

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)

Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative

WE ARE YOUR DOL



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I. COMBINED PLAN STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

A. Workforce Development System Progress

The New York State (NYS) Combined State Plan for Program Years (PY) 2024-2027 envisions a unified workforce development system (“System”) that aims to ensure every business has access to a skilled labor force and that every New Yorker has access to job training opportunities that lead to high quality employment or career advancement. This vision is supported by goals and strategies that address business engagement, prioritize opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment, improve data integration and performance outcome metrics, support non-traditional education models and career pathways through apprenticeship and on-the-job training (OJT), and align workforce development strategies with regional stakeholders.

For the past several years, NYS has provided a hybrid model of both virtual and in-person services, including through the Virtual Career Center (VCC), which connects job seekers to available jobs across NYS and businesses to qualified job seekers. Customers at the Career Centers are automatically enrolled in the VCC and work closely with a case manager to ensure their customer profile is crafted based on their skills and prior work experience. In addition to New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) staff, partner agencies are also serving job seekers using the platform. The VCC integrates with NYS’s case management system, the One-Stop Operating System (OSOS), to track services provided to business and job seeking customers as well as related outcomes, and is inclusive of the following:

- **Virtual Meetings and Events Tool** – Virtual one-on-one appointments, small-group appointments, and large-scale workshops and presentations are conducted via video and audio chat providing customers throughout NYS with quality services without the need to physically come into a Career Center;
- **Virtual Career Fairs** – Large-scale career fairs are held entirely online, providing business and job seeking customers with the ability to connect via text and video chat, further improving employment outcomes for customers and hiring and retention rates for businesses;
- **Comprehensive Online Training Solution** – This provides unemployed New Yorkers with the training and tools to upskill and reskill so they can find the right job and career pathway; and
- **Enhanced Job Search** – Increases and leverages machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI) to provide customers targeted job matches that align with their skills and experience.

To achieve dual job seeker and business customer service goals and the goals identified in the NYS Combined State Plan, NYS’s strategy is to build public-private sector partnerships and strategic alliances, creating a unified System that integrates and coordinates the work of local experts and stakeholders from government, education, and business, with priority given to individuals in special populations.

Various solicitations have been released across core programs that provide priority in scoring to applicants planning to serve individuals with barriers to employment. This includes NYSDOL’s three (3) new workforce development programs under the Workforce Development Training (WDT) Grant. These programs were launched in May 2024, providing up to a total of \$25M in Statewide funding. WDT is one of the most important pieces of the System and is discussed in more detail in later sections of this report.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Interagency Team, consisting of staff from NYSDOL, the NYS Education Department (NYSED), the NYS Office of Children and Family Services/NYS Commission for the Blind (OCFS/NYSCB), the NYS Office for the Aging (NYSOFA), the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), the NYS Department of State (DOS), the State University of New York (SUNY), the City University of New York (CUNY), Empire State Development (ESD), the Workers’ Compensation Board (WCB), the Office of Mental Health (OMH), the Office of People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), the NYS Council on Children & Families, and the NYS Energy Research & Development Authority (NYSERDA) continued to meet quarterly in PY 2023.

The WIOA Interagency Team has several workgroups, which were the main focus of the Interagency Team in PY 2023. These workgroups include:

- **Training & Accessibility Assistance Workgroup (TAAG)** – Identifies opportunities for skills building across partner agencies in an effort to make NYS Career Centers and workforce development services more accessible and inclusive to all New Yorkers;
- **Business Engagement Workgroup** – Focuses on the development of a common system for agencies to track their engagement of businesses and new statewide policy across agencies, while also ensuring the work of the Regional Business Service Teams (RBSTs) continues to progress;
- **Combined Plan Workgroup** – Develops the four-year NYS Combined State Plan and required two-year modification;
- **Data Integration Workgroup** – Tasked with determining how NYS can best comply with WIOA's requirement for integrated data reporting. System partners continued to meet throughout PY 2023 to develop a statewide unique identifier and determine a method to best share and combine agency data;
- **Apprenticeship Workgroup** – Collaborates to increase the knowledge of Registered Apprenticeship (RA), identify ways to best utilize agency partnerships to ensure RA opportunities are marketed to youth and disabled individuals as a career opportunity, and identify strategies to better promote RA between NYSDOL RA and WIOA core partners;
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Workgroup** – Develops the guidance and template for the WIOA-required MOU; and
- **Youth Collaborative** – Works collectively to support the development of youth and young adults. After several years of inactivity in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the WIOA Youth Collaborative re-convened in early PY 2023 to discuss new collaborations under the New York Youth Jobs Connector Program (YJCP).

B. Meeting business needs to support economic growth and self-sufficiency

Functioning as the Career Center System's conduit to the business community and supporting WIOA's principles for a demand driven system, NYSDOL's Business Engagement team (the NYSDOL Business Services and NYSDOL Rapid Response units) directly engages new and repeat business customers to offer targeted programs, services, and job development. Integral to these efforts is strategic business outreach, which is built around an understanding of the unique needs of individual businesses, and a tailored service strategy to meet those needs.

II. SECTOR STRATEGIES AND CAREER PATHWAYS

A. Business engagement strategies

Regional Business Service Teams (RBSTs) and Alignment with Regional Economic Development

NYSDOL's Regional Business Services staff collaborate with Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), WIOA partners, and Career Center staff to establish the composition and role of RBSTs across NYS's ten (10) labor market regions. These RBSTs are established to support alignment of Career Center services with sector initiatives and strategies within the region. This structure brings together Career Center staff, NYSDOL Business Services staff, local Business Services staff, and other State agency partners to discuss common business engagement challenges and share promising practices. It also facilitates the exchange of workforce intelligence and strategies for marketing services, as well as hiring

and training incentives for businesses. Each RBST is required to meet quarterly to support the LWDBs in the region by developing strategies that respond to current demand and coordinating sector strategies. Since the release of NYSDOL Workforce Development System Technical Advisory (WDS TA) #23-05: Regional Business Service Teams, in late PY 2023, all ten (10) labor market regions have been conducting quarterly RBST meetings.

Strategic Business Engagement

The NYSDOL Business Engagement team works closely with many high-profile businesses on projects with significant job creation and sector impacts. These efforts include coordinating with businesses to create a customized recruitment plan and application process, followed by matching, referring, and assessing qualified candidates in NYSDOL's talent bank and the job seeking public. The RBSTs also share and coordinate workforce intelligence, enhancing collaboration among various partners including business intermediaries, government, educational institutions, training providers, economic developers, and labor and community organizations, to effectively address the workforce needs of each region.

Customized Recruitments and Career Fairs

Customized recruitments are no-cost, targeted hiring events built around the specific needs of each business. NYSDOL Business Services staff work directly with business customers to develop job specifics, search the talent bank for qualified candidates, and set up a hiring event where the business can interview these candidates.

Career Fairs provide businesses with the opportunity to interact one-on-one with job seekers. NYSDOL Business Services staff organize and participate in numerous career fairs around NYS each year at no cost to participating businesses. NYSDOL continues to offer virtual career fairs to support the ongoing hiring needs of our business and job seeking customers.

Virtual Career Fairs offer a sophisticated job fair simulation where businesses and job seekers can connect in a virtual setting in real-time, while keeping the familiar feel and positive outcomes of a physical recruitment event. In PY 2023, NYSDOL hosted 109 Virtual Career Fairs which brought 4,102* businesses offering 172,154 job openings together with 55,248* job seekers in a safe space to network and share opportunities (*these are not unique as many of the same businesses and job seekers come to multiple events each month).

As a workforce partner, NYSDOL provides extensive recruitment assistance and supportive services to hiring businesses in sectors with large impacts (e.g., emerging industry sectors or sectors that remain constant and critical (in-demand) in a region or the State as a whole), connecting individuals to employment. Examples of services and initiatives provided include:

- **VCC** – The NYS VCC is a job posting and talent sourcing platform using advanced AI to connect businesses to candidates, and allows them to communicate throughout the hiring process. The NYS VCC streamlines talent acquisition with job calibration, candidate matching, screening, assessment, communications, and job offer tracking all in one place. The platform currently has over 850 business users.
- **Microsites** – A subset of the [NYS Job Bank](#), these sites help job seekers research specific employment needs they may have more efficiently.
 - **Child Care Opportunities Microsite** – NYSDOL partnered with OCFS to create the microsite [Child Care Opportunities](#). This site was launched in June 2023 to support critical childcare worker needs throughout NYS and currently has over 900 jobs available.
 - **Seasonal Microsite** – The microsite [SeasonalWorks](#) highlights NYS's seasonal employment opportunities such as construction, retail, landscaping, and snow plowing, and currently has over 10,000 jobs available.

- **Tourism Microsite** – NYSDOL partnered with ESD and their “I Love NY” team to develop the Tourism Microsite [NYTourism](#) to address the critical needs in the tourism and hospitality industry. The site currently has over 19,000 jobs available.
- **Part-Time Microsite** – The microsite [Part-Time Jobs](#) allows individuals the ability to view thousands of part-time opportunities available throughout NYS, and currently has over 22,000 jobs available.
- **OJT** – In PY 2023, NYSDOL continued to work closely with NYSERDA to operate the Energy Efficiency and Clean Technology OJT program to provide businesses with incentives to hire target populations, such as the long-term unemployed. During PY 2023, NYSERDA paid out over \$3.3M in OJT funding for new hires at energy efficiency/clean technology businesses. Under this program, NYSDOL provided due diligence on 139 businesses and assisted 109 businesses to hire and train 412 individuals through the program.
- **Human Resources (HR) Consultation Services** – NYSDOL Business Engagement provides technical assistance at no cost to businesses with a variety of HR issues. These services include job analysis and descriptions, application processes, skills gap analysis, turnover analysis, employee handbooks, and help navigating rules and regulations.
- **Hiring and Training Incentives** – NYSDOL Business Engagement provides businesses with technical assistance to help them understand available employment-based tax credits and training incentives. By taking advantage of these incentives, businesses can save money by reducing tax liability or by using grant funds to offset the costs of training.
- **Business Jumpstart** – NYSDOL launched the Business Jumpstart initiative in PY 2023 to provide specialized and expanded services to new and growing businesses in NYS. A new landing page was created along with marketing materials and a Business Jumpstart inquiry portal, which allows for flexibility so that businesses can submit inquiries as they have time.

Additional Business Engagement Activities and Communication

NYSDOL’s Business Engagement staff continued its core duty of engaging businesses in PY 2023, engaging an average of 870 businesses each week and providing services to 20,670 unique businesses. These numbers slightly decreased from PY 2022 due to the continued increase of in-person events, job fairs, and recruitments, requiring staff to be back in the field on a more frequent basis.

B. Work-based learning (including apprenticeship)

Teacher Residency Program (TRP)

In PY 2023, NYSDOL released a second round of \$30M in State-level TRP funding to partially or fully fund master’s degrees for teacher residents enrolled in a residency program registered with NYSED. These residents must be graduate-level PK-12 teacher candidates who will complete a residency within a public NYS school district, a NYS private school, a NYS charter school, or Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) program.

Under the TRP, schools or BOCES could apply for up to \$30,000 per resident to cover: (1) tuition support for residents enrolled in a registered residency program at a SUNY, CUNY, and/or NYS independent and proprietary college or university who have partnered with a NYS school, district, or BOCES; (2) books and fees mandatory for participation in the program; and (3) stipends that provide residents with monetary assistance, affording them the opportunity to focus on their studies and continued participation in the registered residency program.

In response to the TRP Request for Applications (RFA), NYSDOL received 18 applications with a total funding request of \$22.7M to serve approximately 760 residents. Application reviews are currently underway.

Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy, and Training (QUEST) Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG)

In PY 2023, NYSDOL was awarded \$5M from the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) for the 2023 QUEST Disaster Recovery DWG. The funds are being used to expand a large infrastructure and care economy project in Onondaga County related to the Interstate-81 (I-81) Viaduct called Workforce Forward: Syracuse, as well as other large-scale projects in Onondaga County. NYSDOL is the direct recipient of project funding, with CNY Works, Inc., the Onondaga Local Workforce Development Area's (LWDA) Career Center administrator, as its primary designated partner. NYSDOL issued a Notice of Award (NOA) to CNY Works, Inc. in the amount of \$4.5M on December 22, 2023.

NYSDOL and CNY Works, Inc. continue to move forward with the grant implementation timeline to ensure the primary goal of providing good jobs in the infrastructure and care economy sectors to targeted individuals from marginalized communities is met. The project targets local Onondaga County job seekers, including the long-term unemployed, underemployed, low-skilled, and additional populations with barriers to employment (e.g., veterans, formerly justice-involved, individuals with disabilities, women, minorities, etc.), and individuals who previously would have been eligible for the terminated Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program.

Currently, partners are working with the NYS Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) in developing its I-81 project talent pipeline to identify and include more priority "hire ready" job seekers for its Local Hire Incentive referral program. The project will expand existing work readiness programs and job networks to create a greater "hire ready" applicant pool for approved I-81 contractors, subcontractors, and other employers. NYSDOL has also identified childcare partners for strategic partnership expansion. Preliminary meetings were held with these partners to discuss childcare goals for Onondaga County and how to support these and QUEST's care economy goals simultaneously. Additionally, NYSDOT informed USDOT about QUEST and the expansion of childcare via training and paying for trainees' childcare needs via supportive services. NYSDOL's Project Coordinators were invited to attend the USDOT Federal Highway Authority (FHWA) Peer Exchange: "Peer Learning Discussion on Supporting Childcare for Construction Workers", and attendees were provided resources from other states that could potentially be incorporated into NYSDOL's project.

Office of Just Energy Transition

In 2023, NYSDOL established the Office of Just Energy Transition (OJET), with a mission to connect workers to opportunities for quality jobs, upskilling, and training with a focus on serving those who are traditionally underrepresented, especially within Disadvantaged Communities (DACs). NYS's Climate Act recognizes that climate change does not affect all communities equally. As such, criteria to identify DACs has been developed to ensure that frontline and otherwise underserved communities benefit from NYS's historic transition to cleaner, greener sources of energy, reduced pollution and cleaner air, and economic opportunities.

As part of a 2024 cooperative agreement between NYSDOL and the New York Power Authority (NYPA), \$9M in funding will be available for two (2) OJET clean energy programs in PY 2024: (1) \$5M for the Growing the Clean Energy Workforce (GCEW) Program, which will provide funding to eligible organizations to expand or create statewide clean energy training or pre-apprenticeship programs and provide wraparound services; and (2) \$4M for the Renewable Energy Training Initiative (RETI) for interested LWDBs to up-skill or re-skill workers transitioning from the fossil fuel industry into clean energy; up-skill or re-skill residential workers in weatherization, building performance, and retrofitting; and fund wraparound services. Both programs require that at least 35% of funding go to participants or businesses located in DACs.

NYSDOL's Workforce Development Training (WDT) Programs

To continue upon the success of the former Consolidated Funding Application Workforce Development Initiative programs, NYSDOL made up to \$25M in federal WIOA funding available for three (3) WDT programs in PY 2024.

Each program has a unique purpose aimed at providing training for individuals in NYS who are unemployed/underemployed and/or in low or middle-skills occupations. The broad purpose of the training is to help individuals overcome employment barriers and/or obtain a higher level of employment:

1. **Employee Retention and Advancement Training (ERAT)** – Provides occupational skills training, commensurate with regional priorities, to existing employees/incumbent workers who are in low and middle-skills occupations leading to job advancement and retention;
2. **Reemployment Training Grant (RTG)** – Aims to secure the services of eligible organizations that can provide occupational skills training, commensurate with regional priorities, to unemployed/underemployed individuals to qualify them for full-time or part-time employment, or if currently employed, a higher level of employment; and
3. **Work Readiness Training (WRT)** – Provides funding to eligible organizations to conduct workplace readiness training, the development of skills or behaviors necessary for any job and skills employers seek from any employee. These skills are sometimes referred to as soft skills or job readiness skills.

NYSDOL released solicitations for ERAT and RTG on May 3, 2024, and for WRT on September 4, 2024. Reviews for all three (3) programs are on-going and no awards were made as of June 30, 2024.

Registered Apprenticeship

NYS's economic well-being is developed and sustained by a highly skilled workforce and RA plays a leading role in ensuring a reliable and constant source of skilled workers for in-demand industries. NYSDOL has received six (6) apprenticeship-related grant awards since 2016, including the \$200,000 Accelerator Grant, \$1.5M ApprenticeshipUSA State Expansion Grant, \$1.8M Expansion Grant Continuation Funding Staffing Grant, \$4.4M State Apprenticeship Expansion Grant (AEG), \$450,000 State Capacity to Expand Apprenticeship, and two (2) State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) grants totaling \$9.3M.

On June 26, 2023, NYSDOL was awarded the Round 1 SAEF Grant for a total amount of \$7,517,536; of this, \$1,517,536 was in base funding and \$6M was in competitive funding. NYSDOL was additionally awarded the Round 2 SAEF base funding in the amount of \$1,865,188 on June 25, 2024. The base funding is being used for staffing, which will support the modernization of NYSDOL's RA database system, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) regulatory updates, the Community College Pilot Program, and to support and expand Direct Entry in NYS. The competitive funding is being used to support new and existing grant opportunities, and further support the database modernization project, which will aid in promoting further expansion of RA programs.

As mentioned, the SAEF Grant is being used to support new and existing grant opportunities, which includes the AEG-4 RFA where NYSDOL made up to \$3M in funding available. The purpose of this RFA is to expand NYS RAs by increasing employment opportunities for approximately 130 apprentices, with a focus on underrepresented populations. These apprentices will enter trades in high-demand occupations, with a focus on the emerging fields of Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare, Hospitality, and IT, as well as other in-demand occupations. Applicants could apply for up to \$300,000 for each award, where up to \$15,000 per apprentice is allowed to cover costs associated with training apprentices, including but not limited to Related Instruction, OJT, books, and tools. Applications for AEG-4 were accepted through August 5, 2024. During PY 2023, four (4) programs received awards, and it is anticipated approximately 20 more awards will be made upon review of the remaining applications received.

NYSDOL also utilized SAEF Grant funds to make \$2M available to support Direct Entry Pre-Apprenticeship (DEPA) programs that provide participants with training and exposure to various trades, and offer opportunities for entry into NYS RA training programs, particularly those serving underrepresented populations. Applicants could apply for a maximum of \$195,000 where up to \$6,500 per participant was allowed to cover the costs associated with participation throughout the duration of the DEPA program. Reimbursement for each participant will be made in two (2) separate payments based on achievement of two (2) milestones: (1) \$4,000 at time of enrollment in the DEPA program; and (2) \$2,500 upon completion of the DEPA program. Applications were accepted through June 28, 2024. Of the 25 applications received, six (6) programs were awarded during PY 2023 and it is anticipated additional awards will be made upon review of the remaining applications.

In addition to these grants, NYSDOL continues to develop new trades and move more trades into alternative training approaches, allowing for further diversity and expansion into new and emerging industries. This includes a recent increase in the number of new programs in non-traditional trades. During PY 2023, NYSDOL approved 78 new programs and of those programs, 63 were in trades outside of building and construction. These numbers continue to rise and NYSDOL anticipates continuing this trend by further expanding apprenticeship beyond the traditional construction trades.

NYS's Empire State Apprenticeship Tax Credit (ESATC) Program has an annual State budget allocation of \$10M to provide tax credits beginning at \$2,000 for each qualified apprentice. Initial ESATC credits are available for apprentices who are hired and remain in an RA program for six (6) months. Additional or enhanced ESATC credits are available for each year the apprentice remains in the program, as well as for businesses that hire disadvantaged youth as apprentices, and for those who provide the apprentices with the support of a mentor. The ESATC focuses on encouraging new apprenticeship opportunities in in-demand occupations throughout NYS, and as such, most construction trade RA programs are excluded from the ESATC.

During PY 2023, NYSDOL worked closely with our business and educational partners, including NYSED and SUNY, to connect with prospective businesses and apprentices, and market to new and emerging industries. Our partnerships have helped increase awareness of RAs and support expansion efforts. Statewide apprenticeship industry roundtable marketing events were also held throughout the first half of 2024 for prospective sponsors and workforce development stakeholders.

C. Work experiences for youth and adults

NYS is on track for spending 20% of local Title I Youth program funds on work experience. Most LWDBs have developed local work experience policies to assist providers in the implementation of work experience, including the educational components. NYS continues to provide reporting, programmatic, and fiscal guidance regarding work experiences. For example, during monthly WIOA Youth Program "Bring Your Own Questions" calls, NYS has facilitated a community of practice discussion around work experiences and offered best practices to LWDBs.

D. Incumbent worker training

As discussed previously, NYSDOL released the WDT ERAT Program in PY 2023 as an incumbent worker training program to assist employees in low and middle-skills positions to remain in their current positions or advance to middle and high-skill positions. Applications were accepted through August 23, 2024, and will be reviewed and awarded in PY 2024.

Additional incumbent worker training will be funded in PY 2024 through the OJET GCEW and RETI programs, for the up-skilling of workers in the clean energy industry.

III. PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

A. State performance measures or goals and progress towards meeting them

After the close of PY 2017, NYS developed and began to release a [WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance Report](#) to the LWDBs, and has continued to do so through PY 2023. This report details the negotiated PY local area goals, local area performance on each of the WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance, and how that local performance relates to the NYS-level performance. Additionally, NYSDOL staff offers and provides technical assistance to LWDBs in the form of webinars, one-on-one support, and OSOS guides. These quarterly reports are used to assess local area progress toward meeting the Primary Indicators of Performance and to assist the local areas with improving performance and determining workforce training needs throughout the System.

In conjunction with the release of the Primary Indicators of Performance Report, NYSDOL also provides individual lists of customers in the Credential Attainment and Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) measures, as well as the Adult Priority of Service metric, to allow local areas the ability to outreach to customers and collect outcomes. NYSDOL provides technical assistance related to these lists to ensure data is entered accurately and offers individualized training to local areas in need of further guidance and technical assistance.

B. Any performance deficiencies on the primary indicators of performance

NYS met all goals for the Primary Indicators of Performance for PY 2023. NYSDOL continues to work with local areas to improve individual performance on these measures, which includes holding conversations with high performing local areas to determine best practices to share, while also scheduling meetings with struggling local areas to address any issues and share these best practices. Individual local area trainings are also developed as needed. Additional discussions and System-wide and individualized trainings will be offered to further improve performance on all measures.

C. Descriptions of any factors impacting performance

The calculation of the Credential Attainment and MSG measures is completely reliant on staff performing proper data entry because an administrative crossmatch method to gather this information does not currently exist. NYSDOL continues to work on improving data entry to ensure accurate performance is reported and to mitigate any potential negative impacts by continually providing staff training and updated OSOS guides.

NYSDOL staff developed and delivered extensive trainings in the form of customized live virtual training, webinars, and OSOS guides for local staff on proper data entry and its importance in calculating these measures. NYSDOL is also working with local staff to ensure they understand the reports of individuals included in these measures and are performing the appropriate outreach to collect and data enter this information. NYSDOL is monitoring these indicators and providing training on data entry to ensure that we continue to meet or exceed our goals for those measures.

D. Common exit policy

NYSDOL implemented a functional alignment policy for the WIOA Title I and Title III programs. Individuals 18 years of age or older who receive a service from a Career Center must be enrolled as a WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker (DW) or Youth and are considered participants in both the WIOA Title I and Title III Wagner-Peyser (WP) programs. Any participant who receives services funded in whole or in part from the WIOA Title I, Title III WP, Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS), or TAA programs, sequentially or simultaneously, will be counted as a participant in each program, and will share a common “date of participation” and a common “date of exit” for federal reporting. Both Title I and Title III WP follow this common exit policy. If a participant receives services from multiple programs, the common date of exit for reporting on each program is the end date of the most recent service across all programs. Participation in any one (1) program extends across all programs that share a common enrollment. Customers who do not receive a service within 90 days will exit enrollment effective the date of last service.

E. Negotiated performance levels for Local Areas for program years 2024-2025

For PYs 2024 and 2025, negotiated performance goals were established for local areas using the Statistical Adjustment Model. State negotiations with USDOL were completed for PYs 2024 and 2025 by the end of PY 2023. Proposed and negotiated performance goals for the local areas are found on the Performance Indicators & Goals [webpage](#) on the NYSDOL website.

F. Data validations and data integrity

Now that the annual USDOL Data Element Validation (DEV) review is discontinued, to ensure data validation and data integrity, NYSDOL continues its annual Adult, DW, Youth, and TAA program monitoring reviews of NYS's 33 LWDBs. These annual program monitoring reviews include DEV reviews of sampled OSOS case management participant records and files, with findings and required actions made, and technical assistance provided as necessary to improve compliance. Program monitoring and DEV reviews of the LWDBs for the PY 2022 timeframe were completed during PY 2023. DEV reviews for the PY 2023 timeframe began in July 2024 and will be completed during PY 2024.

Additionally, in April 2023, NYSDOL issued WDS TA #23-03: Data Element Validation (DEV) for Titles I and III under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWGs), the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program, and the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) Program, to provide the System additional guidance in ensuring DEV is captured appropriately for every customer served.

IV. WAIVERS

A. Waivers in place for at least one program year

Waiver of the requirement to expend 75% of Governor's reserve and local formula youth funds on Out-of-School Youth (OSY)

In PY 2023, NYS received approval for a USDOL waiver to support workforce development: Waiver associated with the requirement at WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 that the State and local areas expend 75 percent of Governor's reserve and local formula youth funds on out-of-school youth (OSY). This waiver was further extended through the duration of PY 2023 and allowed NYS to lower the expenditure requirement for both Governor's reserve and local funds to 50 percent for OSY. This waiver addresses an increase in local need to provide targeted programs for In-School Youth (ISY) services, and allows LWDBs to invest in preventative strategies and address the myriad of current needs within the ISY population.

B. Progress toward achieving the goals and performance outcomes in ETA approval letter and/or state's approval request

The waiver listed above allows NYSDOL the ability to focus more State-level and local formula youth funds on the provision of services to ISY and focus on the following outcomes:

- Increased attainment of MSG, especially educational credentials such as high school diplomas;
- Decreased high school dropout rates;
- Increased participation in occupational skills training and work experience opportunities;
- Increased industry-recognized credential gains;

- The expansion of program outreach to middle school students to plant the seeds for career success; and
- Increased collaboration with partners to align workforce programs and promote trades, both generally and for women in trades.

C. Impacts on State and Local Area performance outcomes, if any

This waiver had a positive impact on NYS and local area performance outcomes. NYS achieved 119.6% (61%) of its PY 2023 Youth MSG goal of 51%, with 2,737 positive outcomes. Likewise, NYS achieved 104.9% (57.7%) of its PY 2023 Youth Credential Attainment of 55%, with 1,497 positive outcomes.

D. Any available quantitative information

In addition to improvements in NYS and local area performance outcomes, Statewide ISY enrollments increased with the waiver, totaling 3,700 in PY 2021, 2,523 in PY 2022, and 2,746 in PY 2023.

E. Waivers in development/awaiting review

NYS drafted a waiver request to allow NYSDOL to obligate and expend up to 50% of State-level DW Rapid Response funds in the first year of availability for broader State Workforce Agency (SWA) needs during PYs 2024, 2025, and 2026. This waiver was initially submitted to USDOL on August 8, 2024, with subsequent revisions submitted on August 13, 2024, August 23, 2024, October 1, 2024, and October 30, 2024.

V. EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING BUSINESSES

The WIOA Interagency Team's Business Engagement workgroup focuses on the development of a common system for agencies to track their engagement of businesses. Since its inception, the workgroup has strived to collaborate more closely at both the local and State levels to ensure all partners are included in the RBSTs and coordination of activities related to engaging businesses. The group focused on aligning cross-agency services for the purposes of federal reporting, utilizing OSOS for tracking all cross-agency services to business, and identifying key performance measures for engaging businesses.

NYS is utilizing the following methods to report on the Effectiveness in Serving Businesses measure:

A. Repeat business customers

This measure looks at the percentage of repeat business customers and is based on the total number of business establishments that received and utilized a service anytime within the prior three (3) years. During PY 2023, NYSDOL reported a repeat business customer rate of 75.3%.

B. Business penetration rate

This measure looks at the percentage of businesses using services out of all the businesses in NYS. During PY 2023, NYSDOL reported a business penetration rate of 3.9%.

C. Other measures/metrics used to assess employer engagement

Additional business engagement activities are recorded by NYSDOL staff in OSOS, which provides a location to store key information that will improve the effectiveness of contact with a certain business. Services have been added in OSOS for core partners to record business engagement activities throughout NYS, ensuring streamlined outreach with minimal duplication of efforts. NYSDOL, NYSED's Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR), OCFS/NYSCB, and local Business Engagement staff are encouraged to meet locally to discuss outreach efforts and determine the most effective manner of engaging businesses.

Successful engagement is evidenced by the multitude of businesses posting their jobs on the NYS Job Bank and the VCC. The NYS Job Bank maintains a daily average of more than 243,000 job openings and the VCC has had over 850 businesses post a total of 3,355 jobs.

VI. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

A. Information used for one-stop certification

NYSDOL's approach to customer satisfaction has historically been to allow LWDBs to implement their own processes catered toward their local area and the populations being served through Career Center Certification, which is required every three (3) PYs under WIOA. Career Center Certification most recently occurred in early PY 2023 and to date, all 33 local areas have been fully certified with all 33 indicating they have a customer feedback process in place.

In late PY 2023, NYSDOL also began collaborating with the State Workforce Investment Board's (SWIB) Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee (SIEC) on a statewide approach to customer satisfaction. Four (4) separate Customer Satisfaction surveys were developed to assess both business and job seekers' satisfaction with the services they receive statewide. These surveys were sent out in September 2024 and analysis of the results is still taking place as of the submission of this report. These surveys will be distributed annually to continuously assess customer satisfaction.

B. Methodologies

NYSDOL has placed a priority on embedding a customer service focus into the service delivery model for both job seekers and businesses. The programs offered to job seekers in the Career Centers all follow a continuous engagement model, whether that be in-person, virtually, or via a hybrid approach. Continuous engagement and individualized case management allow staff to provide the necessary services to customers while giving them multiple opportunities to provide feedback, which leads to customer satisfaction. Staff are evaluated on the services provided to their customers and Career Center Managers use individual level performance data to provide consistent feedback. This ensures customers receive the necessary services to help them reach their employment and training goals.

As mentioned in Section VI. A., the statewide Customer Satisfaction surveys for both businesses and job seekers aims to assess their level of satisfaction with the services they receive from the Career Centers and staff. The job seeker survey consists of three (3) separate surveys – (1) mandatory appointments; (2) self-service (not mandatory); and (3) walk-ins (not mandatory). Each of the four (4) surveys asked questions related to location of the business or job seeker within NYS, specific services obtained, and overall satisfaction with those services. Each survey also allowed customers to submit free form comments. The results of the surveys will provide the SWIB, NYSDOL, and the local areas with valuable feedback that will be used to improve services to both customers.

VII. EVALUATION AND RELATED RESEARCH PROJECTS

A. Weekly/monthly Reports

NYSDOL produces several weekly, quarterly, and monthly reports designed to evaluate the programs, initiatives, and solicitations implemented under WIOA Titles I and III in NYS.

NYSDOL responds to a substantial volume of LWDB reporting requests on a quarterly, monthly, and ad-hoc basis. Reports provided include aggregate and individual reporting on performance, cohort demographics and characteristics, services, and outcomes to assist local areas with developing more effective service strategies.

NYSDOL also actively operates several federally funded grants. Programmatic narrative reports are submitted on a quarterly basis describing project activities related to grant goals and objectives. NYSDOL leadership also receives narrative reports on state-level projects. The federal grants and state-level projects, as well as the information submitted in the reports, include, but are not limited to:

- **The New York Equitable Transition Models (NY ETM) Demonstration Grant** – Quarterly reports include a summary of key accomplishments; program planning and partnerships; employer engagement strategies; project implementation of required element and optional approaches; progress toward grant goals; data management; technical assistance; and financial reporting.
- **The New York Partnerships for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development (NY PROWD)** – Quarterly reports include a summary of grant activities; progress toward grant goals; development and implementation of effective practices and program model strategies; matched/leveraged resources; strategic partnerships; employer engagement; key issues and technical assistance needs; significant activities, accomplishments, and success stories; and evidence and evaluation.
- **New York Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network (NY SCION)** – Quarterly reports include a summary of grant progress including participants served; business engagement activities; challenges and successes; total grant allocations; and accrued expenditures;
- **QUEST Disaster Recovery DWG** – Quarterly reports include a summary of grant progress including total expenditures; challenges and concerns; key issues and technical assistance needs; and significant activities, accomplishments, and success stories. Internal bi-weekly reports are also compiled by NYSDOL staff and reviewed to track grant progress;
- **JVSG** – The report includes information about outlays, expenditures, and obligations related to the budget; staffing expenses; performance goals and outcomes; the individualized career services rate for JVSG staff; services to non-veterans rate; staffing changes and vacancy information; and best practices for the Hire a Veteran Medallion Program;
- **NYSDOL TRP** – Quarterly and annual reports are submitted to ESD. These reports include accomplishments or successes; challenges impacting the program; and participant data for enrollment and completion of the program.
- **Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment Grant (RESEA)** – This quarterly report includes a summary of how many customers were scheduled for and completed mandatory reemployment services meetings with Career Center staff in comparison to the annually projected goals; and
- **Education Stabilization Fund-Reimagine Workforce Preparation (ESF-RWP) U.S. Education Department Grant** – This quarterly report includes a narrative of short-term trainings that are being offered to participants, impactful supportive services, and credentials earned. In addition to the narrative quarterly report, ESF-RWP State partners also submit participant data information every quarter that includes the total number of enrolled participants, total number of participants who completed training, credentials earned, and income second quarter after exit.

VIII. ACTIVITIES PROVIDED BY STATEWIDE FUNDS

A. Rapid response activities and layoff aversion

The NYSDOL Rapid Response Program functions as part of the Career Center System, working cooperatively with LWDB Directors and Career Center Managers to serve affected workers before layoffs occur. NYSDOL Rapid Response is alerted when businesses submit a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act notice to NYSDOL 90 days in advance of layoffs. The program also receives alerts regarding upcoming or sudden layoffs via Career Center leads, Contact Center customer inquiries, media reports, and other business intelligence. At that time, follow-up is made with the business for planning intensive job placement assistance. These alerts are initially categorized as expeditious response and are sometimes recategorized as Rapid Response if the layoffs trigger the WARN threshold.

NYS's Rapid Response Program saw an increase in the number of WARN filings and associated impacted workers in PY 2023 with 263 WARNs filed, impacting 23,568 workers.

Rapid Response sought out opportunities to serve businesses and workers impacted by smaller layoff and closure events (non-WARN) referred to as expeditious responses. In PY 2023, Rapid Response staff identified 287 expeditious response events, impacting 6,216 workers. Rapid Response is initially focused on layoff aversion by advising the downsizing/closing business of the Shared Work Program, which is discussed in more detail later in this Section. When layoffs cannot be averted, onsite service orientations are scheduled for customer registration in OSOS and messaging. This includes:

- Providing intensive 1:1 job placement assistance;
- Issuing customized job lead templates for customers' initial consideration based on WARN job titles attachment (continuous customer engagement job leads follow);
- Providing ongoing job lead templates as the customer relationship evolves;
- Developing a skill-based resume;
- Advocating to a hiring business on the behalf of a customer who submitted an employment application to that business;
- Coaching employment interview techniques based on an upcoming job interview;
- Providing alerts for upcoming recruitments and job fairs (also, introducing customers to specific businesses strongly interested in the labor pool);
- Sharing business and customer testimonials;
- Discussing local Career Center services available;
- Sharing basic information on filing a UI claim and, if an anticipated need, use of a remote UI content expert available to answer technical questions; and
- Arranging for a NYS Marketplace Navigator to present affordable health care options.

As identified in Section I.B., the Rapid Response Unit is part of NYSDOL's Business Engagement Team. Plans for service are initially drafted for downsizing/closing businesses and are subject to modification based on continuing discussion with HR management. Alignment with sector strategies is a point of emphasis toward brokering the labor pool with businesses in expansion mode. The NYSDOL Rapid Response and NYSDOL Business Services units regularly communicate about the Rapid Response customer skill sets and work experience to identify appropriate job leads, in addition to conducting dedicated job fairs.

Business prospecting research tools and methods used by Rapid Response include, but are not limited to:

- Prospecting hiring businesses:
 - Quarterly Expanding Businesses Report;
 - NYS Employment Graph indicating hiring trends;
 - Internet mining;
 - Ongoing interaction with Business Services and Career Center staff; and
 - Leads as provided by served customers.

- Prospecting downsizing or closing businesses:
 - Quarterly Contracting Business Report;
 - Quarterly Dun and Bradstreet Distressed Business Report;
 - Internet mining;
 - Leads as provided by customers calling the NYSDOL Contact Center; and
 - Early Warning Report.
 - New regular UI Benefit Claims, by region and single-site establishment firms, with five (5) or more current week claims in NYS, referencing current week and seven (7) previous weeks trend.

Daily goals are established for Rapid Response staff for outreach to businesses and customers. Throughout PY 2023, business customers had the option to receive virtual or on-site services based on the needs of their workforce.

Results are shared weekly with Rapid Response's ten (10) regional units and 30 field staff. During PY 2023, service activities produced:

- 3,280 unique businesses engaged;
- 8,749 unique number of total customers engaged;
- 7,141 unique total customers engaged (number attached to Rapid Response/Expeditious Response accounts); and
- 2,315 placements (2,022 Rapid Response placements).

The TAA Program is also highly considered when there is a possibility of layoffs due to foreign competition (directly or indirectly). However, effective July 1, 2022, USDOL ceased the certification of petitions. Although petitions are not being certified, NYSDOL continues to review downsizing/closing events for possible Trade-related impacts and has filed 44 petitions for consideration once the program is reauthorized. NYSDOL continues to serve Trade-affected workers from petitions certified prior to July 1, 2022. Benefits to a customer when a petition is certified by USDOL include:

- Job training (classroom, online, OJT, and apprenticeship);
- Income support payments;
- Job search and moving allowances; and
- A wage supplement for customers aged 50 or older, who return to work at a lower pay rate.

Rapid Response asks the business key fact finding questions to determine if a TAA petition should be filed with USDOL, including:

- Is the company doing business in other countries? If yes, where?
- Has the company recently been sold or purchased by another company that does the same or similar type of work? If yes, who?
- Do they compete with products/services from other countries? If yes, who and/or what?
- Does the worker know the name(s) of their competitors? If yes, who?
- Has the worker trained replacement workers based in other countries prior to the layoff? If yes, what countries?
- Has the worker or co-workers traveled to other countries to train workers? If yes, what countries?

The Shared Work Program

The Shared Work Program helps businesses retain valued employees during temporary downturns, which is more important than ever in today's economy. It can also be used as part of a seasonal re-opening strategy. With Shared Work, businesses keep their trained, valued employees and avoid layoffs by reducing work schedules. While on a reduced schedule, employees receive reduced pay from the business and a percentage of their unemployment benefit rate.

Retaining employees means the business can gear up quickly when conditions improve. They can also save the expense of recruiting, hiring, and training new employees. Plus, employees are spared the hardship of full unemployment and are shown they are valued as team members.

NYS DOL received a USDOL grant in 2021 for improvements and promotion of the Shared Work program. Below are some continued key successes of the grant:

- Programming and updates were made to reflect the 2021 legislative change to the cap on Shared Work benefits by eliminating the 26-week limitation of benefits to a maximum of 26 times an individual's weekly benefit rate;
- Maintained enhancements to the processes, online services, and front-end customer service experience, especially regarding responsiveness and convenience;
- Submission and approval of employer plans and the filing and approval of initial and continued short-term compensation (STC)/Shared Work Program claims have been automated;
- Enhancements have been made to the online plan application to allow an employer to manage their plan more easily;
- Plans are approved within 1-2 business days;
- Email campaigns are strategically timed and targeted using business intelligence collected by the Shared Work Promotional team. Targeted businesses include those experiencing supply chain issues, seasonal businesses, financial institutions, and mortgage lenders impacted by rising interest rates, manufacturing businesses, and small businesses; and
- NYSDOL's working relationship with the NYS Chamber of Commerce and business associations has grown tenfold.

Rapid Response staff assists with actively promoting the use of the Shared Work Program to distressed businesses. A business may submit a Shared Work plan even if it has already submitted a WARN Act notice.

During PY 2023, 495 Shared Work plans were approved to begin, and 10,055 participants were registered.

B. Activities provided under the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service section (7b)

NYS DOL is responsible for the delivery of federally funded WP services (otherwise referred to as Employment Service programs), in coordination with other workforce partners and their programs through the Career Center System. These responsibilities include:

- Maintaining and strengthening the public labor exchange through the operation of a central statewide job bank and talent bank matching system;
- Providing Reemployment Services for UI customers; and
- Providing service to special target populations.

All Adult customers served by Career Centers must be co-enrolled in WP and WIOA. Each of the 33 LWDBs developed a Local Plan outlining how Career Center service delivery is integrated across all programs. In PY 2023, individuals attended 89,631 virtual appointments and 95,371 in-person appointments, and 171,569 individuals had a self-service activity.

In PY 2023, NYSDOL issued WDS TA #[23-06](#): Initial Assessment in the Career Center System, and related intake forms. In the policy, Career Center customers across NYS are required to receive an initial assessment to determine the best way to service their individual reemployment needs. This policy emphasizes the value of providing quality job leads and referrals to customers to speed their entry into employment. It also emphasizes the value of identifying customers in need of a more comprehensive assessment to make informed decisions about additional reemployment services they would benefit from.

To help supplement the WP program, NYS administers the RESEA program to serve all UI claimants, with priority shown to customers profiled as most likely to exhaust benefits. RESEA is framed around four (4) major customer service principles to provide intensive case management and a heightened level of services to UI claimants: (1) expeditious entry into the System; (2) assessment/identification of needs; (3) individual reemployment plans; and (4) continuous engagement.

The RESEA program, which follows a calendar year reporting period, operates in 65 select Career Center locations in all 33 local areas and all ten (10) economic development regions of NYS. The program design has been shown to increase RESEA participants' competitive advantage by returning claimants to work earlier than non-RESEA claimants. NYS received just over \$30M in 2024 RESEA funding to date, and \$41M in 2023.

In accordance with the statutory provisions for the RESEA program contained in the Social Security Act (SSA), states began conducting evaluations of RESEA interventions and service delivery strategies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 to support building new evidence of effective RESEA interventions that can be utilized in future RESEA program design and delivery. As part of the study, states are required to conduct an evaluation of the RESEA program to support current program designs. NYSDOL collaborated with the Connecticut Department of Labor to carry out the RESEA evaluation. NYS selected 40 of its 65 Career Centers implementing RESEA to participate in the impact study which represents large, medium, and small Centers located in urban, suburban, and rural areas. The Connecticut Department of Labor included all five (5) of their RESEA Career Centers in the evaluation and results were combined with NYS to allow for a larger sample for analysis. Both states randomized a total of 161,000 customers into different treatment groups, including a control group. Each of the four (4) treatment groups provided customers with a different number of mandatory RESEA appointments and services to ascertain if reemployment outcomes are more favorable for those who receive more services. NYS has contracted with SUNY Rockefeller to evaluate the impact that mandatory RESEA Career Center appointments and reemployment services have on customer outcomes, which is measured by analyzing participants' reemployment rate after second quarter of program exit, median earnings in second quarter after program exit, and overall UI benefit duration. The participant enrollment process concluded in December 2022, data has been transferred to the evaluator, and analysis is underway. By the end of 2024, a formal report will be published summarizing the study outcomes.

C. National Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs)

COVID-19 ER NDWG

On September 1, 2020, USDOL awarded NYSDOL a \$12M COVID-19 ER NDWG, with a period of performance through September 30, 2023. These funds were made available to assist the hardest hit sections of the US to recover from the swath of worker dislocations in the wake of the global COVID-19 pandemic. NYSDOL's COVID-19 ER-NDWG grant had two (2) components to fund program activities: (1) \$4M for virtual training services statewide through the use of Coursera; and (2) \$8M in obligations to the state's 33 LWDBs to offset the additional expenses incurred through the sudden and sustained increase in demand for services due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Through September 30, 2023, 1,373 eligible participants were enrolled and served within the local areas, generating expenditures of \$7,500,067.40.

CAREER NDWG

On September 17, 2021, USDOL awarded NYSDOL \$3M in funding for the Comprehensive and Accessible Reemployment Through Equitable Employment Recovery (CAREER) NDWG to upgrade technology systems necessary to connect unemployed individuals to reemployment. NYSDOL's CAREER grant had several components to fund program activities throughout the September 13, 2021 – June 30, 2024 period of performance:

1. **Annual maintenance and upgrade costs for the VCC** – NYSDOL partnered with Eightfold to create the VCC, offering advanced technology backed by robust AI that provides job leads that target and accurately match a job seeker's skills and experience;
2. **Licenses for the Virtual Call Center** – The Verizon Virtual Call Center is a tool used by NYSDOL staff to conduct Career Center appointments over the phone. The system allows calls to be monitored and tracked to ensure appropriate services are provided;
3. **Subscription to Northstar Digital Literacy** – Career Centers and partner District offices were provided a license for Northstar's assessment and curriculum tool, which is designed for mid-level learners requiring career development and digital literacy services; and
4. **Upgrades to accessibility equipment** – Career Centers received updated Job Access With Speech (JAWS) and ZoomText assistive technology software to assist blind and low-vision individuals.

QUEST DWG

On September 14, 2023, USDOL awarded NYSDOL \$5M for the 2023 QUEST DWG to expand a large infrastructure and care economy project in Onondaga County related to the I-81 Viaduct called Workforce Forward: Syracuse, as well as other large-scale projects in Onondaga County. NYSDOL is the direct recipient of project funding with CNY Works, Inc., the Onondaga LWDA's Career Center administrator, as its primary designated partner. NYSDOL issued a NOA to CNY Works, Inc. in the amount of \$4.5M on December 22, 2023.

During the September 30, 2023-September 30, 2026, period of performance, NYSDOL and CNY Works, Inc. will continue to move forward with the grant implementation timeline to ensure the primary goal of providing good jobs in the infrastructure and care economy sectors to targeted individuals from marginalized communities affected by the lasting economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, is met. The project targets local Onondaga County job seekers, including the long-term unemployed, underemployed, low-skilled, and additional populations with barriers to employment (e.g., veterans, formerly justice-involved, individuals with disabilities, women, minorities, etc.), and individuals who previously would have been eligible for the terminated TAA Program.

As of June 30, 2024, NYSDOL has accrued expenditures of \$161,838.48.

D. Technical assistance needs of the NYS workforce system

NYSDOL continues to provide training and capacity-building activities and technical assistance to NYS's workforce development and Career Center System. Training opportunities are provided to all levels of workforce professionals, from NYS and LWDB members to front-line staff, program providers, partners, and stakeholders. Capacity-building activities will continue to be delivered through a variety of methods, including participatory and skill-building training, site visits, individualized coaching, monitoring, and WIOA Interagency partner meetings.

Training needs throughout NYS are regularly assessed through continuous communication, analysis of performance data, and the work of the TAAG, referral, and other workgroups. Trainings are developed based on the identified need. In August 2023, NYSDOL and local WIOA Title I and III leaders launched the Workforce Synergy Forum, a monthly peer-learning focused space to strategize and operationalize successful practices. The NYSDOL Programs and Tools for Workforce Professionals [webpage](#) includes recordings and resources developed through the 14 Workforce Synergy Forums, along with guides, training supplements for a multitude of programs, appropriate data entry practices, and fact sheets.

E. At-risk and priority populations served**OSY;**

- NYS continues to build the capacity of local areas to help retain OSY. The NYSDOL Youth Unit continues to host a monthly “Bring Your Own Questions” call to address WIOA Youth program providers’ immediate data entry, policy, program, and practice questions. During these calls providers also get to network and learn from each other’s best practices for recruitment of OSY. In addition, they developed a self-paced “[Title 1 Youth Program Basics Training Series](#)” in 2023, comprised of nine (9) separate videos with companion resources and further learning opportunities to onboard new WIOA youth staff at the local level or provide easy access to refresher training for experienced staff. Along with one-on-one and group online technical assistance, NYSDOL’s Youth Unit has started to meet virtually with LWDB youth programs to support local staff efforts with OSY and offer a [training catalog](#) designed to further the knowledge of staff and administrators as appropriate. Statewide partnerships will be forged for continued collaboration with the LWDBs and entities that serve youth with multiple barriers to employment, including those living in areas affected by gun violence.

Low-income adults;

- As required in WIOA, low-income adults are given priority for career and training services in Career Centers. WDS TA #[23-01](#): Serving Priority Populations and Priority of Service under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Adult Program, was issued in PY 2022, as well as multiple training opportunities for staff Statewide on this topic.

Dislocated workers;

- NYSDOL continues to apply for, and be awarded, NDWGs to serve greater numbers of DWs. Additionally, Program Guidance Letter (PGL) #[22-01](#): New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) guidance and interpretation on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) definition of Dislocated Worker (DW) and recording DWs in the One-Stop Operating System (OSOS), was issued in PY 2022, providing the System NYSDOL’s interpretation of the WIOA DW definition.

Individuals who are basic skills deficient;

- Local areas have started to use simplified, valid, and reliable assessments to determine basic skills deficiency (BSD) of individuals for eligibility purposes, instead of using rigorous National Reporting System-approved tests. This allows providers to offer tests that are relevant to the customers’ needs and capacity, while ensuring equitable enrollment for eligible youth. Should Education Functioning Level (EFL) or grade-level equivalent be needed during service provision or outcome documentation, local areas will work with existing education-focused partners to support the assessments and education of BSD individuals.

Individuals with limited language proficiency;

- Individuals with limited English language proficiency receive language assistance to access Career Center services. Language interpretation services are provided in more than 200 languages, including American Sign Language. Vital NYSDOL documents are also translated into the 16 most commonly spoken languages in NYS. Information on these services is provided in WDS TA #[17-02.2](#): Language Interpretation Services Available at Career Centers.

Individuals with disabilities;

- On April 1, 2024, NYSDOL was awarded a \$2.01M Equitable Transition Model (ETM) Demonstration Grant by USDOL’s Office of Disability Employment Policy. Subsequently, on October 16, 2024, NYSDOL was awarded an additional \$750,741 in incremental funding for the first year of this program. Under the NY ETM, NYSDOL has partnered with OMH, NYSED/ACCES-VR, San Diego State University, and the Capital Region, Columbia-Greene, Hempstead-Long Beach, and Monroe LWDBs to serve approximately 675 youth and young adults with disabilities, with a focus on multiply marginalized

populations (e.g., foster care, justice-involved individuals, and those with low literacy). The grant has a five-year period of performance, in which NYSDOL is expected to receive approximately \$17.4M. The NY ETM Model features two (2) key project staff including Youth Access Coordinators, who will serve the youth and young adults as well as their families; and Outreach and Engagement Specialists, who will work within workforce systems to recruit participants, as well as with partners and key stakeholders to support and serve participants.

- On October 21, 2021, NYS Governor Kathy Hochul announced NY SCION to expand the already successful network of Disability Resource Coordinators (DRCs) to all 33 LWDAs to increase the capacity of their service delivery and better serve individuals with disabilities. NY SCION aims to improve education, training, and employment opportunities and outcomes for youth and adults with disabilities, including those receiving Social Security disability benefits.

On May 10, 2024, OMH signed a partnership MOU with NYSDOL, committing to provide \$1M annually to support NY SCION. This partnership was further formalized into policy per WDS TA#[21-06.2](#): Revised guidance for implementation of the New York Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network (NY SCION) Program. To date, there are 27 DRCs covering 48 counties in NYS. As of December 2023, 2,364 customers with disabilities have been served directly by the DRCs; 11,185 customers with disabilities have been served through NYS Career Centers; and 4,300 customers with disabilities have entered unsubsidized employment.

- As of 2020, all NYS Career Centers were equipped with a range of assistive technology that includes text scanning and reading software for individuals who are blind or low-vision, adaptive computer systems and hardware, and accessible workstations. This technology was updated at the end of PY 2023, with funding from the CAREER Grant, to ensure customers are able to use the most up-to-date vision software.

Veterans;

- Veterans' services in NYS are delivered through the Career Centers either under priority of service or through JVSG. A maximum total of 97 Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPs) and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs), funded through the \$9M JVSG, are located in NYS Career Centers. DVOPs only serve those veterans and eligible persons with employment barriers; transitioning service members; or other populations as defined by the Secretary of Labor. Veterans and eligible persons ineligible to meet with a DVOP are served on a priority basis by other Career Center staff. The DVOP specialist service delivery model provides early intervention, services tailored to individual customer needs, and expedited referral of those who need additional assistance to services available within the workforce System. Through a continuous engagement of one-on-one appointments and between appointment contacts, customers receive a comprehensive assessment, an individual employment plan (IEP), and customized job search support by a DVOP specialist. DVOP customers are provided with resume assistance, career guidance, coaching, job leads, and referrals to ensure suitable job placement. During PY 2023, 9,971 veterans were served, with 2,617 of them (26%) served by DVOPs. The DVOP specialists and LVER staff coordinate their services for a thorough and wholistic approach. LVER staff's primary functions are to advocate for the hiring of veterans and eligible persons with businesses, as well as conduct job matching, job referral, job placement, and business outreach on behalf of all covered persons served by their Career Center.

Long-term unemployed (LTU);

- NYSDOL Business Services staff outreach to businesses with job opportunities that align with targeted LTU customers. The purpose of this outreach is to build relationships with area businesses and increase the number of employment leads for customers, as well as customize recruitments and targeted career fairs, and create multiple opportunities to connect qualified candidates with businesses.

Other individuals with barriers to employment, including:**Justice-involved individuals:**

- NYSDOL administers USDOL's Federal Bonding Program (FBP) in NYS to provide fidelity bonding to businesses that hire individuals who meet one (1) of the eight (8) eligibility criteria of the program. Fidelity bonding protects businesses from losses such as theft, larceny, or embezzlement due to employee dishonesty. Businesses receive these fidelity bonds free-of-charge as an incentive to hire applicants with barriers to employment. Bonding coverage begins at a default amount of \$5,000 and increases by increments of \$5,000 to a maximum of \$25,000, depending on the amount of coverage the employer would like to have. Fidelity coverage is free and lasts for six (6) months. In most situations, the coverage can be renewed with the business for an additional six (6) months at no charge. During the period of July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, NYSDOL issued bonds to nine (9) businesses for a total of \$115,000 in coverage.
- NYSDOL has designated Local Bonding Coordinators (LBCs) in almost every NYSDOL Career Center in NYS. A current list of all LBCs is found on the NYSDOL's Federal Bonding Program [webpage](#). The NYS Bonding Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that all new bonding coordinators receive training and that the website reflects personnel changes.
- Under the Work for Success Program, NYSDOL developed a pilot program for implementation, working in conjunction with local Career Centers in pilot locations and the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) to promote and increase the employment of formerly incarcerated individuals. Career Centers provide liaisons for the program, known as Reentry Employment Specialists, who assist job seekers in overcoming barriers to employment due to incarceration, as well as matching formerly incarcerated individuals to job openings. RBSTs are working to educate businesses about available hiring incentives and providing job development services. As a result of staff outreach, 6,168 businesses employed eligible candidates, with 14,484 jobs being held by program participants in PY 2023.
- On September 9, 2023, NYSDOL received a \$4.1M PROWD award via a cooperative agreement between the USDOL Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the United States Department of Justice's (USDOJ) Bureau of Prisons (BOP). Under PROWD, NYSDOL will serve 400 adults in the care and custody of the USDOJ BOP, as well as after their release. Under this project, NYSDOL has chosen to partner with Roots of Success, a national non-for-profit that provides green energy apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship training to adults in custody. This grant has a four-year period of performance in which NYSDOL is expecting to receive a total of \$10M.

Displaced Homemakers:

- NYSDOL administers the NYS Displaced Homemaker program, which is funded with \$1.62M in non-federal, state funds. In 2023, NYSDOL issued funding to ten (10) organizations in Albany, Bronx, Brooklyn, Nassau, Oneida, Schenectady, Schoharie, Suffolk, Tompkins, and Westchester counties. Additionally, under WIOA, displaced homemakers are considered DWs. This makes them eligible for all WIOA DW services, including but not limited to, career pathway development and counseling; help applying for jobs with interview preparation, resume, and cover letter writing; job search strategies, readiness, and referrals; career and computer workshops; information about training and educational services; and referrals to supportive services to address needs such as childcare, medical, housing, transportation, and financial literacy. In total, 431 Displaced Homemakers were served during PY 2023.

At Risk and Priority:

- Youth and Young Adults in Foster Care (FC), have run away or experienced homelessness (RHY), and who also may have some type of juvenile justice involvement – NYSDOL continues to partner with required WIOA agencies to improve the transition to employment and training for FC, RHY, low-income, and those youth with other barriers to employment to create lasting systems-change through collaboration efforts (i.e., ETM and NY SCION).

F. Challenges the NYS workforce system faces

1. **Limited funding and fragmented federal guidance** – At current levels, federal appropriations for WIOA funding reach only a fraction of the need, and with little or no adjustment for inflation, this is essentially a cut to the program. When significant cuts are proposed at the federal level, it makes it impossible to meet the full potential of the statute, including the ability to provide essential supportive services. Fragmented federal guidance further exacerbates this issue. When federal policy guidance and requirements are delivered to each partner individually, it results in conflicting information; continual and necessary front-line staff training; and the need for new processes, forms, and policies.
2. **Influx of Asylum Seekers to NYS** – In late PY 2022, NYS Governor Hochul issued an Executive Order, declaring a State of Emergency in response to the immediate influx of asylum seekers and migrants to NYS. Since that time, the Governor has secured over \$1B in funding to support NYC's efforts to shelter asylum seekers and directed NYSDOL to help connect asylum seekers to employment opportunities so they can begin working immediately after obtaining federal work authorization. In response to this, NYSDOL launched a portal to enable businesses to inform the state that they welcome newly-work authorized individuals into their workforce. However, NYS cannot solely shoulder this influx and requires additional federal resources and assistance to support these individuals appropriately.
3. **Education and Training** – Challenges related to education and training identified by program partners include:
 - Misaligned training and professional development for Career Center staff including the need for training and technical assistance related to serving individuals with disabilities;
 - The need for greater awareness of SUNY's microcredential program, which is now approaching its 4th year of operation and recently scaled from 31 campuses to 42, and soon to be 57 campuses.
 - Capacity constraints in nursing education, due to the lack of graduate-prepared nursing faculty to teach at every level of the clinical career pathway; and
 - The teacher shortage. The U.S. Department of Education has identified 18 teacher shortage areas throughout NYS; enrollment in NYS's teacher education programs has declined by 53% since 2009; and NYS is also facing a steep retirement cliff in the coming years. NYS needs approximately 180,000 new teachers over the next decade to meet workforce needs.

G. Strategies/policies relating to Pay-for-Performance contracting

NYSDOL was a recipient of the \$12M Workforce Investment Act Pay-for-Success Pilot Project Grant to serve formerly incarcerated individuals, which informed NYSDOL's strategies and policies relating to Pay-for-Performance contracting initiatives, including those funded with state-level and local-level WIOA funds and non-federal funds.

In early 2020, NYSDOL made two (2) awards totaling \$1,140,000 under a non-federally funded Pay for Success Pay-for-Performance initiative in collaboration with the Governor's Office of Workforce Development. Contract development was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic; however, as of November 2023, both contracts have been executed, services subject to performance-based outcome payments were delivered, and both contracts are now closed. The following outcomes were achieved for the first closed-out contract:

- Sixteen (16) participants completed the training portion of the program, achieving 100% of the contract's training performance goal;
- Of the sixteen (16) participants, seven (7) were placed into full-time employment related to their training, achieving 58% of the contract's placement performance goal of twelve (12) participants;
- Of the seven (7) participants placed in employment, five (5) retained employment for six (6) months, achieving 63% of the contract's retention performance goal of eight (8) participants; and

- Based on this performance, out of a total contract award of \$180,000, 82.2% of the funds (or \$147,920) was disbursed to the contractor to support this Pay for Success program.

The following outcomes were achieved for the second closed-out contract:

- Thirty (30) participants completed the training portion of the program, achieving 100% of the contract's training performance goal;
- Of the thirty (30) participants, twenty-six (26) completed an additional twenty-four (24) weeks of classroom training, achieving 86.6% of the contract's performance goal of thirty (30) participants;
- Of the thirty (30) participants, twenty-three (23) completed on-the-job training (OJT), achieving 76.6% of the contract's performance goal of thirty (30) participants;
- Of twenty-two (22) anticipated participants, ten (10) completed a six-month externship with an outside employer, achieving 45.4% of the contract's performance goal of twenty-two (22) participants; and
- Based on this performance, out of a total contract award of \$960,000, 89.8% of the funds (or \$862,830.22) was disbursed to the contractor to support this Pay for Success program.