of Education's Special Education Division in the discussions connected with the development of Individualized Educational Plans to ensure that skills being developed will improve the individual's chances to secure employment or participate in postsecondary education opportunities.

There needs to be a more effective tracking system in place to monitor the progress of the young people with disabilities who have left the school system to ensure that their needs are being met relative to being gainfully employed or engaged in postsecondary endeavors.

Lack of clarity over the requirements of the 'intake' process, for aged youth attempting to enroll in the Transition Program, has caused tremendous delays and sometimes preempt receipt of services from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation by individuals with disabilities.

The gloom and doom perception harbored by both individuals with disabilities and their parents contributes to the perceived stagnation in the quality of services being rendered. This serious outlook makes it important for everyone involved to work together to support service programs that help improve the lives of people with disabilities.

It is the general perception that students and aged youth lack work skills, soft skills, work experience and knowledge regarding the expectations of the work force and thus constitute significant barriers to employment for American Samoa's youth with disabilities.

The attachment of the adverse social stigma on individuals with disabilities amplifies the crucial need to sensitize the community over the burden being borne by the disabled and their families thus impelling the need for lenient accommodation of their special needs.

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The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should explore with the Department of Education's Special Education Division the possibility of service activation while the individuals are in high school to ensure that plans are fully developed with service initiation prior to exiting the school system.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE.

OVR staff remain responsible for coordinating and providing all of the support services necessary for their consumers to prepare for, obtain, and retain employment. Consequently, OVR is encouraged to provide ongoing staff training, establish liaison relationships between their staff and all other human service programs in American Samoa, and advocate for the allocation of funding to increase services for individuals with disabilities in the community.

The challenges connected with the issue of the limited number of service providers are formidable. The demand for financial resources necessary to establish new service providers is extensive. American Samoa's economic development capacity, facilitating the creation of a steady supply of employment opportunities, is severely constrained. Essential and critically needed specialized and technically savvy human resources capacity to render individualized niche services by new service providers is similarly delimited. Ostensibly, the establishment of new service providers is a process that will require an extensive period.

The resultant recommendations address the short-term and long-term vision regarding increasing the number of service providers, while maintaining and improving the quality of current services rendered for the disabled population of American Samoa.

- The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation engages in an aggressive campaign to secure additional financial resources from all possible sources to finance the establishment of individual service providers to render niche services to the disabled population. While this long-term aspiration is being pursued, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, in association with all the current stakeholders, prepare a mitigation plan to effectively tackle the documented service impediments preempting successful achievement of the aspired goals.
- The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to identify individuals interested in becoming private service providers and then work with them to develop a comprehensive service plan for incorporation in a grant application to be submitted to existing grantors. If the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is successful in securing more federal resources these applications would be considered for funding.
- The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to examine the feasibility of issuing a public solicitation for proposals from individuals interested to provide services for

disabled individuals as a mechanism to establish more service providers. The solicitation document will outline services for which proposals are being solicited.

- The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should work at arm's length with the Department of Health and the LBJ Tropical Medical Center to ensure that the physical and mental health needs of the disabled are accorded equal service vigilance by establishing clinics specifically catering to the needs of the disabled residents of American Samoa.
- The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to collaborate with the American Samoa Community College to coalesce all disability related capacity building postsecondary training programs under one umbrella to better monitor the efficacy of these programs in building and inculcating basic employment skills for disabled individuals enrolled in such capacity-building training programs.
- The Office of Protection and Advocacy to collaborate with all stakeholders in making sure that the rights and the needs of the disabled population of American Samoa are being aggressively and vigilantly protected and accommodated.

In light of the finite quantity of fiscal resources, the American Samoa Government needs to articulate policies that would compel all existing stakeholders to take stock of the current programs with a focus on improving service accessibility by the disabled residents of the territory.

C. GOALS, PRIORITIES, AND STRATEGIES

Section 101(a)(15) and (23) of the Rehabilitation Act requires VR agencies to describe the goals and priorities of the State in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs. The goals and priorities are based on (1) the most recent CSNA, including any updates; (2) the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of Section 116 of WIOA;

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and (3) other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the SRC and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under Section 107 of the Rehabilitation Act. VR agencies must—

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE SRC AND THE VR AGENCY JOINTLY DEVELOPED AND AGREED TO THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES AND ANY REVISIONS; AND

GOAL 1: Continue to collaborate with core partners and other appropriate agencies to provide a client-centered approach to service delivery to assist individuals with disabilities in achieving their employment outcomes. This also includes Supported Employment Program (SE) personnel.

- Priority 1.1: Develop a common understanding among WIOA core programs and other appropriate agencies (e.g., DHSS - Developmental Disabilities Planning Council and Department of Education, ASCC) of Vocational Rehabilitation and the services it may provide to eligible consumers, in varying capacities, to provide an integrated service delivery and improve employment outcomes for consumers. VR's leadership continues discussions with appropriate agencies throughout FFY 2026 and works on developing written agreements by summer 2028.

- Priority 1.2: Establish efficient procedures for consistent referrals between VR, WIOA core programs, and other relevant services to expand options for individuals with disabilities. OVR continues to refer school-to-work students to the Department of Human Resources – ETD (WIOA) and transition participants to the ASCC Adult Basic

Education if they are interested in continuing their education or provide them with VR services and referral to DHR-ETD.

- Priority 1.3: Ensure VR staff are trained, highly knowledgeable, and are providing information on services across WIOA core programs, and other appropriate programs that may assist individuals with disabilities achieve their employment outcome, especially competitive integrated employment. All staff will continue to participate in web-based and classroom-based training.

- Priority 1.4: Work in partnership with WIOA core programs to strategically enhance employer engagement and work-based learning opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This includes expanding VR employer engagement to develop appropriate disability-related information and resources (e.g., disability awareness training, business-to-business resources for beginning disability hiring initiatives, etc.) for employers.

Development of a strategic plan with the installation of the integrated web-based software of all core partners. Ongoing collaborations with WIOA and partners for more improvements of services and communication in a timely manner. Priorities are working in progress as the local government are dispersed from the central building that housed 90% of departments is under construction to include the Governor's Office. For the next year or more services among all local government are in a temporary status without any permanent web-based software due to this major construction affecting the centralize government systems. The government

agencies are dispersed all over the island leasing any available space from the private sector for work space until the main three-story building construction is completed.

Goal 2: Develop program initiatives and training that adequately support VR and SEPS staff in the provision of quality services.

- Priority 2.1: Review trends in service provision and employment outcomes every quarter and continue to meet at least quarterly with other service providers to review, strengthen, and identify areas of improvement.
- Priority 2.2: Continue development of VR staff through professional development and training that can be shared across WIOA core programs and other agencies to ensure consistency in information and increased knowledge about VR service delivery. VR will introduce new training that will increase focus on counseling and guidance.
- Priority 2.3: Develop training and technical assistance opportunities to community rehabilitation providers and staff (e.g., program managers and employment specialists, counselors) to ensure best practice and improve the quality of employment services and supported employment to consumers of varying disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities. Increased training opportunities will be available to providers as well as OVR staff throughout the year.

Updates on this specific goal; includes current training that are taking place from VRTAC and IPARRT University of Wisconsin in person and virtually from experience expert professionals for VR counselors and OVR leadership have been ongoing since the beginning of FY2025.

GOAL 3: Increase agency outreach and effectiveness of services to individuals and communities who may benefit from vocational rehabilitation services

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- Priority 3.1: Increase effectiveness and cultural relevance of agency.
- Priority 3.2: Continue Outreach with all local partnership agencies for community awareness.

GOAL 4: Increase the number of people with disabilities in integrated, competitive employment, and OVR counseling staff with SES. SEP staff should counsel consumers to pursue postsecondary education as appropriate to increase their earning potential and employment options.

- Priority 4.1: Coordinated with the DDPC and local DOE-Special Education in assisting individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities who are considering subminimum wage employment or who are already employed at a subminimum wage, to maximize opportunities to achieve competitive integrated employment through services provided by VR and the local agencies. Identify resources for conducting the necessary education and outreach to this population, including adequate personnel resources.
- Priority 4.2: Identify best practices, create strategies, and partner with other agencies to better serve students and youth with disabilities to ensure a career pathway and appropriate services to meet their employment outcomes. This includes expanding pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities and meeting the 15% total funding requirement for pre-employment transition services.

The goals are similar to those of PY 3 to 4 years ago because of the aftermath impact of COVID-19, the resignation of key professional staff, and changes in leadership after the general election; these goals and priorities never had a chance to be implemented. It is felt that the new leadership and new professional staff will make a difference and can put these priorities and goals into play in the next 2-3 years. No change in goals and priorities at this time.

2. IDENTIFY MEASURABLE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS AND THE BASIS FOR SELECTING THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES (E.G., CSNA, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES, SRC RECOMMENDATIONS, MONITORING, OTHER INFORMATION). AS REQUIRED IN SECTION 101(A)(15)(D), (18), AND (23), DESCRIBE UNDER EACH GOAL OR PRIORITY, THE STRATEGIES OR METHODS USED TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL OR PRIORITY, INCLUDING AS APPLICABLE, DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGIES OR METHODS THAT—

A. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES.

OVR and Supported Employment Program will increase number of individuals with disabilities served by 25% especially those who are significantly disabled served through the SEP program after incorporating findings from the just completed CSNA and recommendation based on the last 3 years programs performance and accountability.

B. OVERCOME BARRIERS TO ACCESSING VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

OVR will continue to provide island wide awareness campaign utilizing social media, TV and radio presentations, talk show, town hall meetings and community and school outreach educating and distribution of program flyers, brochures and all other program related information.

C. IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES); AND

OVR to continue working collaboratively with our DOE and Special Education partners to coordinate transition services from school to post school activities to include continuing education, trade school or competitive integrated employment. Additionally, implementation of pre-employment program through school to work and Pre-ETS allows exposure and of students to real work experience at work sites, employment exploration counseling, postsecondary education counseling, workplace readiness training and self-education instruction. Additionally affording the VRC the capability to work with clients, parents, the school, and all other important people surrounding the client increases participation and trust by the team.

D. IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO ACHIEVE QUALITY EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES.

This goal will not only assist and help individuals with disabilities whom traditionally have been served and had achieved quality employment, but will also reach the segment of the underserved and unserved population of people with disabilities whom were never part the mainstream of the clientele that VR and SEP had served in the past. An example of these individuals are those who are deaf, blind, deaf and blind who fell through the cracks in the system especially transitioning out of school to post school.

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List and number each goal/priority, noting the basis, and under each goal/priority, list and number the strategies to achieve the goal/priority

GOAL 1: Continue to collaborate with core partners and other appropriate agencies to provide a client-centered approach to service delivery to assist individuals with disabilities achieve their employment outcomes, which also includes Supported Employment Program (SEP) personnel.

- Priority 1.1: Develop a common understanding among WIOA core programs and other appropriate agencies (e.g., DHSS - Developmental Disabilities Planning Council and Department of Education, ASCC) of Vocational Rehabilitation and the services it may provide to eligible consumers, in varying capacities, to provide an integrated service delivery and improve employment outcomes for consumers. VR's leadership continues discussions with appropriate agencies throughout FFY 2026 and works on developing written agreements by summer 2028.
- Priority 1.2: Develop processes and procedures to ensure proper and consistent referrals to and from VR and WIOA core programs (and other appropriate programs) to maximize the service options and delivery for individuals with disabilities. OVR continues to refer school-to-work students to the Department of Human Resources – ETD (WIOA) and transition participants to the ASCC Adult Basic Education if they are interested in continuing their education or provide them with VR services and referral to DHR-ETD.
- Priority 1.3: Ensure VR staff is trained, highly knowledgeable, and are providing information on services across WIOA core programs, and other appropriate programs that may assist individuals with disabilities achieve their employment outcome, especially competitive integrated employment. All staff will continue to participate in web-based and classroom-based training.
- Priority 1.4: Work in partnership with WIOA core programs to strategically enhance employer engagement and work-based learning opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This includes expanding VR employer engagement to develop appropriate disability-related information and resources (e.g., disability awareness training, business-to-business resources for beginning disability hiring initiatives, etc.) for employers.

Priority 1.5 Development of a strategic plan with the installation of the integrated web-based software of all core partners.

Strategy: Collaborate with Public Agencies; TAOA, ASDOE, DPW, etc., to ascertain the number of individuals who have been served annually.

Goal 2: Develop program initiatives and training that adequately support VR and SEPS staff in the provision of quality services.

- Priority 2.1: Review trends in service provision and employment outcomes on a quarterly basis and continue to meet at least quarterly with other service providers to review, strengthen, and identify areas of improvement.
- Priority 2.2: Continue development of VR staff through professional development and training that can be shared across WIOA core programs and other agencies to ensure consistency in information and increased knowledge about VR service delivery. VR will introduce new training that will increase focus on counseling and guidance.

- Priority 2.3: Develop training and technical assistance opportunities to community rehabilitation providers and staff (e.g., program managers and employment specialists, counselors) to ensure best practice and improve the quality of employment services and supported employment to consumers of varying disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities. Increased training opportunities will be available to providers as well as OVR staff throughout the year.
 - Strategy: Creating a partnership with States VR and Pacific Regional partnership through virtual meeting and sharing executable options that support and are suitable with the local employment opportunities, both government and private.
 - Strategy: Utilize Current Subject-matter experts employed in the VR to conduct ongoing training and evaluation of the staff to increase skills to explore current and potential local employment opportunities for our clients.

GOAL 3: Increase agency outreach and effectiveness of services to individuals and communities who may benefit from vocational rehabilitation services

- Priority 3.1: Increase effectiveness and cultural relevance of agency.
- Priority 3.2: Continue Outreach with all local partnership agencies for community awareness.

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- Strategy: Collaborate with ASDOE, WIOA, and other agencies conducting outreach during the National Disability Month and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.

- Strategy: Conduct face-to-face interviews with local media in their prime time, ongoing Television Special Programs to reach other potential clients through television, cable, and radio stations, including all social media relevant platforms with cultural relevance.
- Strategy: OVR conducts annual Outreach Programs with Community Partners to increase competitive integrated employment outcomes for our consumers.

GOAL 4: Increase the number of people with disabilities in integrated, competitive employment, and OVR counseling staff with SES SEP staff should counsel consumers to pursue postsecondary education as appropriate to increase their earning potential and employment options.

- Priority 4.1: Coordinated with the DDPC and local DOE-Special Education in assisting individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities who are considering subminimum wage employment or who are already employed at a subminimum wage, to maximize opportunities to achieve competitive integrated employment through services provided by VR and the local agencies. Identify resources for conducting the necessary education and outreach to this population, including adequate personnel resources.
- Priority 4.2: Identify best practices, create strategies, and partner with other agencies to better serve students and youth with disabilities to ensure a career pathway and appropriate services to meet their employment outcomes. This includes expanding pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities and meeting the 15% total funding requirement for pre-employment transition services.
 - Strategy: One of the basic functions for BASIC 110 is to offer counseling to its consumers to pursue postsecondary education as appropriate.
 - Strategy: Conduct Monthly and quarterly meetings with government partners and potential private sector entities to analyze, strategize, and evaluate opportunities for clients that benefit all stakeholders.
 - Strategy: OVR conducts quarterly trainings to provide updates for staff and public partners.
 - Strategy: OVR partners with public entities to provide computer training to increase employability skills.
 - Strategy: OVR's Basic 110 will aggressively consult with private businesses to create employment opportunities for our clients.
 - Strategy: Liaison with other States VR collaborating to share pragmatic methods utilized in Pre-ETS services that contribute to 15% minimum requirement.

List the goals/priorities and discuss the progress or completion of each goal/priority and related strategies

GOAL 1: Work diligently in tandem with the WIOA core programs and other relevant agencies to deliver services with a client-centered approach that helps people with disabilities reach their job goals. Strategies have been put into practice during evaluation and improvement, wherever necessary.

- Strategy 1: Sustain the Pacific Region core partnership and acquire a management system to improve efficiency and enhance the mobile working environment of VR counselors and enrich the data utilized by VR to make informed program decisions.
- Strategy 2: Continue the System currently in place to ensure proper and consistent referrals to and from VR and WIOA core programs (and other appropriate programs) in order to maximize the service options and service delivery for individuals with disabilities, establishing a streamline efficient process for future projects to succeed.
- Strategy 3: Maintain and sustain Staff involvement in web- based training with NCRTM, National Disability Institute, etc.
 - OVR is also using the services from **VRTAC**
- Strategy 4: Collaborating constantly with WIOA core programs to improve employer engagement and opportunities for work-based learning for people with disabilities. Developing relevant disability-related information and resources (such as business-to-business resources for starting disability recruiting efforts, training on disability awareness, etc.) is part of this, as is increasing VR employer engagement.
 - OVR has improved partnership and collaboration with WIOA.

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GOAL 2: Maintain, follow up, and improve current program initiatives and training that adequately support VR staff and community rehabilitation providers in the provision of quality services.

- Strategy 1: Reviewed trends in service provision and employment outcomes on a quarterly basis and continued to meet at least quarterly with other service providers to review strengths/weaknesses and identify areas of improvement.
 - Priority 2.2: Provided staff development through training from WIOA core programs, SPED, and other service providers were invited to participate in this to ensure consistency in information and increased knowledge about VR service delivery.
 - OVR is using the services from **VRTAC**.

Goal 3: Increase agency outreach and effectiveness of services to individuals and communities who may benefit from vocational rehabilitation services.

- Strategy 1: VR counseling staff provided outreach to individuals and community weekly when visiting clients within their community.
 - Outreach is planned by current leadership to reach all current and prospective clients.

GOAL 4: Increase the number of people with disabilities in integrated, competitive employment.

- Strategy 1: Worked with DDPC and local DOE-Special Education in assisting individuals with disabilities to maximize opportunities to achieve competitive integrated employment through services provided by VR and the local agencies.
 - Leadership training counselors to increase collaborative opportunities with private sectors and government partners to increase opportunities for competitive employment.
- Strategy 2: Continue to collaborate with partners and other agencies to better serve students and youth with disabilities to ensure a pathway and appropriate services to meet their employment outcomes. This includes expanding pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities and meeting the 15% total funding Program requirement for pre-employment transition services.
 - Leadership is creating a partnership with other state VRs to share expansion methods in acquiring successful service within the parameters, which will accomplish the 15% minimum requirements for the pre-employment transition service.

2. PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM YEAR, REFLECTING ACTUAL AND NEGOTIATED LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE. EXPLAIN ANY DISCREPANCIES IN THE ACTUAL AND NEGOTIATED LEVELS; AND

DSU RESPONSE: PY2026-PY2027

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) encompasses detailed data collection and reporting for each of its programs and activities. All monthly, quarterly, and other reports are submitted through the chain of command outlined in the Organizational Chart to ensure effective accountability for all program data.

- OVR continues to collect information and data to evaluate the implementation of VR programs and review the need for improvement. These measures include response to federal monitoring findings, measuring the effectiveness of serving employers, customer satisfaction surveys, and data validation.
- OVR will continue to seek assistance from **VRTAC** and RSA to increase their ability to effectively gather and report the required data elements to obtain a clear understanding of OVR's overall performance to better serve consumers.
- OVR will continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as "baseline", pursuant to section 116 (d) of WIOAAS OVR will continue to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2026 and PY 2027.

3. THE USE OF FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES (SECTIONS 101(A)(18) AND 101(A)(23) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT) (E.G., SRC, SILC).

Examples of initiatives to advance employment outcomes for students and youth with disabilities, clients with deafness and visually impaired and integrate employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities includes school to work programs for primarily juniors and

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seniors, summer youth program, OVR public awareness disability outreach to the schools through onsite presentations and tv/radio talk shows.

OVR has re-established constant communication with SRC and initiated meetings for effective collaboration moving forward. Funding for Innovation and Expansion (I&E) was utilized to support the State Rehabilitation Council's (SRC) authorized activities in compliance with federal regulations. I&E initiatives continue to advance competitive integrated employment outcomes for disabled students and youth, increase the community's ability to serve the deaf, blind, and

visually impaired, and integrate employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities, all in line with OVR goals and priorities.

- Competitive Integrated Employment is a fundamental goal of OVR, and collaborative efforts between the agency and the public and private employers have taken top priority in the efforts to place people with disabilities back into employment. Continued collaboration, outreach, and memorandum of understanding/agreement with incentives co-shared by the agencies and employers is helping with this strategy.

E. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS, AND ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

1. ACCEPTANCE OF TITLE VI FUNDS:

(A) VR agency requests to receive title VI funds.

2. IF THE VR AGENCY HAS ELECTED TO RECEIVE TITLE VI FUNDS, SECTION 606(B)(3) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT REQUIRES VR AGENCIES TO INCLUDE SPECIFIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES WITH RESPECT TO THE DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. DESCRIBE THE USE OF TITLE VI FUNDS AND HOW THEY WILL BE USED IN MEETING THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES OF THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM.

DSU absorbed the Supported Employment Services Program as an OVR service. However, we also have elected to continue to house with a salary and SEP Program Supervisor to provide SEP services under Title 6 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Expand and improve existing programs to increase the number of physically and intellectually challenged individuals placed in permanent jobs after completing the Supported Employment Program.

Keep finding and creating innovative programs to increase the number of chances for supported employment by working more closely with the public and private sectors to create an environment that will support the expansion of the desired programs. Goals: The program aims to achieve the following objectives:

- 1. Continue expansion by fostering greater collaboration with other agencies and service providers in maximizing services to Supported Employment Program [VE1] SEP consumers.
- 2. In recognition of the impairments delimiting possibilities for the Supported Employment Program, there is a need to provide technical assistance to eligible consumers seeking self-employment ventures as an option.
- 3. Foster greater support for the SEP Program, by promoting and continuing increasing public awareness on SEP services to include outreach activities to the outer islands and to minorities.
- 4. Provide in-service training activities to SEP staff to ensure that the delivery of services is of the highest quality possible.

- 5. Intensifying job development activities to increase the number of placements and job contracts.
- 6. Obtain a reliable vehicle, appropriately equipped to provide for the growing transportation needs of SEP consumers and staff.
- 7. Maintain and update SEP Job Bank as an effective resource in providing pertinent information for obtaining job opportunities for consumers.

3. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES MAY BE PROVIDED WITH TITLE 1 OR TITLE VI FUNDS FOLLOWING PLACEMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES IN EMPLOYMENT. IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(22) AND SECTION 606(B)(3) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, DESCRIBE THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST

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SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES; AND THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES.

OVR SEP (Supported Employment Program) provides Supported Employment services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities, to enable them to achieve an employment outcome of supported employment in competitive integrated employment. These services help individuals find competitive, integrated jobs—including customized options—tailored to their unique strengths, abilities, interests, and choices. Ongoing support is also provided to those with the most significant

disabilities. OVR Continues to conduct the following activities with funds allotted for its supported employment Program:

- Provides supported employment services.
- Leverages other public funds to increase resources for extended services and expand supported employment opportunities. OVR reserves and expends 50 percent of its allotment for the provision of supported employment services, including extended services, to youth with the most significant disabilities (34 CFR 363.22).

The following information outlines how ASOVR monitors the quality of the services consumers receive, scope of services provided, extent of supported employment services, and timing of transition to extended services.

4. SECTIONS 101(A)(22) AND 606(B)(4) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT REQUIRE THE VR AGENCY TO DESCRIBE EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND ARRANGE, INCLUDING ENTERING INTO COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS, WITH OTHER STATE AGENCIES AND OTHER APPROPRIATE ENTITIES IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. THE DESCRIPTION MUST INCLUDE EXTENDED SERVICES, AS APPLICABLE, TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES TO YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH 34 C.F.R. § 363.4(A) AND 34 C.F.R. § 361.5(C)(19)(V).

ASOVR has most of its MOU's and Partnership Agreements in place and is now working on renewal process of contracts now expiring and/or close to expiration.

In order to provide supported employment services for people with the most severe disabilities, especially young people, OVR Supported Employment Program (SEP) selects and arranges with Local Government Entities, Businesses, and Private Nonprofit Organizations. In order to offer competitive integrated supported employment services to qualified individuals, SEP works with organizations such as the American Samoa Government's Office, the Department of Human Resources – Division of Employment and Training (WIOA), the Department of Education, American Samoa Community College, the Center for Independent Living, business owners, and other community partners. SEP collaborates with different suppliers of supported employment in the American Samoa Territory, including affiliated and satellite locations. In accordance with guidelines provided in VR's Policy Manual, VR's SEP is creating Memorandums of Understanding and Partnership Agreements. VR will keep working on this project until any agreement can be finalized. The Memorandums of Understanding and Local Partnership Agreements are expected to encourage resource sharing to support person-centered planning and pre-vocational services provided prior to referral for supported employment services. In American Samoa, SEP utilizes the hourly rates for Supported Employment job coaching, intake, placement, and retention services that are defined in the Amended Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 applicable to American Samoa. The current rates were set in the 114th Congress Public Law 114-61. Extended service providers' sources differ based on the client's eligibility for additional programs and the accessibility of additional resources from other federally or locally supported organizations (e.g., local government offices, programs, and entities). The Independent Living Program may offer administrative extended services, or the local mental health programs may fund ASOVR SEP extended services for people with mental illness, depending on each local entity's policies. Extended services may also be funded by the Veteran's Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation Program through the Supported Employment programs offered by ASOVR SEP.

Whenever possible, it's advised to set up natural supports at work for ASOVR SEP clients who need supported employment. Natural support enables the development of chances for

competitive integrated employment, to the degree that it is practical, and deepens the bond between the employer and the customer, promoting long-term successful outcomes.

Currently OVR is modifying MOUs with its partners and stakeholders.

F. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act require all VR agencies to annually conduct a full assessment of their resources and ability to serve all eligible individuals before the start of the Federal fiscal year. In accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 361.29(b), annual estimates must include the following projections:

1. ESTIMATES FOR NEXT FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR—

A. VR PROGRAM; AND

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Priority Category (if applicable)	No. of Individuals Eligible for Services	No. of Eligible Individuals Expected to Receive Services under VR Program	Costs of Services using Title, I Funds	No. of Eligible Individuals Not Receiving Services (if applicable)
N/A	50	25	$10 \times \$7,000 = \$70,000$ $15 \times \$5,000 = \$75,000$ $\$145,000$	25

Services are provided to all eligible clients, while some withdrew their applications for personal reasons, such as relocating off-island or reconsidering their application plans.

Some clients withdraw their application after completing eligibility due to personal reasons.

B. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM.

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Priority Category (if applicable)	No. of Individuals Eligible for Services	No. of Eligible Individuals Expected to Receive Services under Supported Employment Program	Costs of Services using Title I and Title VI Funds	No. of Eligible Individuals Not Receiving Services (if applicable)
N/A	10	5	$5 \times \$7,000 = \$35,000$	N/A

G. ORDER OF SELECTION

1. PURSUANT TO SECTION 101(A)(5) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, THIS DESCRIPTION MUST BE AMENDED WHEN THE VR AGENCY DETERMINES, BASED

ON THE ANNUAL ESTIMATES DESCRIBED IN DESCRIPTION (F), THAT VR SERVICES CANNOT BE PROVIDED TO ALL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE WHO APPLY FOR AND ARE DETERMINED ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES.

* VR agencies may maintain an order of selection policy and priority of eligible individuals without implementing or continuing to implement an order of selection.

The VR agency is not implementing an order of selection, and all eligible individuals will be served.

2. FOR VR AGENCIES THAT HAVE DEFINED PRIORITY CATEGORIES DESCRIBE—

A. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

N/A

B. THE ORDER (PRIORITY CATEGORIES) TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES ENSURING THAT INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS

WITH DISABILITIES; AND

N/A

C. THE VR AGENCY'S GOALS FOR SERVING INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, INCLUDING HOW THE AGENCY WILL ASSIST ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS ASSIGNED TO CLOSED PRIORITY CATEGORIES WITH INFORMATION AND REFERRAL, THE METHOD IN WHICH THE

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VR AGENCY WILL MANAGE WAITING LISTS, AND THE PROJECTED TIMELINES FOR OPENING PRIORITY CATEGORIES. NOTE: PRIORITY CATEGORIES ARE CONSIDERED OPEN WHEN ALL INDIVIDUALS IN THE PRIORITY CATEGORY MAY BE SERVED.

N/A

3. HAS THE VR AGENCY ELECTED TO SERVE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS OUTSIDE OF THE ORDER OF SELECTION WHO REQUIRE SPECIFIC SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT?

N/A

H. WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS.

The State plan shall be in effect in all political subdivisions of the State, however, the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (Commissioner) may waive compliance with this requirement in accordance with Section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and the implementing regulations in 34 C.F.R. § 361.26. If the VR agency is requesting a waiver of state wideness or has a previously approved waiver of state wideness, describe the types of services and the local entities providing such services under the waiver of state wideness and how the agency has complied with the requirements in 34 C.F.R. § 361.26. If the VR agency is not requesting or does not have an approved waiver of state wideness, please indicate "not applicable."

N/A

I. .

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act, the VR agency must develop and maintain annually a description (consistent with the purposes of the Rehabilitation Act) of the VR agency's comprehensive system of personnel development, which shall include a description of the procedures and activities the State VR agency will undertake to ensure it has an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals that provides the following:

1. ANALYSIS OF CURRENT PERSONNEL AND PROJECTED PERSONNEL NEEDS INCLUDING—

A. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE VR AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

B. THE NUMBER AND TYPE OF PERSONNEL THAT ARE EMPLOYED BY THE VR AGENCY IN THE PROVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES, INCLUDING RATIOS OF QUALIFIED VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELORS TO CLIENTS;

C. PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY, WHO WILL BE NEEDED BY THE VR AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES IN 5 YEARS BASED ON PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL EXPECTED TO RETIRE OR LEAVE THE FIELD, AND OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS.

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D.

Personnel Category	No. of Personnel Employed	No. of Personnel Currently Needed	Projected No. of Personnel Needed in 5 years
Management	5	-2	3
Counselor Staff	3	1	4
Counselor Support Staff	0	1	1
Transition Coordinator	1	0	1
Supported Employment	0	1	1
Assistive Technology	1	1	2
Administrative Staff	5	1	6
Centers for Independent OIB	2 1	1 0	3 1
Total	18	4	22

RATIO OF QUALIFIED VR COUNSELORS TO CLIENTS:

**PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
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D. PROJECTED NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED IN 5 YEARS:

DSU response:

Anticipated individuals to be served in PY-2031 will be 125.

2. DATA AND INFORMATION ON PERSONNEL PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION, AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

A. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED DURING THE PRIOR YEAR FROM EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS WITH CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, OR WITH THE CREDENTIALS FOR CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, BROKEN DOWN BY THE PERSONNEL CATEGORY FOR WHICH THEY HAVE RECEIVED, OR HAVE THE CREDENTIALS TO RECEIVE, CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE.

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Institute of Higher	Type of Program	No. of Students	No. of Prior Year
---------------------	-----------------	-----------------	-------------------

Education		Enrolled	Graduates
American Samoa Community College (ASCC)	Elementary education Bachelor's and Associate's degree programs	0	0
University of Hawaii	Elementary education Bachelor's programs Masters in education	0	0
Wayland University	Masters in education Elementary education Bachelor's and Associate's degree programs	0	0

B. THE VR AGENCY’S PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL, WHICH ADDRESSES THE CURRENT AND PROJECTED NEEDS FOR QUALIFIED PERSONNEL; AND THE COORDINATION AND FACILITATION OF EFFORTS BETWEEN THE VR AGENCY AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS TO RECRUIT, PREPARE, AND RETAIN PERSONNEL WHO ARE QUALIFIED, INCLUDING PERSONNEL FROM MINORITY BACKGROUNDS AND PERSONNEL WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

OVR planning to improve customer services and guarantee that clients receive high-quality rehabilitation treatments from licensed professionals, a thorough and well-managed personnel development program is essential. OVR is steadfast in its commitment to offering training courses to all employees, particularly those who work directly with clients. Every year, VR updates all employees' training records to include requests for training as well as completions detailing the training provider, name, and date of attendance.

By comprehending labor trends, spotting possible resource gaps and possibilities, and creating successful projects, the Department of Human Resources (DHR) influences OVR's strategy.

When it comes to important business concerns like training, personnel management, and new development, DHR takes the lead and produces results.

- DHR is the only authorized agency to hire in the government.
- DHR has the policy and procedures on how to handle VR clients with disabilities.

DHR ensures that qualified employees are successfully hired, trained, and retained in order to achieve VR's objectives. DHR maintains a cooperative relationship with ASCC education programs through its Employment and Training division. It also participates in job fairs, cultivates a good rapport with the community and its leaders, and uses its job bank to aid in recruitment.

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The OVR Counseling Division Supervisor is responsible for creating career development plans for each subordinate employee. This process includes establishing career ladders, which involves identifying the training courses employees must complete to advance to the next stage of their careers. The resulting plans will provide the necessary human resources data required to prepare the annual human resources development plan.

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) recruits employees based on a national policy that prioritizes the highest possible placement of individuals with disabilities within the organization. Consequently, OVR is dedicated to placing individuals with disabilities in the workforce as much as possible, while maintaining the quality of services provided to the disability community in American Samoa.

To prepare for future employment with OVR, individuals with disabilities who are pursuing post-secondary education are encouraged to enroll in administrative, counseling, and rehabilitation courses through partnerships with Wayland University, the American Samoa Community College, and the Special Education Division of the Department of Education.

Funding from the Basic 110 Program, along with additional financial resources, will be allocated in accordance with the aims and objectives of the Human Resources Development Plan.

The organization takes great pride in its ability to effectively train newly hired staff members to delegate tasks and responsibilities. This practice was established from the outset when the grantor launched the Vocational Rehabilitation program in the territory. OVR has actively implemented initiatives to enhance staff competency levels in accordance with this responsibility.

OVR has a low employee turnover rate, especially among professional staff, with nearly 0% turnover over the past four years. However, retaining trained personnel is challenging due to salary disparities between government workers and some administrative staff earning more than VR advisors. This financial incentive issue leads counselors to leave for better-paying government jobs.

The Governor's office and the Director of the Department of Human Resources are discussing potential solutions. Additionally, the misclassification of VR counselors as "administrative assistants" has resulted in lower pay, despite their complex roles requiring a bachelor's degree and considerable experience.

As many professionals' approach retirement, OVR is actively seeking potential internal candidates for management positions, though current policies may hinder this process and risk politicizing the role.

C. DESCRIPTION OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND ACTIVITIES THAT ENSURE ALL PERSONNEL EMPLOYED BY THE VR AGENCY RECEIVE

APPROPRIATE AND ADEQUATE TRAINING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS:

I. PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO ASSESSMENT, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING, JOB PLACEMENT, AND REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING TRAINING IMPLEMENTED IN COORDINATION WITH ENTITIES CARRYING OUT STATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998; AND

II. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO VR AGENCY PROFESSIONALS AND ARAPROFESSIONALS AND FOR PROVIDING TRAINING REGARDING THE AMENDMENTS TO THE REHABILITATION ACT MADE BY THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT.

- A system of staff development will continue for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated State unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities conducting State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; and
- OVR continues its commitment to a comprehensive system of training and developing staff. The aim of the goal is to ensure staff development for OVR personnel in areas essential to the effective management of OVR's program of VR services. OVR will continue to provide for the training and development of personnel necessary to improve their ability to provide VR services leading to employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities, especially those with the most significant disabilities.
- With the implementation of WIOA amendment to the Rehabilitation Act, overall training areas include: (1) Functional Limitations, Employment Implications, and Accommodation; (2) Vocational Assessment: Tools, Interpretation, and Application; (3) Counseling and Guidance; (4) Caseload Management, Case Practices, and Service Planning; (5) Employer Engagement, Job Development and Job Placement; (6) Diversity, Inclusion, and Multicultural Competency; and (7) Leadership Development.

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- All staff have access to internal and external training designed to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve success in their positions, provide developmental activities for new and emerging leaders, and enhance delivery service for customers. Training is delivered through classroom instruction, webinars, and teleconferences.

VR counselors and staff are regularly encouraged to utilize available national resources.

Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials (NCRTM) funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). The NCRTM offers the vocational rehabilitation and education communities an opportunity to contribute new knowledge to their specific fields and gain visibility for their work; other similar website resources include the technical assistance center.

- Furthermore, the counselor must be aware of all impediments that might preclude the use of certain assistive devices. This obstacle can be addressed by collaborating with the assistive technology specialist, making sure the recommended device is the most suitable option while also considering cost sensitivity. Based on the local prevailing economic system and job availability, the office of Vocational Rehabilitation is aggressively encouraging clients to pursue the self-employment option, by focusing attention on niche services. VR has been meticulous in ensuring that counselors receive training on assistive technology and the available assistive devices that are available. Attempts are being made to continue to involve physicians in the service process, especially in the area of prosthetics and the assessment of nature and the extent of the disability.

OVR Counselors will develop an individualized SWOT analysis of each client to ensure that their employment requirements are satisfied.

PY2026 to PY2029 training emphasis will continue to be placed on building counselors and staff capacities to aggressively promote the option of entrepreneurship, given the bleak economic forecast for the territory. Partnership is key and vital in these challenging times. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue to collaborate with its partners on training fund leveraging to address the growing need for funds to finance the continuation of training initiatives needed. These long standing partners include the American Samoa Community College Pacific Center in Human Security (PCHS), DHSS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, and workforce partners. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue to promote established goals for the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD).

- These CSPD goals are:
- Maintaining and sustaining qualified professionals within the OVR.

Optimize the limited employment opportunities available locally for OVR clients within the agencies and the private sector.

- Mentorship programs with Technical Assistance (TA) utilization of the VR professional toolkit for specialized/targeted training.
- Render support for maintaining Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) certification and other certifications,

3. DESCRIPTION OF VR AGENCY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF PERSONNEL STANDARDS CONSISTENT WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B) TO ENSURE THAT VR AGENCY PROFESSIONAL AND PARAPROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL ARE ADEQUATELY TRAINED AND PREPARED, INCLUDING—

A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

American Samoa does not have state-approved or recognized certification, licensing, or registration requirements for any of the personnel classifications used by OVR, specifically rehabilitation counselors. In collaboration with DHR, OVR has established minimum qualifications that require all counselors to possess an appropriate bachelor's level degree, experience collaborating with individuals with disabilities, and, whenever possible, be eligible to obtain the appropriate nationally recognized certification. VR has not amended current personnel standards because of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and all professional staff positions continue to identify minimum qualifications that meet or exceed

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legislated requirements. OVR works closely with the Department of Human Resources to ensure the staff responsible for the initial screening of applicants is knowledgeable of the education and experience requirements needed to ensure qualified personnel.

4. METHOD(S) THE VR AGENCY USES TO ENSURE THAT PERSONNEL ARE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE IN APPROPRIATE MODES OF COMMUNICATION WITH OR IN THE NATIVE LANGUAGE OF APPLICANTS OR ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE LIMITED ENGLISH-SPEAKING ABILITY.

Most OVR staff and clients use Samoan as their primary language. Additionally, creating a curriculum for staff to learn the American Sign Language will address the clientele with speech impairment. With staff graduating from High Schools as the minimum requirement for employment, English is also spoken and staff are all bilingual and fluent with both languages. OVR will accommodate by contracting appropriate certified interpreters from other minority individuals.

5. AS APPROPRIATE, DESCRIBE THE PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES TO COORDINATE THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT WITH PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT.

OVR is in the process of revising and updating the MOU's with ASDOE.

As an ongoing process, both entities maintain effective communications to improve the delivery of services

American Samoa Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is reviving close collaboration with the American Samoa Department of Education and the Division of Special Education in negotiation and execution of an MOA/MOU governing each entity's financial and operational responsibilities. This includes processes of processing referrals from school to OVR programs (Transition, Pre-ETS & CIL), criteria for eligibility for such services, invites by the Sped team of OVR professional staff into IEP meetings, development of Transition plans, Pre-ETS plans and even IPE plans for students with disabilities who have applied and have been determined eligible for VR services. All of these requirements will be memorialized in a procedural manual agreed upon by all parties.

Additionally, joint island-wide disability awareness activities and sharing of educational/training on staff development between DOE/SPED and VR professional staff are an ongoing partnership priority. Examples of these collaborations included: Developmental disabilities activities co-hosted between OVR and DOE/SPED, where OVR visits all high schools and provided presentation of OVR, Transition (Pre-ETS), SEP, IL, and Assistive Technology services.

To ensure that the desired MOU is finalized and duly adopted, before the start of the school year commencing at the end of August 2026, the two agencies have committed to completing this task within three (3) months from the date of plan approval.

J. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS.

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(D) of the Rehabilitation Act—

1. DESCRIBE PLANS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATION BETWEEN THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATION OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PUBLIC EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, WHICH ARE DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF THE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM THE RECEIPT OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES IN SCHOOL TO THE RECEIPT OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES.

Career paths and training for our PreETS students are a significant part of each student's participation in our School to Work program. Each student, upon the completion of their first year of the School to Work program, is given an opportunity to fill out an application to become a VR consumer.

This past year, OVR has re-developed its outlook of providing VR services together with SPED to ensure that PreETS Services and Transition Services for students and disabled youths are an important aspect of what defines our services to the public. Exploration, trial, and errors of our service provisions may work in our island environment but may not necessarily work in a metropolitan setting. Thus, we are always looking for new ways to modify our services or replicate what works in other settings similar to ours.

OVR is in the process of revising and updating the MOU's with ASDOE. As an ongoing process, both entities maintain effective communications in order to improve the delivery of services.

2. DESCRIBE THE CURRENT STATUS AND SCOPE OF THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VR AGENCY AND THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY. CONSISTENT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT PURSUANT TO 34 C.F.R. §

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361.22(B), PROVIDE, AT A MINIMUM, THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ABOUT THE AGREEMENT:

A. CONSULTATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, WHICH MAY BE PROVIDED USING ALTERNATIVE MEANS FOR MEETING PARTICIPATION (SUCH AS VIDEO CONFERENCES AND CONFERENCE CALLS, TO ASSIST EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES IN PLANNING FOR THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO POST-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES AND OTHER VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES;

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY PERSONNEL FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPS) UNDER SECTION 614(D) OF THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT;

C. THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES;

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES. OUTREACH TO THESE STUDENTS SHOULD OCCUR AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE DURING THE TRANSITION PLANNING PROCESS AND MUST INCLUDE, AT A MINIMUM, A DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSE OF THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM, ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS, APPLICATION PROCEDURES, AND SCOPE OF SERVICES THAT MAY BE PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS;

E. COORDINATION NECESSARY TO SATISFY DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN 34 C.F.R. PART 397 REGARDING STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE SEEKING SUBMINIMUM WAGE EMPLOYMENT; AND

F. ASSURANCE THAT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH 34 C.F.R. § 397.31, NEITHER THE SEA NOR THE LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY WILL ENTER INTO A CONTRACT OR OTHER ARRANGEMENT WITH AN ENTITY, AS DEFINED IN 34 C.F.R. § 397.5(D), FOR THE PURPOSE OF OPERATING A PROGRAM UNDER WHICH YOUTH WITH A DISABILITY IS ENGAGED IN WORK COMPENSATED AT A SUBMINIMUM WAGE.

PLEASE REFER TO OUR POLICY MANUAL FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION. THIS PAST YEAR OVR HAS REVAMPED ITS COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH AMERICAN SAMOA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION/DIVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TO UPGRADE OUR SERVICE PROVISIONS AND PROVIDING ADDITIONAL TRAINING VENUES FOR DISABLED STUDENTS IN HIGH SCHOOL. WE HAVE BEEN WORKING OFF OF OUR 2018 AGREEMENT BECAUSE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION HAS YET TO PROVIDE OVR WITH THEIR PORTION OF THE UPDATED AGREEMENT. ONCE SPED PROVIDES OVR WITH THEIR PORTION OF THE AGREEMENT, AN UPDATED MOU WILL BE DEVELOPED AND PROMULGATED TO THE PUBLIC

With the inception of new leadership in the American Samoa Department of Education (ASDOE), the prevailing MOU will need to be amended accordingly to reflect any changes and priorities regarding educational policies. It's estimated that it will take three (3) months to complete this task.

K. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(E) of the Rehabilitation Act, describe how the VR agency will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of VR services; and transition services for youth and students with disabilities, including pre employment transition services for students with disabilities.

Career paths and training for our PreETS students are a significant part of each student's participation in our School-to-Work program. Each student upon the completion of their first year of the School to Work program is giving an opportunity to fill out an application to become a VR consumer

This past year, OVR has re-developed its outlook of providing VR services together with SPED to ensure that PreETS Services and Transition Services for students and disabled youths are an important aspect of what defines our services to the public. Exploration, trial and error of our services provisions may work in our island environment but may not necessarily work in a metropolitan setting. Thus we are always looking for new ways to modify our services or replicate what works in other settings similar to ours.

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In this vein, NTACTION, VRTAC-QE, has been a tremendous asset for training opportunities to our program.

VR constantly reviews its strategies to develop new employer relationships and support businesses that employ individuals with disabilities. Some of its flexible strategies include increasing work-based learning opportunities, on-the-job training, and customized employment. VR is also working on developing internship and apprenticeship programs with our core partner Department of Human Resources – Employment and Training Division (WIOA) and the American Samoa Community College.

Competitive Integrated Employment is a fundamental goal of OVR, and collaborative efforts between the agency and the public and private employers have taken top priority in the efforts to place people with disabilities back into employment. Continued collaboration, outreach, and memorandum of understanding/agreement with incentives co-shared by the agencies and employers is helping with this strategy.

The following are OVR's employer outreach and networking strategies to work with employers to increase competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities:

- 1. Continuous outreach to employers/businesses to recruit and hire people with disabilities will consistently be encouraged through engagement with the Department of Commerce, the Department of Human Resources job bank, Chamber of Commerce, core partner DHR Employment of Training Division, etc..
- 2. Increase outreach to employers to recruit and hire people with disabilities. This will include identifying any measurable skill gains that result from the customer's

acquisition of an industry-recognized credential. VR counselors will actively coordinate employer recruitment, work-based learning experiences, internships, apprenticeships, and pre-apprenticeships, OJT, and any other supports for any qualified VR customers.

- 3. Consultation with employers will be provided on disability etiquette, accessibility, and accommodation needs. Referral assistance to help retain an employer's workforce following an injury or the onset of a disability will also be provided. OVR counseling staff will provide non-legal, best practice disability etiquette training.
- 4. OVR business services will conduct bi-annual employer/business satisfaction surveys to measure effectiveness in business engagement; and
- 5. OVR staff will continue to promote and support National Disability Employment Awareness Month events. These events will include employer champions who actively recruit and retain persons with disabilities in their workforce.
- 6. Increase utilization of labor market analysis to gain a comprehensive understanding of target occupational environments by increasing analysis of job trends and factors to promote strategic placement activities for VR consumers.

L. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

In accordance with the requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(C) and (K), describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are

not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system to develop opportunities for community-based employment in integrated settings, to the greatest extent practicable for the following:

1. STATE PROGRAMS (DESIGNATE LEAD AGENCY(IES) AND IMPLEMENTING ENTITY(IES)) CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

Samoa Assistive Technology Program is under the auspices of OVR and coordinates with VR counselors in providing information and recommending equipment and devices for clients prior to purchasing the equipment.

2. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

OVR does not have cooperative relationships with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

3. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH;

Public Agencies like OVR serve out-of-school youth with disabilities and WIOA serves out-of-school youth who fall under all other criteria that meet their program requirements. It is also known that religious affiliated groups and special interest groups do sometimes create special programs to serve all youths including out of school youths when they secure grant funding or other sources of funding for youth groups.

1. The Department of Human & Social Services (DHSS) division of Developmental Disabilities Planning Council provides for systemic change, public policy development, advocacy,

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1. empowerment training, identification of barriers to employment and community inclusion for individuals with developmental disabilities, referral services, and coordination with public education and awareness activities during Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.
2. Statewide Independent Living Center provides group training to assist students and youths with disabilities in developing the skills needed to live independently; self-advocacy and awareness, advocate during IEP process, understanding the transition process and advocating for themselves in post-secondary education, employment and when receiving social services; workplace readiness training to provide students and youth with disabilities the knowledge needed to find and maintain competitive integrated employment through OVR.
3. The University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) is an interdisciplinary education, research and public service component of the American Samoa

Community College that engages in the following core functions:

- 1. Interdisciplinary pre-service preparation and continuing education of students and fellows, which may include the preparation and continuing education of leadership, direct service, clinical or personnel to strengthen and increase the capacity of the territory and community
 - 2. Community service that provides training and technical assistance for individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, professionals, paraprofessionals, policymakers, students and other members of the community
 - 3. Conduct research, evaluation, and analysis of public policy in areas that affect or could affect positively or negatively individuals with developmental disabilities and their families
 - 4. Dissemination of information
- The UCEDD addresses the core functions directly or indirectly with one or more of the following areas of emphasis: quality assurance activities, education activities and early intervention activities, child care-related activities, health-related activities, employment-related activities, housing-related activities, transportation-related activities, recreation-related activities, and other services available or to individuals in a community, including formal and informal community support, that affects their quality of life. OVR has worked closely with the Department of Youth and Women in the past but; Leadership change requires renewing the rapport for the purpose of serving disabled students and out-of-school youth with disabilities in order to provide a seamless transition into employment or training. They have training throughout the year in areas such as sewing, silk screen printing, cooking, sports programs, etc. for the youth of American Samoa, and OVR takes advantage of these programs by referring disabled youths.

4. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS;

Not in use at this time. OVR continues to seek participants to establish community rehabilitation programs. All State contracts are the sole function of the American Samoa Office of Procurement.

VR is not utilizing any State contracts currently, but it is researching the opportunity for future use.

5. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR ADMINISTERING THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT (42 U.S.C. 1396 ET SEQ.);

DSU: OVR presently is in the throes of developing a MOU with our local Medicaid Office. In the past we have worked jointly with the Social Security Office in helping Ticket to Work recipients in getting the most “bang for their buck” in using their Ticket to Work, Over the past five years only three recipients with their ticket to work papers wanted to receive services from OVR, all of these individuals have taken their Ticket to Work papers off-island to programs stateside feeling that they would receive bigger benefits stateside compared to American Samoa. The Centers for Independent Living (CIL), a unit of OVR, provides comprehensive services for individuals needing personal care and other supports to remain in their communities. Those individuals who receive Medicaid services and indicate an interest in employment are served through the CIL utilizing case managers trained to provide case management services and coordinates with VR counselors to better serve the consumers. These combined services allow for a holistic approach to employment outcomes.

In addition, CIL staff collaborate regularly with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services to train staff, manage federal Medicaid/Medicare rule changes and ensure consistency of service provision. Services provided through the CIL unit of OVR are administered within the guidelines of the CMS.

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6. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES;

OVR, the Samoa Center of Independent Living, Older and Blind Assistive Technology, served all individuals with disabilities, including individuals with developmental disabilities. Services provided by these different providers include training and dissemination of independent living skills, providing accommodation and restoration services at home, school, or employment. Job exploration, training, and exploration are also services available to individuals with developmental disability (ies).

Services for people with developmental disabilities are provided by the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC) Division of the Department of Human and Social Services (DHSS). OVR collaborates with DHSS to increase competitive integrated employment, especially for people with more severe disabilities. OVR and DDPC are still in negotiations to formalize the order in which to prioritize securing long-term support for employed DD individuals and DDPC-eligible individuals. Additionally, the negotiation aims to establish methods for cooperation, service coordination, and mutual understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each agency in fostering the success of individuals in need of long-term employment support.

7. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES; AND

Mental health services are provided by the Behavioral Health Services (BHS) of the Department of Health (DOH). In order to guarantee cooperation and partnership in the provision of Extended Services and Supported Employment with DOH, OVR employs a variety of strategies. VR counselors collaborate in staffing cases with Public Health-Mental Health in order to formally establish partnership, coordination of services, and mutual awareness of the scope and responsibility of each agency in achieving success for individuals who require long-term work support. When a client is deemed ready to reintegrate into society and begin engaging in it, DHM assigns them to VR.

8. OTHER FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS OUTSIDE THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM.

OVR works in conjunction and provides service coordination with federal, state, and local organizations that support the independent living and vocational rehabilitation of people with disabilities. In order to increase community capacity, enhance the caliber and quantity of services provided, and prevent service duplication, OVR collaborates with agencies to carry out tasks such as organizing and coordinating services for individuals with disabilities.

Collaborating agencies include:

- 1. Department of Human Resources – Employment and Training Division (WIOA)
- 2. Department of Human and Social Services - Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC), WIC,
 - 3. Department of Territorial Administration on Aging (TAOA)
 - 4. American Samoa Community College - Land Grant (ASCC Land Grant)
 - 5. American Samoa Department of Agriculture
 - 6. Department of Health – Behavioral Health (DOH)
 - 7. Office of Protection and Advocacy (OPAD)
 - 8. Department of Education – Special Education Division
 - 9. Social Security Administration (SSA)
 - 10. Pacific Center in Human Security (PCHS)

- 11. Department of Youth and Women’s Affairs (DYWA)
- 12. Parents of Children with Special Needs Network (PCSN)
- 13. State Medicare/Medicaid Agency under the Office of the Governor
- 14. American Samoa Alliance/Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
- 16. American Samoa Community College – Adult Basic Education (ASCC-ABE)
- 17. American Samoa Independent Living and IL Older Blind
- 18 American Samoa Small Business Development
- 19 . Department of Commerce- Business License Division

9. OTHER PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

DSU response: Additional initiatives that offer home care to our Individuals with Disabilities include FATU-O-AIGA (FOA), a Catholic Church ministry. In American Samoa, FOA is now the only non-profit community service program offering hospice care services to our elderly and

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1. ALL VR AGENCIES, EXCEPT FOR THOSE THAT HAVE AN INDEPENDENT CONSUMER-CONTROLLED COMMISSION, MUST HAVE A STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (COUNCIL OR SRC) THAT MEETS THE CRITERIA IN SECTION 105 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPLICABLE, HAS:

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(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

2. IN ACCORDANCE WITH ASSURANCE (A)(1)(B), IF SELECTED, PLEASE PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE CURRENT COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL BY REPRESENTATIVE TYPE, INCLUDING THE TERM NUMBER OF THE REPRESENTATIVE, AS APPLICABLE, AND ANY VACANCIES, AS WELL AS THE BEGINNING DATES OF EACH REPRESENTATIVE’S TERM.

Select 'Edit' to edit the narrative.

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severely disabled residents who are bedridden. OVR has often tried to work with Fatu O Aiga to create an MOU, but because of the desires of their Board (FOA) members, they prefer to handle issues on a case-by-case basis. This is also because they have a limited number of beds and volunteer home aides.

There are particular difficulties facing American Samoa in this sector. There is general agreement that community rehabilitation programs that are specifically focused on serving OVR clients would be beneficial in meeting the diverse requirements of disabled individuals in American Samoa. Therefore, in order to support service delivery, OVR depends on forming collaborations with other public bodies like the WIOA program, the community college, high schools, and other organizations.

OVR staff are still in charge of organizing and providing all the support services needed for clients to prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment. Therefore, it is requested that OVR provide ongoing training to its employees, establish connections between their staff and all other human care programs in American Samoa, and advocate for the funding of additional services for the community's challenged residents.

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner, that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act.

The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:

The VR agency must select the “Edit” button to review and agree to the VR State plan Assurances.

The State Plan must include
1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.
2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a Unified State plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.
3. Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan: The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:
3.a. the establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act.

3.b. either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.c. consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.d. the financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3).
3.e. as applicable, the local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.f. as applicable, the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.g. statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.h. the requirements for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.i. all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL)

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3.j. the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.
The State Plan must include
3.k. the compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3.l. the reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities as set forth in section 101(a)(18)(A).
3.m. the submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:
4.a. comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(E) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.b. impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.c. provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services or, if implementing an order of selection, in accordance with criteria established by the State for the order of selection as set out in section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.d. determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.e. comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.

4.f. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act
4.g. provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.h. comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by sections 101(a)(14) and 511 of the Rehabilitation Act.
4.i. meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs.

The State Plan must include
4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,
4.j.i. has developed and will implement,
4.j.i.A. strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and
4.j.i.B. strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and
4.j.ii. has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15), 101(a)(25) and 113).
4.j.iii. shall reserve not less than 15 percent of the allocated funds for the provision of preemployment transition services; such funds shall not be used to pay for the administrative costs of providing pre-employment transition services.
5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement to the State plan:
5.a. The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED
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Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act.
5.b. The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.
6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program (Title VI):
6.a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(H) and (I) of the Rehabilitation Act.
6.b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment,

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in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act.
7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:
The State Plan must include
7.a. The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.

7.b. The designated State agency assures that the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(7)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.

Do you attest that these assurances will be met?

Yes

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL) CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE,) IS AUTHORIZED TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (REHABILITATION ACT), AS AMENDED BY TITLE IV OF WIOA [1], AND ITS STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT;

[1] Public Law 113-128.

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE

American Samoa Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

2. IN THE EVENT THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY IS NOT PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH VOCATIONAL AND OTHER REHABILITATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY MUST INCLUDE A DESIGNATED STATE UNIT FOR THE VR PROGRAM (SECTION 101(A)(2)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT). AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES, THE (DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WHEN THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY HAS A DESIGNATED STATE UNIT)[2] AGREES TO OPERATE AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN [3], THE REHABILITATION ACT, 34 CFR 361.13(B) AND (C), AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS [4], POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE TO STATES UNDER SECTION 111(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES AND

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL)

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THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE

PLAN;

^[2] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

^[3] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

^[4] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 361.

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

Office of the Governor of American Samoa

3. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY, OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WHEN THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY HAS A DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AGREES TO OPERATE AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN^[5], THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS^[6], POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER TITLE VI ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

^[5] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[6] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 4, as well as Supported Employment program regulations at 34 C.F.R. part 363.

4. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT OR, IF NOT APPLICABLE, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO PERFORM THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE REGARDING THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH 34 CFR 361.13(B) AND (C);

5. THE STATE LEGALLY MAY CARRY OUT EACH PROVISION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

6. ALL PROVISIONS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT ARE CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW.

7. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO RECEIVE, HOLD, AND DISBURSE FEDERAL FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT; ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Adrian Vasai

8. THE (ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND THE SUPPLEMENT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES; ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)

9. THE AGENCY THAT SUBMITS THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT HAS ADOPTED OR OTHERWISE FORMALLY APPROVED THE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT. FOOTNOTES

[1] Public Law 113-128.

[2] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

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CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

To review and complete the Certification section of the VR portion of the State plan, please select the “Edit” button.

Note, please do not edit the table header or formatting. Only edit the table contents.

If you accidentally edit the table headers and structure, open this link to the blank table. You can copy and paste the table into the narrative field, and start over if needed.

Signatory information	Enter Signatory information in this column
Name of Signatory	Adrian Vasai

Title of Signatory	Director of Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
Date Signed	March 23, 2026

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Each State VR program must submit expected levels of performance in its Unified or Combined State Plan and in the two-year modification of that plan. Expected levels of performance for the first two years of a state plan must be submitted in the initial submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and in the initial submission of the two-year modification of that Plan, for years three and four, as described in 34 CFR § 361.170(a). Expected levels of performance must

be stated to the nearest tenth of a percent (XX.X %) or to the nearest whole dollar for median earnings. State VR programs are reminded that the expected levels of performance must be published for public comment prior to plan submission in accordance with state law, regulation, and policy.

After the Unified or Combined State Plan submission, each State VR program must reach agreement with RSA on the negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the Unified or Combined State Plan (or for the third and fourth years of the Unified or Combined State Plan during the required two-year modification process) in accordance with WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv).

RSA will use its statistical adjustment model to derive pre-program year estimated levels of performance for each indicator. Each State VR program and RSA will consider the negotiation factors outlined in WIOA section 116(b)(3)(A)(v) during the negotiation process. Once negotiated levels of performance are agreed upon, each State VR program must incorporate the negotiated levels of performance into the Unified or Combined State Plan and the two-year modification of that plan prior to the plan’s approval (section 116(b)(3)(A)(iv) of WIOA).

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

In the final rule implementing WIOA, the Departments indicated that they would initially implement this indicator in the form of a pilot to test the feasibility and rigor of three proposed approaches. During Program Year (PY) 2022, the Departments initiated the rulemaking process to establish a standard definition of Effectiveness in Serving Employers. States will continue to report two of three proposed approaches until the Departments issue the final rule and implement the indicator.

Performance Indicators	PY 2027 Expected Level	PY 2027 Negotiated Level	PY 2028 Expected Level	PY 2028 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Median Earnings (Second Quarter)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

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After Exit)	PY 2027 Expected Level	PY 2027 Expected Level	PY 2028 Expected Level	PY 2028 Expected Level
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Performance Indicators	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

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

GEPA 427 FORM INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION PACKAGE - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

OMB Control Number 1894-0005 Expiration 02/28/2026

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a

State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that

provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA Section 427 Form Instructions for State Applicants

State applicants must respond to the following four questions:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.
 2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?
 3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?
 4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?
- Applicants identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.
 - Applicants use the associated text box to respond to each question. However, applicants might have already included some or all this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) in their State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.
 - Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity to apply.
 - Applicants that have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.
 - Applicants that believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

Please refer to GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

1. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ENTITY'S EXISTING MISSION, POLICIES, OR COMMITMENTS ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN, THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a

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The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA.

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1. ALL VR AGENCIES, EXCEPT FOR THOSE THAT HAVE AN INDEPENDENT CONSUMER-CONTROLLED COMMISSION, MUST HAVE A STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (COUNCIL OR SRC) THAT MEETS THE CRITERIA IN SECTION 105 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPLICABLE, HAS:

Select A or B:

(A) is an independent State commission

(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council

(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

2. IN ACCORDANCE WITH ASSURANCE (A)(1)(B), IF SELECTED, PLEASE PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE CURRENT COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL BY REPRESENTATIVE TYPE, INCLUDING THE TERM NUMBER OF THE REPRESENTATIVE, AS APPLICABLE, AND ANY VACANCIES, AS WELL AS THE BEGINNING DATES OF EACH REPRESENTATIVE'S TERM.

Select 'Edit' to edit the narrative.

Note, please do not edit the table header or formatting. Only edit the table contents.

State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The first of four questions is:

Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

OVR is seeking more pathways with local partnerships with public and private agencies, with the inclusion of the SEP program, with the goal of increasing these opportunities in the future.

2. BASED ON YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY, WHAT BARRIERS MAY IMPEDE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, OR OTHER BENEFICIARIES?

***Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)** (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.*

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions.

The second of four questions is:

Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

The limited funding is currently being used for accomplishing such an important feat.

3. BASED ON THE BARRIERS IDENTIFIED, WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE TO ADDRESS SUCH BARRIERS TO EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions. The third of four questions is:

Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

- 1) Seek more willing partners to attract participation with the partnership in the SEP program. Create attractive benefits in order to safely and legally accomplish the SEP goals.
- 2) Hire a grants manager seeking funding for pathways to increasing the budget to support the SEP goals.

4. WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE, INCLUDING TARGETED MILESTONES, FOR ADDRESSING THESE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS?

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions. The final of four questions is:

What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

- 1) Goal number one would be ongoing but a control measure for tracking progress through quarterly reports from the Counselors and Program Coordinators.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
(COMBINED OR GENERAL)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA.

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Select 'Edit' to edit the narrative.

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2) Short-term goal: 3-6 months we should be getting a specialist to start working on more grants, as we have been informed of the increasing availability.

GEPA 427 FORM INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION PACKAGE - SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

OMB Control Number 1894-0005 Expiration 02/28/2026

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of Education. The State applicant is responsible for completing the GEPA Section 427 form that provides a description of the steps the State proposes to take to ensure all program beneficiaries have equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally funded, State-level project or activity.

GEPA Section 427 Form Instructions for State Applicants

State applicants must respond to the following four questions:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.
2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?
3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?
4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

- Applicants identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.
- Applicants use the associated text box to respond to each question. However, applicants might have already included some or all this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) in their State Plans that include the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.
- Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity to apply.
- Applicants that have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.
- Applicants that believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

Please refer to GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

1. DESCRIBE HOW YOUR ENTITY'S EXISTING MISSION, POLICIES, OR COMMITMENTS ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION IN, THE PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to a State applicant submitting a state plan for a formula grant from the US Department of

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GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions. The first of four questions is:

Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

OVR creates more pathways with local partnership with public and private agencies with the inclusion of the SEP program, with the goal of increasing these opportunities in the future.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL)

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2. BASED ON YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY, WHAT BARRIERS MAY IMPEDE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, OR OTHER BENEFICIARIES?

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1. Seek more willing partners to attract participation with the partnership in the SEP program. Create attractive benefits in order to safely and legally accomplish the SEP goals.
2. The leadership team assists the grants manager seeking funding for pathways to increasing budget to support the SEP goals.

4. WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE, INCLUDING TARGETED MILESTONES, FOR ADDRESSING THESE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS?

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GEPA 427 - Form Instructions for Application Package

State applicants must respond to four questions. The final of four questions is:

What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

1. Goal number one would be ongoing, but a control measure for tracking progress through quarterly reports from the Counselors and Program Coordinators.
2. Internal control measures have been implemented and remain an ongoing work in progress throughout the fiscal year; with periodical review for effectiveness; to assist in addressing current and potential future obstacles. VRTAC and RSA are actively monitoring and assist in creating effective controls with federal guidelines in the scope of work.
3. Short-term goal 6-12 months we should be getting a specialist to start working on more grants as we have been informed of the increasing availability.

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult program, Dislocated Worker program, Youth program, Wagner Peyser Act program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation program— and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL)

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programs it elects to include in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program. 24 If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the “common planning elements” in Sections II-IV of this document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program.

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