

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY SYSTEM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR Washington, D.C. 20210	<b>CLASSIFICATION</b> WORKFORCE INFORMATION
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**ADVISORY:** TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE LETTER NO. 3-10

**TO:** STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES  
 STATE WORKFORCE ADMINISTRATORS  
 STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARD CHAIRS  
 AND DIRECTORS  
 STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS  
 STATE LABOR COMMISSIONERS

**FROM:** JANE OATES /s/  
 Assistant Secretary

**SUBJECT:** Application Instructions for Program Year (PY) 2010 Workforce Information Grants to States: Workforce Information (WI) and Labor Market Information (LMI) Formula Allocations

- Purpose.** To announce the grant application process and to transmit guidance for the development, management, and delivery of state LMI/WI core and special information services to state and local workforce investment boards (WIBs), One-Stop Career Centers, and the job-seeking public.
- References.** The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13, 44 U.S.C. 3501-3520); 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 93, 96, 97, and 98; Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-87; Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794d); Wagner-Peyser Act Sections 7(a)(3)(D), 7(d), and 15; (29 U.S.C. 49f and 49l-2) Sections 111(d)(8) and 309 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) (Pub. L. 105-220, 29 U.S.C. 2821 (d)(8) and 49 l-2).

<b>RESCISSIONS</b> None	<b>EXPIRATION DATE</b> Continuing
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3. **OMB Approval.** In conformance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, OMB reviewed and approved the information collection (OMB Control Number 1205-0417). This approval expires on May 31, 2011.

Under 5 CFR 1320.5(b), an agency cannot conduct, sponsor, or require a response to a collection of information unless the collection displays a valid OMB Control Number. The reason for this information collection is the planning and management of the workforce information formula grants to states.

4. **Background.** America's greatest resource is its workers, and ongoing Workforce Investment Act resources supplemented by 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding has helped thousands of Americans acquire the skills that will help them qualify for jobs as the economy recovers. "Good Jobs for Everyone" is the vision of the Department of Labor (DOL) under Secretary Hilda Solis. The Secretary defines "good jobs" as those that support families by increasing incomes and narrowing wage gaps; are safe and secure and give people a voice at the workplace; are sustainable and innovative; that export products, not paychecks; and that rebuild and restore a strong middle class.

Workforce programs and activities funded by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) support the Secretary's vision and strategic goal to "prepare workers for good jobs and ensure fair competition." Through its designated functions and services, ETA with state assistance can:

- Increase workers' income and narrow wage and income inequality;
- Assure skills and knowledge that prepare workers to succeed in a knowledge-based economy, including in high-growth and emerging industry sectors like "green" jobs;
- Help workers who are in low-wage jobs or out of the labor market find a path into middle class jobs; and,
- Help middle-class families remain in the middle class.

To achieve this vision, states must shape policy and service delivery strategy based on a strong understanding of the current labor market and expected areas of growth. The need for good comparable workforce data, information, and analysis has always been high, but the recent recession and the resulting changes in many state and local economies has significantly increased its importance. State LMI/WI offices and economic research entities are poised to help states respond as the future direction of the American economy and workforce needs becomes clear.

5. **Workforce Information Goal and Objectives.** The goal for the Workforce Information Grants to States for 2010 is to support increased employment and sustainable economic growth and recovery by supporting state and local workforce system transformational efforts. States, through their LMI/WI/research entities, must provide sound foundational data, information, and resources to workforce system staff and job seekers so that these customers can make informed decisions about the services, training, and career decisions that lead to good jobs. States should also provide actionable information and sound research to state and local policy makers to support the development of data-driven policy and program design. ETA expects state WI grantees to use their PY 2010 workforce information funding to help inform state, local, and customer decision-making by:

1. Populating the Workforce Information Database (WIDb) with state and local data;
2. Producing and disseminating industry and occupational employment projections;
3. Conducting and publishing relevant economic analyses, special workforce information, and/or economic studies determined to be of benefit to the governor and state and local WIBs;
4. Posting products, information, and reports on the Internet; and,
5. Partnering and consulting on a continuing basis with workforce investment boards and other key workforce and economic development partners and stakeholders.

(See Attachment III of this guidance for more information on expected LMI/WI grant deliverables for PY 2010.)

State LMI/WI offices and research entities should continue to seek out viable partnership and customer service opportunities that enable the leveraging of limited WI program resources. States should know that ETA National Office LMI/WI staff will make every effort to facilitate, assist, and support linkages established between the state LMI/WI offices and research entities and ETA formula-funded programs to develop mutually beneficial partnerships that can help everyone involved attain needed program outcomes.

6. **Partnership Expectations.** ETA-funded state workforce information grantees are required to consult with their strategic partners to increase the scope and utility of workforce information used to inform sound state and local policies, workforce and regional economic development strategies, and to enhance the availability and use of career guidance and resources by workforce system staff and job seekers.

Therefore, workforce information grantees should actively seek to collaborate and partner with their state and local workforce investment boards; economic development agencies; education and training institutions; business groups; industry associations; and labor organizations in order to fully assure that the workforce information tools developed and provided with PY 2010 workforce information grant funding are those that meet identified needs.

7. **Funding and Leveraging Resources.** ETA provides formula allocated workforce information grants to states to produce, at a minimum, the core products and services required by Attachment III of this guidance, and for the development of other workforce information products and services which, at a state's discretion, are required to support the state and local workforce systems.

A total of \$32,000,000 is available for PY 2010, minus \$176,800 allocated in total to Guam and the Virgin Islands. ETA will distribute the remaining amount of \$31,823,200 by formula to states and the District of Columbia, with 40 percent distributed equally to all states and 60 percent distributed based on each state's relative share of the civilian labor force for the 12-month period ending September 2009 (see Attachment I for the table of state allocations).

### **Leveraging Opportunities with ETA Funded Programs**

Due to limited Federal resources directly available for LMI/WI production, analysis, and dissemination, state LMI/WI offices and research entities must continuously seek out and maintain collaborative relationships with a variety of program partners. These relationships allow states and partners to leverage other sources of funding and resources to ensure that data-driven analysis underlies all workforce investment activities.

Two (2) new attachments have been added to this year's WI grant guidance to assist states in identifying possible partners within ETA-funded employment programs and to provide examples of successful collaboration already under way.

Attachment VI contains a listing of select ETA programs for possible partnership. LMI/WI activities are allowable and encouraged costs for all these programs. Attachment VII contains case studies from the Jobs for the Future (JFF) WIN-WIN partnership paper that illustrate the benefits of intra-state collaborative relationships.

Leveraging limited financial resources to support workforce information needs is a key area of emphasis for the PY 2010 Workforce Information Grants. State LMI/WI/research offices are each positioned to immediately provide most ETA programs and initiatives with valuable expertise, information, and insights to

support strategic and tactical decision making. It may be necessary to use some of the identified programs' resources to supplement the LMI/WI/research office's budget to enable expanded data and information collection and analysis. By becoming more aware of internal workforce system opportunities for leveraging, state LMI/WI providers can help ETA and states assure the better use of limited 2010 program funds. State WI grantees can support ETA efforts by:

1. Reviewing the Attachment VI program descriptions to determine possible needs and avenues of assistance; and the partnership examples in Attachment VII for successful models to emulate;
  2. Keeping and sharing this document and its attachments as a reference to larger ETA programs and PY 2010 WI program instructions; and also,
  3. Registering for electronic ETA alerts (or "e-lets") to enhance awareness through the receipt of timely and actionable notices of upcoming program assistance needs, and announcements of new internal and external linkages or other relevant grant or resource leveraging opportunities.  
(<http://www.dol.gov/dol/email.htm>)
8. **State Certification of Required Grant Deliverables.** States must submit a grant Statement of Work (SOW) Certification (see Attachment IV) affirming that all five deliverables required by the grant SOW Guidelines (see Attachment III) will be accomplished during PY 2010. The certification must be signed by the governor, or by both the SWA administrator and the chairperson of the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB). This annual SOW Certification meets OMB requirements for assuring that the WI program funds allocated to each state are used to support the development and production of the deliverables intended.

If circumstances prevent accomplishment of a specific grant deliverable during PY 2010, the state must negotiate a deferral with the ETA Regional Administrator including attaching as an addendum the reasons for delay and a proposed completion date. The ETA regional office will document planned grant activities and grant accomplishments in the state's grant file and those records will be made accessible, per 29 CFR, 97.42(e)(1), for examination by ETA or other authorized Federal representatives.

9. **Accountability.** ETA will assess and document the effectiveness of grantee performance through the following approach:
- a. **ETA Grant Reviews.** The ETA regional offices will conduct periodic reviews of states' progress towards meeting the PY 2010 certified grant deliverables, the

degree to which collaboration with the SWIB and other partners exists, and quarterly reviews of grant expenditures and obligations.

- b. Performance Reporting.** In 2005, ETA implemented common measures reporting and revised Wagner-Peyser and WIA program reporting requirements to include the provision of workforce information services (WIS) and the impact of those services on participant outcomes. State data on the Entered Employment Rate, Employment Retention Rate after Six Months, and Earnings for participants following receipt of workforce information services is specifically captured for performance reporting purposes.

For PY 2010, ETA will continue to monitor the outcomes achieved by participants who received workforce information services. State LMI/WI offices and research entities can benefit from helping their state Wagner-Peyser and WIA program providers better identify and report workforce information participant outcomes.

State reporting in this area is very uneven or incomplete. For the period ending December 31, 2009, seven (7) states reported that zero percent (0%) percent to 10 percent (10%) of their total Wagner-Peyser participants also received workforce information services. Conversely, another 11 states reported that 75% to 96% of all Wagner-Peyser participants active for that same period received WIS. The WIS percentages reported for the remaining states fell between these two extremes and ranged from 12% to 74%.

It is imperative that state LMI/WI offices and research entities help ensure that state reported Wagner-Peyser WIS service counts are accurate when submitted each quarter. Common measures outcomes for participants that receive LMI/WI services represent the only opportunity for ETA to highlight the positive impacts on individual workers of annual WI grant funding.

- c. Annual Performance Report.** Grantees are required to submit an annual performance report for the workforce information grant (29 CFR 97.40(b)(1)), signed by both the SWA administrator and the SWIB chairperson, or the governor, as specified in Attachment V, Section A. The report must include a description of outcomes compared to certified grant deliverables and, where appropriate, an explanation as to why a grant deliverable was not accomplished and what will be done to ensure completion.

States are encouraged to view and use the annual report grant deliverable as an opportunity to communicate to ETA. The report narrative should highlight overall program activities and include a summary of the results of the grantee's customer consultations regarding state workforce information products and

services and a summary of activities to be undertaken to add customer value where needs for improvements are indicated. Expected narrative also should describe the creation and support of partnerships and collaborations during the program year along with any resulting tools or resources developed. Recommendations to ETA for suggested changes and improvements to the required WI grant deliverables can be included in the report as well.

All state annual reports are reviewed for acceptance and approval by the ETA regional LMI/WI Federal Project Officers (FPOs). ETA expects the annual reports to be fully representative of the state's work, and consist of more than just a compilation of state workforce information products. Submitted annual reports should contain a significant level of analysis, interpretation, appropriate actions, conclusions, and actionable recommendations.

Interested parties may access PY 2008 and prior year WI annual reports at: [http://www.doleta.gov/Programs/2008ReportsAndPlans/eta\\_default.cfm](http://www.doleta.gov/Programs/2008ReportsAndPlans/eta_default.cfm).

Grantees must electronically submit the WI annual performance report as an accessible Section 508 compliant .pdf file to the appropriate ETA regional office 90 days following the end of the program year. As stated earlier, ETA will post the annual performance reports on the ETA Web site for state sharing and informing the system and public of overall WI grant program performance.

States should be aware that .pdf copies of all documents submitted to ETA for Web posting must meet the Federal accessibility requirements stated by Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794d). (See [www.section508.gov](http://www.section508.gov) for more information.)

States unable to convert (or unsure of their ability to convert) their annual report and economic analyses grant deliverables to meet Section 508 .pdf accessibility standards should instead submit them to ETA in Microsoft (MS) Word or an equivalent text format. ETA will convert all forwarded state files to meet Federal accessibility standards prior to public posting.

- 10. Consultation and Customer Satisfaction Assessment.** Section 15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by WIA Section 309 (Pub. L. 105-220, 29 U.S.C. 49), requires states to consult with customers about the labor market relevance of the information disseminated through the statewide workforce information system. ETA interprets customers to include workforce and educational system stakeholders, regional economic development leadership within the state, and other strategic partners that foster workforce development. Consultation with the workforce investment system and other customers and information users provides the basis for formulating continuous improvement strategies for workforce information.

ETA is not prescribing an approach or methodology for conducting customer consultations. Methods can include focus groups, various surveys, crowd sourcing and online feedback, Webinars, listening sessions, documented consultations, customer satisfaction assessments, or other methods considered appropriate by the state.

11. **Special Grant Requirements.** Funds provided by this award may not be used to supplant funds obligated from other funding sources for workforce information activities. All costs incurred under the grant must support the cost objectives specified in Section 5 of this guidance and must conform to the principles for "reasonable" and "allocable" costs as specified in OMB Circular A-87.

All data collection activities must conform to the technical standards and methodologies established by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, or document, in the state's grant file, a sound business rationale for the use of an alternative methodology.

In the conduct of LMI/WI information technology (IT) systems and applications, ETA recognizes that Web-based tools will be needed for service delivery. Any IT system or application developed with WI grant funds must adhere to industry-standard, open architecture principles with documentation and software made available for use by other organizations for Federal government purposes.

12. **Publications and Other Information Products.** Grantees are required to submit .pdf copies or links to .pdf copies of required economic analyses, special workforce information, or economic studies (to meet deliverable 3) to the appropriate regional office 90 calendar days following the end of the program year. As with the annual reports, any state economic analyses, special workforce information, or economic studies submitted to meet WI program deliverable 3 must also meet Section 508 Web posting requirements.

States are encouraged to review the wide range and formats of the annual state economic analysis reports approved and posted by ETA since PY 2006. These reports are located at:

[http://www.doleta.gov/Programs/2008ReportsAndPlans/eta\\_default.cfm](http://www.doleta.gov/Programs/2008ReportsAndPlans/eta_default.cfm).

Grantees are also requested to submit .pdf documents or links to .pdf copies of publications and other products produced with WI grant funding that are considered to be of special interest to the workforce investment system to the appropriate regional office.

Examples of products of special interest include industry-specific research and analysis, state brochures describing the availability and functionality of electronic



self-service tools, documentation of innovative applications developed for database access or manipulation, or innovative workforce information services available to workforce system staff and customers.

13. **Grant Expenditure Period.** The maximum expenditure period for these funds is three years under the Wagner-Peyser Annual Funding Agreement. The grant will cover, at a minimum, the 12-month period from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011, but may, if negotiated between the state and the ETA regional office, cover a longer period of time up to the maximum expenditure period ending June 30, 2013.
14. **Grant Modifications.** The grantee and the ETA regional office may jointly modify planned expenditures within the state allocation during the grant period of performance. The regional office has authority to recommend the reallocation of grant funds to the ETA grant officer when overall grant expenditures and obligations are substantially below quarterly budgeted forecasts.
15. **Financial Management and Reporting.** States should forecast actual cash needs by program year quarter on Standard Form (SF) 424A, Section D, for all quarters covered by the grant. State workforce agencies will report quarterly expenditures by direct data entry of the ETA 9130 Financial Cost Report, into the Web-based Enterprise Business Support System (EBSS). Per 29 CFR 97.41(b)(4) quarterly financial reports are due 30 days following the end of each quarter. Address any questions regarding financial management and reporting for PY 2010, or for any existing prior year fund balances, to the appropriate ETA regional office.
16. **Action Requested.** Grant applications are due to the regional offices within 45 days of the date of this guidance. A submission date later than 45 days may be approved by ETA Regional Administrators. ETA requests that SWA administrators:
  - a. Immediately transmit these grant application instructions to the appropriate SWA office(s) and the SWIB.
  - b. Submit the original and two (2) copies of the PY 2010 grant application package with a transmittal letter signed by: (1) the governor; or (2) both the SWA administrator and the chairperson of the state SWIB to the appropriate ETA regional office.
  - c. Include in the grant application package:
    1. Transmittal Letter
    2. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
    3. Budget Plan (SF-424A, Section D only)
    4. Statement of Work Certification

**17. Inquiries.** Direct questions on the statement of work and grant requirements to the appropriate ETA regional office. Direct grant and financial management questions to the regional office or to Gwendolyn Baron-Simms at (202) 693-3309 or to Thomas Martin, Grant Officer, at (202) 693-2989.

**18. Attachments.**

- I. State Allocations for PY 2010
- II. Grant Procedures
- III. Statement of Work Guidelines
- IV. Statement of Work Certification
- V. Annual Performance Report Instructions
- VI. Select ETA Programs for Possible Partnership Opportunities
- VII. Case Studies from the Jobs for the Future (JFF) WIN-WIN Partnership Paper