

Section I: WIOA State Plan Common Elements

Common Element: II. a. 1. B. Workforce Analysis

Requirement:

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA. This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups in the State and across regions identified by the State. This includes—

- Displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(j) 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.

- *Veterans*, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

VETS' expectation:

In this section, we need to see veterans represented in the populations addressed as part of the current workforce.

Common Element: II. a. 1. B. Workforce Analysis--Input

Military veterans, another important demographic group in State, totaled 89,952, or 8.2% of the adult civilian population in Hawaii according to the American Community Survey's 2022 data. The veteran population declined by 23% from 2012. The largest group of veterans in Hawaii served in the Gulf War from September 2001 or later. Of the veterans in Hawaii, 31.7% had a disability compared to non-veterans of whom 14.7% had a disability. Adding to their comparatively high disability rate was their higher unemployment rate at 5.5% compared to non-veterans at 3.6%.

Yet their earned income at or below poverty levels was lower as compared to non-veterans at 7.1% versus non-veterans at 10%. Veterans over age 25 years also had a slightly higher rate of having bachelor's degrees at 36.1% compared to non-veterans at 35.1% percent.

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

Requirement:

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in (a)(1)(B)(iii) above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in (a)(1)(A)(iii) above. This must include an analysis of—

- 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* and optional one-stop delivery system partners.

VETS' expectation:

In this section, we are looking for 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 and optional one-stop delivery system partners. Whether a Combined plan or Unified plan, the JVSG program is a required partner and must be represented.

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

Input: Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) program staff conduct outreach to employers on behalf of veteran customers. The LVER works with employers to develop job opportunities for veterans and promote the value of hiring veterans within the larger workforce.

The Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) staff serves veterans most in need of intensive employment and training assistance. These staff focus on veterans and other eligible persons identified in law and Department of Labor Veteran Policy Letters with significant barriers to employment. DVOPs offer a wide range of workforce services coordinated through a case management approach. All participants are encouraged to take advantage of WIOA Title 1 and other training opportunities for which they are eligible.

Common Element: II. b. State Strategic Vision and Goals

Requirement:

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*.

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

VETS' expectation:

Footnotes in this section clarify that “other populations” include veterans. We are looking for specific vision and goals as they relate to ensuring veterans are part of the population who are being prepared as a skilled workforce to meet the needs of the employers.

II.B.State Strategic Vision and Goals-- Input:

Veterans are promoted as a valuable asset to the workforce based on their skills and experience in leading others, working in teams, working with diverse populations, following instructions, taking initiative, and lower turnover rate.

Common Element: II. c. State Strategy

Requirement:

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).

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).

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).

VETS' expectation:

In this section, we are **looking for a description of how JVSG will be aligned as a partner and integrated into the workforce system**, ensuring veterans are a represented population for fully integrated customer services to help them meet the goals set in this section.

Common Element: II. c. State Strategy -- Input :

As a required AJC partner program, Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) is well integrated within the Oahu AJC where all JVSG staff are located. From the triage at intake, whether it is performed electronically, in-person, or by phone, eligible veterans and other covered persons with self-identified significant barriers to employment are flagged and referred by non-JVSG staff to the JVSG Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists for services. On behalf of all veterans, the Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) engages with employers to promote hiring of veterans, is an active member of AJC business service teams, assists with or coordinates AJC job fairs prioritizing veterans seeking jobs, trains AJC staff about priority of service and value of veterans in the workforce, assists with job development for DVOP clients and other veterans, conducts various job search workshops with employers, and establishes job search groups of veterans seeking employment.

DVOPs serve eligible veterans and other covered persons on other islands in collaboration with the applicable AJC primarily through AJC referrals. Meetings between DVOPs and eligible persons are conducted electronically and through periodic in-person appointments. The LVER is available to assist other AJCs and offers the same services provided on Oahu.

JVSG staff regularly participate in AJC meetings and training sessions. DVOPs work with individual staff members of WIOA Title I and other funding sources to access training, supportive services, internships, and other services through co-enrollment of JVSG clients in the applicable program.

State Requirement:

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.

VETS' expectation:

In this section, we are **looking for JVSG to be listed as a partner** and to see how core program activities align with Combined plan partners for strategy implementation. This response should outline how co-enrollment and other strategies are aligned with JVSG. This is most often found in plans that include JVSG as a Combined Plan partner.

- **Common Element: III. a. 2. A. Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy -- Input :** The DLIR administers core programs and services for WIOA Title I Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth; and services provided under the WIOA Title III, Wagner-Peyser Act with advice from the State Workforce Development Council. Services provided under WIOA Title II, Adult Education, are administered by the State Department of Education and Board of Education; and services provided under WIOA Title IV, Vocational Rehabilitation, are administered by the State Department of Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation Division. [comments-someone needs to say more about adult ed and DHS. and other partners including but not limited to Alu Like]

DLIR additionally administers the federal Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), Senior Community Services Employment Program Senior (Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1956), Trade Adjustment Assistance program, WIOA National Dislocated Worker Grants (currently QUEST and Maui Wildfire Disaster Recovery grants); federal bonding, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Foreign Labor Certification grants, Unemployment Insurance, a federal apprenticeship grant, and Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA). Other DLIR programs include state-funded programs including Hele Imua, an internship program, Registered Apprenticeship, and a business skill upgrading program called Employment Training Fund that supports business skills upgrade of its incumbent workforce.

Co-enrollments take place among programs to expand services and resources for benefit of the jobseeker to improve their opportunities to secure jobs with advancement opportunities, that are likely to remain in demand, and pay wages that provide for economic self-sufficiency. Examples are co-enrollments between JVSG, where DVOPs provide one-on-one counseling, and WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker programs that offer financial support for training tuition and supportive services. Using this same example, if the veteran has a criminal record, federal bonding and Work Opportunity Tax Credits are offered to the employer to encourage hiring the veteran.

Often, the RESEA program is the first contact between a laid-off jobseeker who filed for Unemployment Insurance (including recently separated veterans) and AJC services. Co-enrollments take place between RESEA participants and other AJC programs as most appropriate for each individual.

Common Element: III. A. 2. B. Alignment with Activities Outside the Plan. Requirement:

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.

VETS' expectation: In this section, we are **looking for JVSG to be listed as a partner** and to see how core program activities align with required partners for strategy implementation with activities outside the plan. It continues as an explanation of how activities identified in section III.a.2.A. for required and other one-stop partners will be aligned with these programs and others not covered by the plan.

As with most examples, the example below is only a partial response. The state went on to describe how they will:

- Target key industries/sector approach
- Improve public awareness and access to the workforce system
- Coordinate business services across partners to ensure delivery of streamlined and high-quality solutions

Common Element: III. A. 2. B. Alignment with Activities Outside the Plan. Input:

The Veterans Administration (VA) Vocational Readiness and Employment Program (VRE), and Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) refer their job-ready clients to the DVOPs for assistance in placing the veterans into jobs. VRE provides training and rehabilitation of veterans with a VA-rated disability; and HVRP specializes in providing housing assistance with employment related services. VRE and HVRP grantees work closely with the DVOPs for a collaborative service delivery, sharing the same employment plan for each shared client.

DLIR is the State Apprenticeship Agency, reviewing and approving new apprenticeship programs and modifications to existing apprenticeship programs, and performing other administrative functions for apprenticeship programs. Several apprenticeship programs have included provisions allowing veterans to claim credit for work performed during active duty that can substitute for education or hours of on-the-job learning required in apprenticeship programs. DVOPs, the LVER, and other AJC staff attend the annual Apprenticeship Week activities that showcase different apprenticeship programs in Hawaii. DVOPs and other AJC staff refer clients interested in apprenticeship to the applicable apprenticeship sponsor and seeks co-enrollment of clients into WIOA, HVRP, or other programs as appropriate to support the apprenticeship.

Good Jobs Hawaii, vocational training offered at no cost or limited cost to the public by the University of Hawaii Community Colleges, is a source of training for all AJC clients interested in healthcare, construction, energy conservation, creative industries, and information technology. Basic and intermediate level digital skills will be offered by the public libraries and/or the Department of Education, Community School for Adults, under an earmarked federal grant for DLIR. This expands the menu of services accessible to AJC jobseekers and the public.

Common Element: III. a. 2. C. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals.

Requirement:

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop *partner programs* will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services, including supportive services (e.g., transportation), to individuals, including those populations identified in section II(a)(1)(B), and individuals in remote areas. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

VETS' expectation:

In this section, we are **looking to see that veterans are identified as a population to receive comprehensive high-quality services, including supportive services and resources**, and how the one-stop system provides those customer-centered services.

Common Element: III. a. 2. C. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals. Input:

AJCs specifically work with a variety of special populations such as displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, trade-affected workers, veterans, and ex-offenders. WIOA Youth programs prioritize serving out-of school youth, including those with disabilities or who have aged out of foster care. All AJC customers are served by the program that best suits their needs and goals and depending on their eligibility for different programs. As discussed elsewhere, co-enrollments among programs are encouraged for wrap-around services that include education, vocational training, workforce development, internships, or supportive services as needed.

Common Element: III. a. 2. D. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers.

Requirement:

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.

VETS' expectation:

In this section, we are **looking for the inclusion of the LVERs as a contributing active member of the Business Services Team.**

Common Element: III. a. 2. D. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers. Input:

The LVER is assigned the task of promoting the advantages of hiring veterans to employers, employer associations, and business groups. When employer outreach is primarily accomplished by a "business services team" or like entity within a region or service delivery area, the LVER is included as an active contributing member of that team. The LVER advocates for all veterans served by the AJC with business, industry, and other community-based organizations by promoting how hiring veterans make good business sense with their lower turnover, leadership skills, experience with diverse populations, and skill training. Appropriate employer-centered activities such as job fairs and job search workshops are undertaken in collaboration with employers.

Common Element: III. b. 2. The State policies that will support the implementation of the State's strategies (e.g., co-enrollment policies and universal intake processes where appropriate).

Requirement:

In addition, provide the State's guidelines for State-administered one-stop *partner programs'* contributions to a one-stop delivery system.

VETS' expectation:

In this section, we are **looking for assurance that State policies are appropriately identifying services and processes that may not be veteran specific but benefit veterans as a population while remaining in compliance with WIOA. We are most interested in co-enrollment policies that include veterans, intake processes that guide veterans to appropriate services, and any other policies regarding one-stop processes that impact the JVSG and veteran customers.**

Common Element: III. b. 2. The State policies that will support the implementation of the State's strategies (e.g., co-enrollment policies and universal intake processes where appropriate). Input:

DLIR uses a single management information system for participant data and case management called HireNet Hawaii for the WIOA formula funded programs, the National Dislocated Worker Grant programs, Wagner-Peyser, JVSG, TAA, and Reemployment Eligibility and Assessment programs, thereby effectuating nearly universal intake.

HireNet Hawaii flags veterans with significant barriers to employment and other covered persons eligible for JVSG DVOP services who enrolled for AJC services. Notice of these covered persons is automatically sent to the designated DVOPs and other AJC staff for further services. Unemployment Insurance (UI) has a policy that job-seeking UI claimants must enroll in the Wagner-Peyser labor exchange and have an online resume to qualify for UI benefits. Most new claimants without a job attachment are also mandated to attend RESEA sessions delivered by DLIR Workforce Development Division.

The State encourages co-enrollments to maximize services for optimal benefit to the jobseeker. Co-enrollments and their benefits are often highlighted in training provided or hosted by the State for local areas and their providers. For example, an all day in-person training session co-hosted by Region 6, DOL ETA, DOL VETS, and the State in Honolulu on December 4, 2023 for local area staff, including JVSG staff, featured a session about the advantages of co-enrollments to improve veteran employment outcomes. Data showing the number of veterans served in JVSG and other programs were shared, and local areas developed action plans to co-enroll more veterans. In-person training in June 2023 that included all local areas and AJC staff also emphasized the value of co-enrollments among different programs. Different examples of co-enrollments were provided at all training sessions.

Common Element: III. b. 3. A. State Agency Organization

Requirement:

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.

VETS' expectation:

In this section, we are looking for JVSG to be listed as a partner in the Combined WIOA Plan.

Common Element: III. b. 3. A. State Agency Organization INPUT- Not applicable because not a Combined Plan

Common Element: III. b. 7. Priority of Service for Veterans

Requirement:

Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority of service provisions for *veterans* 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. States should also describe the referral process for *veterans* determined to have a significant barrier to employment to receive services from the *Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG)* program's *Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist*.

VETS' expectation:

In this section, we are **looking for two responses: first, how the state implements and monitors priority of service (POS) provisions for veterans and eligible spouses (covered persons), and second, after an eligibility assessment is completed, a description of the referral process for veterans determined to have a significant barrier to employment (SBE) or who are otherwise eligible for DVOP services.** We do not want states to equate POS with the DVOP referral process. Both are distinct, where POS applies to the broader veteran population, and JVSG DVOP services are exclusively for veterans with

SBE and additional populations in accordance with priorities determined by the Secretary of Labor.

Common Element: III. b. 7. Priority of Service for Veterans -- Input:

AJC staff are frequently reminded through training and monitoring conducted by the State that Priority of Service (POS) for veterans and other eligible persons is statutorily mandated for any employment and training service funded entirely, or in part, by USDOL. Signage in State's AJCs at reception and elsewhere informs covered persons that they have POS before non-covered persons and encourages them to identify themselves as veterans or eligible spouse at intake. Training provided to AJCs and local areas regularly includes POS requirements.

POS was a module during the December 4, 2023 training conducted by DOL ET, DOL VETS, and the State on December 4, 2023 for local areas and AJC staff. Virtual and in-person workshops conducted by JVSG staff, the Oahu WDD Manager, and the State Veteran Coordinator emphasizes POS for covered persons on all counties.

Any veteran or covered person who is eligible for DVOP services is flagged in HIRENet Hawaii, and designated DVOPs and other AJC staff are automatically sent an email notice about the individual. In-person or phone contacts of persons eligible for DVOP services are identified at intake or shortly after that when triage is performed as a preliminary assessment to determine needs and goals of each individual. Only covered persons who qualify for DVOP services are referred to a DVOP. The only individuals who are exempt from a triage eligibility review for DVOP services are referrals from Warrior Transition Units, VA Vocational Readiness and Employment, and Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program grantees.

The State Veterans Coordinator initiates training on POS for AJCs and JVSG staff, and periodically reviews data on veterans served in WIOA and Wagner-Peyser programs as an indicator of whether covered persons are being provided POS. Employment outcome data for veterans is included in the reviews.

Regular discussions take place between the State Veterans Coordinator and the DLIR Workforce Development Division Oahu Branch Manager who supervises all JVSG staff to assess POS, veteran outcomes, and activities serving veterans.