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Redesigning the County's Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

This document provides recommendations to Los Angeles County Workforce Investment Board to redesign the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Adult and Dislocated Worker programs in Los Angeles County.



September 19, 2013



REDESIGNING THE COUNTY'S WIA ADULT & DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

This document provides 12 recommendations to the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) to redesign the Adult & Dislocated Worker (ADW) Programs in the County. These recommendations are consistent with the Governor's State Plan adopted by the California Workforce Board and the County's Five-Year Local Area Strategic Plan unanimously adopted by the Los Angeles County Workforce Investment Board (LACWIB) on June 27, 2013.

The Plan highlights the WIB's commitment to a demand-driven model that places much greater emphasis on business services as well as training strategies in high-growth industries. Most importantly, the Plan articulates the WIB's commitment to an Integrated Service Delivery model for the County's workforce development system in partnership with the State of California Employment Development Department (EDD).

Over the past year and half, the LACWIB has been redesigning its Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs and service delivery system in Los Angeles County. Through a series of engagements with the various stakeholders, the WIB approved nine Tenets of Redesign (attached) to ensure the County's WIA programs serve more customers in an effective and efficient manner.

The recommendations outlined in this document to redesign the ADW Programs are consistent with the major tenets of WIA Redesign approved by the WIB on November 29, 2012.

Policy Recommendations

#1: INTEGRATE SERVICES WITH THE EDD

In California and throughout the country, local Workforce Investment Areas are integrating WIA and Wagner-Peyser services to better serve the unemployed. Areas that have adopted this model have significantly higher enrollments and placements resulting in serving more customers with greater effectiveness. To achieve this integration, the County's centers will be in EDD sites. In some instances, the County will work closely with EDD to establish additional full-service centers and/or satellites in high-need areas.

#2: FOCUS ON REGIONAL BUSINESS SERVICES

LA County is one of the largest and most dynamic and regional economies in the world. The Workforce System must be designed to meet business needs in industries that represent this regional economy. To do so, a cohesive business strategy that is implemented countywide will ensure that sector strategies and training are aligned to meet the needs of employers and businesses.

#3: ADOPT THE BRANDING OF "AMERICA'S JOB CENTER OF CALIFORNIA" (AJCC)

Consistent with directives from the Department of Labor and EDD, the County's service delivery system will be known as the "America's Job Center of California." This branding will standardize the way all full-service centers and satellites are identified and ensure the recognition of the County as the provider of these services.

#4: IMPLEMENT A SINGLE UNIFORM DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

EDD will be implementing the California Workforce System Network (CWSN) as the State's unified system for all employment and workforce development activities. The County will utilize all modules of the system to ensure consistency and standardization at all levels. The new system will increase access to services, streamline processes, improve data reporting and client management and support the integration with EDD's workforce services.

#5: ESTABLISH A MINIMUM OF 50% OF TRAINING FUNDS FOR HIGH-GROWTH SECTORS

As a result of SB 734, the County is required to spend a minimum of 25% of ADW funding in training. Starting in 2016, the minimum requirement increases to 30%. Training our workforce in high-growth sectors is critical to providing job seekers with the necessary skills to achieve sustainable, living wage professions in the County. Adequate resources must be set aside to support training in high-growth sectors. For this reason, a minimum of 50% of SB 734 training funds will be used for training in approved high-growth sectors.

#6: IMPLEMENT A SUSTAINABLE SYSTEM

Due to reduced funding and new statewide requirements, the current system is challenged to meet all of the new mandates. Appropriate funding levels are needed to cover the operational needs of a fully functional AJCC. To do so, the County will fund only the number of AJCCs it can fully support.

#7: REQUIRE 30% OF ENROLLMENTS TO BE COMPRISED OF PRIORITY POPULATIONS

The most vulnerable populations in the County require higher levels of service to succeed in this economy. Our AJCCs must give priority of service to populations such as veterans, low income, long-term unemployed, public assistance recipients, individuals with disabilities, individuals with limited-English proficiency, and skills-deficient persons. This priority of service is consistent with the State's mandate to increase the number of adult basic education students, under-prepared job seekers and displaced workers who complete training programs in demand industries.

#8: ESTABLISH EARN AND LEARN MODELS

Studies show that adults must be placed in environments in which they "earn and learn" to get the skills they need to be competitive in this economy. Training resources must be used to increase opportunities for subsidized employment such as on-the-job training and apprenticeship programs that provide the job seeker with work experience in high-growth industries that lead to permanent employment with potential career pathways in demand industries. Additionally, these earn and learn training strategies will increase the number of adult basic education students who transition to post-secondary education and increase the number of under-prepared job seekers who successfully complete educational/training programs in demand occupations.

#9: COLLOCATE WIA OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH PROGRAMS IN AJCC

The WIB approved a strategy to collocate youth and adult programs. Older youth, ages 18-21, qualify for services and support from co-enrollment in the youth and adult programs. Our workforce system should facilitate easier and more seamless access to the continuum of services and support that older and out-of-school and out-of-work youth require to navigate the labor market. Collocation will be phased in.

#10: UTILIZE TECHNOLOGY TO INCREASE ACCESS AND SERVICES

Adults are increasingly using mobile devices, social media and online resources to access information and communications of all kinds. Technology offers tremendous opportunities to increase access to and utilization of services while minimizing costs. Programs around the country have implemented models that utilize social media and other online platforms to increase access to services and completion of certificated and non-certificated courses and

training. To do so, the County will implement a virtual One-Stop center (using CWSN) that provides job seekers with an array of online, self-serve workforce services and resources.

#11: REQUIRE AGENCIES TO LEVERAGE A MINIMUM OF 25% TO INCREASE SERVICES PROVIDED TO ADULTS AND BROADEN THE IMPACT OF THE PROGRAMS

Federal funding for the WIA program is likely to be reduced in future years. Requiring WIA-funded agencies to leverage other funding sources and partnerships to support the ADW programs is critical. This would likely result in agencies that have diversified funding and/or demonstrated ability to successfully compete for state and federal workforce grants as well as those with well-established relationships with mandated and other key workforce development partners. This would ensure that additional resources are contributed to our adult programs thereby increasing services in the County.

#12: ADOPT A PERFORMANCE-DRIVEN ADW SYSTEM

Increased legislation and public scrutiny demand greater accountability. Consistent with WIB policies related to performance and costs, we must design a system that produces the greatest value at the lowest cost. As performance targets measure whether people accessing workforce services obtain employment, continued funding to agencies will be linked to their ability to achieve these goals.

Redesigning the WIA System “Building on our Successes”

Major Tenets of WIA Redesign



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
COMMUNITY AND SENIOR SERVICES



Redesigning the WIA System
“Building on our Successes”

Major Tenets of WIA Redesign

1. **Adopt the Integration Model Recommended by the California Workforce Investment Board (CalWIB):** In California, and throughout the country, local Workforce Investment Areas have been moving toward integrating WIA and Wagner-Peyser partners and services to better serve their customer pools. In California, many WIBs that have adopted this model have significantly higher enrollments and placements.

The California Workforce Investment Board (CalWIB) adopted recommendations from a study it commissioned in 2010 that endorsed this model for all local areas. Several of the highest performing areas in the State, such as Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego, have adopted an integrated service delivery model to transform the WIA service delivery system into a comprehensive "One-Stop", whereby all customers who enter the one stop are enrolled for full menu of services offered by EDD and the WorkSource Center.

All customers who enter the WorkSource Centers would be enrolled for services and receive a common set of EDD and WIA services from a single access point. Sharing responsibility for services to customers will result in greater efficiencies and cost-savings. In comparison to the Los Angeles County workforce system, areas that partner with EDD such as Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego have higher enrollments and placements, as well as lower placement costs.

Currently, 7 of Los Angeles County's 17 WorkSource Centers and 3 satellite centers, are already collocated with EDD staff.

2. **Strengthen Services to Older Youth While Continuing a Full Array of Individualized Services for Younger Youth:** Serving older youth (ages 17-21) is one of the County's highest priorities since they are an at-risk population. This population is significantly represented in the County's system involved youth such as probation, foster care and CalWORKs. The seven WIBs in the County have adopted a common policy to coordinate and collaborate to serve all AB12 emancipated foster youth. Co-enrollment of these youth in both WIA Youth and Adult programs would provide greater levels of services and support to prepare these youth to enter the labor market with career pathways.

However, younger youth (ages 14-16), are also at risk and have different needs than older youth. Still maturing, they require the full array of services available to youth under WIA, including intensive case management, personalized mentoring and specialized services. The services for younger youth will continue to focus on education, including post-secondary education, instead of the taking the first available minimum-wage job. This approach is appropriate for two reasons: 1) education is ultimately the key to attaining self-sufficiency; and 2) younger youth will not have the priority for employment opportunities that older youth and adults have.

The goal of this tenet is to collocate Youth and Adult funding streams and program services at the same WorkSource Center site, ensuring that all youth, as well as adults, can be served at the same location. Youth would be positively impacted because they would have greater access to seamless services offered by the WIA Youth and Adult funding streams, as well as myriad opportunities and resources provided by partnerships present in our WorkSource Centers. Though the program would be collocated with Adult funding streams, the full array of services specifically targeted for the youth population would continue to be provided. Nine of the WorkSource Centers and Satellite Centers in the County already have this model.

3. **Standardization:** The Workforce Investment Board is very interested in establishing a franchise model for the branding and the delivery of WIA services in the County. This approach would standardize the way all WorkSource Centers are identified and services offered at all County-funded sites. The Department of Labor announced a national branding initiative in May 2011 and encouraged all WIA funded locations to be identified as, or as a partner of *America's Job Centers Network*. While this branding is optional, States are considering ways to implement this branding. The WIB is committed to the County of Los Angeles being more prominently recognized with the Department of Labor for funding WIA programs and services by all funded contracted agencies, as well as employers and jobseekers, and ensuring there is consistency and uniformity in the way WIA services are provided.

4. **Sustainability:** With implementation of SB 734, most WorkSource Centers reported reductions in staff to meet the training requirement. Currently, \$5.6 million or 25% of the funds in Adult and Dislocated Worker are set aside specifically for training. In future years, the County will be required to set aside 30% or roughly \$7.2 million assuming funding levels remain the same. So, funding that used to be available to cover other functions is no longer available. At the same time, due to the new training requirements, many of our WorkSource Centers are challenged with the compliance implications of staffing shortages as well as the requirements to provide business services, case management, job development, etc. Appropriate funding levels are needed to cover the operational needs of a fully functional WorkSource Center. Since funding levels are likely to stay the same or decline, some reduction in the number of WorkSource Centers may need to be considered.

5. **Expand Access to Services:** Technology has changed how individuals and businesses look for jobs and talent, including the use of the internet, social media and remote sites. EDD's new computer system will also provide another access point for WIA resources, including enrollment, on-line training, link to jobs, etc. To increase access to on-line WIA services, the County needs to expand on-line access so services can be accessed from customers' homes, County libraries or County Service Centers.

6. **Collaborate with other County Departments to Explore Ways to Maximize Employment Outcomes for Individuals Served by Multiple Agencies:** Many of the WIBs in the Los Angeles region, as well as the local WIB's WorkSource Centers, have relationships with County Departments in providing employment services. However, the relationships are often forged on an agency-by-agency basis, are not broadly coordinated with other services, limiting maximum outcomes. EDD, as the State's umbrella agency, also serves the same population. There is merit in having EDD, the region's WIBs and County Departments explore how they can work together to share resources to maximize employment outcomes for their shared customers. CSS will be working with all these partners to strengthen the collaborations to maximize employment outcomes for their customers.

7. **Leverage Resources and Partnerships:** Federal funding for the WIA program is likely to be reduced in future years. Requiring contractors to leverage other funding sources and partnerships to support our employment efforts is critical. This would likely result in contractors that have diversified funding and/or demonstrated ability to successfully compete for state and federal workforce grants, as well as those with well established relationships with mandated and other key workforce development partners. This would also ensure additional resources are contributed to our system, which would allow us to maximize WIA services in the County.

8. **Target Training and Employment in High Growth Sectors:** In 2011, the Workforce Investment Board approved seven sectors: construction, transportation and logistics, engineering and green jobs (energy/utilities), healthcare, biotech, hospitality and tourism, and finance. This would entail aligning the County's training and employment strategies with high growth sectors identified by local economic development data.

9. **Strengthen Services to Businesses and Employers:** Training and targeted investments in high growth sectors are intended to strengthen and better align services, as well as increase staff that outreach to businesses and employers to know their current and projected employment needs, training requirements and gaps, if any, and better utilize the public workforce system to support their workforce development and employment needs.

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